



The Archives Re-Past

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Komic (below)

Alex the Archivist was handling a reference inquiry, when the researcher asked, "what's that pickle doing behind your ear?" Alex grabbed his ear and looked at the pickle. "Oh, I must have eaten my pencil for lunch!"



IT'S NEW – IT'S HAPPENING... IT'S US!

There is just tons shaking and moving these days in the SCAA and the buzz word is **NEW**. Where do we begin? The search is on for a *new* Outreach Archivist with a *new* expanded role of Advisor/Executive Director (two hats to serve both purposes as they arise). We have a *new* Strategic Plan emerging, a *new* Educational Plan, *new* measuring equipment we are acquiring that you can borrow – and hope soon for a *new* feature in our Newsletter dealing with archival theory. We continue to move toward a *new* office with brand *new* computers.

Did I mention *new* potential members? There are a few of those, too. As you have gathered by now, we are truly in a *new* era and many good things are on the horizon.

A word on the expanded role of the Advisor/Executive Director, which reflects the broader aspects of the job, involving more liaison with provincial bodies, more of a supervisory role for any contract staff and being involved with day to day fiscal concerns, as well as previous aspects of Outreach work. Some of the key areas are:

- Assessing the Council's short and long-term operational, financial and capital needs and taking measures to address them (including identifying, pursuing and reporting on appropriate revenue sources and government grants)
- Supervising SCAA staff and contractors
- Developing and maintaining communication and professional liaison with SCAA members, all levels of government and other heritage and cultural organizations (including representing the Council at meetings, conferences and special events as requested)

On the subject of newness, did I mention the AGM on May 12th?

Come out and vote in your *new* Executive for 2007-2008. Hear about plans for the coming year. And in the meantime, re-*new* your membership! Information is enclosed with this newsletter.

Disaster Preparedness Workshop – Sobering, Useful

If one image stayed when it was over, it was an archives room full of slides and photographs knee-deep in mud. Where would you start? That was the whole purpose of this workshop with conservator, Jane Dalley, of Winnipeg. Starting begins long before the disaster hits. Emergency planning requires a plan, recorded contacts for mobilization and supplies; it involves human safety, media relations, and much common sense. Like, how do you best pack wet records for freezing? What is the role of a “recorder” in these processes? We spent a good 1.5 day session with Jane, March 9-10, in Saskatoon, asking many questions, and watching some horrific videos. May it never happen to us! An excellent reminder to write our emergency plans: this is time well spent, and is worth making a top priority in your institution. If you are geographically close to other archives, perhaps you can share a provider list (e.g. pallet-suppliers, lifters, freezers for freeze drying, milk cases for records)?

NEW EQUIPMENT FOR YOU!

Illuminometer and Mini Data-Logger

*How fast can you say
illuminometer? Ok. Light meter.*

A light meter reader and a mini data-logger have been bought by the SCAA and will be available for lending to our members in the future to help you check up on your environmental conditions

The light meter is a compact, hand-held version that gives accurate readings within a 5 percent (plus-minus). It costs in the range of \$100.

As we know, materials degrade more quickly when exposed to ultraviolet and natural light. Fluorescent tubes that are low in ultraviolet light should be used wherever possible in storage areas or covered by filters. Ultraviolet light can easily be measured with a light meter, with recommended levels not exceeding 75mW (microwatts)/lumen. Lights should be turned off whenever possible and storage areas should have no windows, or windows that can be covered with curtains or blinds.

The mini data-logger does just what it sounds like. It is another compact device (no cables, wires or accessories) that measures temperature and relative humidity. Precision calibrated, it is only a

matter of leaving it in a certain spot and letting it do its recording. Once the desired information has been recorded, plug the logger into your computer and begin downloading and viewing the logged data. The cost of the mini data-logger is about \$400.

Jane Dalley is test-driving the equipment for us, and writing a loans policy as part of our ongoing conservation programme.

Please plan on borrowing these pieces of equipment. Those interested, please get in touch with Outreach. Also we would like your comments on the use of the equipment and particular ways they have helped your institution.

ABOUT DALLEY FROGATT CONSERVATION SERVICES

As their website states, “heritage resource management is more than opening an old house to the public, or putting photographs in a filing cabinet. Unless a site, its buildings, and its documents and artefacts are safely maintained, they will deteriorate. Their preservation must be actively planned.” <http://www.dfhcs.com/>

DFCS is involved in a great many heritage projects, and can come in with training, planning of facilities, exhibits’ expertise and more. One of the most interesting aspects of their website is a list “Nine Good Books to Have on Your Bookshelf” which you can find at <http://www.dfhcs.com/resources/index> in full bibliographical detail.

By popular demand, they are appearing in the next column. Thanks Jane and Brad, for your contribution to our newsletter!

NINE GOOD BOOKS

Common Sense Pest Control; William Olkowski; Sheila Daar, Helga Olkowski; 1991

The ABCs of Collections Care; Manitoba Heritage Conservation Service, Winnipeg, Canada, 1996.

CCI Notes; Canadian Conservation Institute, 1030 Innes Road, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0M5.

Steal This Handbook: A Template for Creating a Museums Emergency Preparedness Plan; Allyn Lord, Carolyn Reno and Marie Demeroukas.

Preservation Manual; Northeast Document Conservation Center, 100 Brickstone Square, Andover, Massachusetts, USA, 01810-1494

The Manual of Museum Planning; Edited by Gail Dexter Lord and Barry Lord; 1991;

Basic Conservation of Archival Materials: A Guide; published by the Canadian Council of Archives

Conservation Environment Guidelines for Libraries and Archives; published by the Canadian Council of Archives

Tales From the Attic: Practical Advice on Preserving Heirlooms and Collectibles; by Colleen Wilson

From Outgoing Outreach

Enjoyed working with you all. Hope to keep one foot in heritage and one wing in creativity, and to stay in touch! Take care of those archives now....

Kathy :-)

Afternoon at the Theatre ... Archives!

On March 27, 2007 a pleasant afternoon was spent visiting SCAA theatrical members: the Saskatoon Gateway Players Archives and the Saskatoon Summer Players Archives, both located at the studios on Portage Avenue, where the theatre groups share space, costumes, and props. Each has its own separate archives and multi-talented archivist. Lila Henderson (SSP) and Luke Sather (SGP) are also actors, knowing the world of theatre from the inside.

The environment we toured was wonderfully dramatic. The building is located in the southwest part of Saskatoon, near a railway spur line with a few railway cars (Placed for effect? Actually, it is a live line!) Inside, it is super eye-catching. Colourful posters cover gallery walls, there are sets under construction and a giant wardrobe room. (Crinoline, anyone?) Where else would one find couches and chairs perched in storage near a ceiling or bump into a throne? I felt a little like Alice in Wonderland to say the least!

Once I adjusted to where I was, I immediately became impressed just how seriously these volunteer archivists take their work. So they should, for they document almost nine decades of theatre history between them, a kaleidoscope of unfolding drama reflecting a maturing of theatre arts in Saskatoon.

Putting it in a broader perspective Luke Sather said, "The history of theatre is documentation of what it means to be human. The world's theatre history dates back to the ancient Greeks and earlier, and as a classical art form it still remains true to the most fundamental aspects. All productions share the same threads in a tapestry of performance and introspection." Lila added that keeping an authentic record of a theatre company "brings joy in recall to past and present members. Human memories fail us when trying to recall when such and such a show was mounted. We confuse dates and performers over time. Because hundreds of people have voluntarily contributed to the success of Summer Players, I think it is important to keep the records straight."

An interview with Gateway Players Archivist, Luke Sather

Saskatoon Gateway Players has chosen plays to catch the interest of local audiences and provide entertainment, and equally, to challenge its artists and creative production staff. How is this reflected in its archives, I wondered? I caught up with Luke as he unlocked the deep blue door of the archives. A plaque on the door identifies the archives as "The Bill Hubbard Memorial Archives of Saskatoon Gateway Players," with thanks from contributing bodies including the CCA, SCAA and the Friends of Bill Hubbard Memorial Fund. Located in cozy but comfortable quarters on the first floor under the mezzanine stairs, its light grey walls and burgundy floor are most inviting. Inside, everything fits effectively just so: map cabinet, metal cupboards, dehumidifier, even a collapsible work table.

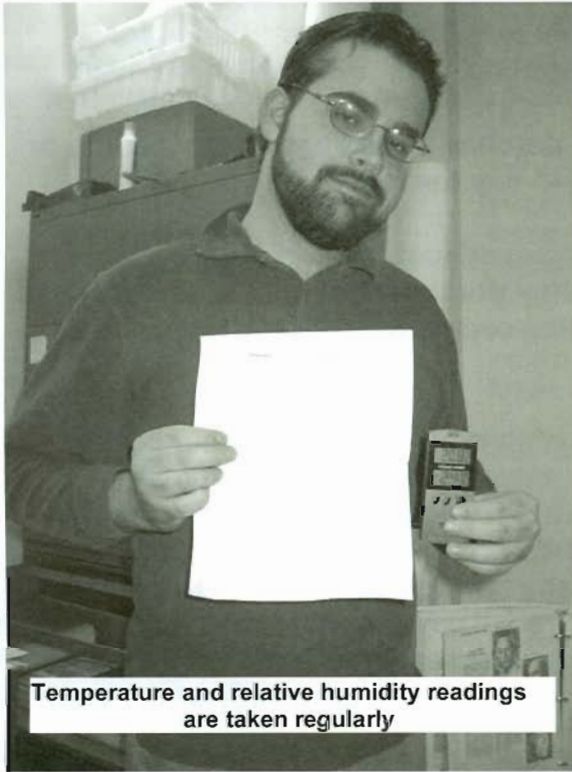
Luke's formal title is Photographic Archivist, but sometimes he is found writing up grants, overseeing construction, writing policies and doing all kinds of reference duties. Like Lila, he said that photographs documenting dramatic performances are the most used records.

Kathy: I see your formal archives dates to 2002 and informally, it existed some years before that. Why was it founded?

Luke: Gateway's archival records existed generally and loosely in the offices of the various buildings the organization has inhabited since 1967, as well as the home collections of our dedicated members. The decision came to consolidate everything under one roof, and give it

proper treatment, spurring Gateway's membership with the (then) Saskatchewan Council of Archives. Thanks to a CCA CPCAR grant and the surroundings of our current studio, a dedicated space was constructed and furnished to archival specifications, establishing the Bill Hubbard Memorial Archives in 2002. It is dedicated after a founding member of Gateway. He meticulously organized and preserved decades of our history, and donated his collection to ours.

Kathy: *Your space is not too large, in fact, this is a very compact archives. What do you collect?*



Luke: The archives receives all internally produced documents and photographs relating to productions and past operations. It also collects donations relating to the history of the organization and of theatre in Saskatchewan. The holdings include over 3m textual, 10,000+ photographs; 40 videos and approximately 250 posters. Aside from the archives there is a reading room for collected scripts and theatrical resource books.

Kathy: *That is impressive. Tell us about some of your main archival projects in recent years.*

Luke: Our studio has posters on display from almost all our productions. Approximately half of them were the sole copy with no duplicate stored in the archives. A second CCA grant enabled us to create indistinguishable colour copies to remain on display, preserving the originals from damage and loss.

[Looking at the posters in the lounge as well as the ones on the gallery wall, it was virtually impossible to tell copies from originals!]

Kathy: *How does a theatre archives document the drama production process? Why is this valuable?*

Luke: As a performance art form there is no inherent record of the play itself, only the production process. Given the nature of theatre the world over, where groups stage the same shows repeatedly with different people at the helm, it is valuable to compare and reference the methods of past productions to solve present difficulties without re-inventing the wheel.

Kathy: *Has your archives seen considerable use for the 40th anniversary of Gateway Players?*

Luke: For our 40th season Gateway has re-staged four plays from our history of performances, one chosen from each decade. The Board requested copies of these show programmes, in order to identify the past volunteers. The volunteers were invited as honorees to be recognized alongside their current counterpart during the performances this season.

Kathy: *Thank you, Luke, for telling us about your archives. Soon you will be documenting a year of murder and mirth, which I understand are themes of the 2007-2008 shows!*

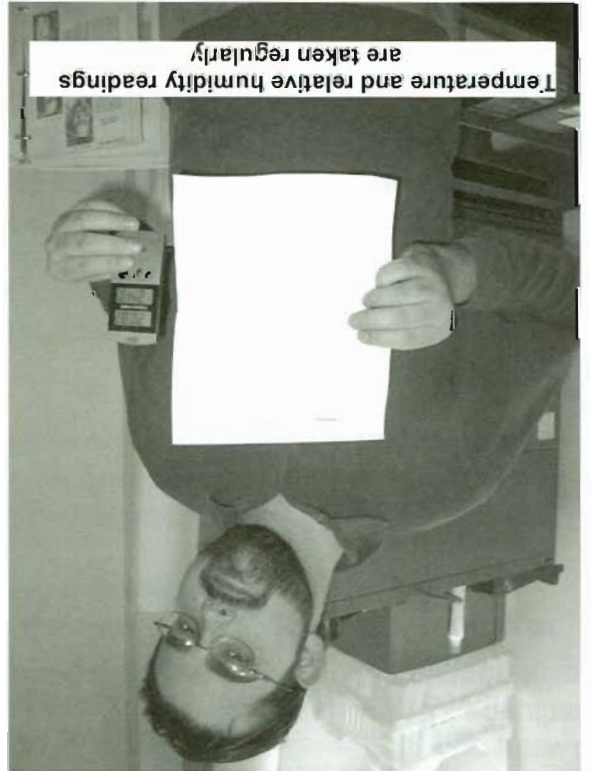
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A huge poster gallery greets visitors to the Theatre Studios. On the opposite wall are posters from children's productions, below.



Ever actors! Ever archivists! Luke and Lila "having coffee" on the latest set.

No, not the archivist's ergonomic chair, just more theatre surprises!



Lila holds evidence of an old favorite, "Oklahoma!"

Guys and Dolls quilt



Luke with his Shakespearean messenger costume



Lila swishes some of the lovely old dresses

Luke shows lobby pictures and albums



Archives abound, stored in proper enclosures; mylar encapsulation has served good purpose together with the use of map cabinets in both archives

(continued from page 5)

Nicole Kruppi in 2003. The purchase of a proper storage cabinet for oversize posters was significant. The posters and some programmes have been encapsulated in mylar.”

[Lila is being modest when she describes the “Mylar Project”. A look into the map cabinet reveals more than 120 items professionally encapsulated, which took planning, purchasing, training and organizing a giant bee to get the job done!]

We continued to chat and one could not help but catch the archivists’ enthusiasm for what they do. Usefulness and creativity had blended in a unique way. In closing, on behalf of Summer Players Theatre Association, Lila congratulated Gateway Players, their fellow theatre organization on their history of plays and small musicals in their 40th year, and the archivists continued to chat about their holdings. I was glad for this lively stop at the Saskatoon Summer Players Theatre Archives and the Saskatoon Gateway Players Archives and to spend time with their vivacious, energetic archivists, Lila Henderson and Luke Sather! Theatre archives have a most valuable place in our culture, whether found in their own particular space, or as fonds in our various archives. Let us not neglect this historical resource.

THEATRE HISTORY IN SASKATCHEWAN

(credit: The Canadian Theatre
Encyclopedia, on-line)

In Saskatoon, an upper room served as theatre until The Empire Theatre went up in 1910. Both in Saskatoon and Regina, the arrival of legitimate venues also meant the arrival of touring companies.

By 1887, the town of Whitewood actually had a professional company (formed by Dr. JF Guerin who had been with D'Oyly Carte in London). In Saskatchewan, many theatres were community halls. In 1886, the first town hall in Regina also served as a theatre. As in the rest of Canada, the first amateur society in Regina was made up of uniformed men; in this case, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Amateurs and Gilbert and Sullivan reigned in Saskatchewan until 1910, when Regina acquired the Regina Theatre, which seated 870 and had Saskatchewan's first dimmer board.

In the 1920s, Saskatoon's Daylight Theatre presented vaudeville. It was by then that touring companies from outside the region began to dominate the cultural landscape. However, there was some local activity. The Eckhardt Players (formed by Oliver Eckhardt) entertained during WWI in Regina and Saskatoon. Had it not been for the ongoing activities of amateurs between the wars and during WWII, indigenous theatre in the prairies might very well have been a moot point. Among companies also active in the province are the francophone Troupe du Jour , Dancing Sky Theatre, Saskatoon Gateway Players, Saskatoon Summer Players, Off Broadway Dinner Theatre (amateur), The Newman Players (Saskatoon's oldest amateur company) and Curtain Razors. The Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts, in Regina, opened in 1970, also presents theatre in its three venues. Also of interest is the women's theatre festival, hosted by 25th Street, Her-icane (1999).

St. Paul's Nurses Alumni Archives Buzzes With Strategic Planning

On March 21st, a fruitful morning was spent at the St. Paul's Nurses Alumni Archives as its archivists joined with members of the Alumni Executive and incoming volunteer archivists to discuss the shape of their archives' future.



The first part of the session allowed for "dreaming big" as participants gave free rein to their ideas.

Next came a narrowing down of the key ideas, followed by a look at what removable obstacles might stand in the way of their coming to fruition.

l to r, St. Paul's Nurses Alumni at work: Georgie Chartier and Eleanor Ritchie (archivists); Joan Keeler, Sharon McCallion and Merc Montgomery)

Finally, a strategic sketch was worked out, which involved a strong corporate memory, training for incoming archivists and plans for future endeavors.

It was a time of frank discussion, with reference to specific media materials, as Cam Hart was also there to discuss their photographic holdings and the Photo Database project. The St. Paul's Nurses holdings are diverse, with some being artefactual in nature (from nurses' capes to teaching materials). Nurses' training also lends itself to oral history, with many memories worth recording. The need for a website linking its members (found coast to coast) was also discussed.

Eleanor Ritchie and Georgie Chartier, archivists of the Alumni for several years, have played an active part in the SCAA. They have participated in workshops, grants-writing, facilitating a conservation assessment of their archives and have taken part in bulk purchases. Their archives' space is not large, but they have clearly maximized its use. A larger space is definitely on the wish-list as Eleanor and Georgie pass their "archives scepters" to new archivists.

As our only nurses' archives (but not our only health-related archives) we have always appreciated the SPNAA, and look forward to working with their new volunteers.

Should other archives desire to have a Strategic Planning time, please get in touch with the Outreach Archivist. To date, two archives have conducted such sessions and found them extremely beneficial. It's a bit like Stone Soup as the archivists, themselves, shape and chart their course, with just a bit of facilitation.

**Plan to attend
The Annual General Meeting
of the
Saskatchewan Council for Archives
and Archivists
to be held in North Battleford
on Saturday, May 12th
at the Don Ross Centre, 891 - 99 Street
Room 110**

PLAN OF THE DAY

**11:00 North Battleford Historical
Archives Tour (in Don Ross Centre)**

**12:00 Lunch
Porta Bella Restaurant
2491-100th Street**

1: 30 Annual General Meeting

HERE and THERE: ARCHIVES in the NEWS

From ONTARIO – Municipal Archives Cuts Archivists

Only a short time ago, archivists across Canada received distressing word from the Archives Association of Ontario of staff cuts made in municipal archives. Of the archives personnel involved, one served as President of the Ontario Association of Archivists (predecessor to the AAO) and the other is the Archives Advisory for Ontario for a number of years: Lutzen and Carolynn Bart-Riedstra. The following letter from Liz Mayville, President of the AAO, speaks to this.

Archives Awareness Week is supposed to be a time to acknowledge the accomplishments of our fellow colleagues as well as a time to celebrate the diversity of archives across this Province. Therefore, I am, as I am sure all of you were, deeply distressed to hear of the events that occurred last week in Stratford-Perth. Lutzen Riedstra and Carolynn Bart-Riedstra have been instrumental in building the Stratford-Perth Archives into an example of a successful community-based municipal archives. In addition, to the wonderful work they do locally, both Carolynn and Lutzen are well known and well respected in the archival community across Canada for the advocacy work they do.

It is a great shock to hear that the County of Perth has deemed the positions of Archivist Director and Deputy Director/Archivist to be redundant and that, according to a newspaper report, they intend to contract out the management of the archives.

In amidst of this stunning news, I do have a bit of good news to share. When Carolynn was informed of the County's decision to terminate her position, she contacted me to see if she could withdraw her resignation as Archives Advisor. The Hiring Committee and the Board all strongly agreed that Carolynn has been fantastic in her role of Archives Advisor and that she should continue on in this position. Therefore, I am pleased to announce that Carolynn will be continuing on as the AAO's Archives Advisor.

Liz Mayville
Archives Association of Ontario President

In an effort to save dollars or reallocate resources, short-sighted decisions leave this world a less informed place. Hacking an archival position not only means less arrangement, description and reference service. It also affects acquisitions, records management, and such things as web development and new programming. It takes away a seasoned professional who brings perspective to society's documentary evidence over the long term. Archivists work hard to build awareness of our profession and the value of our work. Do we really want a return to the Dark Ages or do we support the right to access archives via professionally-trained staff?

Part of advocacy is to watch for situations where archivists and the profession are at risk, and to speak out. Anyone wishing to write a letter of protest regarding the situation at Stratford-Perth might address it to Mayor Dan Mathieson, City of Stratford Mayor's Office, P.O. Box 818, 1 Wellington St., Stratford, Ontario, N5A 6W1 or mayorsoffice@city.stratford.on.ca

The Saskatchewan Postal Museum in Whitewood, Saskatchewan - The Post Office was started in 2000 by Mckay Historical Society, a locally based charity organization whose mandate is the preservation of heritage buildings and artefacts and the research and documentation of Saskatchewan history. The idea of the museum came about because of the collection of postal related artifacts that the society had already accumulated and the fact that we knew a lot of this history was being destroyed as post offices around the province were house-cleaning or shutting down. With the co-operation of Canada Post out of Regina, a letter was sent out to post offices explaining our goal and asking for their help in saving or postal history by donating any unused or obsolete articles out of post offices around the province. More information can be obtained by contacting Blaine Coleman at [306] 735-4157 or write to Mckay Historical Society, Box 460, Whitewood SK, S0G 5C0. Whitewood already has an archives -- in a revamped turn of the 20th century Methodist Church. Hats off to a historically-minded Qu'Appelle town!



Participants of the Emergency Planning Workshop, March 9 -10, 2007

The one and only SCAA cap ever made – sent to Peter Woroschuk for his personal memoir on farm machinery for the Kids’ Farm Machinery Exhibit!



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