

## **B.C. Northwest Regional Representative – Jean Eiers-Page**

The archives in the B.C. Northwest region include the Telkwa Museum, Bulkley Valley Museum in Smithers, Kitimat Museum & Archives, Heritage Park Museum in Terrace, North Pacific Cannery National Historic Site in Port Edward, and the Prince Rupert City & Regional Archives. We continue to communicate and work together. We try to meet every couple of years in a central location such as Kitimat or Terrace to discuss issues that relate to us all. Education is one priority that we all feel that we can benefit from and we hope to have a workshop in the northwest in the near future. Many of us would also like to have site visits at the same time.

The Prince Rupert Archives relocated to the basement of City Hall almost three years ago and this has increased public awareness and research requests due to our central location. The Archives continues to add fonds level descriptions to Memory BC and is in the process of adding more digital images and descriptions to their searchable online database.

The Bulkley Valley Historical & Museum Society (aka BV Museum) continues to maintain and gently expand its archival collection. Use of our archives & archival services come in the form of research for in-house use (exhibitions), research requests (usually regarding family births, weddings & deaths), information/search requests using our Interior News newspaper microfilm collection. Currently, the BV Museum is supporting the Smithers library in its plans to apply for a grant to digitize its collection. The BV Museum will add its microfilm newspaper collection to the library's database to allow for greater & easier access to archival information by the public in future years. The BV Museum enjoys strong support in research, cooperation and information exchange between its sister members in the AABC in northwest BC (Kitimat Museum & Archives, Terrace Heritage Park Museum & Archives, Prince Rupert City & Regional Archives and the Telkwa Museum). Despite the distances between and isolation from each other (4 hr drive from Smithers or Telkwa to Prince Rupert), there is a strong, ongoing dialogue via phone & email between the AABC member institutions in the northwest. The AABC provides a much needed umbrella to help combat the massive distances and isolation between archival communities in northwest BC.

Over the last year the Kitimat Museum & Archives has been very busy with research requests regarding land use in our booming community, as well as requests for photograph reproduction from businesses new to our community who are interested in the history of the industrial development of their sites. This has prompted a conversation amongst staff regarding fees for service and what truly constitutes 'for publication'. We plan to investigate other archival policies and revise ours to reflect the appropriate charges. Corporate copyright has also been a topic of conversation as many of the companies who were originally responsible for the creation of the images no longer exist, or the permission to publish must be sought from the copyright holder. We tend to err on the side of caution – and expediency – and ask the person making the request to apply for permission to publish from the person or organization perceived to hold copyright. Staff hours are then spent on the research and photo reproduction. This has been an interesting time for the Kitimat Museum & Archives staff. The increased demand for our services has been encouraging, however the limited staff hours has proved a challenge.

The archives in the northwest continue to grow and collect archival records of enduring value. We rely on the AABC for support and guidance and thank them for their assistance in the past.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Eiers-Page, Regional Representative, B.C. Northwest