

YCA Newsletter

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XIII INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON ARCHIVES, BEIJING, CHINA SEPTEMBER 2-7, 1996

The International Council on Archives (ICA) holds a Congress every four years. The recent 13th International Congress on Archives represented the first time that the ICA has chosen to hold its conference in a developing nation. It was therefore appropriate that the theme of the Congress, hosted by the Chinese archival community at the Beijing International Convention Centre, was "Archives at the End of the Century: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead." The conference presented an opportunity for archivists from around the World not only to reflect on the past achievements of the profession but to look forward to the challenges of the next century with confidence and enthusiasm. The demonstrated willingness of all archivists - from both developed and developing nations - to cooperate in meeting these challenges is certainly one of the lasting impressions of the conference.

Opening Remarks and Conference Sessions

The official opening of the conference took place during the afternoon of Monday September 2 in the Main Hall of the Convention Centre. Welcoming addresses were delivered by Wang Gang (State Archives Bureau of China and Local Arrangements Committee of ICA '96), Jean-Pierre Wallot (President of ICA), Li Peng (Prime Minister of China), and a host of other dignitaries. There was extensive coverage of the event by the Chinese print and television media.

The plenary sessions of the conference took place in the

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Main Hall of the Convention Centre. The format for each of the plenaries was to have one principal paper of 30 minute duration followed by four subsidiary papers of approximately 15 minutes each. The themes of the four plenaries were:

- From Brussels to Beijing: Continuity and Change in Archival legislation, Institutions, and Infrastructures
- Archives in the Post-Custodial World: Interaction of Archival Theory and Practice Since the Publication of the Dutch Manual in 1898
- The Impact of Modern Technology on Archives and Archival Work

The most significant papers delivered at the conference were Terry Cook's (National Archives of Canada) principal paper for the third plenary session and Michael Muller's (Bundesarchiv) "A Question of Ethics: Administration Versus Scholarship." This latter paper was an excellent exploration of the tensions between the professional responsibilities of archivists and the often conflicting demands of public administration.

After all of the papers had been delivered the floor was opened to commentaries from the conference delegates. These "interventions", advertised as five minute reviews and analyses of the topic under discussion, rarely lived up to their billing.

During the afternoons there were a number of smaller concurrent sessions. These "agora" offered conference delegates an opportunity to listen to speakers present the results of specific lines of theoretical inquiry, describe particular technological applications, and so on. Many of the papers and discussion within this format were more interesting than the plenary session papers.

Exhibition on Achievement of Chinese Archival Enterprise

The most interesting of the conference exhibits was dedicated to the accomplishments of Chinese archives. For this "Exhibition on Achievement of Chinese Archival Enterprise" each of the regional archives in the People's Republic had prepared a small booth and display

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YUKON COUNCIL OF ARCHIVES EXECUTIVE 1996-1997

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The workshop was structured so that the mornings were formal lecture presentations and the afternoons were hands-on pest identification demonstrations.

The workshop Keynote Address was given by David Penninger, a Consultant Entomologist from England. Penninger outlined the importance of developing a pest management strategy which takes into account the type of collection, collection environment and the additional hazards from insects within the building. Various bug traps and lures were discussed with emphasis on placement of traps and interpretation of the results. He closed his talk with a brief discussion of the two main directions in archives/museum pest eradication: controlled high and low temperature environments and secondly, the use of atmospheric gases.

Additional lectures gave insight into practical treatment of pests in collections. Sue Warren discussed the use of carbon dioxide for fumigation of large historical vehicles (buggies, hearses, etc.) at the National Museum of Science and Technology.

The topic of mould was discussed by Thomas A. Parker, Pest Control Services, Landsdowne, Pennsylvania. He emphasized the importance of working in a well-ventilated area, wearing appropriate filtration masks and using HEPA vacuum cleaners when cleaning infected areas. Parker stressed that the only sure method of controlling mould was in controlling the relative humidity in the collection environment to a level that should not exceed 60-65%. Freezing moulding materials, which usually kills the mould hyphae (roots), will not kill the mould spores.

Tom Strang of the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), discussed pest management with the CCI Preventive Framework for Conservation Chart which outlines the various collection risks (pests, light, temperature, relative humidity, etc.) and suggests a four step method of attack: avoid, block, detect, and respond. So, one might avoid pests by improving sanitation practices, removing sources of moisture and installing bug traps. Mr. Strang's second paper "Thermal Control Methods" outlines an approach to pest control through the use of high temperatures. Published literature indicated that pests will be killed in 1 to 8 hours if they are subjected to temperatures of 55-60 degrees celsius. Of course, the artifact material make-up is a concern when considering this method of pest control.

One of the most impressive papers presented was Mary Baughman's "Integrated Pest Management at the Harry Ransom Center." Baughman's responsibilities as well as that of book conservator, include overseeing a pest management program. To give an idea of the scope of this program, the Harry Ransom Center is 7 stories. Each floor is 22,000 sq. ft.

PEST MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

In late May, the International Institute of Conservation, Canadian Group held its Annual Conference and Training Workshop in Montreal. With assistance from the Canadian Council of Archives and the National Archives of Canada, I attended a two-day workshop which focused on pest management.

and has approximately 90 bug traps. Every six weeks the traps are examined. They are brought to the Conservation Lab where all bugs are identified and counted and information is fed into a Filemaker Pro database. Statistics are then produced to give an accurate picture of the insect population in the building. Bug routes can then be identified and sealed up.

Afternoons at the workshop were spent at the microscopes, studying bug physiology and identifying a wide range of bug samples. Gayle MacIntyre, Conservator at Keene Pioneer Village, Peterborough, Ontario, provided examples of pest damage to artifacts from that collection.

Overall, the IIC-CG Workshop was extremely useful in terms of learning what is currently being done to control pests in archives/museums. And of particular interest was the pest identification clinic which allowed identification of bugs at various stages of development.

Lloy Billingham

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: FAY TANGERMANN

Felicitas (Fay) Tangermann is working as a Records Analyst in the Yukon Government Department of Community and Transportation Services. An employee of the Department of Education since 1984, she was seconded to this position in July of 1996 to develop a departmental records classification system.

Fay came to the archives field after several years of university studies in Germany and France, majoring in Sociology, and later in Languages. She worked in libraries for several years: in the sociology department at the Freie University in Berlin, Germany, and subsequently at the Whitehorse Public Library. In 1987 she started her job helping researchers at the Archives as Reference Assistant.

In 1994 she was asked to take on the position of Project Coordinator for the Education Records Project designed to redevelop and standardize the records management practices in the Department. This involved inventorying all the files, investigating departmental functions and activities, a comprehensive purging and scheduling of old files, and the conversion of the existing files to the new administrative and operational records classification system (ARCS & ORCS).

This wasn't really part of a Reference Assistant's 'related duties', so Fay had to learn and adjust quickly to the new environment, especially since she had not had any specific records management training. Luckily, her colleague and

fellow YCA member Judith Balsor was able to join her temporarily and contribute to the project getting off to a smooth start. The project ran for 18 months and the system has been successfully implemented. Pauline Warner, another YCA member was also involved in the project from the beginning through implementation, and is now in charge of the system as the departmental records administrator.



Fay Tangermann Photo:
Hélène Dobrowolsky

Fay is currently working as a Records Analyst, developing an operational records classification framework for a division of the Department of Community and Transportation Services. When you ask her: What does a Records Analyst do? she replies: Do you REALLY want to know?, and launches into a description of her activities that sounds less and less dull the longer she goes on.

PRESERVING THE MOVING IMAGE - REGINA, MARCH 22 & 23, 1996

Due to the support of YCA and the luck of my name being drawn from a hat, I was able to attend the Saskatchewan Archivists Society's workshop Preserving the Moving Image. This "intensive" two-day workshop was held at the Saskatchewan Archives on Hillsdale Street in a very snowy Regina.

The workshop was facilitated by William (Bill) O'Farrell, Chief of Motion Picture Conservation, National Archives of Canada and Alan F. Lewis, Supervisory Audiovisual Specialist in the Motion Picture, Sound and Video Branch, U.S. National Archives, Washington, D.C.. And wonderful facilitation it was! Bill began the workshop with a lengthy look at the many uses of the moving image in today's society and how this is impacting archival preservation. In order to illustrate preservation and handling concerns he led a compelling discussion on the history of moving images. This included a detailed

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF ARCHIVES GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING: OTTAWA, NOVEMBER 9, 1996

This one-day meeting was held in Ottawa at the National Archives of Canada on Saturday, November 9, 1996. Attending the meeting was the CCA Board of Directors, a representative from each province or territory, and observers from the National Library of Canada, the Canadian Conservation Institute and the National/Provincial/Territorial Conference.

Chair's Report

The Chair of the CCA, Chris Hives, discussed the new initiatives CCA was involved with. He described the first "Issues Roundtable on the Information Highway" as a success. He said there appeared to be agreement that the CCA needs to take a major leadership role within the development of any national archival information network. The second roundtable will be held in early June 1997 and will be a continuation of the Archival Information Highway theme. The Directory of Canadian Archives will soon be released in hard copy and it will also be put on the CCA's internet home page. Chris announced that a new logo for CCA had been chosen and each representative was given a pin. Chris ended his report by discussing his six years with CCA, four as Chair, by saying that he felt that CCA was more accountable and had passed out of adolescence. He highlighted the twice-a-year Bulletins, the 10th Anniversary Retrospective, the new web-site and the CCA's commitment to build an inclusive archival system yet one sensitive to local autonomy.

National Archivist's Report

Jean-Pierre Wallot spoke at length about the cut-backs in the federal government and the serious ramifications they were having on the National Archives (NA). There will be a further 3.5% cut in fiscal 98/99 and the NA has decided to reduce the number of managers and supervisors. The new National Archives building in Gatineau is almost completed and records will begin to be moved to the site in early January. The Prime Minister will open this state of the art building in June. The NA is working on an exhibition to highlight its 125th anniversary. The exhibit will document the national treasures held by the Archives and show the linkages to other fonds. The National Archivist ended his talk by reporting that the new NA web-site was receiving approximately 400,000 hits per month which makes it one of the top ten in the country.

CCA Funding Programs

All funding programs have had further reductions due to the federal budget. In 1997/98, Yukon archival institutions will receive \$34,802 under the Control of Holdings Program and \$20,642 under the Preservation Management Program (CPCAR). Changes to the guidelines and program criteria were discussed and hotly debated. Yukon, NWT, and New Brunswick spoke against the new requirement that the all descriptions produced under the Control of Holdings program be based solely on the Rules for Archival Description (RAD). We argued that this would be very difficult for small institutions with new archival programs (such as First Nations) to comply with. They have staff with very basic archival training and to require RAD compliance would impose yet another burden on an emerging repository. A vote was held and the new requirement was passed by a majority of the delegates. The second contentious proposal discussed was that when a grant is rejected at the national level, the local council will be denied the opportunity to reallocate the funds from the rejected application. The CCA Secretariat stated that they would continue to work with applications that need clarification but will reject applications that do not fit the funding criteria. They proposed that all provinces and territories submit one extra project application and if any money is left over these applications will be adjudicated at a national level. This proposal was passed by the majority as well.

Elections to the CCA Board of Directors

Two positions came open on the CCA Board and I was nominated and elected to one of the Director positions for a two year term. The new composition of the Board is as follows:

- *Diane Charland* (City of Montreal Archives), Chair
- *Helen Miller* (Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives), Vice-Chair
- *Jean-Pierre Wallot* (National Archives of Canada), ex-officio
- *Chris Hives* (University of B.C. Archives), Past Chair
- *Fred Farrell* (Council of Archives New Brunswick), Director
- *Lesley Buchan* (Yukon Council of Archives), Director

The next Board Meeting of the CCA will be held in mid-March and will be solely devoted to the adjudication of the CCA funding applications.

Lesley Buchan



(XIII International Congress on Archives - continued from page 1)

area in one of the larger convention halls. These displays had photographs of the archives' facilities and holdings combined with explanations of the interesting archival projects underway in the area. Many of the archives also had on view unique or particularly interesting records from the region. The persons presenting the displays were always interested in engaging the visitors in conversation and very helpful in answering questions about the archival work in their region. This exhibition was the best opportunity for conference delegates to familiarize themselves with the large scope of the archival infrastructure in China as well as with the great pride and dedication of Chinese archivists.

Other Exhibitions

There were also a number of other exhibitions at the Convention Centre. Two large exhibit halls were filled with the standard "modern office equipment": imaging systems, copiers, fax machines, etc. Demonstrations were available to those with a grasp of the local languages, but these edifying experiences seem to have largely been foregone by Chinese archivists more intent on scrambling for the "freebies" - shopping bags, pen and pencil sets, rulers. A complimentary exhibit hall showcased archival supplies of the acid-free folder, mylar sleeve variety.

Of a more conceptual and artistic interest were the exhibits of archival posters and publications from around the world. The posters were posted on a number of display panels in the

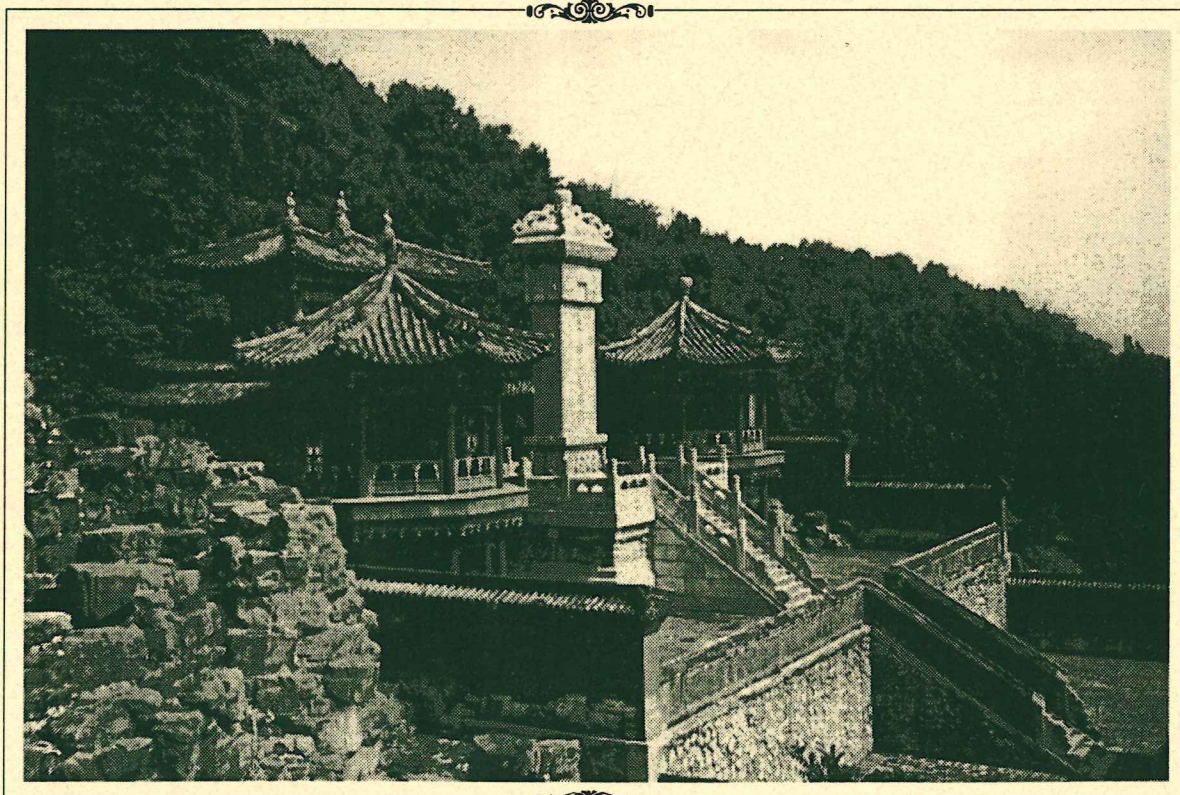
lobby of the Convention Centre. Many of them were very attractive and informative, perhaps the more striking and memorable posters being those from the smaller countries of Eastern Europe and from South America. The exhibit of archival publications - books, journals, newsletters, was held in an annex to the Convention Centre. There were thousands of publications on display from all over the world. A large number were of a very high production and intellectual quality with really good photographs.

Tour of Central Archives

During the afternoon of Wednesday, September 4, delegates attended tours of archival institutions in the Beijing area. From the six alternatives offered, I chose to attend the Central Archives, the agency responsible for managing the archival records of all offices and agencies within the Communist Party of China and the People's Republic of China. The Central Archives also has an added mandate to provide archival services to a wider range of social organizations.

The Central Archives was opened in 1959 in an area to the west of Beijing and approximately 40 minutes from the downtown area. It consists of a large complex of buildings set in the countryside among canals and fields. Apart from the repositories there are also several dormitories for the large number of staff members and for the visiting scholars.

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Summer Palace, Beijing, September 1996. Photo: Ian Burnett.

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Approximately 100 delegates made the trip to the Central Archives. After the welcoming tea and speeches we were divided into 5 groups to begin the tour. We were taken through the buildings to view a variety of the facilities available and the equipment in use: conservation labs, micrographics operations, storage units, etc. I was particularly struck by the great attention given to environmental control: an employee is always on duty monitoring a great number and variety of temperature and humidity controls from a central control room.

During the entire tour we never saw any researchers nor was there any mention of reference services and use. We did, however, see a great number of documents. Among the most memorable documents on display were those pertaining to the earlier years of the Communist Party and the founding of the People's Republic of China: correspondence and diaries of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, the first Five Year Plan, proposals for the flag of the People's Republic, and so on.

Tour of Ming Tombs and Great Wall

Early in the morning of Thursday, September 5, a convoy of approximately 35 buses set off from the Beijing Convention Center. Their cargo was an estimated 1700 archivists; their destination was the Ming Tombs followed by the Great Wall at Badaling. The first site was approximately 40 minutes north of Beijing; the latter another 25 minutes further on.

With 1700 archivists milling around in a relatively small area it was difficult to get much of a close-quarters view of the Ming Tombs. However, countless flights of stairs took us down into what certainly was old and what definitely was a tomb. The smog (or "mist" according to our tour guide) made it difficult to get a long-range view of the buildings and countryside through which the tombs are distributed. On a clear day the area is reportedly quite beautiful and it certainly looks it from the postcards.

More successful than the Ming Tombs was the Great Wall at Badaling - Badaling is perhaps the most famous, and consequently the most crowded of the three sites for viewing the Wall near Beijing. The archivists who were so closely packed at the tombs were quickly dispersed as the steep gradient of the wall separated the fit from those less so. Foregoing the proffered camel, I set off along the wall in the footsteps of former Yukon archivist Susan McClure, now seen bounding off over the next rise. From the top of the valley ridge we were able to look in two directions to discern, through the mist, the Wall winding its way over the landscape. It was certainly a wonderful

experience and a truly marvelous site.

Chinese Ethnic Culture Park Opening Reception and Dance

Following the dignitaries' welcoming remarks in the Convention Centre Main Hall, and following an excessive period of waiting around on the sidewalk, delegates were herded onto a fleet of buses for the short 5 min. (one could have walked there) ride to the site of the opening reception. The location was the Chinese Ethnic Culture Park, "one of the most attractive places in Beijing, both during the day and in the evening." Archivists were deposited at the entrance of the Park and were then guided along a wide path winding its way among homes and landscapes representing all of the regions of China. Along the way we were also treated to songs and dances from performers of the different ethnic groups within the People's Republic. It was a very impressive way of greeting the visitors and presenting them with a glimpse at the diverse cultures of China. At the end of the path the archivists assembled in a large square to listen to more welcoming speeches. After the speeches came the food. The meal was excellent if perhaps somewhat unduly arduous to procure: To reach the table one had to wade through a sea of archivists, simultaneously steadying one's beer to prevent spillage, protecting one's suit from the flailing chopsticks of passersby, and maintaining one's sense of decorum. The dancing also looked quite fun.

A Special Cultural Entertainment

During the evening of Wednesday September 4, the Beijing Municipal Government sponsored a "Special Cultural Entertainment" in the Main Hall of the Convention Centre. I had a bad seat. Off in the distance, and over the din of my conversing colleagues, I could vaguely descry a succession of acrobats and dancers contorting and cavorting to the sounds of a Chinese orchestra. The acrobats we saw were plate spinners, pipe swingers, bowl crowners, and a lamp roller. All were truly amazing, especially the latter. I was particularly impressed by the grace and beauty of the performances - they were not at all the freakish and low-brow antics that acrobatics can so easily become. A remarkable sword fighting scene from the opera *The Monkey King* was the finale of the evening. The evening gave many of the attendees a great appreciation of the Chinese arts.

State Archives Bureau Reception and Dance

The final social event of the conference was a reception and dance hosted by the State Archives Bureau in the grounds outside of the Convention Centre. The food was, once again, excellent. Perhaps the majority of archivists were intimidated by the Food Honour Guard, a phalanx of wait- and bus-people standing guard over the tables, or perhaps they were simply fatigued by overzealous conference-going - in any case, the gripping of one's food proceeded in a much more rational manner than at the opening reception. Again, the

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look at the components of various types of films used to produce moving images. Of great interest was the information on nitrate films which was highlighted by graphic images of its combustibility...yes this type of film can even be a-blaze underwater!

Much of this workshop involved "hands-on" exercises to explore the various types of materials used. Often throughout the two days the group would be attached as a "collective" by 35 mm, 16 mm or 8 mm film lengths as we explored the virtues of each one of them. These exercises allowed us to see soundtracks aligned along the edges of the various films and to learn about the attributes of sprocket holes and "dating patterns". This also provided a close-up look at the strengths and weaknesses of film and how this relates to preservation.

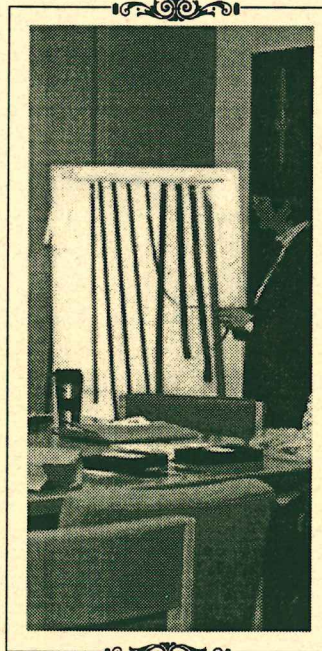
Storage of moving images was covered in a fair amount of detail, as would be expected in a workshop of this sort! The merits of the various film canisters were discussed as well some of the products used to measure the condition of films. This workshop was supported by a number of companies involved in producing items for film preservation, as well as by groups working for the preservation of moving images, therefore we benefited greatly from samples and information made available for this workshop.

Alan Lewis followed Bill O'Farrell's film discussions with an in-depth look at video tape and images produced for television. We were introduced to the anatomy and evolution of video cassettes and the tape which holds the images. Alan explained the differences between film and video and stressed the difficulty which arises in preservation as the technologies continue to advance. And specifically for Archives is the on-going problem of "play-backability"...that is finding the obsolete technology to view an original recording. The notion of Archives becoming museums for machines to project images or needing access to such museums, stirred interesting discussion as we grappled with the timely concerns of preservation in this technological age.

The final part of the workshop was spent exploring specific preservation concerns for moving images which include:

- 1). Temperature
- 2). Humidity
- 3). Physical security
- 4). Fire protection
- 5). Water protection
- 6). Technical obsolescence
- 7). Strategic dispersal
- 8). Magnetic protection
- 9). Storage containers
- 10). Storage position
- 11). Identification
- 12). Inventory control
- 13). Shelving
- 14). Cleanliness
- 15). Winding
- 16). Personnel
- 17). Air quality
- 18). Shock and vibration protection
- 19). Light sensitivity
- 20). Biological infestation

And as a way of "preserving" a very spectacular "moving image" in our minds for a very long time, Alan Lewis showed a video highlighting the new National Archives 'building' in the United States!



Brown Bag presentation by Heather Jones at Yukon Archives. *Photo: Lloy Billingham*

All of the materials and information provided at this workshop are available from the YCA's 'Resource Center' located in the Accession Room at Yukon Archives. Also included in this collection is the 4-minute video *Fading Away* which was kindly provided by Bill O'Farrell for YCA use...this was the dramatic start to this very informative and interesting workshop. My thanks to Canadian Council of Archives, the National Archives of Canada, and the Yukon Archives for their support which allowed me to attend this workshop.

Heather Jones



PEOPLE AND PLACES

Valerie Baggaley, former Director of the Dawson City Museum and past President of the Yukon Council of Archives, moved to Calgary in September 1996 to undertake a Masters degree in Linguistics at the University of Calgary. We wish Val well in all her future endeavours.

Ian Burnett has resigned as Vice-President of YCA due to numerous other commitments which demand his time. YCA members interested in volunteering for the position of Vice-President in the interim, please contact Secretary/Treasurer Clara Rutherford. This position along with others, will be up for elections at the next AGM in the spring of 1997.

Jody Cox and Malcolm Taggart were married last August on the romantic shores of Marsh Lake.

Mac Swackhammer, Director of the Dawson City Museum, is currently on leave researching the repatriation of indigenous peoples' artifacts; he is on a Fellowship with the Smithsonian Institution. His position at Dawson City Museum is being filled by Barb Hogan.

Susan McClure has assumed a position as Associate Archivist in the Resources/Cartographic Section at the Archives of Ontario. She will be working with maps and textual records related to natural resources originating from different Ministries.

Clara Rutherford has reached a milestone in her archival career - five years at Yukon Archives on November 19th. The resulting holidays will be spent touring Irish pubs and/or archives.

Fay Tangermann's assignment to Community and Transportation Services has been extended to March 31, 1997; Heather Jones continues to fill her responsibilities on the Yukon Archives reference desk.

Blair Taylor, the Government Records Archivist at Yukon Archives, returned from a six month leave of absence in October. Lesley Buchan who was Government Records Archivist while Blair was on leave, has stayed on part-time to assist with Access to Information and Protection of Privacy review of the Yukon Government records. Lesley and Jody Cox are sharing the position of Archival Advisor sponsored by the Yukon Archives and the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA). Lesley has been elected to the CCA Board of Directors for a two year term.



SUBMISSIONS, COMMENTS

The YCA Newsletter is the official publication of the Yukon Council of Archives. The Publications Committee welcomes articles, project reports, and announcements for publication in upcoming issues. Articles printed in the YCA Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Yukon Council of Archives.

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dancing looked fun. The majority of Chinese archivists are certainly excellent dancers. It appears to the onlooker, however, that their level of enjoyment is inversely proportional to their level of skill. After the somewhat early closing of the dance the majority of Canadian archivists repaired to the Beer Garden conveniently situated midpoint between the Conference Hotel and the Convention Centre.

Conclusion

The ICA conference was a marvelous opportunity for archivists from all over the world to meet, to learn from their colleagues, and to reaffirm one's sense of pride in the archival profession. It was also an opportunity to reaffirm a dedication to the archival profession for the beginning of the new century. As we move into the next millennium, there is a need for all archivists, wherever they live and work and whatever their specialty, to work together, to share ideas and experiences and to aggressively face new challenges in preserving the cultural heritage of our ancestors.

Copies of the papers delivered at the ICA Congress are available in the Yukon Council of Archives professional collection. The author would like to thank the Yukon Council of Archives and the Canadian Council of Archives for providing funding to attend the ICA Conference.

Ian Burnett

