



ELAN

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Ex Libris Association Newsletter

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Ex Libris Association Receives Governor General Patronage

The Ex Libris Association of Canada is proud and humble to have been granted vice-regal patronage by Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada.

The Governor General plays a key role in promoting national identity by supporting and promoting Canadian values, diversity, inclusion, culture and knowledge. As such, the Governor General recognizes exceptional contributions to Canadian society by associations and organizations through awarding vice-regal patronage.

As a national association of retired librarians, archivists, publishers, and information professionals that seeks to bring attention to significant issues affecting the provision and advancement of information services in Canada, we are deeply grateful for this recognition.

Her Excellency's priorities and clear commitment to equity and inclusion are shared by Ex Libris Association's focus on building an informed, inclusive, and equitable society through the promotion of intellectual freedom and access to information.

Ex Libris Association hopes to continue to earn Her Excellency's support through its activities, which include a bursary for an Indigenous student in library sciences and an award for library services to seniors. ■



Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada
Photo credit: Sgt Johanie Maheu, Rideau Hall
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Upcoming AGM

Save The Date

The **2026 Ex Libris Association AGM** will take place on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 1 p.m. Eastern via Zoom. Details and Zoom link will be sent on the listserv closer to the date.

President's Report

By David I. Harvie



I have always believed that our libraries should tell of the past, converse with the present, and speak to the future.

I also believe this to be ELA's core mission as an organization.

We tell of the past through our work in recording the history of Canadian libraries and librarianship. ELA's **Biographies of Canadian Librarians and Archivists** is a unique resource that honours the many individuals who have made their mark in library and information science in Canada. *ELAN*, our association newsletter, publishes articles and news related to its core objectives of preserving our heritage. Its pages are filled with histories, reminiscences, scholarly articles, and vignettes of members' experiences.

We converse with the present on important library-related issues in our listserv discussion group, which provides updates on current events concerning libraries, and offers a forum for discussion among our members. Our education committee continues to provide library tours and thought-provoking and informative webinars on a number of issues of interest to our members.

We speak to the future in activities such as our Indigenous Student

Award. This bursary award helps to ensure the future of our profession by assisting Indigenous students who wish to further their library or archival education at a university or college.

Of all our endeavours, the need to converse with the present is the most pressing, in my opinion. While we have, and will continue to be, an organization that honours and preserves our past, there is a growing need to strengthen the voice of libraries on a national level. This is an opportunity that is ideally suited to Ex Libris and its members. If not us, then who?

It is my intention that ELA will support the efforts of provincial library associations and provide a voice for our members on national issues concerning intellectual freedom, literacy, equity, diversity, and inclusion in libraries through our advocacy committee. Recent examples of advocacy are available on our website in the **News section**.

As an organization, we will need to develop and strengthen mechanisms on how we can best respond to censorship and threats to libraries. If you would like to participate in this work, please **contact me** to join our advocacy committee.

David I. Harvie is a recently retired public librarian with a background in library automation, digital literacy and administration. ■

Corrections to *ELAN*

Corrections to this issue are made to the digital issues on our website.

Corrections have been made to the online edition of *ELAN* # 77/Spring 2025 to correct the following print edition errors:

Page 5: The TPL cyberattack Zoom presentation was held in 2024, not 2025.

Page 28: Susan Ibbetson is no longer a member of the newsletter committee; Julia Schneider has replaced her as a committee member.

Page 15: In the review of The Wartime Book Club: the word "War" should be added to "Second World."

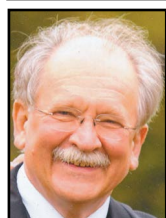
New ELA Members

We're happy to welcome these new ELA members:

Kerry Badgley, Kemptville, ON
 Melissa Botelho, Ottawa, ON
 Vickery Bowles, Palgrave, ON
 Sandra Craig, Toronto
 Lisa Egan, Newmarket, ON
 Susan Ewing, Toronto
 Tanis Fink, Aurora, ON
 M. A. Gingras, Toronto
 Harleen Grewal, London, ON
 Ken Haycock, Vancouver, BC
 Lisa Henderson, London, ON
 Kristen Hinnegan, Mississauga, ON
 Moe Hosseini-Ara, Toronto
 Yvonne Ivcevic, Toronto
 Rebecca Jones, Markham, ON
 Andrew Lofft, Toronto
 Feather Maracle, Ohsweken, ON
 Lisa Miettinen, Woodstock, ON
 Niki Naponse, Naughton, ON
 Right Honourable Mary Simon, Ottawa, ON
 Arathy Sivasubramaniam, Milton, ON
 Andrea Stewart, Uxbridge, ON
 Lisa Tam, Toronto
 Diane Thompson, McKellar, ON
 Ashley Thomson, Sudbury, ON
 Heather Turnbull, Toronto
 Julie Wendland, Napanee, ON
 Michael J. White, Kingston, ON
 Alyssa Williams, East Gwillimbury, ON
 Victoria Yang, Toronto

Canadian Federation of Library Associations/ Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB)

By Todd Kyle with contributions from Dick Ellis



On May 1, CFLA-FCAB appointed Dr. Margaret Law as Interim Executive Director on a one-year contract. She is tasked with implementing the organization's recent operational and governance review. As part of this review and to focus on big picture advocacy and government policy work, CFLA-FCAB has made the decision

to disband its standing committees in favour of issue-specific task forces as of Sept. 1. These include the Intellectual Freedom, Copyright, Indigenous Matters, Climate Action, and Cataloguing and Metadata Standards committees. CFLA requested action plans from each committee and intends to use these as the basis for initial task force assignments.

In addition, the board of directors will welcome member suggestions for task force actions in these and other areas.

In a statement, CFLA indicated it remains committed to these broad areas of advocacy, but wishes to concentrate its resources on time-limited, defined-output actions aligned with its national advocacy role. For example, regarding intellectual freedom, CFLA will continue to pursue federal concerns related to hate legislation and Charter rights, while leaving issues related to specific content challenges to member organizations and other partners, such as the Centre for Free Expression at Toronto Metropolitan University.

The Climate Action Committee's Climate Action Week will nonetheless take place Nov. 1 to 7, 2025, hosted by the British Columbia Library Association. Libraries and other gallery, library, archives, and museum organizations across Canada are invited to participate through initiatives such as book displays, movie-

screening programs, panels on seeds and food security, nature walks to fight climate anxiety, climate cafés, and recipe swaps.

Prior to the Intellectual Freedom Committee's dissolution, CFLA-FCAB released a statement of concern regarding the Alberta government's school resources announcement which would restrict access to materials deemed age-inappropriate. The statement referred to ongoing work with partners at the Library Association of Alberta and Canadian School Libraries to raise awareness and advocate on behalf of school library resource selections by qualified professionals.

*ELA is a **CFLA-FCAB** member.*

Todd Kyle is CEO, Brampton Public Library. He was CFLA-FCAB Chair for 2021.

Dick Ellis, Librarian Emeritus, Memorial University. ■

W. Kaye Lamb Award for Service to Seniors: By Christina Wilson

Every other year, ELA, in partnership with the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA FCAB), invites Canadian libraries to apply for the W. Kaye Lamb Award for Service to Seniors. The national awards committee works with libraries and their associations to highlight the extraordinary services our Canadian libraries offer seniors. This year, we're asking every ELA member to tell their libraries about this award to allow ample time to apply. The deadline is Nov. 6.

All Canadian libraries – First Nations, post-secondary, public, or special – are eligible. The list of past winners is on the **W. Kaye Lamb section** of the ELA website.

In 2023, the Innisfil IdeaLAB & Library, Ont., received the award for providing innovative programs that connected seniors socially, both in the library and at home, and assisted them in learning to use emerging technologies. You can view photos of their work and learn more in the **ELA website** awards section.

The awards committee reviews each application to determine the winner. The lucky winning library receives a cash prize of \$500, a commemorative certificate named after Canada's first National Librarian, William Kaye Lamb, OC, FRSC, and national acknowledgement of the library's accomplishment.

The awards committee encourages members to suggest worthy programs by contacting the **committee chair** or directing applicants to the **ELA website** awards section.

For more information, please contact W. Kaye Lamb Committee Chair, Christina Wilson, at chriswilson@shaw.ca.

Christina Wilson, recently retired as CEO, Red Deer PL, has worked for public and post-secondary libraries in Ontario and Alberta. ■

Spring Outing Takes in Library and Play in Stratford By Todd Kyle

About a dozen ELA members attended the 2025 spring outing May 15, comprising a tour of the Stratford Public Library followed by a play at the Stratford Festival. Coming from as far away as Sault Ste-Marie, the group first attended a presentation about the history of the library, one of the oldest Carnegie libraries still in operation in Ontario. They followed that up with a tour of the crowded, but well-used, library. Library service in Stratford dates back to 1853, part of the Mechanics' Institute, before being incorporated as a public library in 1897 and moving to the current building in 1903. Despite facility renovations and expansions over the years, the single-branch Stratford Public Library has one of the lowest space rates of square feet per capita among Ontario

libraries. Staff still manages to find room for a very active Makerspace, which the group was lucky enough to experience.

After that, the group convened at the nearby Avon Theatre for the Stratford Festival production of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, a 2004 musical based on the 1988 film. The production was directed by Tracey Flye and starred Jonathan Goad and Liam Tobin as a swindler and his protégé, who make a bet to swindle an heiress, played by Shakura Dickson. The group was highly entertained by the music, the twisting plot, the hilarious dialogue and the occasional dirty joke. At over two hours, the play maintained a fast and captivating pace. Members left satisfied before their treks home.

Thanks to Shauna Costache, public services supervisor, Stratford Public

Library, for giving us such an informative presentation and tour and to Julia Schneider and Vivienne James for organizing the event.

Todd Kyle is CEO, Brampton Public Library. ■

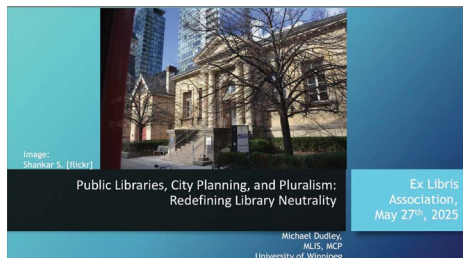


Photo credit: Todd Kyle

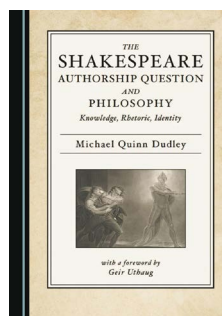
Public Libraries, City Planning and Pluralism: Redefining Library Neutrality

By Julia Schneider

Public libraries exist to serve their public(s) and Michael Dudley knows this is not an easy thing to do when prioritizing intellectual freedom. In his May 27, 2025 ELA webinar, the multifaceted University of Winnipeg librarian showed his iconoclastic, scholarly, and pragmatic/idealistic sides in a webinar designed to challenge any facile notions participants might have had about their mission at a particularly challenging time.



Librarians have no how-to text on how to deal with patrons who bring conflicting demands about what the public library



should do (or not do) for them and, "there's the rub" (as a Shakespeare scholar like Dudley might put it). They are all entitled to be heard and acted on. Dudley's presentation drew on thinkers from John Stewart

Mills, in his 1859 text *On Liberty*, to intellectual freedom advocates David K. Berninghausen and Anita Brooks Kirkland to answer the question of how to be fair all to all, while contending that we face "wicked problems" that really have no pre-set solution.

In fact, it could be argued that, in their tendency to favour uncensored resources, activities and outlooks, librarians can themselves be accused of censorship if, and when, they refuse to consider the views of all those who oppose them. Who is to judge the judge? It is, indeed, a thorny question. Are we serving all our publics? What about the homeless, the handicapped, those who need outreach? What about those we might consider biased? People currently may find villains of all kinds easier to relate to than the "good guys" because, in view of social realities, people now relate to the villains.

This being the case, the exclusion of dissenters can mean they are not being heard and librarians are limiting their free speech.

Dudley states there is no right or wrong way, but only attempts to appreciate the "plurality of objectives," keeping in mind librarians can never address wicked problems to everyone's satisfaction. He speaks of the value of neutrality, not as an abstract good, but rather as part of what he calls "Dialogical Librarianship," which does not impose values for outsiders, but rather (one too many "but rather") allows users to tell what they want the library to do for them.

Dudley's talk raised many questions from webinar participants about how to be fair to all publics; his advice would probably be "keep trying." Intellectual freedom is of paramount social importance, but how to approximate it in today's world involves unprecedented challenges – and inclusive dialogues. To view the presentation, go to the [ELA website](#).

Julia Schneider (B.Ed. Queens; M.L.S. Western '75; M.A. Waterloo; B. Journalism U. of King's College, Halifax) has worked in school and prison libraries as well as classrooms around the world. She is a member of the ELA Board. ■

Final Gifts

Contributed by Leslie McGrath

Librarians wrote a series of Reddit posts some months ago about the strangest “gifts” their libraries had received, mostly as anonymous, night-time drop-offs. The list was long and varied, including, a vintage wedding dress, novelty crab socks, a taxidermized turtle, a kit for making beef jerky and a fish wrapped in newspaper. Perhaps the most surprising: “People’s ashes. More than once.” A low-cost, but respectful form of disposal? Or the fulfillment of a bibliophile’s last wish? Librarians should be grateful that AI, when consulted by potential donors of ashes, gently suggests other forms of gifts because libraries, generally “do not have policies” for dealing with such donations, and they “may raise ethical questions about the library’s mission.”

Sources:

AI Overview, “People donating their ashes to a library.” June 27, 2025.

[Reddit](#).

Leslie McGrath worked at TPL as a children’s librarian and a branch head for 10 years and Senior Department Head of the Osborne Collection of Early Children’s Books for 23 years. ■

Upcoming Webinar

Save The Date

Library Violence and Staff Safety will take place on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at 1 p.m. Eastern, via Zoom. The link will be provided on the listserv closer to the date.

Canada’s Public Libraries have traditionally been regarded as welcoming spaces offering a variety of educational, learning, and social engagement opportunities for patrons. However, as cutbacks have become more acute, vulnerable people increasingly look to libraries for shelter, health care, and food supports. Library staff feel ill-equipped to manage these situations, especially when vulnerable patrons with complex needs may attack others.

How can public libraries provide physical and emotional safe spaces and secure environments for staff and patrons while protecting their privacy? How can they maintain open, accessible, and welcoming spaces? This session examines the current landscape in North American “library land” and includes practices to mitigate disruptive or threatening incidents. Particular emphasis is placed on sharing an innovative, trauma-informed approach to prevention that will improve staff resiliency for physical, emotional, and psychological safety.

Webinar presenter **Heather Turnbull** is an award-winning learning and development professional with 20+ years’ experience in designing and delivering a real-world curriculum that optimizes individual, team, and organizational growth. Heather advocates on behalf of marginalized and at-risk people, especially women and girls, impacted by violence and trauma.

Awards to Members

ELAN includes only awards and appointments of national importance and high relevance to our members. Look for these in the news sections. A Canadian awards page is available on [ELA’s website](#).

Award to ELA Member

The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) presented its 2025 CARL Award for Distinguished Service to Research Librarianship to Victoria Owen.

Appointments

Leslie Weir, Librarian and Archivist of Canada, assumed the role of president of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) for 2025 to 2027 at the recent IFLA World Library and Information Conference in Astana, Kazakhstan.

ELA Advocacy Committee Activities

By Deb Thomas

This committee was formed in spring 2025 in response to the need for the Ex Libris Association to comment on issues related to our fields and support those working to keep our fundamental values strong and protected.

Our first action was a letter sent in May to the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Culture and Identity, joining our voices with other library, archival, and historical associations in urging the Department of Canadian Heritage to acquire the Hudson's Bay Charter for Library and Archives Canada to keep it in Canada and accessible to Canadians. To date, there has been no response. However, we're pleased to report that the charter may be on its way to the Canadian Museum of History, pending court approval of a plan to let the Weston family buy the charter and donate it to the museum. The Museum of Manitoba, the recipient of many Hudson's Bay artifacts, expressed

its disappointment that it wasn't able to acquire that charter but, like many Canadians, is satisfied it will remain in Canada and accessible to researchers.

In late June, the committee responded to the province of Alberta's move to diminish the role of trained educators and library professionals in determining the content of school library collections and in responding to challenges to that content. ELA joined other provincial and national library associations by endorsing the **Canadian School Libraries (CSL)'s Statement on Alberta's Announcement Regarding Possible Book Bannings**, which emphasizes the need for trained professional input from educators and school librarians in the selection and management of school library resources.

The standards have now been published. The ministerial order outlining them is on the Alberta government **website**. A summary of the survey done by the government is on its **website**.

The Library Association of Alberta (LAA) has challenged the decision to issue the standards, noting most survey respondents (40 to 60 per cent in most cases) were content with the current processes.

ELA President, David I. Harvie, followed up July 28 with a letter to the minister and the minister replied in mid-August. The **president's letter** and the **minister's response** are on the ELA website.

Committee: Deb Thomas, Julia Schneider, Chris Middlemass, Elizabeth Ridler, and Tanis Fink.

*Questions? Contact Committee Chair **Deb Thomas**.*

***Deb Thomas** recently retired from a 40+ year career in libraries, 30 years of which were in public library management. ■*

News from Canadian Library/Information Studies Schools



Compiled by Judy Dunn

University of British Columbia iSchool, Library, Archival and Information Studies (SLAIS)

By Guy Robertson

In March, the iSchool hosted a research day that included a keynote panel discussion featuring faculty members Dr. Eric Meyers, Dr. Muhammad Abdul-Mageed, Dr. Cameron Pierson, and Dr. Tess Prendergast. Their topic was "Unleashing Curiosity & Breaking Boundaries: Diverse Approaches to Research Excellence." Student presentations covered a wide range of topics, from Manga literacy for librarians to cataloguing Franklin Expedition relics in museums. Dr. Richard Arias-Hernandez, associate professor of teaching at the iSchool, is the new academic director of

Vantage College, which offers programs for international students who do not yet meet UBC's English-language admission requirements. Dr. Arias-Hernandez specializes in curriculum research and the use of AI and machine learning in archival and records management processes. The Association for Information Science & Technology has selected Candace Taylor, an upcoming Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) graduate, to receive the Pratt Severn Best Student Research Paper Award. Ms. Taylor's winning paper is entitled "You Have to Quit Your Life: Mapping the Information World of an Experienced Thru-hiker."

University of Alberta, School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS)

By SLIS Administration; edited by Kenneth Gariepy

We congratulate the 43 MLIS graduates who convoked on June 18, and we are proud to celebrate a number of recent achievements across our community. In student news, C. Whelpton received **Saskatchewan Library Association's Indigenous MLIS Student Award**. N.

Peredo and W. Quarshie were awarded **ALA's Spectrum Scholarship** for 2025/26. Faculty and staff also saw significant recognition with Director Dr. K. Gariepy appointed to Centre for Free Expression's (CFE) Working Group on Intellectual Freedom, Dr. T. Samek renamed **CFE Scholar-in-Residence** for 2025/26 and academic adjunct colleague Dr. M. Law appointed executive director of CFLA/FCAB. Additionally, alum and term instructor J. Wilson was named **deputy director of Yellowhead Regional Library** (YRL). We also wish Dr. M. Washington well in his new endeavours ahead of his departure as dean and vice-provost of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. Finally, the program's continuing high demand and competitiveness are demonstrated by a record number of applications for Fall 2025.

Western University, Faculty of Information and Media Studies (FIMS)

By Becky Blue

With the conclusion of Lisa Henderson's term as dean on June 30,

Faculty of Information and Media Studies (FIMS) welcomed Associate Professor Susan Knabe as the acting dean from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The LIS program also welcomed a new full-time faculty member. Assistant Professor Bri Watson, who joined FIMS on July 1, will teach knowledge organization and representation, cataloguing, metadata, and related topics and has a particular interest in teaching at the intersection of Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums, and Special Collections (GLAMS). Congratulations go to Professor Pam McKenzie who was named recipient of the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T) **2025 Research in Information Science Award**, in June. Further, doctoral alumna Heidi Julien (PhD '97) received **ASIS&T's 2025 Award of Merit**. Dr. Julien is currently a University of Buffalo professor.

University of Toronto, Faculty of Information (FI, iSchool)

By Ann Brocklehurst

The Faculty of Information's 2025 Ian P. Sharp Lecture, held last spring and entitled "Weaving the Future: Indigenous Knowledge and the Ethics of AI," brought together two distinguished speakers: Morgan Vigil-Hayes from Northern Arizona University and Jennifer Wemigwans from OISE at the University of Toronto. They explored how AI can be shaped with respect, relationality, and responsibility, rooted in Indigenous ethical frameworks. The talk was moderated by Danica Pawlick-Potts, PhD candidate at Western University. Video of the lecture can be viewed on the [faculty's website](#). Also on the website is a new section with regular updates on the [faculty's strategic plan](#), which was introduced to the public by Dean Javed Mostafa at the Sharp lecture. And finally, you'll find featured articles about recently retired professors, Chun Wei Choo, Leslie Regan Shade, and Brian Cantwell Smith, who served as the Faculty of Information Dean from 2003 to 2008.

McGill University, School of Information Studies

By Peter McNally

Professors Benjamin Fung and

Steven Ding will co-lead a four-year project, **ZenithVector**. It was recently awarded a \$5.6 million Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Alliance Grants-Communications Security Establishment (CSE). The project will provide a multimodal, comprehensive solution for exploratory analysis of unstructured data with a strong focus on cybersecurity applications. The project will help McGill become a hub for innovation in AI and cybersecurity. Unstructured data refers to information that does not conform to a traditional tabular format of rows and columns. Common examples include network logs, malware executables, chat messages, dark web fora, and system alerts. Professor Peter F. McNally delivered the convocation address at McGill University's Faculty of Arts Convocation "B" on June 2, 2025. The School of Information Studies put forward three PhDs, 84 Master of Information Studies (MIS), five graduate certificates in cybersecurity and one graduate certificate in digital archives management.

Université de Montreal, École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information (EBSI)

By Isabelle Bourgey and Martin Bélanger

Several books by École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information (EBSI) professors have been published in recent months: *Le mouvement Wikimedia au Canada: communautés, institutions et culture libre* (*The Wikimedia Movement in Canada: Communities, Institutions, and Free Culture*) by Marie D. Martel; *Aux marges de l'archivistique. Exploitation des archives et cinéma de réemploi* (*On the margins of archiving. Exploitation of archives and reuse cinema*), by Annëlle Winand; and *Les bibliothèques universitaires à l'heure des bilans* (*University libraries at a turning point*) by Réjean Savard. Professor Lubna Daraz was selected as Canada's delegate to attend the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women's 69th session. As a member of Business and Professional Women Canada (BPW Canada), an international non-profit organization representing

businesswomen and professional women across the country, she had the honour of representing the Montreal chapter among other women. Professor Christine Dufour received an award for excellence in teaching at the Faculty of Arts and Science Commitment and Inspiration ceremony.

Dalhousie University, Faculty of Management, Department of Information Science (DIS)

By Philippe Mongeon and Sandra Toze

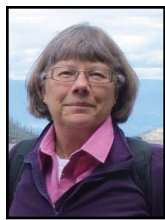
There was much to celebrate this past term within the Department of Information Science (DIS). Dr. Bertrum MacDonald was awarded the Canadian Association for Information Science (CAIS/ACSI) **Career Achievement Award**, recognizing his significant contributions to our programs and the field. Our newer faculty members were also recognized for their research and impact. Dr. Philippe Mongeon received the CAIS Emerging Leader Award, Dr. Colin Conrad received the Faculty of Management Research Impact Award (Emerging Scholar), while Dr. Stacy Allison-Casin received the **President's Research Excellence Award Emerging Scholar**. At the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) annual meeting, Patti Bannister, provincial archivist at the Nova Scotia Archives and adjunct professor with DIS, received the **Larry Dohey Award** to honour her work to raise public awareness of archives and recordkeeping. Master of Information (MI) graduate, 2025, Chelsey MacPherson, was awarded the CAIS Master's Research Award. Congratulations also to all our 2025 graduates. For details of our award winners, see our [blog post](#). Looking to the academic year ahead, we are very excited to welcome a new cohort of MI students, as well as the inaugural cohort of four PhDs in Information students starting this September.

Judy Dunn retired in 2011 after six years as assistant dean academic, Faculty of Information, U of T and 15 years as Program Co-ordinator, School of Information Management, Dalhousie University.

News from the Provinces & the North

News from the North

By Julie Ourom



Libraries across the north are closely connected to territorial and community initiatives. Nunavut Community Access Program (CAP) sponsors community internet access at the **Rebecca P. Idlout**

(Pond Inlet) and the **Donald Suluk** (Arviat) Libraries (NU). Library success is dependent on volunteer support. For example, Friends of the **Iqaluit Centennial Library** (NU) provides story time, craftersnooks, book clubs, and other programs.

Libraries in the north serve as community archives and cultural centres. Hay River Centennial Library (NWT) participates in the annual Hay Days celebration, showcasing culture and history through the library. **Inuvik Centennial Library** (NWT) received a donation of yearbooks from Stringer Hall (the former Anglican day school) dating from 1959 to 1990. The library's collection of photographs, funeral and memorial programs, and other local resources are now digitized.

Garden boxes on the **Whitehorse Public Library** (YT) balcony thrived this summer. Hay River Centennial Library (NWT) sponsored the Tallest Sunflower Contest award at the local community garden.

The Hay River library also hosted Lee Moldehauer, author of *Prospecting in the Northwest Territories*, to share his experiences searching for minerals in the 1970s. Another event featured music from a local collector's vintage LPs. The summer Words Out Loud showcase for Yukon writers featured both Kate Fisher and long-time Yukoner and local author Ellen Davignon who wrote *The Cinnamon Mine*. **Dawson City Community Library** (YT) offered readings by Simon Tourigny, author of *Guns & Roses*, Marielle Veilleux with her *The Adventures of an Aviatrix*, and Cole Pauls, a local comic book writer.

Tagish Community Library (YT) closed after a catastrophic fire destroyed the community centre that housed the library. The community is overjoyed about the arrival this fall of a mobile library that

will serve until the centre is re-built.

Whitehorse Public Library (YT) introduced sensory tool kits for people with sensitivities.

Summer reading programs wrapped up in libraries across the north. Celebrations included an ice cream sundae station at **Whitehorse Public Library** (YT).

Julie Ourom was Director, Yukon Public Libraries from 1990-2014. She previously worked at public libraries in B.C., including Kitimat and Richmond, and in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

British Columbia News

By Guy Robertson



In June, **University of British Columbia (UBC) Library** gave library assistants **Matthew Barrett** and **Kyra Wheatley** the **Suzanne Dodson Award**, which recognizes outstanding

commitment to the library profession. In September, Barrett and Wheatley commence their MLIS studies at the university's School of Information/iSchool. Wheatley also received the **Diana Lukin Johnston Award** along with her library colleague **Aleha McCauley**, who will participate in the **Fostering Change for Academic Library Leaders** cohort program sponsored by the **Association of College & Research Libraries**.

Established in 1993, UBC's **Xwi7xwa** [pronounced "whei-wha"] **Library** has obtained funding to hire **Jesse Carson**, a graduate of the iSchool's Master of Archival Studies program, as a two-year term archivist, reporting to the Xwi7xwa library head and university archivist. Holdings include correspondence and meeting minutes recording discussions of the library's development and purposes and records of UBC's **First Nations House of Learning** and the **Indigenous Teacher Education Program (NITEP)**.

In June, the **Vancouver Public Library (VPL)** announced the appointment of **Ben Hyman** as chief librarian and CEO. He previously served as executive director of the **Vancouver Island Regional Library**, where he developed strategic renewal initiatives. He has earned a reputation as an effective leader. **Board chair Karen Spears** said she

and her board colleagues are excited to work with Hyman, who they believe will lead the institution into the future.

Over the past two years, the **Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL)** recorded hundreds of threatening disturbances at its 12 branches. Staff members have filed almost 600 incident reports at the downtown central branch, an area that is a hub for street people and opioid abusers. Overdoses are frequent, and petty crime has increased to alarming levels. GVPL management recognizes many incidents are minor: smoking in washrooms; intoxication and disagreements over using printers and photocopiers. Other incidents are more serious and involve physical threats, theft, and racist outbursts. Staff stress levels have risen, along with staff vacancy rates. GVPL hired a full-time safety and security co-ordinator to deal with problem patrons.

On July 4, **Cranbrook Public Library (CPL)** celebrated its 100th anniversary. Popular writers -- **John Grisham**, **Louise Perry** and **Ann Patchett** -- sent congratulations, as did **Simon Tolkien**, novelist and **J.R.R. Tolkien's** grandson. On its opening day in 1925, CPL offered a few shelves of donated books to an enthusiastic public. The first borrower was **T.M. Roberts**, the town's mayor.

Terrace Public Library announced plans to build an accessible parking lot, to include two accessible and three regular parking stalls. Local residents are disappointed at the loss of treed green space but are pleased with accessible parking. Replacement trees are coming.

Prince George Public Library (PGPL) has announced the appointment of **Wendy Jael**, a **lheidli t'enneh** [pronounced klate-lee ten-eh] **councillor**, as its first Indigenous board member, an important step toward reconciliation and community engagement.

According to many of its patrons, **Richmond Public Library (RPL)** is for the birds. In July, it offered an Introduction to Birdwatching program, using RPL's Birdwatching ExplorePacks which introduce users to essential aspects of a popular activity. **Birds Canada** representatives kicked off the program with a presentation covering local bird families and the use of binocular and field guide.

Guy Robertson is an instructor at Langara College, teaching library history, reference services, and records management. He is a disaster planning consultant and the author of five books on library and archival topics.

Prairies News

By Alvin M. Schrader



Edmonton Public Library was awarded the “2024 Minister’s Award for Municipal and Public Library Excellence” in October 2024, for its **“Together We Grow”** program that supports older adults by bringing babies (with parents) to seniors’ homes (program reported in *ELAN* Fall, 2024). The program has reached 2,000 participants across seven locations, with plans to expand to more seniors’ residences in support of EPL’s strategic goals and Edmonton’s commitment to community safety and wellbeing.

Calgary Public Library avoided the worst effects after it was targeted in a massive cyberattack Oct. 10, 2024. Servers were shut down immediately, a decision that **CEO Sarah Meilleur** credited with saving the library’s infrastructure and ensuring no business, employee, or member data were compromised. A Microsoft Incident Response team was brought in early to support containment procedures and investigate what happened. A three-stage pathway to recovery was implemented. Initially, patrons were asked to avoid returning books, Wi-Fi was discontinued, ebooks and audiobooks were unavailable for check-out, and holds could not be placed. Branches reopened six days later with limited services such as hand-written checkout cards. Later, secure laptops were provided to branches.

Sarah Meilleur, Calgary Public Library (CPL) CEO, was honoured as one of four **“Exceptional Women of East Village 2025,”** in March 2025, in honour of International Women’s Day. She has dedicated her life to building a library system that serves everyone, where she leads initiatives that make mental health, career development, and library programming more accessible. Under her

leadership, CPL has grown to more than 818,000 members, nearly 60 per cent of all Calgarians, averaging more than 20,000 visitors a day, including 3,000 to 4,000 daily visitors at the central library in East Village. Meilleur played a key role in shaping the vision for the new central library, an award-winning building that brought international recognition to Calgary.

The Saskatchewan Library Association celebrated its **2025 One Book One Province** program, in April 2025, with the title *Bread & Water: Essays* by dee Hobsbawn-Smith. Hobsbawn-Smith uses food to explore the human soul’s hungers that loiter beyond cravings for love. She kneads themes of floods and place, grief and loss, the commonalities of refugees and Canadians through common tastes in food, cooking methods, grandmothers and mentors, the politics of local and sustainable food, parenting, male privilege in the restaurant world, and the challenges of aging gracefully. Seven in-person events with the author were scheduled across the province.

Winnipeg Public Library selected **Raymond Lyttle to be its Maker-in-Residence** at the Millennium Library from March 3 to June 14, 2025. He led creative workshops and studio sessions. The program operates out of ideaMILL, a creative space designed to provide the public with hands-on learning opportunities for exploring various artistic techniques during weekly drop-in sessions and workshops. Library branch sessions were also arranged, with a focus on engaging families and youth. Lyttle’s artistic approach emphasizes community engagement and exploring how visual art can represent memories and emotions. He works in multiple media, including ceramics, watercolour, ink, and oil paints.

Winnipeg Public Library announced in March 2025 that, thanks to the **Ukrainian Bookshelf** project that is an initiative of Olena Zelenska, Ukraine’s First Lady, Winnipeggers would have access to additional Ukrainian language books. She donated more than 120 such books. Winnipeg is the fourth Canadian city to participate in this project, joining Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto.

Alvin M. Schrader is Professor Emeritus at the University of Alberta, School of Library & Information Studies.

Ontario News

By Vivienne James



Ontario Library Association **2025 Awards:**
 • **New Library Building Award:** The **Coulson Family Bracebridge Library**. The jury praised the library design for its

integration of the warmth and colours of the north, capturing the Northern Ontario complexity and simplicity;

- **Ontario Public Library Association Children’s and Youth Services Librarian of the Year Award:** **Danielle Big Canoe Snake**, library co-ordinator, Rama First Nation Public Library;
- **OPLA Advocacy in action: Excellence in Children’s and Teen Services Award:** Audrey Kennington, Library Associate, Community Engagement, Barrie Public Library. Visit the **OLA website** to see more awards.

Toronto Public Library’s new city librarian is **Moe Hosseini-Ara**, succeeding Vickery Bowles, who served since 2015 with excellence and creativity. Hosseini-Ara, highly experienced in various library service levels and with a deep passion for public service, is expected to continue to ensure libraries remain gateways to opportunity and equity.

Hamilton Public Library celebrates more than 55 years of **Summer Reading Club**, with an exhibit until December at the central library, exploring adventurous places captured in the archives. In July, Six Nations author Dawn Hill led a live reading and conversation about her new book, *Memory Keeper*.

Niagara Falls Public Library opened its **Chippawa branch**, to the delight of the community, after closing the previous site last year due to prohibitive repair costs.

Guelph Public Library expanded its annual **Comic Con** event in August, featuring activities and exhibits, including local graphic novelists, role-playing games, a cosplay contest, and more for fans and the community.

Cambridge Public Library. The Hespeler Public Library is a century-old Carnegie Library now enclosed in a modern glass structure. It features **Cast**

Continued on page 10

...continued from page 9

Shadow, Sofia Eleni Escobar's innovative installation reflecting the region's textile heritage. Escobar, a Toronto-based artist with roots in Peru and Ecuador, creates three-dimensional woven sculptures inspired by Andean textiles. The exhibit is open until July 2026.

London Public Library suspended Sunday service for the rest of the year—the first service cut since the library's multi-year budget was not approved.

Windsor Public Library launched its new bookmobile, **Fred 2.0**. In July, its first official stop at Captain Wilson Park marked a new era of community outreach and access to library services.

The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) presented the **Excellence in Leadership Award** to Catherine Davidson, recognizing her significant contributions to the executive committee. A librarian at Ontario Tech University and a director for more than a decade, she has demonstrated unwavering commitment to the goals of Ontario's post-secondary libraries. OCUL directors have approved the **2025-2029 strategic plan** which focuses on academic research advancement, social change, and reconciliation with Indigenous communities.

McMaster University Library's William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections acquired the **Encyclopedie, ou dictionnaire raisonne des sciences, des arts et des metiers**, considered the supreme French Enlightenment work. Articles by thinkers, such as Rousseau and Voltaire, challenged 18th century social and political norms. It will benefit students and faculty across disciplines.

University of Toronto. For the second consecutive year, UofT has been ranked the world's most sustainable university. UofT Libraries support the vision through climate-focused efforts at **UTL@Downsview**. Since 2005, the Downsview facility has preserved the university's academic collections, housing more than 3.5 million items. (On an ELA tour of Robarts Commons, many of us were a bit startled to see no books around. We were told they were all stored in a building and were easily and quickly available upon request. See *ELAN* Spring 2024, p. 6.)

The building hosts one of the university's largest solar energy projects and is an example of environmental responsibility, making practical decisions today for the benefit of tomorrow.

Vivienne James worked at TPL for more than 25 years, was Branch Head of Queen Sault, St. Lawrence and Spadina Rd. Libraries and was responsible for Adult collection development for the Black and Caribbean Heritage Collection (Parkdale) until retiring.

Quebec News

By Pierre Guilmette and Peter F. McNally



Association des Bibliothécaires du Québec Library Association (ABQLA) held a Spring Social and Awards event, May 8, in the Selwyn House Library, where, among others, the following awards were presented:



- Anne Galler Award for Outstanding Library Service: Barbara Whiston (Lower Canada College) and Maria Ressina (Côte-

Saint-Luc Public Library

- Anne Hébert Award: Elisabeth de Grandpré (McGill University School of Information Studies and Côte-St-Luc Public Library)

At the ABQLA AGM, June 19, in person at Webster Library, Concordia University, and virtually, the following were elected co-presidents: Sam Devin, assistant librarian at the Atwater Library and Computer Centre; Jinian Beharrell, a student in McGill's MIST program.

The AGM also voted for a significant constitution overhaul. Sections and section presidents – for areas such as public and academic libraries – were eliminated. Directors-at-large were also mostly eliminated in favour of directors-with-assigned-portfolios.

The annual conference will occur in the autumn as a subset of a larger pan-Quebec library conference.

The Haskell Free Library and Opera House, in Stanstead, Quebec, is on the border between Canada and

the United States. Canadian users have had to enter through the main entrance located in the U.S. Access to this library for Canadians has become difficult due to more challenging control by American authorities recently. A fundraising campaign raised funds to build an entrance on the Canadian side. The campaign, which initially had a goal of \$100,000, raised \$160,000. Renovation work was expected to begin in September.

It is quite rare for libraries to be named in honour of women who deserve recognition. Is this unfortunate situation about to change? Montreal's Ahuntsic Library is now named the **Hélène Charbonneau Library**, in tribute to the librarian (1929 to 2021) who dedicated her life to helping young people read. In 2027, the **Saint-Charles Library** will be named Éva-Circé-Côté Library (1871 to 1949) to honour the pioneering librarian, journalist, and activist. A third Montreal library, the Le Prévoist Library, will be renamed **Caroline-Dawson Library**, in memory of a Montreal writer born in 1979 in Chile and died in Montreal in 2024. It is worth noting here the name of the **Monique-Corriveau Library** in Quebec City, which evokes the memory of the writer (1927 to 1976) who published several books for children.

Peter McNally is Professor Emeritus at McGill University, School of Information Studies.

Pierre Guilmette is a retired librarian, Université Laval.

Maritimes News

By Penny Logan



The **University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI)** is welcoming 20 Prince Edward Island students to Memorial's Doctor of Medicine program, which is being delivered at Memorial's new

regional campus located in the Health Education Facility at UPEI. Students begin Aug. 22. While UPEI has a Faculty of Medicine unit, the program will initially operate as a regional campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland, under its accreditation.

Kim Mears, UPEI's Medical & Knowledge Synthesis Librarian, says the Charlottetown campus will get a new building. The library has benefited with the addition of two librarians, a library technician, and an addition to the library budget to support the program. There was a very successful collaboration around collection building between UPEI and the Memorial Health Sciences Library (shout out to Alison Farrell), where librarians focused on surveying the two collections, identifying and filling gaps. The work on licensing was undoubtedly very complicated. The additional resources will be available to the general UPEI student population.

In Nova Scotia, the third Libraries, Archives, and Museums Nova Scotia (LAMNS) Conference was held Oct. 2 to 4 in Halifax. This innovative collaboration is meant to happen every five years. The first was in 2015, the second virtual-because-of-COVID conference was held in 2021. This year's conference theme is: *Intersections: Adaptability, Sustainability, Community Connections*. Jeff Mercer, executive director and chief librarian of Colchester-East Hants Public Library and current president of the Nova Scotia Library Association (NSLA), was involved in the first two conferences and is a co-chair of this year's. He

expects about 200 people to attend. Associations such as NSLA usually hold their own annual conferences. On the fifth year, associations for public libraries, archives, and museums forgo their annual conferences and, instead, pool their resources for a combined conference. Funds were made available to hire a co-ordinator to oversee the 2025 event. Jeff says libraries, archives, and museums have shared challenges and the conference provides a forum to show what each sector is achieving and share approaches and successes. The overall intent is to make the whole sector stronger.

Penny Logan worked in public and hospital libraries, retiring in 2015 as Manager, Library Services for the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

Newfoundland & Labrador News

By Dick Ellis



Collaboration: The House of Assembly **Legislative Library** continues to make available its holdings digitally. In collaboration with

Memorial University Libraries' Digital Archives Project, the Newfoundland and Labrador statutes text and an accompanying index are now publicly available. It is interesting to note that the first statute (1833) provided for quarantines. Perhaps that explains, in part, the general acceptance of the early COVID restrictions here.

The Dominion of Newfoundland government was bicameral and the texts of the first 28 sessions, 1833 to 1934, of both branches are also available online at the Legislative Library and the Digital Archives Initiative. It will come as no surprise that the new assembly's first action was to strike a committee.

Support for the provincial library service: A year ago, I reported the province had allocated an additional \$600,000 to the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Library budget. At the time, the appropriate minister was quick to explain the increase was neither permanent nor a sign a continuing increase was being contemplated. Well, I can now report a different minister has announced another one-time grant of \$500,000, with the same caveats.

Dick Ellis, Librarian Emeritus, Memorial University.

Technology Unmasked: Substack

By Stan Orlov



Today, we will look at **Substack**. Launched in San Francisco in 2017 to allow writers to publish directly to readers and earn a living through paid subscriptions, the platform soon expanded to include podcasts, videos, and mobile apps. But its core focus is still on email-based publishing. While the early adopters were mostly independent journalists and niche writers, over time educators, librarians, and cultural institutions also began experimenting with Substack as an easy, no-cost platform for creating and distributing newsletters. Since libraries

typically use Substack free of cost, the only real investment is staff time to write and maintain content, making it an accessible way to reach patrons without new software or subscription expenses.

Substack started slowly, but in the early 2020s it rolled out a mobile app and saw rapid subscriber growth, going from about 50,000 paid subscribers to more than 5,000,000 in 2025, with more than 35,000,000 total (paid and non-paying) subscribers. This is helped by the fact most newsletter creators don't monetize their content.

Some USA libraries are making good use of Substack. Stonington Public Library, in its "**SPL Newsletter**," shares book recommendations and community news. Samuels Public Library, "**Next Chapter News**," focuses on advocacy and campaigns, using the platform to rally community support and highlight local

initiatives. Coeur d'Alene Public Library, "**Programs and Services**," uses Substack as a calendar for all ages, providing a monthly overview of events and services. I have not yet located a Canadian library using the platform.

Substack is not a replacement for a library website or catalogue. It delivers everything via email so it could easily become one email too many for some patrons. It also does not offer an easy way to search and browse the content in multiple emails. Still, it is a great supplementary outreach tool, and it would be nice to see it used by Canadian libraries.

Please send your questions and comments to stan.orlov@msvu.ca.

Stanislav Orlov is systems librarian at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax. ■

How and Why I Became a Librarian

By Norma Gibson-Macdonald

Here's where it started.



How do you go from the small public library in Agincourt, Ont., to being a founding member of the Ontario Workplace Health Coalition? Who knew where a library degree would take you?

It may be a cliché, but I have always loved books and spent many hours in our local library as a child. I well remember the alcove in the front with the children's collection and the stuffed animals and birds in glass cases looking down on us.

The Agincourt Public Library was built 1925 on Church Street (now Midland Avenue) in Agincourt. Built to resemble a house in case the library didn't succeed, the library was supported by members and small grants from the government. About the time I started to use the library, it was incorporated into the new Scarborough Township Public Library Board, in 1955.

While the Agincourt library subsequently moved to larger locations, I also frequented the high school library. My heaviest use of libraries was, of course, in university, mostly the Frost Library at Glendon College, York University. I still didn't know what I wanted to do after university, but as I spent more and more time in the library, I got to know the librarians well. They were so helpful to everyone and, for me, an inspiration to investigate library schools. I settled on the School of Library and Information Science at University of Western Ontario, because I could get my degree in 12 months. Our family had a jewelry store in Agincourt, and I learned from a young age the importance of customer service. This served me well in my career.

In 1974, with my MA in history and brand-new MLS, I took the first

job offered to me, namely cataloguing meteorological materials using the Universal Decimal Classification at Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service. I left the next year to establish a library for the International Joint Commission's Great Lakes Water Quality Office in Windsor, Ont. Staff members were a mix of Canadians and Americans, covering a wide range of disciplines. I joined the Detroit chapter of Special Libraries Association and had opportunities to visit other special libraries in Michigan, including the Henry Ford Museum library. I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to network with other librarians in the Great Lakes basin area. We formed the Great Lakes Environmental Information Specialists group.

After three years, it was time for a change, and I moved to the Harrow Research Station of Agriculture Canada. A few years later, the Vineland Research Station needed a librarian, and I took the opportunity to move closer to Toronto.

I became increasingly tired of being a "solo" librarian, although I was able to network with area librarians in a Hamilton-Niagara online user group. At this time, the newly established Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) in Hamilton was developing its library, and I answered an ad for the Canadiana librarian. On the job, I was one of 19 librarians in areas including cataloguing, reference, and systems. I was responsible for collecting Canadian occupational health and safety (OH&S) documents to be sent to the International Labour Organization for its microfiche collection. I also developed an online directory of people, organizations, and research in OH&S in Canada.

In 2000, Health Canada invited proposals from leading health organizations in Canada to develop a new **website**, which would provide "**Health Info for Every Body.**" Subjects included groups such as women, topics starting with active living and diseases, such as diabetes. Once our proposal to be an affiliate organization was accepted, I became the project leader and hired a librarian and a workplace

health promoter to work on the project. Through the project's eight years, I met many people, including librarians, in the Canadian health promotion community.

A number of other organizations in Ontario were very interested in comprehensive workplace health, and in the early 2000s, we formed the Ontario Workplace Health Coalition. It was an incorporated, not-for-profit body serving as a unifying structure across the province, helping to facilitate communication among workplace health stakeholders and promoting the importance of using a comprehensive approach to create and maintain healthy and safe workplaces. I was on the board of directors for many years, even after I retired. I also selected resources to highlight and maintained the website which CCOHS hosted. Unfortunately, the organization is no longer, but its messages still resonate.

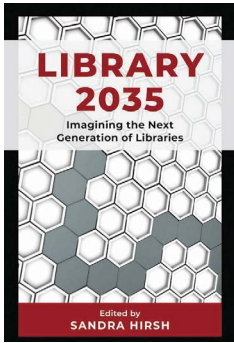
I look back now on the many opportunities I had to develop as a librarian and work in so many different organizations providing information services. I haven't stopped. Since retiring I continue in my volunteer work to identify useful resources and help people access them. As I often say, once a librarian, always a librarian. I can't help it. ■

Write for ELAN

The Newsletter Committee welcomes contributions from our members. We are seeking articles, news items, and ideas that you think would be of interest to *ELAN* readers. Please submit your articles, including memoirs of your early days or important figures in librarianship, library history, your own career, and your current activities in the field. We especially need contributions to our regular feature, "Why I Became a Librarian." For submission information, see the back page.

Book Reviews

Edited by Sally Press



**Library 2035:
Imagining the
Next Generation
of Libraries**
**Edited by Sandra
Hirsh**
Bloomsbury, 2024

Reviewed by
Victoria Owen

This collection of 25 short chapters forecasts the future of libraries a decade hence. There are a few bright lights, writers that imaginatively take up the remit to look ahead and describe what we might meet in 2035.

Among the bright lights was Chapter 2. It is eye-opening -- Predictions about Future Technology in Libraries and Epistemic Collapse. It illuminates the transformative impact AI will have on libraries. Our fundamental understanding of data, information, and media will be utterly altered. There will be a proliferation of AI outputs, bespoke text, images, and code, giving rise to fundamental and thought-provoking questions about preservation practices, if any, that will be applied to unique, customized outputs. The chapter presents a paradigm shift, a collapse of categories, and the question of how and if libraries will evolve to embrace the explosion of customized content while continuing with traditional roles.

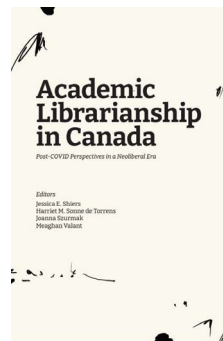
Hand in glove with Chapter 2 is Chapter 21, with job descriptions for 2035. Four new positions were created to address the rise of the metaverse, the staggering challenge of misinformation, use of robot-delivery services, and AI/robot assistance in public spaces. The chapter includes job descriptions for a TruthCloud Librarian, an Automated Service Delivery Librarian, a Synthetic Customer Service Programmer and Wrangler, and a LibraryVirtual Librarian. These will manage the metaverse experience using design principles to construct a virtual space with programmers and gamers, using both human and AI staff responding to the ever-changing communities that libraries serve.

A handful of chapters offer some thoughtful gems; the remainder were uninspired and mundane. Absent were

substantive discussions on inclusion of people with disabilities. It was completely U.S. focused, with no international exemplars.

The library profession needs more bright lights; there is ample room for those with ideas to add some amperage. Libraries need them. Overarching, the book emphasizes libraries must be proactive and creative and adapt to technological advancements and cultural shifts to fulfill their essential societal role.

Victoria Owen is Information Policy Scholar-Practitioner in the Faculty of Information at U of T and Special Advisor to the Dean on Information Accessibility at UT Scarborough. Her background is in library administration in academic, special and public libraries and her special interest is in intellectual property. ■



**Academic
Librarianship
in Canada:
Post-COVID
Perspectives in a
Neoliberal Era**
**Editors: Jessica E.
Shiers, Harriet M.
Sonne de Torrens,
Joanna Szurmak,
and Meaghan
Valant**

Litwin Books Price, 2024

Reviewed by Amanda Ross-White

There is a popular joke going around that, if you want to know when the world started to fall apart, add Ronald Reagan's face to any chart. And sure enough, whatever it is you're measuring, it all started to decline with his election. This joke may also work with Margaret Thatcher, of course, but it can also be described as the rise of "neoliberalism." This economic concept that favours austerity and privatization of public goods, including universities and colleges, is a global phenomenon. This book provides a snapshot of how higher education is enraptured by neoliberalism today. It's a series of essays, mostly case studies on aspects of how austerity and constant

threat of cutbacks, especially in the humanities, are influencing various aspects of libraries. Many of these issues are not COVID-specific, other than the promise of all Massive Open Online Courses, which seemed to fade from popularity and are back again rebranded as online programs, but still are not as scalable for information literacy as administrators would like. There is a significant lack of reference to global consultancy firms, such as Nous Cubane or Deloitte and their service surveys, which are running faster through university administrations than, well, the plague. In the example I'm familiar with, we are asked to rate the quality of different university services (including libraries), but without any reference to reduced staffing and budget cuts, which might be making it harder to keep up with service expectations. Still, the essays are worthwhile and relevant to universities beyond Canada. Many of the issues are universal and will likely continue long past the influence of COVID or specific politicians. The authors are all well-known academic librarians, some of whom are unable to take credit for their work due to lack of academic freedom in their current role. Interesting to any academic librarian.

Amanda Ross-White, MLIS, AHIP is the nursing librarian at Queen's University Library, where she has been since 2004. She is also current President of the Canadian Health Libraries Association / Association des bibliothèques de la santé du Canada. ■



**On Book Banning:
Or, How the
New Censorship
Consensus
Trivializes Art
and Undermines
Democracy**
By Ira Wells
Biblioasis, 2025

Reviewed by Dick
Ellis

This book is best read twice: once, to appreciate the author's prose and his care in reporting both his own experience and the record, both recent and historical,

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

of book banning and the associated rationales; and then, with others having continuing professional responsibilities for maintaining libraries, to explore the author's insights in concrete contexts.

The topic of book banning is complicated by problems of definition, which the author explores, and by a common reversion to the abstract concepts of freedom: intellectual; expressive; and speech. Wells deals with the concrete problems, both political in the U.S. and Canada (his report of a book reviewing/weeding session at a school library captures the ambiguity of the process nicely) and the theoretical. His handling of history is adroit. Who knew the Streisand Effect was reported two millennia ago, or that an early unsuccessful marriage and the world's smallest focus group had long-ranging impacts on the discussion? His handling of free speech's theoretical basis, in particular the work of the philosopher Stanley Fish, author of *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech, and It's a Good Thing, Too* (Oxford, 1994), is appropriately rigorous.

These are the virtues that a single reader can fully appreciate. But they take on real significance in discussions that move from the abstract to the concrete. What is the implication of school districts citing policies obviously derived from the advice of the professional association Canadian School Libraries? In what context, a contribution of Fish, is the book proffered by the school librarian a problem? Are sexuality and ideology sufficiently similar in the lives of students or young people as to be treated with the same strictures? Is the development of curiosity and discernment part of education? Always? At certain ages?

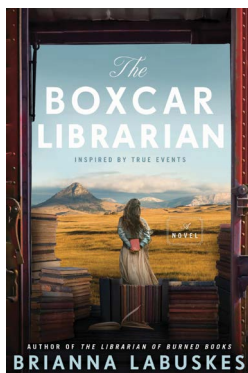
These are the aspects of Wells' work that are best explored by those whose professional and personal responsibilities should be at the leading edge of the effort to understand book banning and its impacts.

Sally Press, retired to Kingston, Ontario, in 2018, after working in Academic, Special and Government Libraries, in Southern Africa and Ontario, from 1976 to 2017. ■



Good Reads

By Judy Dunn



The Boxcar Librarian
By Brianna Labuskes
William Morrow, 2025

A historical novel that follows three women in Depression-era Montana.

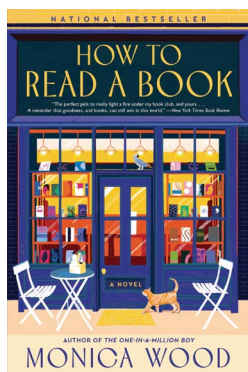
Inspired by the true story of a converted train car library.



The Forgotten Book Club
By Kate Storey
Avon, 2025

A woman joins her husband's unique, silent book club after his death. Explores themes of grief, loss, friendship, the power

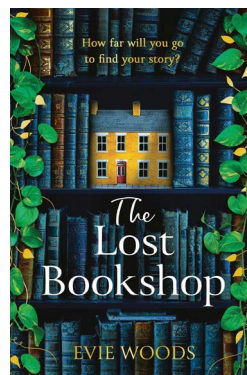
of literature, and the importance of finding your own path.



How to Read a Book
By Monica Wood
Harper Collins, 2024

A prison book club leads to unlikely friendships, redemption, and a new start.

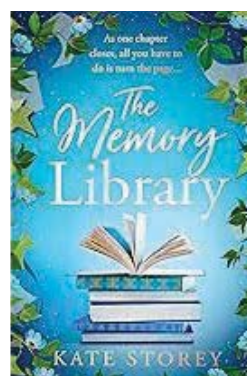
Charming and beautifully written.



The Lost Bookshop
By Evie Woods
Harper Collins UK, 2023

Tells the story of three individuals whose lives become intertwined through a mysterious

bookshop in Dublin. Explores themes of courage, love, the power of stories, and second chances.



The Memory Library
By Kate Storey
Avon, 2024

A mother builds a special library by adding a book every birthday for her estranged daughter. A heartwarming novel of loss,

hope, and new beginnings.

Judy Dunn retired in 2011 after six years as assistant dean academic, Faculty of Information, U of T, and 15 years as program co-ordinator, School of Information Management, Dalhousie University.

Find a **compilation** of Good Reads on the **ELA website**. ■

When You Move

When you move, please remember to send your new address to Bob Henderson
66 Walkerton Drive
Markham, ON L3P 1H8,
or
bob.exlibris@gmail.com.

Treasures of British Libraries: The Adam Library, Kenwood House, London

By Guy Robertson

Murder remains popular in Britain, and new detective series appear regularly on TV. All sorts of people end up dead, their bodies discovered by joggers or elderly persons taking dogs for walks. TV producers favour wooded areas for body disposal; London's Hampstead Heath is ideal for this purpose. Along comes a retiree, whose spaniel gets a whiff of something dreadful. Presently, the police arrive with a pathologist, who provides the time of death, an assumption about the weapon, and a cynical comment about a possible motive. And then, the detectives show up. They demonstrate high intelligence and charming neurosis. You have seen it all before. What you have not seen — yet — is Kenwood House, a neoclassical villa that stands at the north edge of the Heath.

John Bill, the King's Printer, built the first house on the property during the early 17th century. It was renovated and rebuilt by subsequent owners before its purchase in 1754 by William Murray, who became Lord Chief Justice in 1756. He was created 1st Earl of Mansfield in 1776. Rich and ambitious, he hired the noted Scottish architect Robert Adam to expand Kenwood and decorate its exterior and — famously — its interior, including what is now known as the Adam Library.



Photo credit: Guy Robertson

In 1925, Edward Guinness, 1st Earl of Iveagh, bought Kenwood from a descendant of the Earl of Mansfield, and in 1927 he donated it to the nation. His donation included a fine collection of Old Masters paintings that hang in various rooms. These days, people visit Kenwood specifically to view Rembrandt's "Self-Portrait with Two Circles" (c.1665) and

Vermeer's "The Guitar Player" (1672). The former presents the painter in his later years. On the wall behind him appear two almost perfect circles, indicating to viewers that he could demonstrate his gift of exactitude. Who else could paint such circles? One turns with some relief to Vermeer's painting of a young woman playing a guitar. Whereas Rembrandt looks intense, the woman seems approachable and playful. Viewed from different angles, these paintings deserve considerable time and attention. But Kenwood offers even more for librarians.



Photo credit: Guy Robertson

"You'll want to spend a lot of your time in the library," says the security guard by the door. "It's simply a splendid place to be."

Also known as the Great Room, the Adam Library was designed and constructed by Robert Adam and his craftsmen between 1764 and 1770. The largest room in Kenwood, it was intended to be the high point of any visit, laid out not only as a library, but also as a room in which Lord Mansfield could receive guests. During his travels in Italy, Adam had been deeply impressed by classical architecture, hence the library's neoclassical design, the shape of which features a double cube with semi-circular apses and a magnificent coved ceiling that displays 19 paintings by Antonio Zucchi.

"This is Adam's most noteworthy achievement in interior design," says a guide. "Everything about it fascinates architects. Adam planned the room carefully, and considered the ways that

people could enjoy it, from quiet reading by the fireplace, to chatting and dining in the middle area, to gazing out the windows at the landscape, to browsing the collection on the shelves."

The 1st Earl of Mansfield was a friend of writers, such as Alexander Pope, who described him as "his country's pride." The library once housed his fine collection of books, including a 1504 edition of Petronius's *Satyricon* and works by 18th century scholars, such as Jean-Jacques Barthelemy. This collection was dispersed in the 1830s and '40s, and now what stands on the shelves are miscellaneous volumes that belonged to previous Kenwood owners and residents.

"It's a bit of a mishmash on those shelves, but when you look at them, you understand that you're in a library," says the guide. And not just any library. From its earliest days, it has been regarded as remarkable. In *The Ambulator, or the Stranger's Companion in a Tour round London* (1782), the anonymous author states that "the new room latterly built by his Lordship, from a design by Mr. Adam, is considered, by architectural judges, as well for its proportions and decorations as its novelty to be superior to any thing of its kind in England."

For the record, there are no murder mysteries on the library's shelves. What happens outside Kenwood is another matter.

For more information, see english-heritage.org.uk. ■



Photo credit: Guy Robertson

This article is the second in a series of histories of special libraries in Canada. Series editor, Suzette Giles.

Departmental Government Libraries in Ontario: An Historical View

By Helen Katz

Provincial government departmental libraries have varied widely across provinces. In some, legislative libraries provided services to government departments; in others, they provided little to none. This article focuses on Ontario, where the Legislative Library did not directly support departments.

The golden era for Ontario government libraries was the 1960s to 1980s, though they were not immune from ongoing reviews.

The role of librarians remained constant: supporting clients, government goals, and fellow librarians. What changed was how they delivered services. Libraries were crucial to their organizations, and the collaborative network among Ontario libraries contributed significantly to their continuation.

Libraries were reviewed repeatedly—1969, 1972, and 1988—to explore possible consolidation. These reviews consistently found little duplication, but recognized the need for co-operation.

In 1968, the Treasury Board's Advisory Services Division studied whether consolidating library services would be beneficial. Its 1969 report, *Review of Ontario government libraries*, found:

- No duplication;
- No cost-effectiveness measurement;
- Anticipated impact of computerization;
- Libraries should remain separate.

It also recommended a council to co-ordinate services and improve library management.

As a result, the Ontario Government Librarians Council was formally created by Order-in-Council in 1970 (OC-2905/70), later renamed the Ontario Government Libraries Council (OGLC). Membership was by invitation, approved by Deputy Ministers.

A 1972 review made further recommendations:

- No full consolidation;
- Ministries retain responsibility;
- Partial consolidation by policy area;
- Central storage for older materials;
- Joint acquisitions and specialized services;
- Co-ordinator position with authority.

In response, Ontario government librarians wrote a paper, *Library services in the Ontario government: today and tomorrow*, that recommended:

- Ministries should decide their own library services;
- Maintain local technical services;
- Investigate central repository;
- Maintain a resource directory and union list;
- Possibility of libraries supporting specific program/policy areas;
- Support for a well-funded co-ordinator role to:
 - Run pilot projects;
 - Purchase data services;
 - Provide temporary staffing;
 - Provide consultation for projects.

Over the years, OGLC compiled a directory of libraries and multiple editions of a union list of serials—the fifth being internal-only.

By 1986, there were 280 library staff and 64 member libraries in OGLC, including those in ministries, psychiatric hospitals, colleges (e.g., police/fire), museums, labs, and research centres. By 2018, this had dropped to 22 member libraries, most with three or fewer staff.

Today, Ontario government has about 20 member libraries, including the Legislative Library, with more than half in agencies, not ministries. Most operate with minimal staffing and resources.

The 1988 review, *Report on the activity review of library services within the Ontario government* led by Barbara Stanley, also surveyed government libraries in New Brunswick,

Alberta, and B.C.

- New Brunswick had 14 to 15 libraries; a consolidation proposal was not adopted due to lack of departmental support.

Alberta had 48 main and 73 satellite libraries, most in Edmonton. Economic downturns in the mid-1980s led to closures. By 2000, Alberta **consolidated the libraries** into 10 branches, which were gradually closed—by 2021, all had shut.

British Columbia had 19 libraries; ministries rejected centralization proposals.

The 1988 Ontario review made 33 recommendations, including:

- Each ministry should designate one library to be the main one;
- Negotiate volume discounts government-wide;
- Needs analysis for automated systems;
- Use library expertise for information management;
- Libraries should be aware of ministry publications.

A contentious proposal was to create a central co-ordinating office, which ministries would fund. Instead, a more cost-effective OGLC-led alternative was adopted. OGLC focused on:

- Updating the union list;
- Maintaining the library directory;
- Securing discounted pricing on resources.

In the 1990s, following a severe recession and the Common Sense Revolution government platform, the Ontario government sought to reduce administrative costs through shared services. Libraries were targeted for cuts:

- Emphasis shifted to desktop resource access;
 - Proposed partnerships (e.g., with the Legislative Library);
 - Use of information brokers;
 - Reduced real estate and staff costs.
- Between 1996 and 2004, many

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ministry libraries were closed or services were outsourced to Ontario universities. Affected ministries included Health, Labour, Agriculture, Transportation, and others.

Libraries rebranded or stayed “under the radar,” and OGLC ceased meeting. In 2004, a meeting led to the revitalization of the network of librarians and restored OGLC.

Despite reduced resources, OGLC achieved:

- Government-wide access to e-databases (cost-shared);
- Recommendations for government

publication retention and accessibility;

- Digitization of older government documents as resources permitted;
- Recognition of librarians’ roles in information and FOI management.

In 2010, Ontario funded Knowledge Ontario to provide e-resources and research assistance across the province regardless of the size of the community. Ontario Government libraries participated, but after funding ceased, they jointly negotiated continued access throughout the government.

Since 2018, the number of government libraries has further

declined. Still, Ontario Government libraries continue to fulfill their supportive mandate—with fewer staff and fewer resources.

Editor’s note: After this article was written, it was announced that, after more than 45 years of operation, the Ontario Ministry of Finance Library closed on Sept. 15, 2025.

Helen Katz worked at CIBC for 15 years, in the library and investor relations, followed by 26 years as the manager of the library at the Ontario Ministry of Finance, retiring in 2016. ■

Judging Crime Writers of Canada Crime Stories

By Elizabeth Ridler

Crime Writers of Canada (CWC) recruits Canadian volunteers to judge 10 categories of crime and mystery, including crime novel, crime novella, crime set in Canada, French language, and juvenile or young adult crime. Each applicant completes a questionnaire about which categories they wish to judge. A three-person panel judges each category. I have judged best novella, best traditional mystery, and, the biggest category, crime novels. Previously, judges received hard print copy for each title, with books arriving in multiple boxes. Now, the copy is provided via a drop box.

Publishers choose titles to submit and category; they must submit by the end of the year of publication. The author must be Canadian or a Canadian resident. There must be enough titles in a category for the judging to go ahead. When I judged the best Canadian novella in 2023, two novellas were disqualified, one for wrong publication date. As a result, the others were held over for the 2024 competition. Result: 11 entries of varied lengths and quality.

Judges are all kinds of readers from all across Canada. I have worked with judges who are librarians, bookstore owners, and readers who love crime writing.

Judges receive criteria and judging models for assistance, but they can

do their own analysis. I tend to judge from the whole novel and not get into technical criteria; other judges follow crime writers’ criteria or have their own. Judges often have very different tastes in crime writing which makes the evaluation phase interesting. Judges can consult each other from January to March with questions of style, content, even length of story. They can also consult their crime writers’ contacts for technical assistance.

By March 31, judges must decide on the top five finalists; by April 30, they must choose the winner for which they provide a short blurb for CWC’s May newsletter. Judges are acknowledged for their work in each category. They can meet in person or by zoom or finalize via email. I have finalized judging all three ways and all work. Once the five finalists are chosen, judges pick the winner.

Here is our judges’ blurb on our selection for Best Novella in the Crime Writers of Canada’s 2025 Awards: *The Windmill Mystery* is a whodunit set in off-the-beaten-path neighbourhoods of Montreal, where an unlikely duo of detectives investigates the death of an eccentric political activist with a mysterious past and a few items of considerable value. When she is found deceased at the foot of an old windmill, the officers find several suspects with compelling motivations: a riches-to-rags

sister; a shady politician; and a group of financially distressed nuns. Central to the story is the history of the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755 from what is now Canada’s Maritime provinces. With its clever writing, colourful characters, and a satisfying puzzle that can be solved by the perceptive reader, *The Windmill Mystery* tops our list as Best Novella.

I hope to judge again this year, although I have not yet chosen what category to request.

Elizabeth Ridler, former president of Ex Libris, retired librarian, former elected American Library Association Councilor, is now busy judging Canadian Crime Writers crime novels, travelling, and enjoying retirement. ■

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Noisy Books

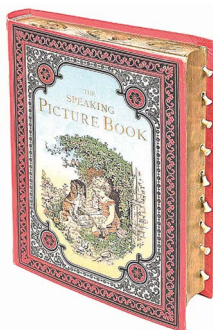
By Leslie McGrath

Part 1: Turning Up the Volume

In Medieval times, readers believed they could hear noises from manuscripts: “hold a runic inscription up to your ear, many thought, and it would whisper to you ... the Middle English word for ‘whisper’ is ‘runeth’” (Olmert). Books written on parchment “crackled and creaked, and were usually read aloud (even in private). We should think of medieval books not just as objects to look at, but as a kind of musical instrument that needs a reader to bring its sounds to life” (Terlunen). Dystopians have found pleasure in the pigeon-like fluttering of burning book pages (Bradbury). Today, one needn’t hold a book to enjoy what is now called its ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) potential. YouTube offers numerous, varying lengthed recordings of the soothing sound of pages being turned, many with specialized themes: one is devoted entirely to water-damaged copies of Reader’s Digest, promising “heavenly crunchy crinkles” (Poisabloom). Librarians may enjoy the sound of “Old Books Cataloguing & Page Turning” with a thunderstorm in the background (Moonlight Cottage), but may be less engaged by “Licking fingers, turning pages, library book sounds” (Southern).

The deliberate addition of noises to books is related to Edison’s phonograph invention in 1877, followed by brief recordings of nursery rhymes and poetry, first recited by Dylan Thomas, demonstrating this technology’s literary potential. The creation of closed-groove records extended recordings to 20 minutes; further technological advances led to the American “Talking Books Program” in 1931, with copyright exemption and subsidized postage. According to an article in the *Economist*, November 28, 2024, audio books now make up 12 per cent of the commercial book market, span interests from cradle to grave, from potty-training books that include “whooping” and “hollering” applause (Leavitt) to how-to books on death: *Nothing to Fear* will “demystify” your “end-of-life-journey” (McFadden). Aspiring Wiccans can listen to the spells

they wish to cast, joining the chants and personalizing them (Audible.ca). Dramatized audiobooks offer lively sound effects and multiple carefully auditioned voices in “steamy” romances and gothic horror series, for which monthly subscriptions are promoted through a free trial recording, such as *My Heart is a Chainsaw* (Audible.ca). One may now wake up to a clock recounting *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* instead of a beeping alarm (Reddit).



The Speaking Picture Book
Photo credit: Courtesy of Dominic Winter Auctioneers

Sound effects in children’s books have a long history. *The Speaking Picture Book* of 1880 features lifelike noises made by cows, chickens, donkeys, and other animals, activated by pulling on a miniature ivory button that operated a tiny bellows next to the creature’s image. Today, most sound effects in children’s novelty books are based on microchip sound storage technology, activated by opening a page, pressing a button, or lifting a flap. However, others rely on their construction to create noise: Pieńkowski’s *Haunted House* grates a cardboard saw against paper to make a realistic rasping sound. Some books contain music boxes, cultivating young readers with renditions of “Swan Lake,” “The Nutcracker,” and “The Magic Flute.” More lively how-to books offer push-button play: *My Big-Fun Piano Book*, an “educational musical gadget” for “kids 3 and up,” allows children to mix their own piano playing with vibraphone, organ, accordion, guitar, violin, harp, trumpet, saxophone, and clarinet accompaniments, together with recordings made by their parents (Walmart). Usborne’s *Listen and Learn Musical Instruments* contains the sounds

of 70 instruments, with an on-off switch for parents lest prolonged use “drive you mad” (Usborne).



In a return to their printed origins, recently developed Augmented Reality (AR) books now allow the reader to scan hard-copy volumes to add and customize built-in sounds, from mood music to narrators’ voices and even to activate 3D projected images that rise from the page (Wonderbook). It would be helpful for writers, especially diarists and inventors, to have stationary AR books that scream and shriek on being opened by an unauthorized person, but at least for now these seem limited to literary fantasy (Rowling).

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Part 2: Artists' Musical Books

There are many examples of children's books with built-in xylophones and keyboards. But are there adult books that are musical instruments? Yes, though some of these exist only in AI algorithms, in which spoofs and actual creations alike are gleaned from the internet and repackaged in AI's authoritative voice as viable responses to the question. For example, in *"Spring Cleaning with Summer Reading: a Xylophone Made of Books,"* author Anna J. Grossman, apparently, described mounting books of different sizes on a frame to make a xylophone, played by hitting their spines with wooden mallets – apparently, because the article cannot be accessed. AI cites it from *Vice* magazine, provides step-by-step instructions for making it and provides a diagram of Grossman's finished "xylophone," concluding that books can indeed be adapted to make "magical and musical" sounds (Copilot).

Grossman, who now runs a dog obedience school in New York, replied to a querying email, "Would you believe I have NO memory of that story?" She thought most likely it was one of a series of humorous captions she wrote with no accompanying text, in this instance inspired by a YouTube video (Grossman). AI does not scan these videos so it missed gathering data on an actual robotic "book xylophone." This is actually a percussion instrument built with O'Reilly computer programming books which, apparently, give just the right hollow thumping noise and have pleasing uniform animal-themed covers (Branwyn).

AI also suggests that harps and drums, among other instruments, can be made from hardcover books and maracas, kazoos and rainsticks from paperbacks (Copilot). Asked how to make a "book harp," AI once again gave detailed instructions: crafters and aspiring musicians should fit strings across the spine of a book, allowing the pages to act as a "resonating body, amplifying the sound produced by the

strings" (Copilot). When asked for its source, AI admitted "I didn't find a specific source mentioning a 'book harp' in my search results. However, the concept of transforming everyday objects into musical instruments is a popular creative endeavour among artists and musicians..." (Copilot).

Yet, there are indeed many documented examples of books actually made or incorporated into genuine musical instruments, apart from music clipped onto a band instrument with a "lyre" holder. An early example, patented by Anselmo Gavioli in 1892, is the "book organ" that uses a series of punched sheets, accordion-folded into a book, called "book music," to be fed through the mechanism, causing keys to rise and fall. Unlike paper music rolls, "book music" does not require rewinding, and is still used in some outdoor organs in Europe.

Electric guitars have been created from Bibles for spiritual folk performances (Arvey), and one has been carved from 700 laminated sheets of newspaper; it produces mellow sounds and features interesting articles on its playing surface (Burls Art). Most impressively, Peter and Donna Thomas, of California, have created a series of artists' books from ukuleles, guitars, accordions, concertinas, and a dulcimer, with relevant text and illustrations, almost all of which can be both played and read -- though not at the same time (Thomas, 2014). There are more than twenty Hawaiian-themed playable books in their ukelele series, with text formats ranging from flip books and a Jacob's Ladder to a full bookshelf tucked into one instrument. Their early work, *The Actual Accordion Book*, now at MIT, was once a functional accordion; with its bellows slit and turned into pages it can no longer make music, but according to Thomas, it explained the correct use of the term "accordion" for rectangular expanding books, as opposed to hexagonally-designed "concertinas" (Thomas, 2016). Their subsequent projects are mostly functional instruments combined with books. An advocate for proper terminology,

Thomas notes "the world will be a better place for having a word for books made out of instruments" and hopes a definitive term will soon be coined (Thomas, 2025). After discussions with the Canadian Bookbinders and Book Artists Guild and book artist Karen Hanmer, and with the approval of Peter Thomas, whose works inspired the initial research, the term "Artists' Musical Books" appears to fill this need.

Leslie McGrath worked at TPL as a children's librarian and a branch head for 10 years and Senior Department Head of the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books for 23 years. Her PhD thesis was *Service to Children in the Toronto Public Library: A Case Study, 1912-1949*. ■

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Books of Interest to Members

ELAN welcomes news about books by ELA members. Send a brief description or an advertising brochure to

Frances.Davidson-Arnott@senecaretirees.ca.

Milestones



Obituaries

Compiled by Frances Davidson-Arnott and Bob Henderson

Shirley Anne Atkins (née McTavish)

died July 16, 2025, age 89, in Bradford, ON. BA, B.Ed. (York); LT Dipl (Seneca). She taught in elementary schools in Scarborough, Kingston, and Clarendon, ON. She worked at Markham PL's Unionville Branch and then Ryerson Polytechnic Library. She was a York Region District School Board Trustee, 1985-1991.

William "Brian" Bell died April 24, 2025, age 68, in Richmond Hill, ON. Brian was a librarian at Richmond Hill PL, the last 15 years of his career as Richvale Branch Manager.

William (Bill) Forest Birdsall died August 12, 2025, age 87, in Halifax. PhD (LIS, U of Wisconsin). He held positions at Iowa State U, U of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, and U of Manitoba before becoming Dalhousie's Director of Libraries, 1981-1998; he became Novanet Executive Director in 1998. He was a consultant for CARL, CRKN, and CISTI. He authored many papers and books, and CACUL named him 1998 Outstanding Academic Librarian.

Alan Caden Burk died August 7, 2025, age 82, in Fredericton, NB. He was the Assistant Director of the UNB library system, establishing the Electronic Text Centre (now the Centre for Digital Scholarship). He collaborated with universities across Canada to develop standards in the field of digital publishing. After retirement he worked for a year at McGill to help further the development of the digital publishing landscape.

Brent John Cehan died September 15, age 63, in Toronto. Master of Information

Studies 2006 (MIST) (U of T, '06). Brent had just retired after 36 years with TPL, mostly in the Toronto Reference Library's Arts Department, where he curated and selected works for the various collections.

Helen Anne Coffey (née McGinnis)

died July 18, 2025, age 80, in Kingston, ON. BLS (U of T, '69). She was a librarian in the Queen's Library System for 35 years.

Michael Keith Dell died January 2025, age 69, in Edmonton. MLS (U of A, '80). Starting as a children's librarian and ending as a branch manager, he worked for Edmonton PL until retirement.

Louise Dion died April 4, 2025, age 91, in Quebec City. Library Science (U de Montréal). She worked in the Laval U library from 1970 - 1990 until retiring, specializing in collection development. She authored *An Introduction to Reference Works in Geography*, 1970, one of the library's bibliographic guides series.

Daphne Dolan died August 2, 2025, age 82, in Ottawa. BLS (McGill, '65). She was Chief Librarian at Concordia. She then had a career in Canada's Civil Service, retiring as the Public Service Commission's Audit Branch Director General.

Adele Fasick died May 26, 2025, age 95, in California. PhD (Case Western Reserve). She was a scholar of children's libraries and literature and former Dean of U of T's Faculty of Information.

Bruno Fast died May 14, 2025, age 68, in Chicago. MLS (U of T, '82). He spent his career as a librarian at Northwestern U, Evanston, IL, from where he had recently retired.

Nancy Fay died June 1, 2025, age 69, in Ottawa. She was Manager, Copyright Services, Library and Archives Canada.

Fr. Donald Francis Finlay died April 4, 2025, age 88, in Toronto. MLS (Rosary College, River Forest, IL, '67). He was

Chief Librarian of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies (1966-1993) and Chief Librarian of the U of St. Michael's College (1985-1993).

Bertrand Fleurant died May 30 2025, age 82, in Gatineau, QC. He was Director, Acquisitions and Cataloguing Division, Library of Parliament.

Ronald Alva Fox died March 25, 2025, age 84, in Calgary. MA Library Science (U of Minnesota). He was Assistant Librarian at Bethel Seminary for seven years. Then he was pastor several churches. In 1992 he became Director of Library Services, Rocky Mountain College, Calgary, retiring in 2005.

Donna Ellen Frederick (née Mazurek) died April 16, 2025, age 57, in Saskatoon. MLIS (San Jose State College). She was Metadata Librarian at U of Saskatchewan. She also worked for the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, Moose Jaw Water Plant, and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada.

Zelda Freedman (née Achbar) died April 29, 2025, age 92, in Ottawa. She was a former medical librarian and an accomplished author and artist.

Judith Pearl Ghert died April 29, 2025, age 82, in Toronto. BSc (McGill). With a keen interest in history and genealogy, she became an avid archivist after moving to Toronto in 1970. Her archival work included the Ontario Jewish Archives, where she was a long-term board member (2001-2020) and led the creation of Toronto's Temple Sinai Congregation archives.

Robert Gibson died May 25, 2025, age 83, in Wakefield, QC. He founded Micromedia Ltd. in 1972. He dedicated his career to advancing the accessibility of global Canadian content for use in corporate, academic, and library settings. In 2006, Bob and his brother Gary established the Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris, which collected and curated primary sources (Canadian publishers and policy papers from governments, think tanks, and research institutes), and delivered them through

an online platform built for library and educational use. From 2022 he was owner of desLibris Publishing Solutions, providing publishers with eBook conversion services. Bob had recently joined ELA.

Iris Mary Gilley died, January 31, 2025, age 92, in Red Deer, AB. BLS (U of A, '72). She taught at North Battleford, Lloydminster, Edmonton, and Red Deer.

Edna Anne Hajnal (née Perry) died June 8, 2025, age 88, in Toronto. BLS (U of T, '62). After library school, she worked at U of New Brunswick before returning to U of T as a librarian. Edna spent much of her career at U of T's Thomas Fisher Rare Book, where she worked until her retirement in 2002. Edna was an ELA member.

Maureen Rose Harper (née Fitzpatrick) died March 24, 2025, age 92, in London, ON. She earned a teaching certificate in the 1960s. After briefly teaching public school, she obtained an MLS degree and became the librarian at Halton Hills secondary schools until her retirement in 1988.

Jean Hatton died April 29, 2025, age 96, in Mississauga, ON. She was a long-time librarian at Lorne Park Library and Christ First United Church.

Kathleen Angela Holder (née Huggins-Chan) died May 2, 2025, age of 81, in Hamilton, ON. MLS (McGill). She was a librarian at Hamilton PL for 35 years.

Steven A. Horn died September 17, 2025, age 81, in Nanaimo, BC. BLS (U of T, '69), JD (U. Saskatchewan). He worked at Carleton U library and Brampton PL, among others, before moving into law: JP in BC and Saskatchewan and Chief Legislative Counsel in the Yukon for 11 years, responsible for drafting legislation, and advocated for good legal information in public libraries. After retirement in 2011, he and his late wife, also a librarian, Meg (née Gelinis) moved to Nanaimo, where they carried on their promotion of and working for civil rights and public legal

education through public libraries.

Joan Huzar (née Featherstonhaugh) died August 7, 2025, age 79, in Victoria. BLS (U of T, '69). She was a teacher in Richmond Hill, ON.

Margaret Joan King (née Langlois) died April 13, 2025, age 94, in Kingston, ON. LT Dipl. Joan was Librarian and CEO of Englehart PL for more than 20 years, retiring in 1994.

Judith Kolonics died April 8, 2025, age 71, in Montreal. She worked at McGill's Library for 43 years, retiring in 2016. She contributed significantly to electronic documents and cataloguing policies in library technical services. She was among the first library staff to work with electronic documents and played a key role in shaping practices in this area.

Yvan Lamonde died August 26, 2025, age 81. He was a McGill Professor Emeritus and a leading specialist in Quebec's intellectual history. As the author of some 40 publications, his writings included work on the subject of Quebec Library History. He co-edited, with Patricia Fleming of U of T, *A History of the Book in Canada / Histoire du livre et de l'imprimé au Canada*.

Paula Lederman died May 17, 2025, in Toronto. MLS (U of T, '75). She was a consultant for much of her career: Lederman and Associates, Lead Consultant, Information Management, Canada, 1985-2005; and, information management consultant with IMERGE Consulting from 2006. She was an instructor at the U of T School of Continuing Studies in the information and records management certificate program.

David William Leonard died July 3, 2025, age 76, in Edmonton. BA, MA (U of A, '68 and '69), PhD (U of Sheffield, '75). He was an archivist with the City of Edmonton, the Northwest Territories, and the Province of Alberta, and Alberta's Provincial Archivist, 1993-1996. In 1996 he became Project Historian for Northern Alberta. He

taught archives and records management at U of A. In 2022, David received the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal.

James (Jim) Robert Looney died November 9, 2024. MLS (UBC, '75). He was a recipient of the BC Library Association's Helen Gordon Stewart Award in recognition of his outstanding work with BCLA and his 30-year career at British Columbia's Public Library Services Branch bringing public libraries into the digital age. He retired in 2006.

Richard Malinski died August 27, 2025, age 81, in Oakville, ON. BLS (U of T, '68). Richard's career included positions at York U, Simon Fraser U, and Ryerson U, as Chief Librarian and Director of Distance Education.

Jane Alison Maxwell died September 10, 2025, age 68, in Barrie, ON. MLS (U of T, '82). She was a research librarian at Bell Canada, sole librarian at McKim Advertising, Assistant Editor at Micromedia ProQuest, and, most recently, Resource Specialist at Findhelp Information Services.

Lorna Olga Bertha Mays died August 10, 2025, age 89, in Mississauga, ON. LT Dipl (Sheridan College). Her career included library work at U of T, North York PL, Gulf Oil research centre, and as librarian at Peel Regional Police HQ.

Ljubica Milicevic died in, 2025, age 76, in Montreal. Library Science (Concordia, '89). In her years of service as a librarian she produced future critical thinkers and leaders through the power of fiction, storytelling, and nonfiction. She worked at Solomon Schechter Academy.

Jean Mary Molson (née Rennie) died May 20, 2025, age 99, in Vancouver. BLS (UBC, '64). She served as a librarian for the BC Registered Nurses Association and then in the Woodward Biomedical Library, UBC.

Anna Ruth Rogers died January 18, 2025, age 93, in Halifax. BLS (McGill, '53). She was a librarian in Annapolis

Royal, where her duties included adventures on a sometimes-unreliable bookmobile that traversed the Annapolis Valley on even more unreliable roads.

Wendy Mary Elizabeth Schick (née Warner) died April 7, 2025, age 82, in Burlington, ON. BLS (UBC, '65). She had a 40-year career at Burlington PL, starting as a part-time cataloguer, followed by positions as Head of Technical Services, Deputy Chief Librarian, and Chief Librarian (later titled City Librarian) for 23 years. She was a pioneer with the introduction of computers in all aspects of operations at Burlington PL. She advocated for the expansion of several branches to support Burlington's rapidly growing population and the redesigned and rebuilt Central Library building.

Dorothy Sedgwick (née Taylor) died June 17, 2025, age 97, in Toronto. MLS (U of T, '74). After a short time at Quill & Quire, she worked for Markham PL. She was then hired to establish and manage a library and information centre in the National Office of Price Waterhouse Chartered Accountants. She was President of Toronto's SLA Chapter.

Brian Cantwell Smith died September 6, 2025, age 75, in Toronto. BS, MS, PHD (MIT). He was U of T's Faculty of Information Dean, 2003-2008. His research focused on the philosophical foundations of computation, artificial intelligence, and mind, as well as on fundamental issues in metaphysics and epistemology.

Judith Ellen Snow (née Bradley) died April 20, 2025, age 81, in Toronto. BLS (U of T, '65). Her career began at the U of T Faculty of Education, then continued at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), Chief Librarian at Erindale College, back to OISE as Co-Director of the Education Commons, and concluding as Deputy Chief Librarian for U of T libraries, until retiring in 2007.

Nancy Page Stuart-Stubbs (née Ballard) died April 20, 2025, age 93, in Vancouver.

BLS (McGill, '54). She joined Vancouver PL, where she was one of two VPL librarians to work in all three Main Branches, starting her career at Carnegie Library in 1956. She spent the last years of her career in the Local History Room, where she could be closer to the history of her pioneer relatives around the Salish Sea.

Jane Glasgow Trimble died July 31, 2025, age 84, in Halifax. BLS (U of T, '66). Jane began her career at the Dalhousie Library before moving to Ottawa in 1970 to work as Librarian with the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. She returned to Dalhousie in 1977 and then to the U of King's College where she worked with Dr. Wayne Hankey, helping to prepare the specifications and proposal for funding the new college library, completed in 1991. She worked at the Nova Scotia Centre on Aging, Mount Saint Vincent U, until early retirement in 1995.

Kathleen M. Tripp died June 22, 2025, age 90, in Calgary. MLS. She taught English and Physical Education. After getting her MLS she became a long-time teacher-librarian in Calgary.

Mary "Betty" Ward died March 29, 2025, age 95, in Calgary. BLS (U of T, '53). Her career as a librarian included working at Calgary PL until her retirement in 1989.

Brian Bromley Wilks died May 31, 2025, age 87, in Toronto. BLS (UBC, '66). He was a science librarian at Simon Fraser U before joining York U's Steacie Science and Engineering Library in 1970, remaining there until retiring in 2003. He was the author of *What Every Librarian Should Know About On-line Searching* (CLA) and *Browsing Science Research at the Federal Level in Canada* (U of T Press).

Nan Williamson died August 8, 2025, age 84, in Peterborough, ON. BA, English (U of T, '65), OCE, '66. Mid-career she shifted directions from classroom teacher to become a teacher-librarian. She believed the library should be seen as the hub of research-based

inquiry and learning, with the teacher-librarian and classroom teacher working in partnership to promote a student-centered learning environment.

Alexandria Yurgensen died January 18, 2025, age 39. MLS (UBC, '14). After beginning her career at Okanagan PL, she was a children's librarian for eight years at Vancouver PL.

Obituaries are brief, due to space constraints. You can access a published obituary for each person by visiting the online issue of ELAN, then click on the name. The ELA website, <https://exlibris.ca/history/memories-and-tributes>, provides more information celebrating the lives of our members.



Retirements

Compiled by
Suzette Giles

Constance Adamson, associate librarian, Queen's University Library, retired May 30, 2025. She received her Master of Library Science from Faculty of Library Information Science (University of Toronto, '86). Prior to joining Queen's University Library in 1992 she was at Metro Toronto Reference Library and KPMG Peat Marwick's Corporate Finance Group. At Queen's she was Head, Information Reference Unit until 1997, when she became reference and instruction librarian. In 2000, she was promoted to associate librarian. Constance served on multiple Queen's University Faculty Association committees and as QUFA president (2003 to 2005). She was president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) (2011 to 2013) and honoured with the 2016 OCUFA Service Award. In addition, she was Queen's University Librarians and Archivists chair and co-chair at various times receiving, in 2017, the Liz Fox Distinguished Service Award. (With thanks to Michael J. White.)

Peter Bailey, CEO of St Albert PL, Alta., retired Aug. 31, 2025 after 24 years, the

last 15 as CEO. During his time as CEO, the library developed its digital services and outreach programs, including a Makerspace, computer classes for seniors, and since 2011, STARFest a Readers Festival. Also, a branch library opened in 2020. Bailey served as CFLA-FCAB chair, Library Association of Alberta president, and as a member of the Centre for Free Expression's working group on intellectual freedom.

Darla Fraser, CEO of Orangeville Public Library, Ont., will retire in 2025. She joined OPL in 2010, after more than eight years with the County of Dufferin as Manager, Community Services, Program & Research. Her educational attainments include Master of Information Science, Library, Research and a certificate in Public Library Leadership from University of Toronto.

Elizabeth Gibson, associate librarian, Queen's University Library retired at the end of May 2025, after 48 years at the library. She joined Queen's as a cataloguing librarian in 1977 after receiving her Master of Library Science from Faculty of Library Information Science (University of Toronto). Elizabeth had a dual role as a cataloguer and a member of the Information Reference Unit in the Douglas Library (1982 to 1985), with promotion to associate librarian. In 1994, the unit was relocated to the Joseph S. Stauffer Library, where she remained until retirement. Elizabeth's primary liaison responsibilities have included drama, history, English language and literature, and film and media studies, and she is the author of more than 70 published LibGuides. Her committee work included being chair of Professional Librarians at Queen's (PLAQ, later QULA), as well as various committees including Appointments and the Renewal, Continuing Appointment, and Promotion Committee. (With thanks to Michael J. White.)

Brenda Reed, Head education librarian retired from Queen's University Library, on December 31, 2024, after 30 years. Brenda joined the library in 1994, after positions in St. Mary's in Halifax, N.S., and Bishop's College in Lennoxville, Quebec.

With the creation of the Teacher Resource Centre in 1996, her position became fulltime and has involved renovations, collection building, and supporting new programs and priorities in the Faculty of Education. Her professional accomplishments have been recognized by being the first recipient of the Liz Fox Distinguished service award in 2010 and in 2023 receiving a Queen's University Distinguished Service Award. (With thanks to Michael J. White.)

Heather Robinson, CEO and chief librarian of St. Thomas Public Library, Ont., will retire on Dec. 31, 2025. In 1998, she joined St. Thomas PL as children's librarian and became CEO/chief librarian in 2016. She studied library science at University of Western Ontario and held positions at the City of York Public Library and Kingston Public Library prior to St. Thomas. She played a key leadership role in the library's major 2010 to 2011 renovation project and other highlights include the creation of the Kids Spot, installation of outdoor murals, and other community-driven art projects. In 2004, she received the Ontario Public Library Association's Children's Librarian of the Year award.

Wendy Sears, deputy director and manager of administrative services, Yellowhead Regional Library, Alta., retired effective Sept. 2, 2025. She joined YRL in 2004, as assistant director and manager of bibliographic services and was appointed manager of administrative services in 2019. From 2001 to 2004, she was bibliographic services manager for Northern Lights Library System. She earned a Master of Library and Information Science (Western, '87) and a BA (University of Alberta, '83), specializing in French and minoring in English. Jocie Wilson was appointed deputy director, effective Sept. 3, 2025.

Terri Short retired at the end of March 2025, after 20 years at McKellar Public Library, Ont. She joined as assistant librarian and worked with CEO Joan Ward to design a new library. She was appointed CEO in 2019 when Ward retired. She has played an integral part in keeping the library updated in technology. Lynne

Campbell was promoted from assistant librarian to CEO/head librarian, effective March 31, 2025.

Donna Spickett, resource assistant, LaSalle Branch of Essex County Library, Ont., retired May 14, 2025 after a 52-year career at ECL. Starting as a desk clerk while in high school, she continued to work at LaSalle and Essex branches both full and part time. When her mother (Jean Forbes) retired from the LaSalle Branch in 1990, she returned to LaSalle as the branch supervisor. From the 1990s, there were on-going technological developments and programming expanded to include adult crafts, cooking programs, book clubs, and outreach to the community. Donna was a recipient of a **County of Essex 2024 Employee Excellence Award**. She was honoured for her "sound judgment, organizational knowledge and collaborative approach to leadership." She was also praised for her positive attitude and work ethic that inspires those around her to work as a team.

Wenyan Wu, associate librarian, public services in the Engineering and Science Library at Queen's University, retired on May 31, 2025 after 31 years of service. He received a Master of Library Science (University of Western Ontario, '94), which followed a Master of Public Administration (University of Manitoba, '92). (With thanks to Michael J. White.)

***Suzette Giles** held a number of different positions at Ryerson University Library 1975 to 2010 and was the Data Librarian at retirement.*

Let's Stay in Touch

Help us keep our email listserv current. If you are not receiving our emails, please send your new email address to Bob Henderson, bob.exlibris@gmail.com.

Perhaps you know someone who ought to be receiving our emails or someone who might want to join Ex Libris. Send that information to Bob, too. And please pay your membership dues.

Indigenous Student Bursary Activities

By Deb Thomas



The Bursary Committee is pleased to report that we have once again raised sufficient funds to award the bursary for 2025. **Library Bound** has continued its generous bursary support with another \$500 donation. Its staff also helps promote the bursary by including our flyers and bookmarks at their library conference booths. The remainder of the annual budget (\$2,500 bursary + \$300 administration fees to Indspire) is raised through generous donations

from Ex Libris Association membership and others in the library community.

Each year, we promote the bursary with library and archival studies programs at Canadian colleges and universities. This year, we are reaching out to programs awarding certification for teacher librarians. We feel that, with growing threats of school library collection censorship — especially in the United States but spreading into various regions in Canada, Indigenous voices in this sector are particularly critical.

Indspire continues to manage

bursary awards for ELA as it is better able to determine financial need and Indigenous status. It will announce this year's award recipient at year's end. We will share the news with ELA membership through the listserv and in the Spring 2026 *ELAN*. More information on the bursary can be found on ELA's **website**.

The Indigenous Student Bursary Committee comprises Deb Thomas (chair), Bob Henderson, Tom Eadie, and Lorisia MacLeod.

Questions? Contact Committee Chair **Deb Thomas**. ■

Donate to ELA

A donation or bequest to ELA helps us extend our programming and broaden and increase our activities. Donations are tax deductible. We offer a GIFT MEMBERSHIP option, which allows a current member to make a \$10 tax-deductible donation and invite someone to join ELA for a one-year free trial membership. You can use this option as often as you like. You can donate by cheque, CanadaHelps, and e-transfer. Please mail your cheque to Bob Henderson, 66 Walkerton Drive, Markham, Ont., L3P 1H8. If you prefer to donate through e-transfer, please email Bob at bob.exlibris@gmail.com.

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ELAN Indexing

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