

archives
SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

BUSINESS PLAN

2007-2008

INTRODUCTION

The 2007-2008 Business Plan for the Archives Society of Alberta (ASA) will provide direction and guidance to meet the needs of Alberta's dynamic and diverse archival community in the coming year. The Business Plan outlines the ASA's structure and core objectives with links to goals, activities, outcomes and planned actions related to the core objectives.

Vision Statement

Striving to create a cohesive and engaged archival community, the Archives Society of Alberta will provide its members with the opportunities for professional assistance, continuing education, awareness initiatives, online presence and other services that the provincial archival community requires to assist the people of Alberta, Canada, and the world in experiencing the province's unique documentary heritage.

Core Objectives

- Promote and advance the collection, preservation, and use of archival materials
- Encourage and develop standard archival skills among those involved in archival work
- Provide an effective voice for archival interests in Alberta
- Improve access to archival materials, including the use of new technologies

Society Structure

The ASA is incorporated under the Alberta's *Societies Act* as a not-for-profit organization governed by five volunteer board members elected at annual general meetings and one board member elected by institutional members at the Institutional Forum, an advisory body to the board. The Society has staff members including a full-time Executive Director/Archives Advisor and part-time positions including an Administrative Coordinator, Systems Administrator, and a Financial Coordinator. When ASA staff does not assemble the Society's quarterly newsletter, a volunteer member of the society edits the newsletter. In addition to the work undertaken by these people, the ASA has a number of committees (listed below) that are tasked with various projects designed to accomplish the ASA's core objectives:

- Archives Network of Alberta (ANA) Committee (provides direction regarding the ASA's website as well as its online databases of archival descriptions and digitized materials)
- Communications Committee (promotes public awareness of archives, mostly in the form of coordinating Archives Week)
- Education Committee (coordinates archival education initiatives, including the Archives Institute fundamentals course as well as two advanced course offerings)
- Finance Committee (monitors the ASA's financial controls and systems)
- Grants Committee (adjudicates applications for project funding provided by the Archives Society of Alberta and the Canadian Council of Archives)

As defined in Section 1 of the ASA bylaws, the ASA's membership consists of the following categories:

- **Honourary:** Awarded by the ASA Annual General Meeting on recommendation of the ASA Board of Directors to individuals for their distinguished archives work in their own institution, on behalf of the ASA, or in another manner
- **Individual:** Available to any person who supports the objectives of the Society, is engaged in archival work, and pays the annual membership fee
- **Associate Institutional:** Available to any organization that has an interest in archives but does not meet the criteria of institutional membership
- **Institutional members:** Available to those institutions engaged in the identification, preservation and use of archival records who meets standardized criteria regarding how this work is done

Environmental Scan

Strengths

- The ASA's individual and institutional members are cooperative, working together on a variety of projects and issues of importance to the entire archival community.
- Most ASA institutional members have entries in the ANA databases, representing the highest percentage participation rate for a provincial database in Canada, and continue to add and update entries on a regular basis.
- The ASA receives provincial funding that has been adequate for its needs and in excess of that received by most other provinces.
- The ASA's Institute and advanced-level workshops continue to draw participants (including those from out-of-province) and are well received.
- The ASA is well known in the educational field for its online learning objects, particularly the popular "Letters from the Trunk" site.
- The ASA staff has been consistent for several years, providing a level of stability unusual for a provincial or territorial archival association.

Challenges

- In addition to feeling overworked at their own institutions, ASA members are experiencing volunteer burnout with the Society after participating in various projects or serving on the Board and its committees, making Board succession planning more difficult.

- Although the Centennial Legacies Grant Program funds allowed much new development in the archival community, core-operating funding from the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation has remained static since 2003 despite increased costs related to staff and sustainability of the ASA's online presence.
- Information about compliance to institutional membership standards is nearly a decade old, and changes in staff, mandates or other circumstances may have rendered obsolete the existing information available at the ASA office.
- Institutional members require increased grant project funding in addition to their existing operating funds to advance their institution's processing and preservation projects.
- ASA individual members have identified professional development needs in the areas of digital/e-records, and archivists require financial assistance to meet these and other continuing education needs, funding that may not be available at their institutions.
- ASA individual members are concerned about the lack of public awareness regarding the role of archives in society, identifying issues including the lack of comprehension by parent bodies / sponsors of the role of archives, loss of archival records, and attracting new members of the profession, as results of this low public profile.

The ASA will address these needs through the following initiatives:

Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Performance Measures, 2007-2008			
<i>Core Objective:</i> Encourage and develop standard archival skills among those involved in archival work			
<i>Goal</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Performance Measures</i>
Provide educational opportunities in archival practice at basic levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offer the six-day Archives Institute for basic archival education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individuals receive basic but intensive training in archival theory to run archival programs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attendance at workshops. All workshops will reach minimum participant levels.
Provide educational opportunities in archival practice at advanced levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offer two advanced level workshops – “Genealogists and Archives” and “Photographs from Acquisition to Access”	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Experienced archivists receive training in a specialized area of archival practice to broaden their knowledge	
Provide financial assistance for members to attend non-ASA professional development activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maintain the funding opportunities in the education and travel assistance program.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archivists from Alberta will bring knowledge from other disciplines and regions back to the community.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use of the PDTA fund. The entire PDTA budget will be expended.
Hold a two day conference in 2008 in conjunction with the Society’s AGM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Offer a pre-conference workshop as well as a series of sessions on archival theory and practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conference participants will receive up-to-date information on current archival practice and be able to network with colleagues	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Attendance at conference. Approximately 25% of the ASA’s members (will attend the conference.
Review compliance of ASA institutional members with standard criteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have members with documentation older than five-years resubmit compliance documents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Compliance with basic archival work standards will be confirmed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete review. All members with documentation older than five years will be examined.
Resource Implications			
<p>If it achieves minimum registration numbers, the Institute maintains a separate budget that is self-sustaining. It is anticipated that costs to hold the genealogy workshop will be higher than normal ASA courses, but the photograph workshop will likely be less expensive. The 2006-2007 PDTA budget was entirely spent, with no eligible claims denied for the period.</p> <p>A 2008 conference will require the creation of committees to provide ASA staff with direction and assistance with program and local arrangements.</p>			

Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Performance Measures, 2007-2008			
<i>Core Objective:</i> Promote and advance the collection, preservation and use of archival materials			
<i>Goal</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Performance Measures</i>
Provide advisory services to the general public, organizations and established archives in Alberta.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Respond to inquiries and conducting on-site visits with emerging or existing archives programs to advise about best archival practices.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New archival programs will be established to preserve Alberta's unique documentary heritage. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Established archives will receive information about upcoming developments affecting them. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Albertans will have access to accurate, professional information about archival practices.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of site visits. There will be approximately 15 site visits for 2007-2008 to both new and existing archival programs. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of new institutional members. There will be approximately 2 new institutional members for 2007-2008.

Resource Implications

The current budget permits the Archives Advisor to provide a basic level of service to the province's archival community, both to existing and developing archival programs.

Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Performance Measures, 2007-2008			
<i>Core Objective: Improve access to archival materials, including the use of new technologies</i>			
Goal	Activity	Outcomes	Performance Measures
<p>Provide and coordinate financial assistance to Alberta's archival community to process and preserve records</p> <p>Maintain an attractive, effective and accessible online presence for the ASA and its member institutions</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Providing Access to Holdings grants from Alberta Historical Resources Foundation (AHRF) funding to process and describe archival records.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adjudicating the Alberta portion of the grants offered through Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) to process, describe and preserve records</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Uploading new and revised materials to the ASA website and ANA databases</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Records important to the history of Alberta and its communities will be preserved and more accessible for researchers.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Researchers will have access to archival descriptions and digitized content from Alberta's archives</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ASA members (and people surfing the Internet) will be informed about association activities.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of fonds-level descriptions in the ANA database. The Access to Holdings funding will result at least 15 new fonds-level descriptions totalling 15 metres of records available for research.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Website Updates. The website will be updated monthly at a minimum, more often if required.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Database Updates. The ANA databases will be updated monthly, with quarterly updates sent to the regional and national databases.</p>

Resource Implications

Current levels of funding for Access to Holdings grants are becoming insufficient in light of rising costs, and certain sizes of projects cannot be undertaken any longer. Sustainability of the ASA's website, databases, and online learning objects is a continuing expense that now must be absorbed by regular operating funds as opposed to project funding.

Goals, Activities, Outcomes and Performance Measures, 2007-2008			
<i>Core Objective: Provide an effective voice for archival interests in Alberta</i>			
Goal	Activity	Outcomes	Performance Measures
Increase public awareness of the archival community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coordinate Archives Week 2007 with the theme “Archives Unleashed,” including a kick-off event and promotional calendar <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sponsor a quarterly archives-themed column in Legacy Magazine using federal funding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Archival institutions will participate in a province-wide event demonstrating the network of institutions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The archival community will direct an archives-friendly message to an audience sympathetic to heritage issues but may not understand specific archival issues.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation in the virtual exhibit. Fifteen institutional members will participate in the virtual exhibit. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legacy Magazine columns. Four columns on archival issues will appear through Legacy Magazine’s publication and website.
Increase awareness of the archival community among allied professions and other audiences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentations at conferences of allied professions and other organizations – Alberta Museums Association (AMA), Alberta Library Conference, and teachers’ conferences	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The ASA will present a consistent, accurate and professional message about the community to key organizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentation of ASA Award within AMA program. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presentations at conferences. The ASA will present at a minimum of three conferences of allied professions or key audiences.

Resource Implications

Although ASA has applied for matching funds from the National Archival Development Program (NADP) for both the promotional calendars and the Legacy Magazine articles, there will be an extra marketing expense of approximately \$4,000 to achieve these public awareness goals over the funds that are usually spent on Archives Week.

Other awareness activities will be pursued as they present themselves as beneficial to the ASA’s overall goals.