



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

SHAMIN MALMAS, PRESIDENT

Days like this make me proud to be part of the Alberta archival community and remind me why I am archivist - regardless of the institutions we work for, our goal is the same: to acquire, preserve and make accessible records of enduring value.

On a typical Tuesday morning I received a phone call from a researcher looking for baptismal information for his grandmother. While his family has lived in Edmonton for centuries he has been unable to locate the final document necessary to complete his Métis Status Application - his grandmother's baptismal certificate. After several phone calls to parishes and digging through indexes and registers in the Archdiocese Archives, I made a call to the Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA). The PAA holds a series of index cards created by the Oblate Priests who ran many of the early Catholic missions in Alberta. Thirty minutes later the fabulous reference staff had located the name in the index which pointed me to our Lac Ste Anne Parish Register and I was able to re-connect my researcher with his family history. Days like this make me proud to be part of the Alberta

archival community and remind me why I am an archivist - regardless of the institutions we work for, our goal is the same: to acquire, preserve and make accessible records of enduring value.

Speaking of the Alberta archival community, it has been a busy winter for the ASA Board. We have been focusing on strategic planning and governance in our last few board meetings. Succession planning is near and dear to my heart and as such we have been compiling a Board Manual and reviewing board position descriptions and committee terms of reference. To paraphrase Jenkinson, "the golden rule for the Administrator (...) must be to have [his records] in a state of completeness and order so that (...) a successor (...) would be able to take up [his work] and carry it on with the least possible inconvenience and delay simply on

the strength of study of the office files."

There have been a few Board member changes. On behalf of the ASA, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Melissa McCarthy for stepping into the position of Vice-President. Melissa's experience as the Archives Advisor in New Brunswick provides her with a unique perspective that, I am sure, will prove to be invaluable to the board. As many of you know Wendy Dyck resigned as Treasurer. On behalf of the entire Board I would like to extend my gratitude for her hard work and contribution to the ASA. We look forward to filling this challenging position in the near future!

The ASA Secretariat continues to grow and evolve. The ASA bid farewell to Ericka Chemko. I am sure I echo the membership in expressing our thanks to Ericka for the fantastic work and her

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commitment to the ASA over the past couple of years. Maryna Chernyavska filled the Database and Administrative Assistant position in early December. This new position is a combination of the previously vacant Database Administrator and Member Services Manager positions. I would like to extend a big thank you to the Education Committee for organizing the most recent ASA Workshop "Managing Electronic Records" that took place at the Provincial Archives of Alberta in November. The workshop was informative, educational, and

inspiring. In my work at the Archdiocese Archives digital records are becoming ever-present. I recently acquired my first digital records accession and attending this workshop gave me the confidence to accept this new challenge.

The next couple months will be busy as the Grants Committee meets in early March to review and adjudicate grant applications and the ASA Board will prepare for the AGM in May. I hope to see as many of you as possible at AGM.

FROM THE DESK OF THE ARCHIVES ADVISOR

RENE GEORGOPALIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ARCHIVES ADVISOR

As I write this article, the ASA is in its Access to Holdings grant season. It is exciting to see all the interesting proposed grant projects arrive in my inbox. I wish all institutions who have applied the best of luck with their applications.

In other news, the ASA currently has eight staff and contractors - I believe this is the largest amount of people that the ASA has ever employed. I would like to announce that we have a Project Archivist, Carey Isaak, working in Fort McMurray to help with their flood recovery, and we have a Project Conservator, Lisa Isley and Project Archivist, Michelle Parsons, assisting with High River's archives' flood recovery. It is exciting to finally see all this work underway for the Flood Advisory Programme. For details on the progress of the project, the Lead Team has included an article in this issue. I have also been training our new Database and Administrative Assistant, Maryna Chernyavska, and it has been nice to have her support and to once again get things underway with Alberta On Record.

ASA had a fall workshop in November as well as the Institutional Forum. As is my luck when ASA events are planned, a snow storm covered most of the province during this time, but we still managed to offer the forum and workshop. Many members and non-members were interested in the workshop topic of Managing Electronic Records and we were unable to register over 6 people who were interested. The Education Committee would like to offer this workshop, or at least a similar one, in Calgary at some point. An article summarizing the workshop is included in this issue.

It looks like Spring is just around the corner which is a busy time at the ASA so stay posted for news on our upcoming workshop, AGM, Institutional Forum, Archives Institute, grants announcements, and Archives Week theme.



LEAD TEAM UPDATE - FLOOD ADVISORY PROGRAM

AMANDA OLIVER & EMILY TURGEON-BRUNET, ASA FLOOD PROGRAM

The Flood Advisory Programme is well underway and the Lead Team have had a busy last couple of months. The Lead Team attended the Institutional Forum on November 27, 2014 at the Provincial Archives of Alberta. We prepared a handout for the participants and presented a brief overview of our work. We also answered a variety of questions about our project and received positive feedback from attending institutional members. Please let us know if you have any questions about our work or about disaster preparedness and recovery.

Since September 2014 we have conducted eight site assessments of ASA institutional members. These sites include those most negatively affected by the 2013 flooding and those located on floodplains. We will be reviewing all ASA institutional members over the course of our project.

In January 2015, the Lead Team began recovery work at the ASA's most negatively affected sites. Two contract archivists and one contract conservator were hired to assist with the flood remediation process. The contract conservator is treating flood affected records and the two contract archivists are reconciling records with their original descriptions as well as assisting with other archival tasks. This is a large, ongoing project and we will continue to update the ASA community as it progresses.

In February 2015, the Lead Team invited Greg Hill from

the Canadian Conservation Institute to Edmonton to examine and treat some of the more difficult, flood affected photographic material. Hill worked with Emily Turgeon-Brunet, ASA Lead Conservator and Alison Freake, Conservator from the Provincial Archives of Alberta, on glass plate negatives and prints that had been covered in mud during the flood. It was very exciting to have three conservators working on these records. Thank you to Greg Hill for coming to Edmonton and providing your expertise and thank you to the Provincial Archives of Alberta and Alison Freake for providing us with lab space to conduct this project.

The Lead Team has created a variety of resources on the Flood Assistance page of the ASA's website (<http://archivesalberta.org/programs-and-services/flood-assistance/>). Resources include: emergency response resources, environmental monitoring, disaster response kit, digital preservation and preparing for digitization. We are in the final stages of preparing our first group of how-to videos for the website. Topics for these videos include: mould removal, packing wet records and handling wet paper. Please check our website for these upcoming video resources.

We have also taken over the ASA blog (<https://archivesalberta.wordpress.com/>). Follow our blog for updates on our project and other disaster related topics. We welcome any feedback on our resources and our blog. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for future resources or topics of discussion!

ALBERTA ON RECORD NEWS

MARYNA CHERNYAVSKA, DATABASE & ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

From December 2014, I am happy to be part of the ASA team. I have been working as an Archivist at the Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives at the University of Alberta since 2011. I am a board member of the Friends of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, and also currently pursuing my MLIS degree at the UofA.

At the Archives Society of Alberta, I am responsible for the Alberta On Record database, member services, and website and blog maintenance. I also assist Executive Director with events planning and various other tasks.

It is both challenging and exciting to work with Alberta On Record database. Being one of the largest provincial databases in Canada, and containing the biggest number of digital objects, it provides multiple possibilities to make Alberta's archival records more visible and accessible to people around the world. Inevitably, it also creates challenges like the timing out issue that ASA members have been experiencing.



At the end of 2014, the database was moved to larger and more secure servers. New security updates were introduced, and now AtoM is in its 2.1.2 version. In February, Artefactual performed testing of AOR trying to identify problematic areas of the code and to suggest possible solutions.

From our side, the ASA decided to do our own testing with a selected group of members who currently work with AOR. We are hoping that the results of the testing will be positive, and will allow us to open the database for all members to add and edit records in the near future.

ASA ELECTRONIC RECORDS WORKSHOP REVIEW

ELIZABETH WALKER, ARCHIVIST, CITY OF EDMONTON ARCHIVES

On a snowy day in November about a dozen ASA members gathered at the Provincial Archives of Alberta for an ASA workshop on preserving electronic records. The workshop was so popular there was a waiting list and I was happy to have secured a spot. Three things set this workshop apart for me: the grounding of digital records within archival theory, the inclusion of things like description and appraisal, and how positive an experience it was.

The instructor was Jeremy Heil, the Digital and Private Records Archivist at Queen's University Archives. Jeremy was relaxed, approachable, and knowledgeable. He made his contact information available and encouraged us to contact him with further questions. I especially appreciated his attitude: that everything will work out. For example, the internet was down (I heard a backhoe had slashed a cable) but Jeremy worked around it. The only thing you can trust with technology is that something is likely to go wrong, usually just when you need it. So, as Jeremy demonstrated, have a backup plan and just deal with whatever happens. The workshop brought home to me that no matter what kind of digital material you're dealing with, just back things up, try out different tools and methods to see what works and document what you do. And you'll be ok.

The workshop was a solid overview and we covered a lot of ground. Topics covered were: the importance of policy and institutional commitment, the nature of electronic records and metadata, pre-acquisition preparation, acquisition, appraisal and selection, storage and trusted digital repositories, processing electronic records, arrangement and description, and providing access. Not surprisingly, it was a long day.

I've had the opportunity to attend a number of electronic record workshops and this is the first one that considered appraisal and description. In my experience, workshops focus on technology and policy and procedures (usually in terms of commitment to standards and resource securement). And those are important but this workshop covered electronic record management from acquisition to access and was thoroughly grounded in archival theory. I found it comforting.

It reminded me that we are still dealing with archival documents, regardless of the format. In the workshop we discussed what is



unique with digital records but at the same time framed them within the body of archival theory. This led me to an epiphany - I think we have been thinking about digital records in terms of discrete items. Maybe this is a legacy of digitization, which is necessarily at the item level. But archivists deal with aggregates and this applies whether or not the medium is analogue or digital. Thinking in terms of aggregates makes it more manageable for me.

The ASA Education Committee is considering holding the workshop again because there was so much interest. If possible, due to the breadth of topics covered I would recommend having it over two days. But I hope the ASA can offer it again - it's worth it.

PILGRIMAGE TO ARCHIVES MECCA - ICA CONFERENCE

JANE BOWE MCCARTHY, ARCHIVIST, UNITES CHURCH ARCHIVES

The International Council of Archives conference took place in Girona, Spain, in October 2014. The conference entitled “Archives and Cultural Industries Congress” was really three events: the 2nd Annual Conference of ICA, the 9th European Conference on Archives, and the 13th Image and Research Seminar.

Some of you may recall an article that I wrote for the ASA News (Fall 2011) describing my first-time experience at the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Conference in Chicago. This year, thanks to the ASA’s Professional Development Travel Assistance (PDTA) grant, and continuing education support from The United Church’s Alberta and Northwest Conference, I embarked on another pilgrimage to another ‘Archives mecca’ - the International Council of Archives (ICA) gathering, this year in Girona, Spain.

This “Archives and Cultural Industries Congress” was really three conferences: the 2nd Annual Conference of ICA, the 9th European Conference on Archives, and the 13th Image and Research Seminar. To give you some idea of the magnitude of this gathering, here are the ‘Conference in Figures’ statistics: 922 registrants, 13

Open Data projects, and business models for digital preservation and custody. For the flavour and richness of the Conference offerings, <http://www.girona.cat/web/ica2014/eng/> provides a summary.

While there were lots of memorable and interesting sessions, there are two presentations that I would like to highlight here in this report. The first one was a very powerful presentation from the Israeli film maker, Yael Hersonski, who spoke passionately and intimately about her project, “A Film Unfinished”. This link will describe the film and its’ history and development <http://www.afilmunfinished.com/film.html>. Ms. Hersonski’s presentation and the project itself speak to the use of film as a means of record, the authenticity and reliability of film as a record of events, the manufacturing of records for political ends, the legacy of film records over time, and the importance of remembering that context is everything.

The second conference session of particular note was offered by faith group archivists from the USA, Dr. Emile Leumas and John J. Treanor and their presentation on “Diocesan Archives: Setting the Standard for a New Model”. The session featured an overview of their work as diocesan archivists dealing with the realities of litigation, funding, professional standards, disaster preparedness, church closures, and all the usual topics of church archives life. In 2012, along with Audrey P. Newcomer, Leumas and Treanor created an excellent resource for Catholic diocesan archivists: *Managing Diocesan Archives and Records: A Guide for Bishops, Chancellors and Archivists* (2012) that covers setting up an archives and records management program, financial and staff resources, space and facilities, preservation, and the identification of textual and digital records series within a diocesan context. The guide is available for purchase from The Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists, http://diocesanarchivists.org/?page_id=79

This big, juicy buffet of archival knowledge was only just the beginning. Never before had I attended a professional conference that was so richly interwoven with the physical space of the conference venue and the geographic location of the host city. The cultural experience of Catalonia, along with the food, drink and hospitality of the region was infused into each day of the conference. The beautiful, historic city of Girona is 99 km northeast of Barcelona, in the Catalan region of Spain. Anyone planning a trip to Spain would do well to make some time for this lovely city, with its culture and history as well as its proximity to the beaches of the Costa Brava.



Street in Barri Vell (Old Quarter) Girona, 2014

student registrants, 90 nationalities represented, 255 speakers, 136 papers accepted for presentation (from a total of 248 submissions), translation in four languages (Catalan, Spanish, English, French) by 22 translators, 6 keynote speakers, papers submitted by 37 various nationalities, 26 ICA meetings (including sections), 12 workshops, 364 workshop registrants, 5 cinema screenings. Web and Social Networks statistics indicate 20,398 total users online, 151,835 total pages visited, 2000 tweets, 300 contributors in 6 languages.

The conference offered speakers on a variety of nine topics ranging from cultural and creative industries and strategies for collaboration, actions and initiatives, archives and web portals, access to information, digital repositories and authenticity, preservation in the Cloud,

I should also like to thank Dr. Claude Roberto, from the Provincial Archives of Alberta, for her kindness in welcoming me into ICA and introducing me to so many of her ICA colleagues whom she knows through her work as a member of the Steering Committee for ICA's Section of Professional Associations (SPA) representing the Association des archivistes du Quebec. Claude contributed a session to discuss the "SPA Worldwide Advocacy Plan" and their new published guidelines for advocacy and promotion activities for archivists and records managers.

In his pre-conference welcome on the ICA website the Municipal Archivist, Mr. Joan Boadas i Raset, referred to Girona as a "City of Archives". I have now been to the "City of Archives" and my final memory of my time in Girona, is forever marked by the closing words offered by this humble and passionate archivist, Mr. Boadas i Raset. He spoke about how pleased he was that we had all come Girona, and about how some decades ago whilst standing in front of the ICA office in Paris he hoped that one day he could bring the archival world to Girona - and now he had!

Aside from knocking another item off my bucket list, the point of attending this international conference was to be able to connect with my fellow faith group colleagues who are part of the ICA Section for Archivists of Faith Traditions. As was my experience when I attended SAA in Chicago, I found a very warm welcome from them all and we exchanged thoughts on the changing nature of church in our society, the impact of litigation, aging membership, dwindling resources, church closures, and



Girona's River Onyar, Oct. 2014

the role of the archivist in these challenging times. If you are interested in faith group archives, then you may be interested in SAFT's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ICA.SAFT>

If I have sparked your interest in attending an ICA conference, then you should know that next year's offering shall be in Reykjavik, Iceland. I had the pleasure of spending some time with the National Archivist of Iceland, Mr. Eiríkur Guðmundsson; and he is most excited to welcome the archivists of the world to Iceland. And, now that Icelandair flies from Alberta directly to Reykjavik, perhaps some of you shall join me there next year?

THE LOYAL EDMONTON REGIMENT MILITARY MUSEUM

MEET A NEW INSTITUTIONAL MEMBER

The Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum, located in the Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre in Edmonton, is focused on preserving and sharing the military heritage of The Loyal Edmonton Regiment and other central and northern Alberta military units. The archival collection spans from the late nineteenth century to the present and contains documents and photographs from military units as well as individual soldiers. For the past few years the museum has undertaken an ongoing project to rehouse and fully catalogue the archival holdings, leading up to our accreditation with the Archives Society of Alberta in fall 2014.

We were approved for institutional membership just in time to participate in last year's Archives Week with our first full archival display in the museum titled "The Eerie Battle of Ortona". The display features photographs from a temporary graveyard of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment from a battle fought over Christmas week 1943 at Ortona, Italy and a memorial book created by the sister of a soldier that fell in the battle. We are currently working on a new, expanded archival display for the museum gallery. This display will provide our visitors with a general definition of archives and an introduction to the variety of items in our archival holdings.



ARCHIVES PROGRAM AT THE GALT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

ANDREW CHERNEVYCH, ARCHIVIST, GALT MUSEUM & ARCHIVES

The Galt Museum & Archives in Lethbridge holds records donated by private individuals, community organizations and municipal governments. Funded in part by the City of Lethbridge, the Galt Museum & Archives operates as an arms-length organization with its own Board of Directors.

The Archives Program was introduced in 2012 as a means of promoting the Galt Archives in the community. Just like similar joint institutions, the Galt Archives tended to be overshadowed by the museum's exhibits and programs. We wanted to invite people inside the archives, offer them a learning opportunity, and, most importantly, show them how they can use archival records.

The Archives Program is generally a public lecture or workshop held in the archives' research room once a month on Thursday evenings, when the museum is open until 9:00 pm; it is led by the Archivist or a guest speaker. Over the last three years, we've presented a variety of topics: visitors had a chance to learn the basics of genealogical research, scanning techniques, elements of preventative conservation, and more - they've also had opportunities to learn more about the history of southwestern Alberta from scholars and community historians.



Archives Program on genealogical research, presented by Eleanor McMurchy

Early this year, Archives Assistant Trish Purkis presented a talk on local neighbourhood and corner stores, based on her most recent book on the subject. In February, Carol Williams, a professor of Women's Studies at the University of Lethbridge, explored 19th century photographic portraiture of indigenous people and the ethics of representation. In March, we will host a presentation by the Glenbow Archives' Director Doug Cass about the records from the Lethbridge area and the history of early acquisitions in the 1950s.

The program has proven to be very popular. Besides enhancing the Galt's public programming and drawing more visitors to the archives, the event has become a factor in the growing use of archival records for research, learning, leisure and professional activities. By 2015, the annual number of the archives' users (as opposed to visitors) grew from 540 to 730 - a considerable 35% increase.



Archives Program dedicated to the World War 1 diary of Leit. A. G. Virtue, presented by Glenn Miller

PEOPLE AND PLACES

More archives babies have been born or are soon to be born since last issue's announcements. I believe our count is up to about 8 babies since 2014 -- it is quite exciting to have so many archives babies. Karly Sawatzky from SAIT Archives is going on maternity leave this Spring. Karen Simonson from PAA gave birth to her second child, Elizabeth Kathleen, in December.

Kim Unrau, from Esplanade Archives has also given birth to a baby girl, Elliot Olive.

In other news, Stephanie Vaillant, Archivist at Peace River Museum, Archives & MacKenzie Centre, is leaving as she has a new job at Stratford Festival Archives in Ontario. Alberta's archives community will miss you Stephanie and we wish you luck in your new position!

Lastly, Edson and District Public Library and Archives has discontinued their ASA institutional membership as the Edson Archives is moving to Edson's Galloway Station Museum and Travel Centre.

The Archives Society of Alberta News is published quarterly by the ASA. Submissions, questions and suggestions should be directed to:

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Individuals and institutions are encouraged to submit articles, reviews, reports, photographs or letters to the Archives Society of Alberta News, Issues #1, 2, and 3. Submissions are preferred in electronic format as Word files for textual submissions, or as JPG files for graphic submissions.

Please note:

Issue #4 is reserved for Annual Reports of the Society and its committees.

If you are interested to learn more about advertising opportunities, please direct all inquiries to info@archivesalberta.org

NEWSLETTER

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The views expressed in the Archives Society of Alberta Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Archives Society of Alberta.

ARCHIVES SOCIETY OF ALBERTA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2015 – 2016

Name (Institution or Individual) _____

Address _____

City _____

Province _____

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Telephone (_____) _____ - _____

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Fax (_____) _____ - _____

E-mail _____

Voting Delegate (Associate) _____

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TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

Please Check

- Archives Employee \$50.00
- Students, Volunteers, Seniors \$25.00
- Associate Institutional Member \$75.00
- Institutional Member (Please contact the ASA for further information)
- Yes, I would like to volunteer for an ASA Committee

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