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The AABC Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Archives Association of British Columbia. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the AABC.

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Relics of the Past : A Methodological Inquiry into an Archival Source

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come back, history calls, to the solid
ground of fact. you don't want to fall
off the edge of the world –

— Daphne Marlatt, *Ana Historic*

Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* explores the silences and stories found through an unconventional reading of a record in Vancouver's city archives.^[1] In so doing, she shows how documents found in archives, sometimes treated as unproblematic representations of a recoverable past, may appear in another light as deliberately preserved, power-suffused creations of privileged authors of that past. With this issue in mind, I undertook a methodological exercise examining the circumstances of creation, collection and uses of an archival source, as a reflection on the status of what Greg Dening calls historical "relics." Dening makes several assertions about "sign-bearing relics of the past," and the problems of analysis and interpretation they present.^[2] Using his ideas and a selection of readings on archival and appraisal theory, I developed a set of questions with which to interrogate a previously "familiar" archival record, the Roderick Haig-Brown Papers in the University of British Columbia Library Special Collections Division. In the past, I used Haig-Brown's papers in my master's thesis research, for some contract research and in the preparation of a forthcoming paper on Haig-Brown. After considering these questions, I will reflection on how this exercise has affected my perception of this source.

Dening's discussion of "relics of the past" touches on their primary status as "cultural artifacts of the moments that produce them...".^[3] A collection is a discrete thing itself, apart from its content, that has a context of cultural meaning and history. Some archival theorists, in debates about the acquisition and appraisal of records and documents, appeal to the context of creation as the source of an item's value. Luciana Duranti, arguing for a non-interventionist archival practice, posits culture as the "contextual interaction of meaning with action." Thus, archives should represent "the natural interrelationship of [culture's] documentary residue," not an artificially solicited, putatively "complete" documentary record.^[4] The collection's contexts are not only cultural, of course, but archival. "Just as all documents of the same fonds are equally functional to the existence of that specific fonds, all fonds are equally functional to the existence of our documentary heritage," Duranti writes. "This also implies that each document within a fonds, and each fonds within a documentary universe, acquires its meaning from its relationship to the rest, that is from its context."^[5] But Dening also reminds us that archival context is not merely a relationship to the greater collection, or an issue of collections mandate and procedure: "archives and museums are mirrors of power and cosmologies."^[6]

While archival relics are produced in a cultural context, Dening further argues they "also become cultural artifacts of all the moments that give them permanence." We have seen how, for archivists, the "permanence" granted an artifact relates strongly to the cultural context in which it was created and of which it is a trace. However, archivist Hugh Taylor also argues that the "very act and deed" of collection may be subject to a "social historiography" of how and why records were preserved. Though archival theorist Terry Cook invokes Taylor, he persists advancing a model of

collection practices that fails to account for the situatedness of the archivist.[7] By contrast, Roy Schaeffer posits a more nuanced understanding of the archival collection practices as conditioned by the "cultural interests of a definite moment or milieu." [8] In other words, the people and practices granting an object permanence are key to understanding its status as a historical relic.

Permanence, for Luciana Duranti, is an elusive and ultimately misguided value in archival theory, since it is impossible to predict the future value of objects for society.[9] Similarly, Denning suggests that "the relics of the past in their messages are transformed simply by being read" and that "they are reconstituted in their meanings by all the cultural systems that give them meaning." [10] This contrasts with historian Pierre Nora's fear that "the indiscriminate production of archives is ... the clearest expression of the terrorism of historicized memory." [11] Nora argues that living memory is imprisoned by history, through objects in museums, archives and public memorials. However, Denning and Duranti move towards an understanding of the object itself as a living, shifting site of meaning that evolves each time it is accessed.

The foregoing insights guided me through a consideration of the Haig-Brown papers in their cultural and archival contexts, the moments of their permanence, and the interplay between their history, use and meaning. A thorough examination of the cultural moment in which to situate the production of Roderick Haig-Brown papers would be difficult, but must include the socio-economic context of British Columbia from the early 1930s to the early 1970s. It inevitably encompasses Haig-Brown's experience as a well-educated British immigrant and settler in the then-remote Campbell River district. The papers were byproducts of Haig-Brown's literary, conservation and personal activities, and found in a vast, if idiosyncratic, filing system including letters, notes, handwritten and typed manuscripts. As a writer, Haig-Brown must have understood this detritus as raw material for his own posterity. "Most must certainly be useles (sic) junk," he wrote, perhaps disingenuously, in 1969, "though I suppose a student ploughing through it 50 or a hundred years from now ... might dig out some contemporary insights." [12]

A university policy for the acquisition of manuscript collections created the archival context for the Haig-Brown Collection was created by. Haig-Brown's papers intersected with three elements of this mandate: "Preference should be given to materials indigenous to the region in which the University is situated," the policy noted, including "the papers of pioneers in any field vital to the life and growth of the province; the records of immigrants to the region recording their experiences as settlers" and "the literary papers of B.C. writers." [13] The directive to collect "Canadiana" formed the initial interest in Haig-Brown book manuscripts, [14] and his personal papers were regarded as worthy of collection as "literary remains." [15]

An investigation of the connections between the author and the institution links the archival context and process of "granting permanence" to these papers. Haig-Brown received an honorary doctorate from U.B.C. in 1952 and enjoyed long-time friendships with many powerful members of its staff and faculty through the Harry Hawthorne Foundation. The activities of this mock-cabalistic fishing club—including president N.A.M. MacKenzie and university librarian Neal Harlow and Haig-Brown—included donating to the university an extensive collection of fly-fishing literature. [16] In 1971, Haig-Brown personally donated \$1,500 to the "Order of Library Friends," a group created by Harlow as "a distinctive class, appreciative of the importance of books" that helped him develop the Special Collections Division in the 1950s. [17] The collection of Haig-Brown's papers at U.B.C., then, occurred within a web of relationships with those very gatekeepers who chose what to collect and where to house it.

The establishment of their "permanence" was no straightforward matter, however. In a 1966 letter, Haig-Brown wrote university librarian Basil Stuart-Stubbs that he had been approached by Syracuse University in New York regarding the donation of his manuscripts and papers. Haig-Brown noted that he believed the manuscripts and papers then held at U.B.C. were "on loan" but that "I can see no reason why they should not be a permanent gift." [18] Thereafter, though he continued to donate "installments" of papers, their status remained in question; prompted by word that Haig-Brown was preparing a new will, Anne Yandle of the Special Collections Division wrote Stuart-Stubbs in 1974 that no record of an agreement existed. [19] This led to the creation of an official Deed of Gift in April 1974. Thus, an element of fortuitousness, outside interest and a certain initiative on Haig-Brown's part all led to the permanent inclusion of the entire Haig-Brown collection, not just manuscripts, at U.B.C. Once this "permanence" was established, the Haig-Brown papers began collecting the trappings of official archival status. An inventory was started and, with the receipt of a large amount of materials after Haig-Brown's death, the university began to consider appraisal of the items. This

formal process was undertaken by a National Archives Appraisal Board in 1981. In addition, application was made for the certification of the papers as "cultural property" for income tax purposes, which outlined the collection's "outstanding significance and national importance."[\[20\]](#)

The Haig-Brown file contains an impressionistic record of inquiries, requests for access and research queries. The work of two biographers and one bibliographer appears through the letters and notes of the manuscript curator. After Ann Haig-Brown's death, the Haig-Browns' eldest daughter Valerie appears as her father's literary executor, dealing with the republication of some materials and acting as gatekeeper to her father's legacy. There is evidence, too, of the controversy surrounding E. Bennett Metcalfe's biography, which contained salacious details about Haig-Brown's private life.[\[21\]](#) Finally, almost unsettlingly, I found myself, as the reference for a research request earlier this year by an Oregon fly-fishing group interested in Haig-Brown's activities in their area.[\[22\]](#) Is each of these readings, even when not explicitly citationary, shaped or influenced by earlier ones? Or does my individual reading of the Haig-Brown papers in some way constitute them anew, as an object qualitatively different than the one read at some other time by some other person for some other purpose? Denning, I think, would incline to the latter view, although my reading of the Haig-Brown papers did encompass at least the finished product of the earlier researchers' efforts in the archives. Certainly, my reading was different in purpose and context from my forerunners and in that sense, the papers were being read for the first time, my way. By looking "backstage" through the Haig-Brown File at the research history of the papers, I was made more fully aware that every reading takes place in a particular context, that "the past is as much created as preserved by readings which must invent the circumstances that give meaning to words."[\[23\]](#)

In reexamining the Haig-Brown papers as a "relic of the past," I have come to see them in important new ways. The papers are more than their contents: they are the product of a cultural and archival context, which include the relationships and circumstances surrounding their coming to reside at U.B.C. I found that the justifications their permanent conservation varied over time and circumstance. Early on, his literary achievements, outside interest and, perhaps, Haig-Brown's ties to U.B.C. through the Hawthorn Foundation pushed forward the collection's enshrinement. Interestingly, by the time of the formal appraisal in the early 1980s, documentation of Haig-Brown's role and activities as a conservationist, rather than simply literary merit, became part of the justification for preservation. Indeed, contemporary relevance and the use values of researchers in some ways continually reconstitute the meaning of the documents themselves. Finally, I found the trace records of users, including myself, posed a series of questions about the re-readings of the papers, which made me more aware of the partiality and situatedness of my particular experience with the collection. Self-awareness and reflexive research of this kind may help scholars escape the "terrorism" of the fetishised historical object and help situate both researcher and researched in their full contexts, enriching and opening the resulting interpretations.

[1] Daphne Marlatt, *Ana Historic*, (Concord, ON: House of Anansi Press, 1997).

[2] Greg Denning, "A Poetic for Histories," in *Performances* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996): 43.

[3] Denning, 43.

[4] Luciana Duranti, "The Concept of Appraisal and Archival Theory" in *American Archivist* 57: Spring 1994, 328-344.

[5] Luciana Duranti, "So? What Else is New? The Ideology of Appraisal Yesterday and Today" in *Archival Appraisal: Theory and Practice. Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Association of British Columbia Archivist and the Northwest Archivists Association, April 26-28, 1990*, Christopher Hives, ed. (Vancouver: Association of B.C. Archivists, 1990) : 2.

[6] Denning, 43.

[7] Terry Cook, "Mind over Matter: Towards a New Theory of Archival Appraisal," in *The Archival Imagination. Essays in Honour of Hugh A. Taylor*, edited by Barbara L. Craig. Ottawa: Association of Canadian Archivists (1992): 39, 59.

[8] Roy C. Shaeffer, "Transcendent Concepts: Power, Appraisal and the Archivist as 'Social Outcast,'" *American Archivist* 55 (Fall 1992): 619.

[9] Duranti, "So? What Else is New?": 10.

[10] Denning, 42.

[11] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*" in *Representations* 26 (Spring 1989), 14.

[12] Roderick Haig-Brown to Basil Stuart-Stubbs, University of British Columbia Librarian, letter, August 13, 1969. File 1 of 2 of information relating to the Roderick Haig-Brown Papers, University of British Columbia Library, Special Collections Division. Hereafter, I will refer to these as "Haig-Brown File" and the number. I am very grateful for the access and assistance provided by George Brandak, Manuscript Curator of Special Collections.

[13] The Library, University of British Columbia, "The Acquisition of Manuscript Collections: UBC Archival Collections Policy," ND, copy provided by George Brandak, Manuscript Curator.

[14] William K. Lamb, University Librarian, to Roderick Haig-Brown, letter, July 18, 1947, Haig-Brown File 1.

[15] Basil Stuart-Stubbs to Roderick Haig Brown, letter, February 7, 1966. Haig-Brown File 1.

[16] This points to an relation within the larger archives with the Harry Hawthorne Foundation fonds, 1953-1986, University of British Columbia Library, Special Collections Division.

[17] Roderick Haig-Brown to Basil Stuart-Stubbs, letter, April 17, 1971, Haig-Brown File 1; Laurenda Daniells, "The Special Collections of the Library of U.B.C.," in *American Archivist* 36:4, (Spring 1974): 49. This is not to insinuate that Haig-Brown was delivering some belated *quid pro quo*, but rather to underline the depth of his relationship, personal and philanthropic, with the U.B.C. Library.

[18] Roderick Haig-Brown to Basil Stuart-Stubbs, letter, January 26, 1966, Haig-Brown File 1.

[19] Anne Yandle to Basil Stuart-Stubbs, memorandum, February 7, 1974, Haig-Brown File 1. Interestingly, neither Yandle nor Stuart-Stubbs seemed to be aware at this time of the correspondence between the latter and Haig-Brown between 1966-1969, with the exception of the January 26, 1966 letter. This "missing" correspondence appeared later in the file, stapled together: my guess is that it was inserted later, perhaps relocated from Stuart-Stubbs' personal files.

[20] Government of Canada, Secretary of State, "Application for Certification of Cultural Property for Income Tax Purposes," completed February 26, 1981 by Anne Yandle, Special Collections Division, U.B.C. Library, Haig-Brown File 1.

[21] E. Bennett Metcalfe. *A Man of Some Importance: The Life of Roderick Langmere Haig-Brown* (Vancouver and Seattle: James W. Wood, 1985).

[22] These letters are found in Haig-Brown File 2.

[23] Dening, 42.

* * *

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AABC 2000 Conference

The AABC 2000 Conference will be held on 28-29 April 2000 at the Richmond Inn in Richmond, B.C. As we move into the 21st century and acknowledge the 26th year of our organization, dating from the formation of the Association of British Columbia Archivists in 1974, let's think about who we are as archivists of this province and as active members of a dynamic professional group.

There will be sessions and workshops to educate and inform, forums for expressing opinions, the Annual General meeting, and events to entertain and enjoy. Proposals for papers are requested from our members for the following sessions:

Archivists of the Future

A special session for SLAIS students to present a paper or report on thesis work in progress.

The Changing Nature of the Archival Profession

We would like to hear a response to this topic from a student or recent grad, a representative of a small, community-based or corporate archives and someone from a larger, government-funded archives.

Outreach

What does outreach mean to your archives? What tools do you use? Artifacts or virtual reality? How do you target new users? Who do you think they are? Who would you like them to be? Can anyone report on their success at starting a "Friends" group?

Access to Archival Records

What is the archivist's relationship with the researcher in the year 2000? Is the reference interview obsolete? Should it be? How do you handle research agreements for access to restricted material?

Any other suggestions?

Submissions must be received before 31 January 2000. Please send an abstract of your proposed paper with a short biography to Deidre Simmons, Conference Program Committee Chair, 1513 Laurel Lane, Victoria, B.C. V8S 1Y2 or dasimmons@pacificcoast.net. Other members of the Committee are David Wardle; Cheryl Linstead; and Peter Johnson. The Local Arrangements Committee is chaired by George Brandak, with assistance from Lynne Waller. Please contact any of us if you have any questions, comments or suggestions regarding the Conference.

Join us in April. Let your archival soul sing!

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Newfoundland Announces New Heritage Facility

The following statement was issued by Premier Brian Tobin (December 13, 1999).

It was in 1905 that Sir Robert Bond stood in the Colonial Building to announce the construction of the Newfoundland Museum. It was in 1955 that the Honourable Joey Smallwood stood in our former House of Assembly to announce the creation of the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador. And, it was in 1961 that he stood in the same House of Assembly to announce the creation of the Art Gallery of Newfoundland and Labrador.

It is mindful of these historic precedents that I am proud to stand in this House today to announce that, a full 94 years after the first announcement and 38 years after the last, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will construct a new facility to house our three heritage institutions: the Newfoundland Museum, the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Art Gallery of Newfoundland and Labrador.

This new building will be constructed at a cost of \$40 million and will be financed by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It will be a state-of-the-art facility which will draw upon the latest technology, while its architecture will be rooted in our vernacular. We have decided to call the building "The Rooms" in order to reflect the tradition of building our fishing structures close to the water, close to the resource which has sustained Newfoundland and Labrador for centuries.

The existing buildings which house our three institutions are no longer adequate to store and exhibit our heritage treasures. Many of these structures were built prior to the development of modern museum standards, and others were never built to serve as heritage institutions. This is placing our natural specimens, our material artifacts, our archival documents, our films and photographs and our works of art in danger of deterioration and loss. This is cheating the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador. They deserve to have these treasures preserved for their children and grandchildren. And, they deserve to be better able to enjoy these treasures today.

That is why, we have taken this bold step to consolidate all three heritage institutions into one building. This building will be constructed at Fort Townshend in St. John's, on the site of a former military fort. I will draw your attention to one outstanding feature, among many others, and that is the building will have an archaeological dig taking place inside, even after the building is constructed, making it a rare and unique museum in North America for this type of archaeological program.

I would like to offer a special thank you to the Advisory Committee on Cultural Infrastructure, co-chairs Mary Pratt and Robert Jenkins and their dedicated team including Wayne Trask, Dr. Phil Warren, Dr. Art May, Robert Thompson, Clyde Granter, and Aileen O'Rafferty. This group consulted widely with the cultural community of this province and developed the proposal we are announcing today.

Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are justly proud of their cultural heritage, be they descendants of Innu, Inuit, Mi'Kmaq, English, French, Irish, Scottish or any other ancestors. What we have in this province is unique and deserves to be preserved for future generations. It also deserves to be better displayed for our own enjoyment and for the

enjoyment of visitors to our province. We are therefore very proud to continue the tradition begun by Sir Robert Bond and continued by Joey Smallwood of ensuring that we do not forget from whence we came, so that we may face the world in full confidence. This is indeed an historic occasion, and I am certain that all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will rejoice at this announcement.

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Northwest Archivist Conference

You are cordially invited . . .

to Bellingham, Washington for the annual Northwest Archivist Conference, May 3 through May 6, 2000. Bellingham, uniquely situated just north of Seattle and south of the Canadian border, is a jumping off point for the San Juan Islands, Vancouver, and Victoria, British Columbia. Be sure to plan your stay so that you can enjoy the sea to mountain recreation, old town shopping, golf, and Western Washington University. The local arrangements and program committees are hard at work developing plans for an exceptional and an innovative meeting with a nod toward the new millennium.

Western Washington University, will host the Society of American Archivist's two day Encoded Archival Description workshop on May 3 and 4th. We are pleased to announce that Kris Kiesling of University of Texas at Austin and Michael J. Fox of Minnesota Historical Society will instruct this workshop. Those interested in attending this workshop will need to register through the Society American Archivists. This workshop tends to fill quickly and archivists travel across the country to attend it. **So, make sure to sign up early!** Northwest archivists will also offer two other workshops: Records Management and Oral History. The Northwest Oral History Association, who will join us for the conference, will sponsor the oral history workshop.

Currently, the program committee is pursuing a number of interesting themes for the main program sessions. We are planning to have a short version of the fundamental series for new professionals, which will include an oral history session. We are also offering some stimulating sessions for the familiar faces. Some of the exciting sessions we are planning on are: Time management for the Lone Arranger, Tribal Records and Archives-Federal Records or Tribal Records, Management of Institutional Records, Functional Records Analysis, Archivist as Administrators, and Archivists as Authors.

Our host for the conference will be the Best Western, Lakeway Inn and Conference Center, located in the heart of Bellingham. The opening reception will be held in the historic Rotunda Room of the Whatcom Museum of History and Art, where you may peruse the exhibits relating to Northwest art and history. We hoping to feature a local Jazz Trio for the banquet dinner's entertainment so you can sit back relax and discuss the day's sessions with old friends and colleagues. We hope to start a new tradition by providing a hospitality suite at the hotel. The local tours this year will include a hiking trek into the wilds of Chuckanut Ridge, hosted by Randall Jimerson. The ridge affords beautiful views of Bellingham Bay, the San Juan Islands, and the surrounding mountains. Also, we have planned a sightseeing tour of old Bellingham hosted by Dr. Jim Scott, who will provide his unique perspective on Bellingham history—both scholarly and anecdotal. For those interested wines, plans are underway for a tour of Mt. Baker Vineyard, a noted producer of some rather unusual grape varieties.

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Community Archives Education Programme Workshop Schedule 2000

Rules for Archival Description

January 20 & 21, 2000 Victoria

The purpose of this workshop is to introduce participants to the Canadian Council of Archives' Rules for Archival Description and to provide examples of a find in aid system for small archives. The workshop will focus on introducing a system of finding aids for small archives: key rules in RAD for multi-media fonds; and how and where to use media chapters.

Participants are requested to bring a current copy of RAD to the workshop. It is also recommended that participants will have taken the "Introduction to Archives" course or have relevant archival experience.

(BC Archives, 865 Yates Street -- 250-387-5885)

Instructor - Patricia O'Byrne

Care and Handling of Photographs

February 24 & 25, 2000 Nanaimo

Concepts of management of photographs in archives, including arrangement, description, indexing, storage, handling, conservation, reference, copyright, photographic reference systems, and reproduction programmes.

(Coast Bastion Inn, 11 Bastion Street -- 250-753-6601)

Instructors - Rosaleen Hill, Patricia O'Byrne

Fundamentals of Records Management Practice

March 9 & 10, 2000 Victoria

Principles and practices of records management, including concept of the life cycle, records management functions, file classification, and the development of records schedules.

(BC Archives, 865 Yates Street -- 250-387-5885)

Instructor - TBA

Management of Archives

April 26 & 27, 2000 Richmond

To be held in conjunction with Annual Conference

The following topics would be taught through a combination of lectures, audiovisual aids, and experiential exercises developed specifically to illustrate key points, generate discussion and facilitate understanding of archival management, particularly in a community setting.

The course covers the following topics.

- Introduction - the Archivist as Manager
- Management Principles
- Planning-the Fundamental Tool of Management
- Financial Planning and Management
- Human Resource Management
- Facility Management and Operations
- Public Relations Planning and Development
- Managing Archives as Part of the Community

Instructor - Jim Burrows

* * *

Acknowledgements: *The Archives Association of British Columbia would like to gratefully acknowledge the generous support of this programme by the B. C. Archives and the Canadian Council of Archives.*

For Further Information

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* * *

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BC Archives Time Machine Continues To Win Awards

VICTORIA — The British Columbia Archives Amazing Time Machine Web site has won a gold medal for innovative service delivery, Andrew Petter, minister of advanced education, training and technology, announced today.

The Distinction 99 Awards were held in the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa on Monday. The Amazing Time Machine won in the Provinces category.

"I'm proud that this imaginative teaching tool, which showcases the rich history of British Columbians in an innovative way, has been recognized for its excellence," said Petter. "This award follows on the Time Machine's award for innovative web development at the 1999 Strategies for Public Sector Transformation awards held on Sept. 22 in Victoria."

This year's Distinction Awards drew over 230 entries in all categories from all three levels of government across the country. Sixteen nominations were received in innovative service delivery in the Provinces category. These entries were judged on innovation, leadership and excellence in the management and use of information and information technologies to improve service delivery.

The Time Machine site - <<http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/exhibits/timemach>>- has been visited by almost three million students, teachers, researchers and members of the public since it was launched one year ago.

The Time Machine can be used to journey along with characters like Billy Barker and other early prospectors seeking their fortune in the Cariboo Gold Rush. Visitors to the site can step into the past to see B.C. communities like Victoria's Chinatown, Doukhobour settlements or the town of Ocean Falls. They can also learn more about the lives and contributions of women to B.C.'s development, or look through the eyes of B.C. artists while touring the virtual galleries.

The purpose of the B.C. Archives Amazing Time Machine is to provide Internet access to B.C. historical documents, images and other multimedia information in a format designed for school children. This project was completed under contract, awarded through a competitive process by Industry Canada's digital collections program.

The Amazing Time Machine is a major addition to the main B.C. Archives Web site and includes hundreds of Web pages of text, resources for teachers, and thousands of images and other materials selected from the B.C. Archives' holdings.

Partners in the development of the B.C. Archives Amazing Time Machine include the B.C. Archives and the Information and Data Management Branch, both of the Information, Science and Technology Agency; SchoolNet Digital Collections teams of young Canadians; Industry Canada; the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture; the Ministry of Education; and B.C.'s teaching community.

Contact:
Kathryn Bridge
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(250) 387-2962

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Notes

ACA 2000 - Edmonton Welcomes You!



Between June 19-24, the ACA will hold its annual conference in the "City of Festivals" - Edmonton, Alberta. Not only is the ACA celebrating its 25th anniversary in the city where it all began, but, for the first time, the ACA will be meeting jointly with the Canadian Library Association and Region VII (Canada) of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators. By registering for the ACA conference, members will be able to attend sessions at all three conferences. The theme of the joint conference "Information Communities at the Turn of the Century: Archives - Looking Forward, Looking Back" will provide an opportunity to examine the similarities and differences in our professions as well as an occasion to socialize and interact with a wide variety of colleagues.

The Programme Committee (Michael Moosberger, Chair), the Local Arrangement Committee (Bruce Ibsen/Lorraine Mychajlunow, Co-chairs), and the ACA Conference Coordinator (Bryan Corbett) are currently arranging a diverse program of workshops, conference sessions, social and cultural events, and tours both prior to and after the conference. Archivists are encouraged to make their plans early to attend the conference and to take advantage of the opportunity to explore Alberta - the Peace Country, Banff, Jasper, Calgary, and the Royal Tyrell Museum at Drumheller are within easy driving distance of Edmonton.

Further updates about the programme and social events will appear in subsequent issues. Visit the ACA website at www.archives.ca and follow the Annual Conference link to receive the latest information. For more information, contact the ACA secretariat.

Newsletter Co-editor Steps Down

With the appointment of a newsletter editorial board, Alan Smithee who originally proposed moving the publication to its electronic format and served as its co-editor for the last three issues, has resigned from his position. We thank Alan for his efforts with the newsletter and wish him well in his retirement in the Golden area.

Opting Out of Paper Copy of AABC Newsletter

AABC members currently receiving the paper version of the newsletter are reminded that the publication is also currently available on the Association homepage <<http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/newsletter/>>. Those willing to forego receiving a paper copy in favour of accessing the on-line version (and saving the AABC money in the process) are invited to contact Leslie Field (leslie@lesliefield.com). Members who choose this option are notified by e-mail when each new issue of the publication is available.

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AABC Newsletter

Volume 10 No. 1 Winter 2000

President's Message

by Chris Hives

Mid-December marks not only the rapid approach of the yuletide but also signals the completion of the first two-thirds of the current executive's mandate. In some ways the time has flown by very quickly, in others it has dragged on unmercifully. Don't get me wrong, the experience has been generally positive and rewarding. But..... I digress. Let me try to clear my mind of visions of dancing sugar plums and the prognostications for the calamities that are to befall us at the onset of the next millennium long enough to deal with the matter at hand. In something unintentionally, but perhaps given the season, appropriately reminiscent of "A Christmas Carol", my message touches on elements of the present, past and the future of the Association.

First the present. One of the first, and on ongoing concerns of this executive has been the need to get our financial house in order. While much of the basic financial management infrastructure is, after much effort, now in place, we are still in the process of "fine tuning" our procedures. For me anyway, it has been a very mystifying process to watch as Lynne and the Finance Committee refine the financial accounting system to the point where, what begins as rather amorphous mass of numbers, becomes increasing clear. The only meaningful analogy I can think of (at least for those of us who require vision correction) is the eye examination process where one moves from blurry to the increasingly sharper images. Although we seem to be nearing something analogous to 20/20 vision financially-speaking, the process has required an inordinate amount of Lynne's time. One must understand that during the 1999/2000 year approximately \$170,000 will flow through the AABC treasury for our various programs and this does not include the funds received and expended to support the basic administration of the Association-specific activities. The paperwork associated with tracking and accounting for the disposition of these funds is simply beyond reasonable expectations for a volunteer treasurer. Consequently, we are acting on the resolution passed at last year's AGM in exploring what financial activities might be contracted to reduce the Treasurer's workload to a manageable level. In planning for this transition it is not our intention to change everything over all at once but rather adopt a phased-in approach so that everyone is comfortable with the changes. Also, in recognition of the increasing burden placed on the financial management of the Association by the various programs, we have, for the first time, included as part of our grant applications a request for a small amount of money to offset these necessary accounting-related expenditures.

I am very pleased to announce the availability of the web version of the *Manual for Small Archives* <<http://www.aabc.bc.ca/aabc/msa>>. Originally published in 1988, with two revised chapters prepared in 1994, the popular publication has gone through several printings. In 1999, the AABC decided to produce an electronic version of the publication to satisfy a reduced, but continuing, demand for the *Manual*. While recognizing that some of the publication's information may be somewhat dated, the *Manual* still contains much that could be of assistance particularly to archivists working in smaller institutions. Although there are currently no immediate plans to revise the publication, its transformation into a web-based resource will make dissemination of this information much easier in the future. AABC members without internet access will be able to order printed copies of the publication on a cost-recovery basis while non-members will be required to pay an additional fee. Details about ordering copies of the *Manual* will appear soon. We hope that this will be just the beginning of what will become a growing trend of providing access to a wider range of archival information.

The Association had originally hoped to convene a planning meeting involving the regional representatives, committee

chairs and members of the executive in the fall of 1999. Unfortunately, scheduling difficulties made this meeting impossible and we have now tentatively re-scheduled it for mid-February 2000. At this meeting we would like to discuss some of the new directions for the Association and also to hear from the regional representatives about initiatives their constituents would like to have the AABC pursue in both the short- and long-term.

Over the past several months the Association has been working to establish better communications with the British Columbia Archives. This on-going contact is critical because as the province's largest archival institution and the body through which provincial government funding is distributed, the BCA obviously has a vested interest in the development of the archival community. The Association has been very fortunate in being able to undertake province-wide projects through partnerships forged with both the provincial and federal levels of government. Funding provided to the Association through the BC Community Archives Advisory and Training Program and the Canadian Council of Archives has made possible a number of programs that have been targeted primarily at the smaller community-based institutions. Continued contact with the granting agencies and an on-going and open dialogue is critical to the development of a shared vision for the future of the provincial archival community.

Before discussing some of the future directions for the Association, I wanted to reflect briefly on the past. In our efforts to address the AABC's contemporary affairs and operations we have largely overlooked the fact that 1999 marks the 25th anniversary of a provincial archival organization in British Columbia. To put this into perspective, the national organization, the Association of Canadian Archivists was not established until the following year. Obviously much has been accomplished in this province since a small group of archivists meeting at the Vancouver City Archives voted in favour of Laurenda Daniells' motion to establish the Association of British Columbia Archivists in February 1974. Throughout the history of the ABCA, its subsequent amalgamation with the short-lived BC Archives Council, and the establishment of the Archives Association of BC in 1991, those affiliated with the organization have always tended to think "big" and have consistently at heart the interests of the whole archival community. In the early years of the organization much was accomplished by sheer will and the dedication of members of the archival community. Amongst other things the Association established a newsletter to share information to keep archival community informed, held an annual conference, sponsored educational opportunities, and oversaw the development of the *Manual for Small Archives*.

In the last seven or eight years the Association has, through funding provided by both the provincial and the federal governments, operated a number of important province-wide archival services. Programs including the archival and preservation advisory services, CAEP courses, and network co-ordination have all helped promote the development of an inclusive provincial archival network. While the funding provided by various governments has made the programs possible, a great deal of their success is also largely attributable to the our skilled and dedicated contractors. Bill, Rosaleen and Irene have all done outstanding work on behalf of the AABC. Important too, but often overlooked, are the efforts of the respective advisory committee members, who together with the relevant contractors, have planned the development of these services.

That the AABC and its predecessors have been agents of significant change within the provincial archival community is indisputable. As we look forward to the new millennium we should remember that next year will also mark the onset of the second quarter century of a provincial archival organization in British Columbia. While the Association might move in some new directions what should not change is the commitment to developing an inclusive provincial archival network. The cornerstone of this network will be the recognition of the important role to be played by institutions of all sizes throughout the province in pursuit of the collective goal of preserving our documentary heritage.

Notwithstanding the historical successes of the archival and preservation advisory service, education program and the network co-ordination service, it is important that they not be "etched in stone". As the person responsible for drafting a total of six grant applications for the CCA and CAAT, I can readily attest to the temptation of simply recycling last year's grant applications and just adding new numbers. This would not, however, be in the best interests of the archival community and it would fail to take into account changes in the provincial archival landscape. In fact, one might suggest that if we are still attempting to do basically the same thing in the same way for several years then there is likely something wrong. Changing requirements in the archival community call on the AABC to become more responsive, more creative and more mindful of delivering programs that are cost-effective and efficient. As a consequence, the executive, in the course of developing its grant applications for the 2000/2001 year, have

incorporated some changes which we wanted to share with the membership.

First, in the process of rationalizing our programs and anticipating CAIN funding, we will split the Archives Advisor/Network Co-ordinator program into its two component parts -- each of which will be staffed by contractors equivalent to approximately half-time positions which reflects the current status quo. While the BC Archival Network Service will exist on its own, the archives advisor function will be integrated with the education program to create the BC Archival Education and Advisory Service.

This change was, in part, our response to Bill's decision not to continue in the archives advisory position next year. Appreciating what a great job Bill did as archives advisor and the high regard in which he has been held by the archival community, this news originally caused the executive some anxiety. But, following discussions, it occurred to us that this would be a great opportunity to revisit the archives advisor function to determine if there was something that could be done differently. In the end we decided to amalgamate two of AABC's most important initiatives to date -- those being education/training opportunities for archivists and archival advisory services provided to institutions throughout the province. The AABC feels that these services have been, and remain central to realizing the Association's objective of creating an inclusive network of archives and archivists throughout the province. In particular, these services are important to the smaller community-based archivists who, at times, lack formal archival education and find it difficult to access the information necessary to properly care for their part of the province's documentary heritage.

While this new development marks something of an administrative or organizational "repackaging" of activities previously provided, the Association feels that it will continue to deliver the services which have been long recognized as very important within the archival community. This change provides the opportunity to exploit the obvious synergy that exists between the general education of archivists and the professional development and training opportunities traditionally offered through the advisory services. There are clearly economies of scale as well as the opportunity to develop greater consistency and standardization by more formally integrating the two programs.

To carry out this service, the AABC will contract the services of an Archival Education and Advisory Co-ordinator. In general half this individual's time will be spend co-ordinating, delivering and developing basic level courses developed as part of the Community Archives Education Program (CAEP) as well as reviewing and revising existing course curriculum. The other half of the position would focus on the delivery of archival advisory services.

We believe that the amalgamation of the education and advisory functions will be a "good fit" because all of the activities in these two areas can be broadly categorized as education. By participating directly in the advising activities the contractor will be in a much better position to truly understand the general educational requirements of archivists around the province and also the best ways in which to deliver the necessary information. We are very excited about this opportunity and look forward to hiring a new contractor to assume this important position.

There will also be some changes in the focus of the BC Preservation Service as well as with the archives advisor function. Next year will see somewhat fewer site visits than has been the case in the past. For the next year more energies will be devoted to the development of generic tools and the compilation of information which can then be made available in electronic and print form to the whole archival community. We have opted to reduce the number of site visits in recognition of the fact that Bill, Rosaleen and Meagan over the years have visited virtually all of the repositories in the province that have expressed an interest in taking advantage of our advisory programs. We recognize that it is not terribly cost-effective to keep visiting the same institutions year after year. Scarce resources have to be focussed on creating the greatest "bang for the buck". While perhaps de-emphasizing site visits for next year, we recognize the importance of these activities and understand that there must be a provision for them even if on a reduced scale. As the visits of the archives advisor and the preservation co-ordinator are the principle links between the AABC and its institutions, we have attempted to co-ordinate the site visits of each program to ensure the maximum coverage possible.

These then are the basic changes that have been proposed for AABC's programs for the upcoming year. This represents the beginning of what should, and must, be an evolutionary process. As part of this process it is important that we continue to review both what is being done and how we are doing it. An important aspect of this process is the

solicitation of feedback to ensure the AABC programs remain relevant to the archival community we seek to serve.

While on the subject of the future, the executive has just reviewed the preliminary program prepared by Deidre Simmons and the rest of the program committee. The conference which will be held at the Richmond Inn April 28th and 29th promises to be both educational and entertaining. The annual conference provides one of the primary forums for exchanges between members of the archival community and it would be nice to see a large turnout. Those of you living outside of the Lower Mainland are reminded that there are travel/accommodation subsidies available for those participating for the workshops that are offered both before and during the conference.

So, having completed my task – Dickensian theme and all -- I will again allow my consciousness to return to those pleasant Christmas images and I will close my rambling remarks by wishing everyone happy holidays and the very best for an uneventful passage into the new millennium.

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AABC Executive Minutes

Minutes of the September 13, 1999 AABC Executive Meeting

1. Approval of minutes from previous meetings

The Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held August 9, 1999. Chris Hives asked Marnie Burnham to forward the minutes to Bill Purver for posting on the AABC website and to Leslie Field for inclusion in the Newsletter.

2. President's report

Chris Hives reported that he has been in communication with Provincial Archivist Gary Mitchell and has received word that CAAT would entertain a grant request that would include support for the administration of the AABC's province-wide activities. The Executive discussed the structure of such a request.

Action: Chris Hives and Lynne Waller will develop a grant proposal in an attempt to secure funds to support AABC activities relating to programme administration.

The President discussed the progress of the working group developing an instrument to augment the Need Assessment Survey. This secondary survey will not likely be completed before the end of September. The Executive discussed methods to distribute the completed questionnaire. The President recommended setting aside funds to cover copying and mailing costs.

Chris Hives reported that Leslie Field has begun his contract to produce a web version of the Manual for Small Archives.

The President discussed his attendance at a recent meeting of the Archives Advisor / Network Coordinator Advisory Committee. The meeting served to advise new members of the committee of the program's mandate, to update members on Bill Purver's schedule and work plan and to develop priorities for the remainder of the year.

Chris Hives discussed the need to address the possible changes to the AABC's programs for the next fiscal year. Proposals should be developed within the next six weeks to facilitate consultation.

The President discussed the status of the current issue of the Newsletter and the issues remaining for this fiscal year. In the absence of a co-editor, he has been assisting Leslie Field in the production of the Newsletter. He feels that the production of the electronic version will result in a significant financial savings to the Association. In addition, Chris Hives has begun soliciting advertisers for upcoming issues.

3. Treasurer's report

Lynne Waller presented the second financial statement developed by Malish and Clark utilizing the new system of accounts. She reported that the system is working well, providing her with the flexibility to suggest codes and review

statements prior to delivery to the accountant. In addition, Lynne Waller presented a draft of a file classification plan to better organize the Association's financial records.

The Treasurer reported the success of the new system developed to retrieve and circulate the Association's mail. Lynne Waller noted that the Education Coordinator is now forwarding workshop registration cheques directly to her for deposit.

Lynne Waller expressed caution at the current state of the AABC's finances. According to the general account schedule, revenue and expenses are about equal. She feels that after September 1999, the Association must begin to use surplus funds to cover expenses.

She recommended that the Executive determine the minimum surplus needed in the AABC's account to support operations in the event of a funding problem.

The Treasurer reported that Evelyn Peters McLellan has agreed to act as Conference Treasurer. She noted that Evelyn would like to meet with other members of the Committee as soon as possible to set conference budget priorities.

4. Strategic Planning Forum

The Executive discussed the need to solicit member input regarding proposed changes to the AABC's program structure. The Executive decided to host a strategic planning forum to solicit comments from Regional Representatives and Committee Chairs about the direction of the Association. It was concluded that a two day meeting should be scheduled for late October or early November to be held in Vancouver.

Action: Dorothy Lawson will contact the Regional Representative to discuss dates for a meeting and to determine the necessity of subsidizing travel and accommodation.

Action: Lynne Waller will investigate possible sites for the accommodation of members and venues for meetings.

5. Membership

Marnie Burnham reported on the status of membership renewals. The Executive expressed concern at the drop in the number of individual members. It was concluded that a portion of this decrease should be attributed to the increase in fees. The Executive acknowledged a need to increase individual membership. Chris Hives suggested including a discussion of professional community service within the president's message in the next newsletter.

The Executive addressed the issue of lapsed membership. It was decided that, after the first four months of the current fiscal year, members who have not yet paid their membership fees will no longer be provided with the benefits of membership including the newsletter and the member directory.

The Executive concurred with the Membership Committee's recommendation to approve the granting of an institutional membership to the City of Coquitlam.

6. Volunteers

The Executive examined a list of current AABC members with the intent of creating a list of candidates to fill the numerous vacancies on AABC committees. Lists were developed to fill vacancies on the Membership Committee, the Conference Program and Local Arrangements Committees, and the Editorial Board.

7. AABC Conference 1999/2000

The Executive discussed the upcoming AABC Conference to be held in the Lower Mainland in May 2000. Given the current state of the Associations finances, the Executive expressed a commitment to holding a revenue neutral event.

8. Committee reports

Francis Mansbridge reported on efforts to combine the two grants committees into a single body. He noted that these committees are currently in the process of re-evaluating the points system for rating grant applications. He feels it is important to develop a better system for tracking previous grant applications.

Next meeting : 4 October 1999 1 pm.

Minutes of the October 4, 1999 AABC Executive Meeting

1. Approval of minutes from previous meetings

The Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held September 13, 1999. Chris Hives asked Marnie Burnham to forward the minutes to Bill Purver for posting on the AABC website and to Leslie Field for inclusion in the Newsletter.

2. President's report

Chris Hives reported that the current issue of the AABC Newsletter was near completion. The mailing of the Newsletter will be coordinated with the distribution of the Membership Directory.

The President discussed the grant request for administrative funds developed with the assistance of Lynne Waller. The Executive reviewed the details of the request submitted to the B.C. Archives. The President recommended that, in future, program administration costs be built into funding proposals.

Chris Hives reported that he has contacted Provincial Archivist Gary Mitchell regarding this year's second installment of grant funding to help ensure that funding will be forwarded in a timely manner.

Chris Hives noted that the production of a web version of the *Manual for Small Archives* is proceeding on schedule. It is hoped that this contract will be completed by the end of November.

The President responded to a query from Jane Turner regarding subscription to the newly developed Archives B.C. listserv. The President stated that a number of individuals had already subscribed. Erwin Wodarczak will be posting an announcement on ARCAN-L. An additional notice will be included in the next issue of the AABC Newsletter.

Chris Hives and Francis Mansbridge updated the Executive on the technical specifications established for the CAIN initiative. Bill Purver has drafted a response to the CCA Committee confirming that BCAUL is compliant with established standards.

3. Treasurer's report

Although Lynne Waller was unable to attend the Executive meeting, she submitted a thorough written report of the AABC's finances, including statements to August 31, 1999.

The Treasurer reported that the three program accounts at the Hong Kong Bank of Canada have been closed. All transactions will now take place within one main account.

Lynne Waller's report included a discussion of the Finance Committee's attempts to get reduced rates on postage. The Finance Committee is in the process of submitting the documentation to obtain a mail subsidy from the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Treasurer requested feedback from the Executive to determine whether the required paper work is a worthy investment of time.

The Treasurer reported that the Finance Committee is investigating issues relating to administrative costs and grant funding. The Committee is conducting a survey of other non-profits to determine how their budget process accommodates administrative costs.

4. Membership

In the absence of an active Membership Committee, Marnie Burnham presented an application for institutional membership submitted by the Resource Centre of the Satellite Video Exchange Society (Video In Studios). The Executive concurred with the recommendation to approve the granting of an institutional membership.

Chris Hives reported that he would be giving a presentation to students in the Master of Archival Studies program at UBC on October 13th to encourage them to become members of the Association.

5. Volunteers

The Executive reported on efforts to locate volunteers to fill numerous vacancies on AABC committees. The following members have agreed to participate:

Membership Committee: Carrie Stevenson and Dovel Buie

Editorial Board: Jennifer Mohan

Conference Programme Committee: David Wardle

Grants Committee: Stephen Fleming

The Executive agreed that a committee to plan the 1999-2000 AABC Conference must be formalized by mid November.

6. Proposed 'Archives Day'

The Executive discussed a proposal to establish a province-wide 'Archive Day'. The Executive agreed that Year 2000 celebrations provide an opportunity to increase awareness about heritage and heritage institutions. It is felt that such an initiative should be delegated to the AABC Advocacy Committee.

Action: Jane Turner will request that the Advocacy Committee develop a proposal for an 'Archives Day'.

7. Strategic Planning Session

The Executive discussed plans for a strategic planning meeting to be held at the end of October with AABC Committee Chairs and Regional Representatives. While tentative dates have been established and accommodations reserved, it is still unclear as to whether attendance will be adequate.

8. Committee reports

Grants Committee

Francis Mansbridge discussed strategies to distribute CCA grant applications to AABC institutional members. He mentioned that it may be possible to circulate much of this information electronically.

B.C. Archival Preservation Service Advisory Committee

Dorothy Lawson discussed the progress of the Preservation Committee. The Committee is examining possible revisions to the structure of workshops. The Preservation Service is progressing according to established work plans and within budget. She noted that there is a possibility that one position on the Committee may become vacant in the near future.

Next meeting : 8 November 1999 1 pm.

1. Approval of minutes from previous meetings

The Executive approved the minutes of the meeting held October 4, 1999. Chris Hives asked Marnie Burnham to forward the minutes to Bill Purver for posting on the AABC website and to Leslie Field for inclusion in the Newsletter.

2. Proposed 'Archives Day'

Aaron Vidaver, Chair of the AABC Public Awareness, Advocacy and Legislation Committee reported to the Executive on early investigations into establishing a province wide 'Archives Day' during mid-2000. The Advocacy Committee concurs that such an event would be positive; increasing public awareness of archives and related heritage issues. Aaron Vidaver reported that the Advocacy Committee had conducted a survey of other provincial archives associations to determine how such public awareness events are structured. The Archives Society of Alberta is the only provincial association to organize such an event. For the past three years, the ASA has hosted an 'Archives week' during October commemorated with an on-line exhibit, a poster and locally sponsored events.

The Executive felt that 'Archives Day' should be formally recognized by the Provincial Government. Chris Hives recommended speaking with Provincial Archivist Gary Mitchell to determine how such events are placed on the agenda.

Action: The Public Awareness, Advocacy, and Legislation Committee will continue to investigate the logistics of establishing an 'Archives Day' during the 2000-2001 fiscal year.

3. Proposed Archives Legislation

Aaron Vidaver reported that the Advocacy Committee was preparing a report proposing provincial archives legislation. The Committee hopes to present the document at this year's annual general meeting in late April. The Executive supports their efforts but requested that the report be completed by early March and submitted to the Executive for feedback prior to presentation to the general membership.

4. President's report

Chris Hives reported that he had not heard back officially from the Provincial Archives regarding the grant application for funds to support the administration of AABC programs for the 1999-2000 year.

The President noted that he had contacted the Provincial Archives regarding the second installment of grant funds. It is expected that funding will arrive in late December or early January.

Chris Hives stated that grant applications and guidelines had been received from the CCA for distribution. As these forms are now available electronically via the CCA website, it is hoped that the AABC will have an opportunity to reduce postage and duplication costs. Chris Hives is in the process of contacting member institutions to determine if they are willing to access the information electronically. He confirmed the Executive's commitment to ensure that everyone receives access to this information. As a result, members he is unable to contact will receive, by default, paper copies of the forms via the mail.

The President noted that a Newsletter Editorial Board has been assembled. The members of this board will be Jennifer Mohan, Marta Mafti, and Barb Towel. The Executive expressed its appreciation for their willingness to participate.

Chris Hives distributed a sample from the on-line version of the *Manual for Small Archives*. It is hoped that this version of the *Manual* will be completed by the end of November.

5. Treasurer's report

Lynne Waller presented financial statements to 31 September 1999. She reported that the three extra bank accounts used in the past for the grant programs, have been closed. Account surpluses arising from bank interest and transfers

from the administration account will be examined and redistributed during fiscal year end preparations.

The Treasurer reported that the AABC currently holds \$20,000 in GIC's. She recommends that, to ensure that the Association can function in an emergency, \$45,000 be available in surplus funds.

Lynne Waller asked for feedback regarding a proposed audit of the AABC's accounts. She presented a letter from accountant Steve Malish of Malish and Clark concluding that an audit was unnecessary given the current level of financial management. The Executive agreed that, at this point in time, an audit would not be a good investment given the expense of the procedure and the present state of the accounts.

The Treasurer provided an update on efforts to secure rebates on the AABC's GST expenditures. She will recommend how to proceed once further information has been received from the accountants and the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

The Executive agreed with Lynne Waller's recommendation to renew the Directors' Liability Insurance with Chambers Olsen.

6. Request from Northwest Archivists

Marnie Burnham reported that she had received an e-mail from the Northwest Archivists. The Chair of the Conference Program Committee requested a copy of the AABC membership list to enable their organization to distribute materials promoting their upcoming conference and workshops. Marnie Burnham inquired as to the AABC's policies on sharing such information. The Executive concluded that while they felt it was inappropriate to supply this organization with the membership list, arrangements could be made to provide advertising space in an upcoming newsletter.

Action: Marnie Burnham will contact the NWA to offer a reciprocal arrangement regarding conference advertising.

7. Spring Planning Forum

Consideration of this event will be deferred until Jane Turner is available to participate in the discussion.

8. AABC Conference 2000

Chris Hives discussed the progress of planning for the 2000-2001 conference to held in Richmond. Deidre Simmons has agreed to chair the Programme Committee with assistance from David Wardle. The Executive discussed potential volunteers for the Local Arrangements Committee.

Action: Lynne Waller will investigate potential venues in Richmond for the Conference.

9. AABC Grants 2000-2001

Chris Hives outlined the proposed grant applications for the upcoming fiscal year. He recommended that the Executive and the Archives Advisor/ Network Coordinator Advisory Committee begin to think about potential projects that might be supported through the CAIN initiative.

10. Committee reports

B.C. Archival Preservation Service Advisory Committee

Dorothy Lawson reported that the Preservation Committee had met to discuss proposed revisions to courses and to review the budgets for the C.C.I. workshops. In addition, Rosaleen Hill had presented a proposal relating to the development of preservation kits. Dorothy Lawson also welcomed Jennifer Roberts as a new committee member.

Grants Committee

Francis Mansbridge updated the Executive on efforts to distribute information relating to 2000-2001 grants.

Next meeting : 13 December 1999, 1 pm.

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**The British Columbia Archival Network:
A Retrospective (Part 1)**
by Bill Purver

As the odometer of time clicks over into a new millennium, it is timely to reexamine the role of the AABC and its B.C. Archival Union List initiative relative to the evolving provincial archival network. The union list, as a provincial registry for fonds and collection level descriptions of archives in publicly-accessible repositories throughout the province, has been viewed by the Association not only as the cornerstone in the development of provincial web-based archival resources but as an infrastructure around which to build programs and mechanisms designed to be inclusive for all archival institutions, both large and small, in the province. This inclusivity, and an attendant focus on education and advocacy, has characterized all stages of the BCAUL program, and has been cited as a model by other provincial associations, the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) through its Canadian Archival Information Network (CAIN) initiative, and various international projects, including most recently those of the Scottish Archival Network and the Welsh Archival Network.

What has allowed British Columbia to assume a leadership role in network development in Canada has been the active participation, enthusiasm and cooperation of individual archives in every corner of the province. The successes of AABC initiatives pale in comparison to the many achievements of archival institutions of all sizes in adapting, over the last decade, to new ways of analyzing and processing records and to making archival resources accessible in their communities and beyond.

Success stories abound as smaller archives from Smithers to Quesnel to Kaslo to Oliver to Enderby to Lytton to Powell River to Port Alberni to Lake Cowichan to White Rock, to name just a very few, have applied national standards and created or developed vibrant archival programs. Medium-sized archives in various regions have often supplied the spark for much of this development, witness the tremendous achievements of municipal or community archives in Richmond, Victoria, Vernon, Nanaimo, Mission, and Fort Steele (again, to name just a few) to adapt to new standards and to assist other archives in their regions.

In some ways, many of the larger archives have been driven to change their foci as a result of the examples set by smaller or medium-sized archives around them. Success, of course, has come with a big bang for a variety of large institutions, witness as one example the tremendous achievement of the City of Vancouver Archives in using standards as the basis for its comprehensive online access system.

In addition, the achievements of specialized archives in the province should be recognized. To mind immediately are the examples of archives serving various religious bodies. The Sisters of St. Ann in Victoria, Anglican Church archives around the province, and the United Church BC Conference Archives in Vancouver have all been leaders in adopting standardized approaches to managing their archival holdings and services.

University archives in the province have played a significant role as models for the implementation of standards and the development of access mechanisms to archival holdings through a network setting. The University of British Columbia has provided the expertise and leadership for the BC Archival Union List project from its inception, and its impressive application and implementation of standards has enabled the UBC Archives to achieve national recognition for its innovative web-based resources. Standardized practices for all archival functions have been the hallmark of the Simon Fraser University and University of Victoria Archives experiences, providing models of all aspects of archival work for institutions throughout the province, and sharing these models through the development of comprehensive web sites.

The provincial government archives, through its achievements with its web-based indexes and digitization, has also provided the archival community with internationally-acclaimed examples of how archives can be made interesting and accessible to a large community of users. Its Community Archives Assistance Program (CAAP) has provided funding to the AABC for its network initiatives and needed financial resources to institutions around the province faced with adapting to the challenges of the modern archival world.

The role that the AABC and its network initiatives have played in these achievements have been cited by many participating repositories, as well as by media outlets and the general public in reaction to the AABC's various programs and online resources. Initiatives such as those undertaken by the AABC can never be considered to be completely successful. There are still archives in the province struggling to adapt to archival standards, and, thus, to become full partners in the archival network enterprise provincially, and by extension, to the developing national network. Many of these institutions have had to deal with diminishing resources at a time when heightened expectations have been made of them as to the activities and services they should be carrying out and delivering. As more avenues of funding become available, as the BCAUL model is replicated, modified and adapted at the national level through the developing Canadian Archival Information Network, these institutions will be able to access resources to assist them in becoming full partners in the provincial and national networks.

Archives in British Columbia, if they step back to view the archival world outside of a narrow provincial perspective, should feel pride in their many accomplishments and in the fact that the province is viewed nationally as being a leader in so many aspects of archival network development. The province as a whole, through the energy, commitment, foresight and spirit of cooperation of its many archives, has provided a model for network initiatives well beyond our provincial borders.

The AABC, in its role as provincial representative on the Canadian Council of Archives, is committed to assist in the carrying out of the CCA's primary mandate, that of building a national archival system. The AABC's web based resources are ever developing, as are the functionalities of its BCAUL system. In the next issue of the AABC Newsletter, Part 2 of this retrospective will examine how archives throughout BC have exploited various of these functionalities and resources and will report on new opportunities for individual archives that the CCA's Canadian Archival Information Network initiative will provide

* * *

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A Guide to Archival Repositories in B.C.

by Bill Purver

GUIDE UPDATES

The following recent changes should be noted in the hardcopy version of *A Guide to Archival Repositories in British Columbia, 2nd Edition* published by the AABC in April, 1996. These changes have been updated on the Internet version of the *Guide* at: <<http://aabc.bc.ca/aabc/bcguide.html>>.

1. City of Surrey Archives

new email address: pnjohnson@city.surrey.bc.ca

2. Kootenay Lake Archives

new email address: archives@klhs.bc.ca

new web address: <http://www.klhs.bc.ca/KLHS/ARCHIVES.HTML>

3. Esquimalt Municipal Archives

new contact name: David Parker, Archivist

new email address: parkerd@mun.esquimalt.bc.ca

4. Chase and District Museum and Archives

new email address: cdma_chin@direct.ca

5. Delta Museum and Archives

new contact name: Laura Cheadle, Archivist

6. New Westminster Museum and Archives

new contact name: Jacqueline O'Donnell

new phone number: (604) 527-4640

new fax number: (604) 527-4641

new email address: jodonnell@city.new-westminster.bc.ca

new web site address: <http://www.city.new-westminster.bc.ca/cityhall/museum/index.html>

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BC Archives Preservation Service Update

by Rosaleen Hill

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The AABC re-launched the BC Archives Preservation Service (BCAPS) in June 1999. It has been a busy six months since then. In addition to the implementing the regular BCAPS services the focus for this program year has been to:

- highlight the need for disaster planning at the institutional level
- review and evaluate the BCAPS program so that future preservation strategies can be developed for the archival community in BC

In order to determine the future preservation strategies a preservation database was compiled to assist in assessing the situation and allow for priorities needs to be identified.

This database acts as a snapshot of where we are as a province in terms of preservation standards and requirements. 168 institutions are included in this database. They include AABC institutional member and non-members with archival collections. The following statistics drawn from the database give a general idea of where we are as a province and certainly highlight areas that need attention.

- 106 of the 168 are AABC institutional members
- 62 of the 168 are not AABC institutional members
- By the end of the year:
 - 85 of the current 106 AABC institutional members have received a site visit
 - 56 of the 62 non- institutional members have received a site visit (90%)
 - 70 of the 85 AABC institutional members have received a full facility assessment (82%)
 - 18 of the 85 AABC institutional members have received either abbreviated follow-up reports or preservation information packages (21%)
 - 18/106 have disaster plans (17%)
 - 22/106 have acceptable environmental control (21%)
 - 25/106 have used the environmental monitoring loan kit program (24%)

In addition to the future program planning, BCAPS has been operating all of the standard services: facility assessments, collection surveys, disaster planning and assistance, environmental monitoring loan kits, workshops and the conservation hotline.

Site Visits

Site visits have been made in the Lower Mainland, the Prince Rupert/Kitimat region and the Okanagan. During site visits this year the Revelstoke Historical Association Archives and the Oliver and District Archives stood out as being two institutions which have significantly upgraded their Archival storage areas. Congratulations!

Site visit trips are planned for the South Island during the week of 10-14 January and the North Island during the week of 6-10 March. If you would like to book a site visit during one of those weeks please contact Rosaleen at:

tel/fax 604/709-9263 or by e-mail at rhill@aabc.bc.ca

Workshops

The two preservation workshops currently offered by the AABC Education program "Principles of Conservation Management and Emergency Planning" and "Care and Handling of Photographs" have been reviewed, updated and are now offered in a PowerPoint format. The "Principles of Conservation Management and Emergency Planning" workshop was given in Victoria on 18-19 November to a small but spirited group! "Care and Handling of Photographs" is scheduled for 24-25 February in Nanaimo. This is an important follow-up workshop to the "Principles of Conservation Management and Emergency Planning" workshop. It is a lot of fun as part of the "preservation of photographs" day is spent learning about how to identify historic photographs. BCAPS now has a wide variety of historic photographs in the workshop collection, in addition to Rosaleen's collection, for use in this identification session!

The AABC/BCAPS also hosted a successful Canadian Conservation Institute Workshop "Storage Planning for Cultural Facilities" 1-2 November at the Vancouver Public Library. The VPL proved to be particularly good venue as we were able to have tours of the Special Collections Storage Vaults included as part of the workshop. The "Storage Planning for Cultural Facilities" workshop focused on the protection of collections from the agents of deterioration. The damaging effects of improper temperature and relative humidity, light, pollution and contaminants, fire, theft, pests and water and moisture were examined. Participants worked through the process of storage planning and design, including space analysis, layout, structural requirements and scheduling.

Environmental Loan Kit

The environmental loan program has proved to be very busy this year. The dataloggers are booked for the whole year and we have the start of a waiting list for next year. So if you are planning on borrowing a datalogger or other environmental loan equipment it would be worthwhile making arrangements soon.

Disaster Planning

Both the North Island and Fraser Valley AABC Regional Groups invited Rosaleen to speak at their regional meetings about disaster planning. In both sessions an informal discussion about disaster planning and other preservation related topics was offered.

In disaster prevention/assistance news BCAPS will be organizing and purchasing disaster salvage supply kits. One kit will be allocated per AABC region. Rosaleen will be contacting regional representatives early in January to arrange for one centrally located institution to house the supplies. The materials in these kits will be available to AABC institutional members in the event of a disaster.

This has been a busy and rewarding six months for the BC Archives Preservation Service. As always, if you have any suggestions for BCAPS or would like assistance with preservation questions please contact Rosaleen Hill at:

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AABC Newsletter

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