

The Saskatchewan Archives celebrates Heritage Week with

Archives in Your Attic !

"You have your Grandmother's passport, landing card, diary, letters from her sister on the farm, a stack of old photos and records of a ladies' auxiliary club when she served as vice-president. Then there is the old family Bible, Eaton's catalogues from the turn of the century, and Grandfather's ledger from his hardware store. Before you recycle those old papers and fading pictures, take another look. They just might be an important piece of history."

With these words, the Saskatchewan Archives Board brought the importance of archives to the community and our society into focus, and invited the public to its Archives in Your Attic event held at its Regina location on Saturday, February 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. In celebration of Heritage Week 2003, the event was the first-ever of this nature held by the Archives, but has already been declared an annual event.

Members of the public were invited to drop by the Archives and bring their personal archival documents... diaries, correspondence, old photographs, slides, papers, paintings, sketches, posters, certificates, maps and films... Limited monetary appraisals were also given by a local book dealer and member of the National Archival Appraisal Board. A conservator was on hand to provide conservation advice and several tours of the facilities were given by senior archivists. Coffee and refreshments were provided on the third floor along with two screenings of the 1955 film *Face of Saskatchewan*.

Publicity efforts attracted an almost unbelievable flurry of media interest, putting archives firmly in the minds of the public. A *Leader Post* writer and photographer visited the Archives and a feature article appeared on February 12. A similar story was carried by the *Regina Sun* on Sunday, February 16. An SAB staff member appeared on Accesscomm's TV program *About Town* on February 20, and was interviewed live on CBC's morning program on February 21, by radio station CKRM and the story ran throughout the day on February 22. On the day of the event CTV, Global-TV and the *Leader Post* dispatched crews to the Archives. CTV carried the story the same day at 6 PM and 11:30 PM. Global prepared a feature story that was shown at 11PM on Sunday, February 23.

Successful? 176 attendees braved blustery cold to make it out for the day, and brought their treasures, among them threshing photos, architectural plans, rink records, the personal papers of a poet and of an air ambulance nurse, and the business records of a clothing store. Some of these records might make their way to the Archives in time. It is also significant that of the 95 individuals who participated in the tours about half had never visited an archives before. Now the challenge is ours: to find a similar potential event to bring a focus on archives to our community! To help, the Saskatchewan Archives staff are willing to share just how they went about planning and carrying out the event. Contact Chris Gebhard at 787-3381.



Visitors at Saskatchewan Archives Examine Documents at Attic Archives Day

Professional Development and Travel Subsidy Program—We Need Your Help!

The SCAA has now received several applications for prior approval under the 2003/04 Professional Development and Travel Subsidy Program. Because the workshops for which funding is being applied are all out-of-province, the amounts being applied for are all at or near the \$800 maximum. Therefore, the SCAA regrets to announce that very little general funding is available, assuming that the receipts subsequently submitted are for eligible expenses, and that all the applicants follow through on their plans to attend the approved workshops. However, the SCAA has established an additional pool of \$1000, reserved for members who wish to attend workshops organized by the SCAA. The process for applying for this funding has not changed; the guidelines and forms are available on the SCAA web site.

The executive would welcome your input on priorities and possible improvements in the process for this fund. Since SCAA workshops are not generally planned by the beginning of the fiscal year, members are not in a position to apply for prior approval. The fund also tries to serve two purposes: to foster our local educational programming (allowing people to attend Council-sponsored workshops), and to provide support to people attending out-of-province workshops. The latter tends to be used by professionally trained archivists and those in larger institutions. This year, the regular portion of the fund has been used almost entirely for this purpose. Should a proportion of the fund be regularly set aside for local needs? Do the total funds available need to be increased? If you are a volunteer or the archivist for a small institution, how much does a lack of travel support affect your ability to attend SCAA workshops?

Send your response to:

Tim Hutchinson, SCAA President
 tim.hutchinson@usask.ca
 tel: (306) 966-7253

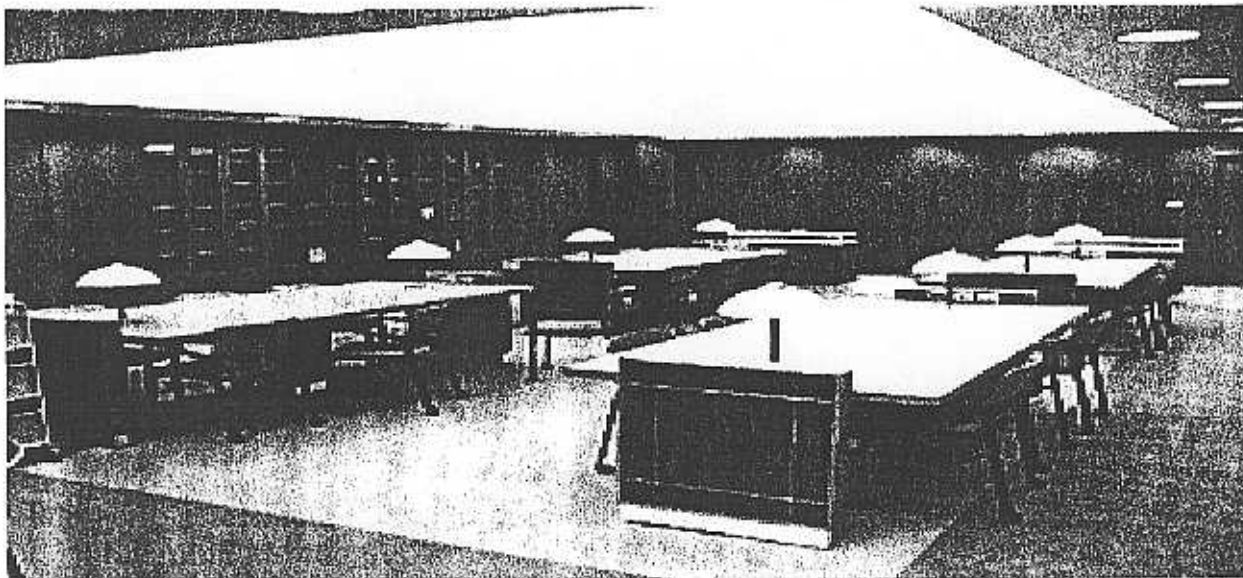
Meet a Member...

Major Renovations at the University of Regina

Hey, where's the archives?

In November 2002, Archives and Special Collections at the University of Regina left the sixth floor of Dr. John Archer Library, moving to handsome quarters on the library's first floor. The newly renovated space consists of a reading room, offices, and closed compact shelving for its rich holdings that include the records of the University—faculty, staff and students—and a heritage of private papers in the areas of visual arts, journalism and Saskatchewan literature, such as those of Anne Campbell, Ken Mitchell and Geoffrey Ursell. Mark Vajcner, University of Regina archivist and past president of the SCAA, oversaw the entire archives move—a major feat in the life of any institution.

The centerpiece is the reading room, with the warm glow of the original teak paneling that has adorned the room since the library opened in 1967. The room has been used for various purposes since that time. In the



early years, before the construction of the Administration/Humanities Building, senior University committees met here. At another time the room served as the old Special Collections room of the Library. During its last incarnation it served as the Library's instruction room. The area now includes a vaulted ceiling and warm lighting. These changes plus new carpeting create an effect that sets the room apart from other spaces in the Library, modern and restful to the eye. The reading room has space for 24 researchers at four large study tables. Each table has task lighting with electrical and Internet connections.

Immediately adjacent to the reading room is office space for permanent, student, and grant-funded staff, and closed compact shelving for Special Collections and for the University publications section of the Archives. The remainder of the archival collection is being transferred to compact shelving recently installed in the Library's basement.

Since the University of Regina Archives and Special Collections first began in 1979 with 74 meters of records and 231 photographs, the collection has grown to over 1,500 linear meters and 15,000 photographs, along with an extensive film, poster, map and print collection. Special Collections also contains published materials that are rare, valuable, or have particular cultural and historical importance. In January 2003, the Library's thesis collection was transferred to Archives and Special Collections. Theses, rare books, and archival materials are now available for researchers for use in the reading room.

The University of Regina Archives and Special Collections offers reference services Monday to Friday, between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (closed over the lunch hour). You might visit Mark and his staff, or reach them at 585-5314 or by writing Mark.Vajcner@uregina.ca

Archivists Talk Arrangement & Description in M.J. “We Have to Keep Meeting Like This!”



On the fine frosty evening of February 7 archivists gathered on the steamy shores of the Moose Jaw Spa in anticipation of next day's Arrangement and Description workshop. Next day, Jeff O'Brien of the City of Saskatoon Archives demurred the waters of the Rules for Archival Description (RAD) with many an example and fielded a raft of questions. With representation clear across the province, including La Ronge, the Workshop was entirely a positive experience.

Why do we need standards of description anyway? We know each repository has various types of archival material—very unique holdings. Should we not acknowledge this uniqueness with our own unique descriptions? Well, that was the way things were in archives for many a decade. Now we see we have to talk the same language. By having consistent elements of description we decrease the confusion for users who are accessing many repositories. Archives and archivists can communicate better with each other. Especially with the development of web-based archival information systems (like CAIN or SAIN), descriptive standards are needed. Our researchers now span the globe.

Thanks to Jeff for making all of this freshly palatable for us. Note that a brand new basic primer on RAD has been recently published. This volume is an excellent addition to your reference shelf. It is called *RAD Revealed* (144pp.) and is available from the Canadian Council of Archives, 344 Wellington Street, Ottawa, K1A 0N3, tel. (613) 995 - 1555 for \$30; or order from list of publications at www.cdncouncilarchives.ca

A Visit to the Archives of Ontario

It takes a lot to run a big ship. On March 24, three of us on the Mentorship Initiative visited the busy Archives of Ontario, celebrating its 100th birthday this year. Ex-Saskatchewanite archivist, Steve Billton, gave us a special tour through its multifloors including its Reading Rooms, Film and Sound, a humming conservation lab, large support library for archivists, microfilm shipping and its Reading Rooms, open weekends for main genealogical resources. Its holdings, graphically put, include 45 miles of 1-foot boxes, 3.5 million photographs and 21,000 hours of audio, visual and film records. Besides massive amounts of government records, there are huge private records, such as those of the T. Eaton empire, comprising 1,600 feet and early documents on birchbark and animal skin.

In honor of the centennial, their Reading Room holds a dramatic surprise--a press of a button brings curtains back to reveal a copy of their biggest holding, the 8 x 10 foot map of David Thompson, "Great Lakes and Prairies." Research inquiries run at 20,000 per year by visit and double that in e-mail, letter and phone. Most frequent microfilm interlibrary borrower of the 1200 reels shipped out every month? Our Saskatoon Public Library. One more Ontario/Saskatchewan connection. It was a memorable tour, and all staff members were friendly, knowledgeable and articulate, which gave a strong professional impression to the whole visit.

Coming Soon to An Archives Near You...

Workshop on Modern Information Carriers, Fall, 2003

Tired of playing dominoes with old tapes and rolling old floppy disks around your archives? The latest word on caring for CDs, DVDs, tapes and disks is coming our way from the Canadian Conservation Institute! Come find out about how to best store, when to reformat, when to let them hit the dust.

Through the efforts of our Educational Advisory Chair, Joe LeClair, we are going to have a CCI autumn workshop on the preservation of optical and magnetic media of various kinds. The educational mandate of the CCI includes putting on workshops on various topics across the country, including Disaster Planning, Copyright, Care of Photographs and Modern Information Carriers. We are fortunate to have the CCI stop by Saskatchewan with a workshop on such a pertinent topic. As soon as we know the who-where-whens, we'll let you know.

Privacy and the Archivist

by Mark Vajcner— U. of R. Archives/Special Collections

Perhaps more than any other area of legislation, privacy laws effect how archivists practice their profession. A thorough understanding of privacy is essential to protect against unwarranted release of personal information, and to advise researchers and donors of their rights and responsibilities.

"Privacy Issues for Archival Institutions", a workshop offered by the Archives Society of Alberta, provided a discussion of privacy from legal, ethical, and practical perspectives. The workshop, led by Heather MacNeil of the University of British Columbia School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies, was held March 14 and 15 at Grant MacEwan College in downtown Edmonton.

According to classical legal theorists, the right to privacy lies at the heart of democratic states and institutions. This right is only limited by the consent of the governed. In practice the right to privacy is recognized in Common Law by such concepts as copyright and trespass. These, among others, limit intrusion on private property and personal affairs.

Technology has made the collection and manipulation of information possible to a degree greater than ever before imagined. As a result, information privacy has become an important concern for society and the law.

Since the 1980s the law has responded to these concerns in an ever-expanding manner. Early federal and provincial laws enacted protection for personal information held by government. These protection laws were usually twinned with freedom of information laws so that mechanisms were in place to ensure citizens had access to the personal information collected about them. While at first these laws simply applied to government departments, protection of privacy and freedom of information laws were extended to include local public bodies, schools and universities, and to health care agencies. To date most provinces have enacted such laws. The next step is extension to private organizations that collect personal information as Bill C-6, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), does.

How should archives and archivists respond to these laws? Many institutions have developed privacy tests, or checklists of factors that would constitute an invasion of privacy. These privacy tests are based on the definition of personal information, as defined by the various laws the archives is subject to. The test can then be systematically applied whenever an archives has questions about what information to release or not to release. The test also comes in useful in negotiating with donors, as the archives can show a concerned donor that it has a firm procedure in place to protect personal information. A second useful tool is the research agreement. A research agreement is a specific agreement between a researcher and the archives regarding the research project. It grants access to restricted records provided that the researcher agrees not to violate confidentiality. In other words, the researcher will not connect a person's name, or other identifying information, to the information discovered during their research.

Privacy issues and privacy laws will have an increasing impact of archives and archivists. A thorough understanding of the importance of privacy, and of the tools available to archives to maintain access, has become an essential part of the knowledge base all archivists should have.

Unraveling Gordian Knots --

Archival Complexities in the Information Age

The following article is based on a visit to the National Archives and the Archives of Ontario undertaken as part of a Saskatchewan Archives Board Mentorship to study information systems applicable to the needs of the Saskatchewan Archives. The Outreach Archivist accompanied Dan Davies, SAB Descriptive Standards Officer and Chris Earing, IT at the provincial archives, on their trip East this spring, where many common problems facing larger archives were discussed (and synopsized here).

It is useful for all of us to understand the scope of these archival concerns even if they go beyond the issues with which we personally struggle in our archives. It reflects the difficulties of choosing the right information delivery system that meets current research accessibility while remaining true to archival principles, such as respect des fonds and provenance, all jiving with current descriptive standards.

Many of us struggle with defining our archival holdings, wrinkling our heads over who exactly created records, working out scopes and contents, and establishing proper access points, all according to the Rules for Archival Description. We get to know the material intimately by the time we are done, but sometimes the nagging thought continues long after we have punched in the data. *Is this fully accurate from the archival viewpoint?—in keeping with modern arrangement and descriptive standards?*

The *fonds* has become our familiar companion over the last two decades, giving us a certain amount of security. It has become the established unit of currency in a world of archival definitions, based on more or less six accepted criteria: a legal identity, official mandate, defined hierarchical position, a large degree of autonomy, an organizational structure and an independent record-keeping system. In an information age of complex management of society, defining fonds can be a complex exercise.

However, quite often, the reality of archives is not a neat package that fits theory. Archivists need to be sharp, flexible and realistic while peering down the road at information needs of the future. Often it is the older and large archives, particularly the ones caring for government records that face the toughest Gordian knots.

What if your archives has been producing archival descriptions for 130 years of its existence prior to the development of modern descriptive standards? This is the position in which the National Archives finds itself. We would soon see that two simultaneous streams of archival work are needed: the description of newly acquired records according to RAD; and a RECON—a conversion project that would bring about a massive description conversion of records, accurate and compatible with modern standards, converting the old arrangement/description formats in the RG series (Record Groups) for government records to modern working fonds descriptions. Private sector fonds would have to be dealt with in their own right.

Since 1993 until now, the National Archives has been at work establishing criteria for this conversion to fonds, sous-fonds and series, working out administrative histories and arrangement trees for federal records. By 1997, a team of archival specialists had carried the gruelling work forward--former RGs were 321 fonds and 107 sous-fonds containing in the neighbourhood of 8,000 descriptive records.

Another scenario--what if you had to care for a 1,000-item Township Plan Collection, spanning from the French Revolution to Canada's Centennial Year--1783 to 1967? Created by myriad government agencies over the years? The Ontario Archives has had to grapple with the proper arrangement and description of just such records, an accumulation of land plans received from various sources, mainly the Office of the Surveyor General, later the Commissioner of Crown Lands, then the Department of Crown Lands, then the Surveying Branch of the Survey Department - Canada West and on. Determining the provenance of such records and writing a fonds description is not an archivist's dream!

This is what larger archives face including the Saskatchewan Archives, the main repository of provincial government and Territorial records in Saskatchewan. Huge series of records were created, used and sent to the archives by multi-creators as functions of government transferred from one ministry to another over the years. How can fonds be defined given name changes, functional changes, the creation of new governmental bodies and the extinction of others?

One alternative that Ontario Archives and others have chosen is a redefinition of archival description and arrangement called the *series approach*. Following initiatives coming out of Australian archival thought in the past decade, the *series approach* is based on defining the offices of origin--linking multiple agency histories, and the relationship of records to their multiple creators. It maintains successor, predecessor, controlling agency and subordinate relationships. It is one that gives accuracy, system and flexibility of provenance information to a working archives. The Archives of Ontario employs the "series" as the highest level of arrangement for government records, however, for private or non-government records, for example, those of an association or family, the fonds or collection level remains the highest level of arrangement. Administrative histories are critical to series-level understanding, with strong information ties to preceding and succeeding bodies to get the full picture.

The scope of the job facing the larger archives is monumental. It is not surprising that we have had good evidence of strong inter-institutional cooperation in trying to work out solutions, good common-sense partnerships with face to face discussions. Perhaps it is through problem-solving in this way that team approach and networking, so long discussed as necessary elements to good archiving, will be fully realized in Canada.

(continued on page 10...)

Ontario. Dept. of Labour

History and function of this agency

Agencies that preceded and/or succeeded this agency

Subordinate agencies

Archival records series created by this agency

History and Function

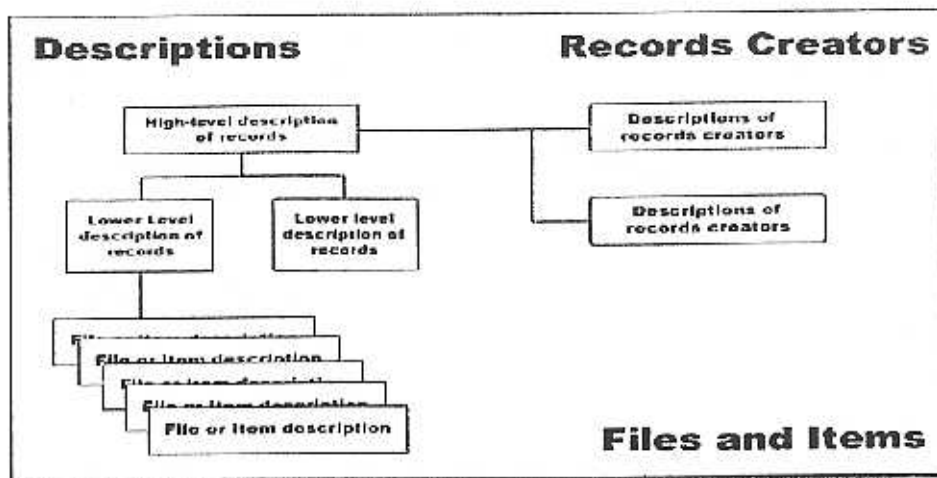
Name Department of Labour

Function The Department of Labour was responsible for the administration of statutes and regulations involving safety in industry, collective bargaining and the economic protection of workers

Administrative History:

The Department of Labour was established in 1919, replacing the Trades and Labour Branch of the Department of Public Works. Some of the branches that have existed within the Department include the Boiler Inspection Branch, the Elevator Inspection Branch, the Factory Inspection Branch, the Construction Safety Branch, the Engineering Services Branch, the Fair Employment Practices Branch, the Industrial Training Branch, the Labour Standards Branch, the Public Relations and Information Branch, and a wide variety of department administrative services branches.

Agencies which reported to the Department include the Ontario Human Rights Commission; the Industry and Labour Board; the Ontario Labour Relations Board; the Board of Examiners of Operating Engineers and the Workmen's Compensation Board. In 1972, the Ontario government was substantially reorganized and many former departments were disbanded and replaced with Ministries. The Department of Labour continued to exist as the Ministry of Labour, but lost several of its functions to other jurisdictions during the restructuring.



Name of Record Creator (Sample)

- Ontario. Department of Labour. Apprenticeship Branch. 1928 - 1965
- Ontario. Industrial Training Branch (1965 - 1973), 1965 - 1973
- Ontario. Women's Bureau, 1963 - 1984
- Ontario. Uniform Building Standards Branch, 1970 - 1975
- Ontario. Boiler Inspection Branch, 1930 - 1975
- Ontario. Energy Branch, 1964 - 1978
- Ontario. Elevator Inspection Branch, 1954 - 1971
- Ontario. Elevating Devices Branch, 1971 - 1994
- Ontario. Safety and Technical Services Division, 1963 - 1972

Archival Record Series Created by this Agency (Sample)

- RG 69-3 Women's Bureau publications
- RG 69-9 Women's Bureau photographs
- RG 31-16 Fuels accidents, prosecutions and leakages reports
- RG 31-17 Energy Safety Board certification log books
- RG 31-18 Architectural drawings of storage plants and marinas
- RG 31-23 Fuels technical information records
- RG 31-43 Correspondence of the Executive Director of the Fuels Safety Branch
- RG 31-51 Architectural drawings of elevating devices
- RG 31-59 Correspondence of the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Technical Standards Division
- RG 31-73 Correspondence of the Chief Engineer of the Pressure Vessels Safety Branch
- RG 32-3 Records of the Task Force on Industrial Training
- RG 32-52 Administrative records of adult training and apprenticeship programs
- RG 7-1 Correspondence of the Minister of Labour



Saskatchewan Council for Archives and Archivists

ADDRESS:

Outreach Office
2506 Woodward Avenue
Saskatoon, SK,
S7J 2E5
Phone: 374-7143
Fax: 653-0768

Archives...wiped or wiped out?

SWIFFERS are great and are found in archives today. Those electrically charged cloths nab all the dust and lint off the top of the document boxes. Supposed to be safe for leather and hard-bound books.

But is the charge in the cloth good for tapes and other electromagnetic carriers? Until we know for sure, don't swiff the tapes. It's a good question for our CCI "Magnetic Carriers" workshop.

Treasures! Treasures?

Tell us about your oddest holding in your archives....is it huge or strange or curious?

Is Marie Antoinette's hat-pin holding some of your letters together?

Interesting letterhead?

Anything hand-drawn that's fun?

A gopher trap plan?

Tell us all about it, and you might win a prize!

To be announced in the next Newsletter!

WE'RE ON THE WEB
<http://scaa.usask.ca>