

# archives

## SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

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### ASA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Susan Stanton, ASA President*



This is my first editorial as the new President of the Archives Society of Alberta. My presidential appointment came in May at the ASA's biennial conference in Red Deer. Time has flown by since the election and there have been several highlights. Through my position with the ASA, I was able to attend two conferences in less than a

month. Fortunately, I love to travel. I enjoy visiting new places, exploring fresh shops and stores, and eating in local restaurants. Consider this column as postcards from my trips.

Many ASA members had the chance to go to the 2008 ASA conference. The event, held in Red Deer from May 22 to 24, was a great success. The conference theme was "Foundations of Change" and the well attended sessions covered everything from electronic records management to preservation issues. Delegates were entertained by a lively hoop dancer and awed by the dramatic portrayal of a year in the life of a pioneer woman doctor. It was a good chance to network with colleagues from around the province, take a heritage walk through the city of Red Deer, and enjoy big breakfasts and delectable dinners. Congratulations to the ASA members and staff that organized, presented, and attended this conference. The planning was faultless and I hope the ASA can host another well run event in 2010.

In June I traveled to Fredericton, New Brunswick for the annual Association of Canadian Archivists conference. I represented the ASA at the pre-conference Council of Presidents meeting. I reported that the ASA is a dynamic and prosperous provincial society. The other provincial

*continued on page 2*

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The Archives Society of Alberta is supported in part by a grant from the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.

councils were impressed (and maybe a bit envious) that the ASA received supplemental funding for “community archives” this year. I was able to give updates on recently completed initiatives such as; the wrap-up of the preliminary institutional membership review, the success of the 2008 ASA conference, and the implementation of the server upgrade. The sessions at the ACA conference focused on the topic of digital records. Presenters reassured us that most archives are grappling with the concerns of the digital age. It was obvious that Canadian archivists are well aware of the issues and are facing this new challenge head on. I enjoyed my four days in Fredericton. It is a quaint city with beautiful built heritage and an interesting history. The weather was lovely and the lobster was delicious. I look forward to attending ACA 2009 in Calgary.

I want to thank the ASA for giving me this opportunity to talk about what goes on behind the scenes. I look forward to reporting on new developments, and perhaps more traveling, in the next issue.

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## **ARCHIVES NETWORK OF ALBERTA NEWS**

*Janet McMaster, System Administrator, Archives Network of Alberta*

There are a few items that have come up recently regarding the Cinemage databases that owner-editors should be aware of:

1. Repositories Database - The ASA Repositories Database should contain up-to-date information for all of our institutional members. If you are an ASA institutional member have not checked this recently, please go into the Directory of Archives at: [http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V\\_ITEM\\_ID=68](http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=68). If there are any updates/revisions that should be made, owner-editors can sign onto asaback and make the necessary changes, or if you prefer, you can e-mail them to me at [jmcmast@shaw.ca](mailto:jmcmast@shaw.ca) and I will update your information. All changes will be reflected on asalive when the updates are done at the end of each month.
2. Deleting Records — As some of you are aware, there have been a few isolated incidents recently of records that have inadvertently gone missing from the databases. Jon Nightingale from Cinemage has been investigating the problem. He does not feel this is a widespread issue; however, additional controls have been put in place to prevent this from happening in the future. While new records and revised descriptions show up on the back-up server, deleted records do not. As a result, until further notice, please send me a quick e-mail at [jmcmast@shaw.ca](mailto:jmcmast@shaw.ca) if you delete any records from ANA, Alberta InSight or Alberta InWord, so that I will be able to monitor this.
3. Exiting the databases – When you have completed a session in any of the Cinemage databases, please exit by clicking on the “Home” key at the top of the page. This will properly close the session, and hopefully prevent any unauthorized users from accessing our system.

The ANA databases are available to all of the ASA’s institutional members. Training is provided at no cost to members who wish to contribute new material or who have questions about revising their existing material. If you have any questions about the databases, or would like to arrange for training, please contact me by e-mail at [jmcmast@shaw.ca](mailto:jmcmast@shaw.ca), or by phone at (403) 236-3406.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE ARCHIVES ADVISOR

Michael Gourlie, Executive Director/Archives Advisor

The previous “From the Desk of the Archives Advisor” column focused on the centennial anniversary of the appointment of Katherine Hughes as Alberta’s first Provincial Archivist. Around the time the column was published, two additional events occurred that prompted a consideration of the apparent state of the history of the archival profession in Canada.

The first event was an update to the website of the Association of Canadian Archivists that added brief biographical sketches of its honorary members, highlighting the contributions made to the profession by selected archivists over the years. These archivists played a significant role in a variety of ways, whether it was drafting enabling legislation for archival programs, writing definitive monographs, or founding national advocacy organizations. Names such as Hugh Taylor and Alan Ridge are familiar to many Alberta archivists, while the contributions of those outside Alberta, such as Helen McClung or Phyllis Blakeley, have become obscured with distance as well as the passage of time. (As an aside, the list of honorary members features a number of people with Alberta connections, including L.H. Thomas, Hugh Taylor, Alan Ridge, Jean Tener, Harold Holland, and Terry Eastwood). Certainly, many archivists outside of Alberta would have trouble recognizing Alan Ridge as a Canadian archivist of note.

The second event was a request from *Archivaria* for me to review *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts*, published by the Society of American Archivists in its Archival Fundamentals Series II. In addition to its chapters on basic archival principles and the current challenges facing the profession, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts* devotes a chapter to the evolution of the archival profession in the United States from the seventeenth century to the present. The chapter succinctly describes early trends in archival acquisition, the development of educational programs, notable early theorists, the establishment of professional organizations, and the evolution of the National Archives and Records Administration. Although it was clearly a summary history of the evolution of the archival profession in the United States, the chapter provided enough information to sustain a narrative that a curious reader could follow.

The combination of the revelations provided by the honorary member biographies and the pithy summary of the American archival profession led me to wonder why there is no similar overview of the history of the Canadian archival profession. While there must have been theses written on the subject of Canadian archival development at the federal, provincial and local levels, none of these sources are widely available to the general reader. The Canadian Historical Association published a pamphlet in 1997 outlining the development of the National Archives of Canada, and work is underway on an in-depth institutional history, but any volume focusing solely on the history of one institution misses out on the unique origins of other institutions across the country and the personalities and contributions of the people who worked outside of Ottawa. How much do we know about our own institutions and their accomplishments? As individuals retire and internal oral tradition gradually breaks down, it becomes more difficult to understand how and why particular institutions have evolved to their current state.

With every deed of gift and reference letter completed, the paper and electronic trails created by the archival community build a history that documents our role in society and indicates our ability to fulfill society’s needs. Without an overview of the evolution of that role at the national or even local level, newcomers to the profession and outsiders with an interest in our work (or, more importantly, people who fund our work) will always see a fragmented, subjective and current segment of a community rather than an evolved, logical and (somewhat) coherent system. While it might not be a best-seller or completely capture the unique nature of all aspects of the Canadian archival system, a systematic overview of the profession in Canada, either as a chapter within a larger volume about cultural professions or a stand-alone publication, would provide a foundation for discussion about the origins of the profession and its structures and perhaps uncover a few pioneering archivists whose stories are just waiting to be uncovered.

**“FUTURE EVIDENCE, PAST RECORD”  
AABC AND ARMA VI 2008 CONFERENCE  
VICTORIA, BC  
24-26 APRIL 2008**

*Jane Bowe-McCarthy, United Church of Canada, Alberta and Northwest Conference Archives*

What more can a weary faith group archivist ask for than a stimulating archives conference with engaging and thoughtful presentations, fellowship with friends and colleagues, in the beautiful city of Victoria no less... all in the same week as the big Alberta springtime snowstorm! Such was my good fortune at the end of April when I attended “Future Evidence, Past Record”, the joint conference meeting of The Archives Association of British Columbia (AABC) and ARMA (Vancouver Island).

Attendance at this three-day conference event was strong with approximately 120 records managers and archivists converging on the Harbour Towers Hotel. A good balance of theory, method and practice was maintained throughout the Conference with sessions ranging from “The Evolution of Records and Information Management—Its Impact on Evidentiary and Archival Considerations”, “Managing Personal Records – It Starts at the Desktop”, “Classifications for Real People: Designing for the End Users”, “Documents Created by Children”, “The ‘Lone Arranger’ or the Cotillion – How to Secure Funding for your Institution”, just to name a few. Several workshops were held concurrently with the sessions and these included “Community Heritage Mapping”, “Metadata and Archives”, “Documenting Gardens and Landscapes” and “Digital Output: Inkjet and Laser Printers (or Life and Death in the Digital World).

Two sessions were of particular interest to me though in terms of my own professional development. One session spoke directly on why our parent bodies should care about their records and archives management programs; the other session gave me a glimpse into the global and future direction of our profession.

Practicing lawyer, librarian and records management consultant, Stuart Rennie, brought home the legal and evidential justifications for recordkeeping and laid out the elements of a legally valid records retention program in his session entitled “The Case for Recorded Information Management and Local Governments”. I couldn’t help but think ‘if only this fellow could spend an hour with my executive’ how much better informed they would be on why records and archives management is so important. That it’s not just about ‘neat old stuff’.

As I settled into the second session of note, a fellow archivist referred to Peter Van Garderen’s session on the ICA-AtoM [Access to Memory] Project as ‘cutting edge stuff’. So right then my curiosity was piqued. However, I must confess that I had a nagging suspicion that I was about to be bamboozled with ‘techno-geek archivist speak’. Being out of the archives loop for some time now I didn’t even know what the AtoM Project was all about. It turns out that the International Council on Archives AtoM [Access to Memory] Project is all about developing open source, archival description software, based on ICA standards, for low-income countries in Africa so that it is easy for archival descriptions to be entered and easy for end-users to access. I was very pleasantly surprised to find that Peter Van Garderen is highly skilled at presenting his project in non-technical, user-friendly terms. Peter’s passion and knowledge of this project also gave me insight into the future of archives and a new generation of archivists who are young and technologically-savvy — addressing the needs and expectations of our young and technologically-savvy users.

The Provincial Archivist of British Columbia, Gary Mitchell, was the keynote speaker and he spoke passionately about the development and evolution of our profession and our collective obligation as professional archivists to protect and uphold the documentary heritage that society entrusts to our care. Gary went on to speak of the ‘societal assumption’ that archivists are the ones responsible for protecting the heritage of society. For our colleagues working on the records management side, society depends on them to ensure accountability and open access to records of society. For colleagues on the archival side, society expects us to provide access to records which is often a challenge given our limited resources. Gary also reminded us that to connect with our constituents means to deal with folks where they are at and in a language that is not full of the jargon and lingo that we might use amongst ourselves at professional gatherings such as this conference. Keeping it real for our users will keep it real for us.

Social events included a stellar reception at Government House hosted by the Honourable Steven L. Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, member of the Sto:lo Nation, and Patron of the Archives Association of British Columbia. His Honour has conducted research in the BC Archives and he conveyed his appreciation for the value of archives as the memory of British Columbian society and the work that archivists do on behalf of society.

Other social events included a UBC School of Library, Archives and Information Studies Alumni Reception, banquet, and walking and bus tours.

Altogether, I came away from this conference energized, refreshed and inspired. I commend to anyone in ASA to consider attending an AABC conference if such an opportunity comes their way in the future.

I wish to thank the Archives Society of Alberta for giving me this professional opportunity under the Professional Development Travel Assistance Grant.

## ***LES FRANCOPHONE EN ALBERTA: COURAGE ET DETERMINATION***

*Jonathan Nordland, Description and Preservation Francophone Archivist, Provincial Archives of Alberta*

In May the Provincial Archives of Alberta created a display, which will run until the beginning of September, telling the story of Alberta's francophones through its holdings. Titled *Les Francophones en Alberta: Courage et Determination*, the exhibition draws upon the PAA's francophone records, chronicling the French experience in Alberta since the first white settlers arrived during the fur trade.

The exhibit consists of twelve bilingual panels that briefly tell the story of the various contributions francophones have made to the creation of Alberta. It traces the history of the French Albertans through its associations, both economic and cultural, its religious work, and its early pioneering work. Instead of being strictly chronological, the exhibit has been grouped according to the various activities of the Francophone community from the early days of missionary work and pioneering to its present-day economic and cultural activities. The exhibit flows through time with overlaps as it traces the various stages and activities that were important to the francophone community. The last panel states the objectives of the archive and reminds the viewer of the importance of considering their records for donation. After all, the exhibit will always be an incomplete story so long as important stories remain hidden in anonymous basements and attics.

Over the last few years, the PAA has been moving towards making its francophone records available to wider community. This has involved the retro processing of over 130 identified fonds and describing them both in French and English. The work has been carried out through a contract funded by both the PAA and the Francophone Secretariat, which has resulted in exhibitions such as this and a greater presence for the archives in the francophone community of Alberta. So far, the francophone project at the PAA has been a success. It seems new acquisitions arrive under to the project daily and there appears to be an awareness growing within the francophone community both of archives and of Franco-Albertan history. The exhibit has been another valuable outreach tool for the PAA in soliciting acquisitions from the community.

To date, the exhibition has been a success and is scheduled to be displayed at the Faculté Saint-Jean and possibly travelled to francophone and immersion schools after its run at the PAA. *Les Francophones en Alberta: Courage et Determination* runs until the PAA until September 6.

## **PREFACE TO THE 2008 REVISION**

*Sharry Watson, Canadian Committee on Archival Description*

Nearly twenty years have passed since Kent Haworth's extensive preface to the first edition of Rules for Archival Description (RAD) in 1990. Over this period Canadian institutions and the archival profession have made a significant investment in RAD, resulting in increased standardization of archival descriptions and improved access by users to archival holdings.

The initial publication and subsequent implementation of RAD reflects the substantial effort of the members of the Bureau of Canadian Archivists' (BCA) Planning Committee on Descriptive Standards. Today Archives Canada, the national archival database network, aggregates more than 55,000 RAD-compliant fonds and collection-level descriptions, promoting the discovery of, and access to, archival material held in Canadian repositories. Following the development of RAD, the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) charged a committee of experts with monitoring and promoting issues related to archival descriptive standards within the context of the Canadian archival system. Established in 1996, the Canadian Committee on Archival Description (CCAD) is responsible for the continuing maintenance, review, interpretation, and revision of RAD.

Maintaining and updating RAD represents a significant effort. Since 1990, and in collaboration with the Canadian archival community, the standard has been enriched by regular rule revisions as well as the addition of an index and several chapters that provide guidance on the description of specific media.

In 2001, the Canada-U.S. Task Force on Archival Description (CUSTARD) was initiated to explore the potential for harmonizing archival descriptive standards within North America. At the time, the initiative revealed what were felt to be significant divergences in approach between Canadian and U.S. practice. At the conclusion of CUSTARD in 2003 a collaborative draft document formed the basis for the U.S. standard, Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS), and a comprehensive revision of the Canadian standard referred to as draft RAD2.

Over the course of 2004 there was comprehensive consultation on the draft RAD2 document. Not unlike the CUSTARD project, this consultative process revealed widely divergent opinions from within the Canadian archival community. Following a careful review of

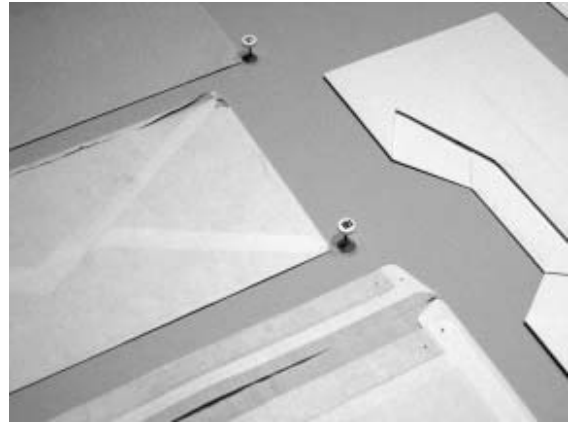
feedback received, CCAD put forward to the CCA a number of options for proceeding with the development of RAD. The approved option saw the Committee move forward to draft a series of revisions to RAD based on those aspects of draft RAD2 that received the most consensus from the Canadian archival community.

The 2008 revision to RAD is the result of this effort, and reflects the responsibility of CCAD to directly respond to needs expressed by the Canadian archival community. The revision sees the addition of a number of rules as well as a new chapter. The revision means to make the standard more flexible and reflective of the range of descriptive practice in Canadian archives. For example, RAD now includes rules that provide guidance for those approaches where the series constitutes the highest level of description. These rules make the standard more permissive, and will ultimately allow more Canadian institutions to participate in the national archival database.

The revision also includes rules that guide the description of collections and discrete items. Archival material varies with respect to provenance. Rules have been added to provide guidance for the description of collections of material assembled on the basis of a common characteristic. A new chapter includes rules for the description of discrete items that do not form part of a larger body of materials. The addition of these rules will support archivists to consistently describe the range of material that make up the holdings of Canadian archival repositories.

Finally, CCAD is very pleased that the 2008 revision incorporates a Statement of Principles. The principles serve as a conceptual framework for the standard that represents a contemporary approach to archival description. They mean to guide descriptive practice and inform the evolution of standardization in Canada. The sum of the changes implemented in the 2008 revision allow archivists and institutions greater flexibility, latitude and the exercise of judgement in describing archival materials, while at the same time firmly grounding practice within a framework of explicit principles.

The 1990 publication of RAD represented a substantial and cooperative effort by the Planning Committee on Descriptive Standards. The 2008 revision to RAD reflects ongoing dialogue by the Canadian profession on the nature and evolution of contemporary descriptive practice. As a national archival descriptive standard, RAD continues to require the input of, and feedback from, the archival professional community. In addition to identifying areas of consensus, recent community consultations also revealed a number of areas with greater divergence of opinion. These points of divergence will form the basis for future discussion, consultation and revision of the national descriptive standard.



*Touch Paper Once Exhibit*

## ***TOUCH PAPER ONCE –AN ARTWORK BASED ON ARCHIVES***

*Jane Parkinson, Archivist, The Banff Centre, Paul D. Fleck Library & Archives*

To celebrate The Banff Centre’s 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Walter Phillips Gallery commissioned Toronto artist Micah Lexier to create a new work based on the Gallery’s archive. He began his project with a visit to the archives in which he spent an intense week methodically looking through every box and files in chronological order, virtually touching every piece of paper.

As Micah explained, “I started by selecting those items that interested me. I was not looking so much at the content (what was written on the paper) but on what the paper looked like. [...] My goal was to respond authentically and intuitively to the material, the result of which would be a (very personal and idiosyncratic) history of the gallery.” This simple, minimalistic selection resulted in the vitrines for *Touch Paper Once*.

The Gallery was founded in 1976 to commission and exhibit contemporary art and has kept complete files of their activities. Micah’s comments to me about the project give an artist’s perspective of what archives can reveal:

Below are some excerpts from an interview with Micah regarding this exciting exhibit of archival records as works of art:

“The title, *Touch Paper Once*, comes from a concept that a friend told me about years ago. He had attended a seminar on how to be more efficient and was told about the concept of only touching paper once – meaning that we need to deal with things right away

and not put them aside to be dealt with later. For instance, when a bill comes in you should pay it right away, file it and be done...in other words “deal with it”. I like the way the title resonated with my activity, which was to try to literally touch each piece of paper in the archive as I made my deliberations about what would be included in the exhibition.

“Over the years I have developed an interest in simple, minimal imagery. I am very interested in process and in the kinds of marks we make with our hands, specifically handwriting. I am also attracted to the kinds of drawings we make when we are concentrating on something else. I like quickly written notes or sketches that are made to communicate something – the kind that are made not as an end product but as a means of passing on some technical detail. So of course these were the kinds of documents I was drawn to when I went through the archive. [...] There were a lot of items that were chosen because they reflected some kind of process or passage of time, for instance people revising their artist statements or changing the insurance value of a work. There also were lot of pieces of paper that were punctuated in some way, including lists of artists with certain names marked with coloured pen or memos with selected words underlined.

“I noticed lots of trends and shifts. At the beginning of the archive I noticed copious handwritten letters and lots of coloured tissue papers which were the carbon copies of typed letters. The evolving technologies of communication affected the kinds of

documents that were generated and I noticed the introduction of faxes at a certain point (of various kinds and qualities – thermal, plain paper) which were followed by email. Emails struck a pretty hard blow to the richness of the archive as most correspondence became digital and were not printed out that often.

“To announce and accompany the exhibition we created a poster that describes each of the items in the show in a very minimal way. With the exception of some photo documentation, this piece is paper is all that that will be left when the show comes down – one piece of paper standing in for the 149 pieces in the show, which in turn stand in for the (tens of) thousands of pieces of paper in the archives.”



*Touch Paper Once* Exhibit

*Touch Paper Once* is installed in the project room of the Walter Phillips Gallery, as part of *Bureau de change*, an exhibition celebrating The Banff Centre’s 75th Anniversary, curated by Helga Pakasaar and Sylvie Gilbert. It runs until September 28.

Micah’s Lexier’s current project is *Half K*, a large public installation on the site of a new Torode commercial and residential development in Calgary.

For further information see

<http://www.banffcentre.ca/wpg/exhibitions/2008/lexier/>


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## WHEAT STRAW PAPER MAKES A COMEBACK!

Lori Podolsky Nordland, Alberta Research Council

At the 2008 Annual General Meeting for the Friends of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, the Board and its members had the great pleasure of hearing about one of Alberta's Best Kept Secrets. Steve Hogle, Vice President of Communications and Corporate Affairs, was invited as the guest speaker. Dynamic and entertaining, Hogle captivated the audience as he spoke about the Alberta Research Council (ARC) and its impact on Alberta past, present and future. He connected the contributions of ARC through the people, bringing a sense of life to this hidden gem, and by extension ARC history which is documented through its holdings at the Provincial Archives of Alberta and at the University of Alberta Archives.

Unbeknownst to everyone at the meeting, there was another well kept secret. Following Hogle's speech, Provincial Archives of Alberta Reference Archivist Karen Simonson made a wonderful connection between a holding donated to the Archives in 1989 and a current project that is underway at ARC. This connection involves paper.

This past summer, the Alberta Research Council was working on a project that transforms wheat straw into paper. This work became the focus of local and national media coverage when the June edition of the *Canadian Geographic* was printed on paper made in part from wheat straw fibres. Using wheat stalk waste for the paper will lessen our ecological footprint by reducing the number of trees used by the newspaper and other industries. Wheat straw paper is made up of twenty per cent wheat straw,

forty per cent recycled fibre content and forty per cent wood pulp.

Described as revolutionary and innovative, at least in Canada, this "wheat sheet" was first pursued in the 1920s. The Straw Paper Company of Canada Limited, headquartered in Edmonton, was one of the first companies to attempt to manufacture paper from straw. The company secured a license from the Straw Cellulose Products Company in Portland, Maine, to use their patent and process for a straw pulp and paper mill. Using the Bache-Wigg Process (invented by John Bache-Wigg and his father), the Straw Paper Company began to produce straw paper. Unfortunately, the company did not experience any success and it liquidated in 1928.

Through good foresight, the records of the Straw Paper Company of Canada and the Straw Paper Syndicate have been deposited at the Provincial Archives of Alberta by Diane Coulthard, granddaughter of one of the founding board members, Harold Fletcher McKee. The Straw Paper Company of Canada Limited Fonds consists of records from the company and syndicate: agreements, correspondence, reports, financial information, bylaws, minutes, newspaper clippings and samples of straw paper. A full RAD description can be found in the Archives Network of Alberta database.

As for the wheat sheet of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, check out page 11 of the June edition of the *Canadian Geographic*.

### ***YOUR ASA BOARD - MEET SHELLEY RESPONDEK, INDIVIDUAL MEMBER-AT-LARGE***



Hi, my name is Shelley Respondek and I am the new Individual Member -at- Large for the Archives Society of Alberta. I have been an archivist with the Red Deer and District Archives since October 2005, and have worked in several archives throughout Ontario. In June 2005 I received my Master of Information Studies degree, Archives Stream from the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto and prior to that received my Bachelor's of Arts from Wilfrid Laurier University in History and North American Historical-Industrial Archaeology. I am honoured to serve as your representative on the Executive for the ASA, and welcome your comments and suggestions. Shelley

## A MARRIAGE OF ARCHIVES AND THEATRE – Part II

Karen Simonson, Provincial Archives of Alberta

Archives hold many fascinating stories, just waiting to be told. Last year, MAA & PAA Theatre, a joint venture with my husband, David Cheoros, brought the story of Mary Percy Jackson to audiences at the Edmonton Fringe Festival. The play was also performed at the ASA's conference banquet in Red Deer earlier this year. The storytelling for this play was fairly straightforward. We selected and shaped excerpts from the fabulous and witty letters Dr. Jackson had written to her family and friends during her first two years in Alberta.

The initial impulse to transform the letters for the stage came at the Provincial Archives' Voices of the Past event. The story for our second venture was not as obvious as the previous year. We did some searching at the Archives, looking for a topic and toying with the idea of doing something with bush pilots, but nothing seemed to grab us. As archivists, we know that the great stories are there, just waiting to be discovered. However, finding aids do not necessarily direct researchers to "really interesting stuff."

This year's suggestion came from Irene Jendzjowsky, who one day simply asked, "What about the Brownlee scandal?" After some initial research, we were hooked on the idea. The case – which drew international attention when it broke in 1934 – came down to a case of "he said/she said." In 1933, Vivian MacMillan brought forward a civil case against then-Premier John Brownlee, under the

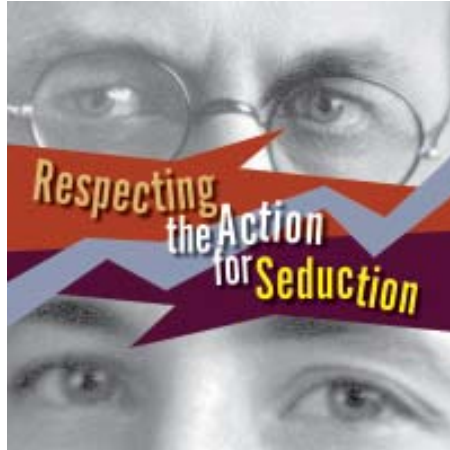
*Seduction Act* (full title of the 1903 version: *An Act Respecting the Action for Seduction*) purporting that there had been a two-and-a-half year affair between herself and the Premier. Brownlee denied the affair.

Neither could prove their version of events, or completely disprove the other's story. The case, appealed as far as the Privy Council in England, ended with a judgment in favour of Ms. MacMillan (by that point, Mrs. Sorenson).

The presentation of this story was not going to be straightforward. We could possibly have just used testimony from the court transcripts, but we chose a different approach – using what was said in court to recreate key moments from the recorded accounts, and blending these with actual testimony. We

then concluded with a series of scenes speculating on a third course of events about what might well have happened. A fortuitous presentation at the Red Deer Conference by Stacy Kaufeld made us aware that the Legal Archives Society of Alberta held the record of Vivian's lawyer, Neil Maclean. This of course prompted a trip to Calgary to check them out.

Many of you will no doubt have seen the play, *Respecting the Action for Seduction*, by the time you read this. For those who haven't, we hope that you'll be able to see it some time in the future. Visit [www.maapaa.ca/](http://www.maapaa.ca/) for details about the play and MAA & PAA Theatre.



### ARCHIVES WEEK 2008

Mark your calendar! This year's Archives Week will take place from October 6-11, and this year's theme, "Historic Hi-Tech," has proven irresistible to ASA's institutional members. Twenty institutions have submitted images for the annual virtual exhibit, and many of these images will appear in the 2009 calendar that is currently under production. The ASA encourages its members to host events during Archives Week to promote their programs and their holdings. If you have Archives Week events to publicize, please post details to the asa-l listserv or email them to Michael Gourlie at [mgourlie@shaw.ca](mailto:mgourlie@shaw.ca) for posting.



Television comes to Calgary, Alberta, September 1954. NA-5600-6044f, Glenbow Archives

## PEOPLE & PLACES

Beginning with this issue, members and the general public will be able to access copies of the Archives Society of Alberta newsletter at Library and Archives of Canada and at the Government of Alberta Library. Online copies can be accessed through the Library and Archives Canada AMICUS database at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/index-e.html>. In addition, the provincial government library for the Ministry of Culture and Community Spirit, located on the 5th floor of Commerce Place in Edmonton, regularly receives the ASA newsletter.

The Sam Steele collection has arrived in Alberta. Purchased through collaboration between the Glenbow Museum, the University of Alberta and the Department of Canadian Heritage for \$1.8 million, the collection contains artifacts and archival materials pertaining to Steele, who was a noted Canadian soldier and the third officer sworn into the newly-formed North-West Mounted Police.

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The ASA will present a workshop, "Oral History Collections: Management and Digitization," at the University of Calgary on October 17-18, 2008. Presented by Erin Suliak and Norman Glowach of the NWT Archives, the workshop will focus primarily on the management (as opposed to the creation) of oral history collections in archival institutions, including a discussion of digitization. For further information and a registration form, please visit the workshop section of the ASA website at [http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V\\_ITEM\\_ID=50](http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=50).

The Friends of the Provincial Archives of Alberta Society is pleased to announce that Kristan Cook will continue her work at the Provincial Archives of Alberta as the Retro-Description Archivist.

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The Peace River Museum, Archives and Mackenzie Centre is the newest institutional member of the Archives Society of Alberta. Visit its webpage in the Residents Section of [www.peaceriver.govoffice.com](http://www.peaceriver.govoffice.com).

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Karen Simonson is the recipient of the 2008 Alan D. Ridge Publication Award for her article, "Memories Resurrected in Context: Gender and Remembrance in Charlotte Black's Scrapbook," published in *Archivaria* 62 (Fall 2006). Congratulations Karen!

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Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA)  
Annual Conference  
[www.archivists.ca](http://www.archivists.ca)

**Rights, Responsibilities, Trust: Archives and Public Affairs**  
May 15 – 17, 2009, Calgary, Alberta

Mark your calendar!

### ***YOUR ASA BOARD - MEET MARY NUTTING, SECRETARY***

Mary Nutting manages South Peace Regional Archives in Grande Prairie. She has a General Studies degree from Athabasca University, and began her career in Archives when she was hired to do an archival records survey for the Grande Prairie area in 1999. After the survey was complete, it was obvious that Grande Prairie needed an archives, so Mary was hired to set up an Archives within the Grande Prairie Museum in January 2000. From a half-time position and 500 sq. ft. of space, the Archives has increased to two full-time staff and about 2000 sq. ft. of space. In 2004 the name changed to South Peace Regional Archives, and in 2007 split from the Grande Prairie Museum to form its own Society and board.

# SUBMISSIONS? QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS?

The *Archives Society of Alberta Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Archives Society of Alberta. Submissions, questions and suggestions should be directed to the Newsletter Editor c/o

Archives Society of Alberta  
PO Box 4067  
South Edmonton Post Office  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6E 4S8

Editor contact information:  
Telephone: (780) 424-2697  
Fax: (780) 425-1679  
Email: jlnordland@yahoo.ca

Individuals and institutions are encouraged to submit articles, reviews, reports, photographs or Letters to the Editor to the ASA Newsletter, Issues #2, 3 and 4. Submissions are preferred in electronic format as Word files for textual submissions, or as JPG files for graphic submissions.

Submission deadlines are:  
September 30th Issue #2 - Winter  
January 15th Issue #3 - Spring  
April 30th Issue #4 - Summer

\*Issue #1 is reserved for Annual Reports of the Society and its committees

The views expressed in the *Archives Society of Alberta Newsletter* are not necessarily those of the Archives Society of Alberta or its Editor.

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## Archives Society of Alberta Membership Application 2008 - 2009

Name (Institution or Individual)

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Province

Postal Code

Telephone

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Fax

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Voting Delegate (Associate / Institutional)

Institutional Affiliation (Individual Members)

### Type of Membership - Please Check

- Archives Employee \$40.00
- Students, Volunteers, Seniors \$20.00
- Associate Institutional Member \$60.00
- Institutional Member (membership fee is based on the archives operating budget. Please contact the ASA for further information)
- Yes, I would like to volunteer for an ASA Committee

**Please make cheque or money order payable to the Archives Society of Alberta and mail to:**

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