

archives

SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

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NEWSLETTER

A TRIBUTE TO OUR PREDECESSORS

Michael Gourlie, Executive Director/Archives Advisor

Alberta will mark the centenary of many events in the coming years, some of which may go unnoticed by most people. For the province's archival community, a significant yet quiet centennial commemoration will occur on May 26, 2008. One hundred years earlier, Alberta's Executive Council appointed Katherine Hughes of Edmonton as the first Provincial Archivist, marking the start of the archival profession in Alberta.

Of course, one can debate the true origins of Alberta's archival community. Did it occur with Hughes, or should it be marked with the establishment of the Glenbow Archives in the 1950s or Provincial Archives of Alberta in the 1960s? As for what can be considered the "organized archival community," the Archives Society of Alberta itself has several notable anniversaries in its history, including the founding of the Directors of Alberta's Archives (DAA) in 1978, establishment of the Alberta Society of Archivists (ASA) in 1981, the creation of the Alberta Archives Council from the DAA in 1986, and the merger of the Council and the ASA in 1993. However, any chance to celebrate or draw attention to the archival community's activities and achievements is a worthy opportunity for public awareness, so marking this early accomplishment provides that occasion.

Hughes herself was a remarkable woman for her time. According to *In the Promised Land of Alberta's North: The Northern Journal of Katherine*



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Provincial Archivist
of Alberta A5398

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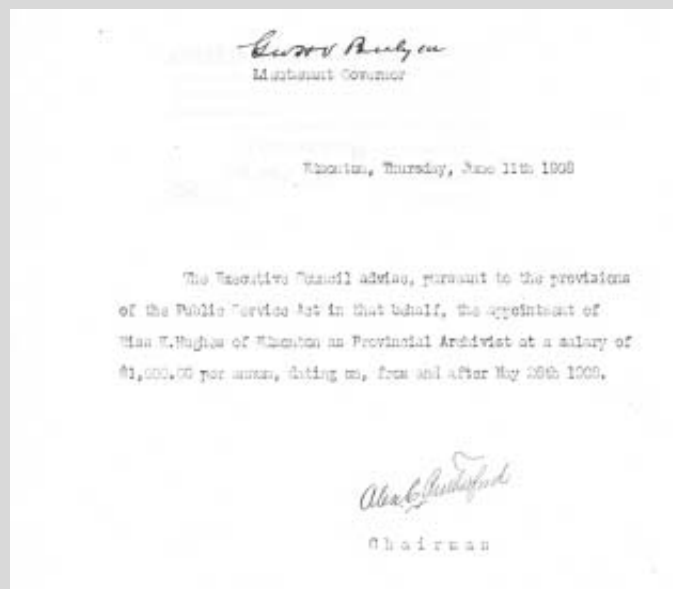
The Archives Society of Alberta is supported in part by a grant from the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.

Hughes, she was born in Prince Edward Island in 1874 and, after receiving her teacher's license, taught for several years in Quebec before becoming a journalist, ultimately residing in Edmonton. During her time as Provincial Archivist, she traveled to the Peace River region to collect documents and stories from early settlers, a trip documented by a diary recently published by the Alberta Records Publication Board of the Historical Society of Alberta. Her appointment as Provincial Archivist was cut short by a secondment in 1910 to the Premier's Office as private secretary. In 1913, she became the secretary of John A. Reid, first Agent-General for Alberta in London, but resigned in 1915 to dedicate the rest of her life to the cause of Irish independence. She died in New York City in 1925 at the age of 48.

While her tenure may have been brief, Katherine Hughes inaugurated an archival tradition in Alberta and articulated a vision of what it could achieve. In 1909, indicating that the archives should acquire records of political events as well as social conditions, she reasoned that:

Archives of a country kept on this plan have a strong economic value for the legislator no less than the historian, reflecting as they do the conditions of people of all classes, giving in an intimate way the atmosphere of past days and throwing light upon the social development of the race, as affected by political changes, by legislation and other circumstances.

Whether or not we acknowledge Hughes as the founder of Alberta's archival community, archivists today still strive to achieve some of the goals she laid out nearly 100 years ago.



Order-in-Council creating the position of Provincial Archivist, 1908.

Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Alberta

2008 ARCHIVES INSTITUTE

From May 5-10, the Archives Society of Alberta held its ninth Archives Institute in the boardroom at the Provincial Archives of Alberta. Drawing participants from across Alberta and Saskatchewan, the six-day course provided them with the basic fundamentals of archival theory and practice. Participants will receive a certificate of completion once they have submitted their completed take-home exercise to the ASA office.

The ASA thanks the Provincial Archives of Alberta for the use of its facilities for the Institute and for allowing staff members Alison Freake, Anna Gibson, Terry O’Riordan, and Karen Simonson to participate as guest instructors this year.



2008 Institute Participants and Instructors (left to right): Megan Becker, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Tim Atherton, Musee Heritage Museum; Michael Gourlie, instructor; Connie Yaroshuk, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Tom Bernier, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Todd Giberson, Lord Strathcona’s Horse Regimental Museum and Archives; Bonnie Wagner, Saskatchewan Archives Board; Myron Lahola, Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta; Christal Lintott, Saskatchewan Archives Board; Adam Wisheu, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Valarie Westers, Medicine Hat College; Angela Smith, City of Wetaskiwin Archives; Phyllis Verhaar, United Church of Canada, Alberta and Northwest Conference Archives; Katie Roth, Provincial Archives of Alberta; Ida Beltran, Alberta Teachers Association; Mary Hirsch, Alberta Museums Association; Marilyn Campbell, Hinton Coal Branch Archives; Kim Frey, Esplanade Archives; Mary Trush; Anna Gibson, instructor; Alison Freake, instructor; Karen Simonson, instructor. (Missing from photo: Terry O’Riordan, instructor)

THE ASA ARCHIVES INSTITUTE UNKNOWINGLY CELEBRATED ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR:

ARCHIVES INSTITUTE – ALBERTA

(As it appeared in the ACA Archives Bulletin, January 1974, p. 9)

An Archives training course was held at the University of Alberta, under the auspices of the School of Library Science, between 3rd July and 10th August 1973. This course – the first of its kind to be offered in Western Canada – was conducted under the direction of Dr. L.H. Thomas (Professor of History at the University of Alberta and sometime Provincial Archivist of Saskatchewan) assisted by Mr. J.M. Parker (University Archivist) and Mr. A.D. Ridge (Provincial Archivist of Alberta). The course was designed to introduce to the basic principles of archives administration, personnel who contemplated entering the profession or who were already performing archival functions on a whole or part time basis.

In planning the course careful attention was paid to every aspect of archives administration so that as rich and comprehensive a schedule could be provided as possible. However in view of the uncertainty as to the background of potential registrants, the limited human resources available and the problem of providing practical work, less emphasis was placed on records management that might otherwise be expected in a professional training program of this kind. The course was designed so that every morning students had lectures from a selection of Prairie archivists and scholars, and the afternoons were reserved for reading or practical work. Fifty hours lectures were provided and a minimum of 25 hours practical work was required of every student. The amount of lecture time devoted to each subject was: —

Archives administration and principles	8 hours
Physical care and facilities	4 hours
Copying facilities	2 hours
Reference services and research	10 hours
History of archives institutions	4 hours
Legislation	2 hours
Appraisal	2 hours
Records management	6 hours

Audiovisual records	4 hours
Special categories (e.g. ecclesiastical, land registers, business)	4 hours
Public relations	2 hours
The profession	2 hours
Course evaluation	2 hours
	50 hours

Twenty students registered and of the 19 who stayed the course all but three passed the final examination successfully. An assistant archivist from the Yukon Archives was the sole non-Albertan institution. Students' reaction to the course was mainly favourable and they greatly appreciated the wealth of experience brought by the visiting lecturers from repositories outside Edmonton. Some criticism was voiced over the practical work assignments and there was a general feeling that this had been started too soon in the course before students had had adequate time to master the fundamentals of archival principles. If the course is held again this will certainly be borne in mind by the planners. It is also to be hoped that next time the course is held – and Albertan archivists certainly hope that this proves to be the first of a series held periodically – the Canadian Archivists' professional organization will be sufficiently sure of itself to know if it wishes to extend some kind of accredited status to the course. Standards of professional training across the country ought to be watched and encouraged by any professional organization worthy of the name and it is to be hoped that the West's initiative will be recognized as being equal to the larger established programs in Ontario and Quebec. Meanwhile all owe a special debt of gratitude to the University of Alberta School of Library Science for hosting the Institute, and to Dr. L.H. Thomas not only for his unflinching pressure to have the course introduced at all but also for his unstinted help and wise counsel to students and instructors alike.

A.D. Ridge,
Provincial Archivist.

The lecturers were:-

Prof. L.H. Thomas, Department of History,
University of Alberta
Mr. A.D. Ridge, Provincial Archivist of Alberta
Mr. J.M. Parker, University Archivist, University of
Alberta
Mr. B. Hyman, Assistant Provincial Archivist of
Manitoba
Mr. D.H. Bocking, Assistant Provincial Archivist of
Saskatchewan
Mrs. M.H. Stewart, Director, Archives of the
Canadian Rockies
Prof. T.D. Regehr, Department of History, University
of Saskatchewan
Mr. C. Betke, Graduate Student, Department of
History, University of Alberta
Miss S.S. Jamieson, Archivist, Glenbow-Alberta
Institute
Mr. H.A. Dempsey, Director of History, Glenbow-
Alberta Institute
Prof. P.J.M. Lown, Faculty of Law, University of
Alberta

With regard to the practical work in the University of Alberta Archives or Provincial Archives, each student was given a modest collection of documents of moderate to great complexity and required to arrange the material, list it, index it, [and] prepare a brief descriptive commentary and a press release for news media. At the end of the course students were given a 2-hour written examination consisting of one compulsory question, (a selection of short notes on numerous aspects), one (out of three) on administrative techniques, and two (out of five) on other topics. To marks for this exam were added marks assigned for the practical work already concluded.

NEW ASA DISPLAYS AVAILABLE

Need something to draw attention during your next archives event? The Archives Society of Alberta has purchased two banner stands that can be loaned to institutional members for short periods of time. One banner describes the role and program areas of the Archives Society of Alberta, while the other banner provides a definition of archives and lists the types of archival institutions found in Alberta. The displays can work together or separately, depending on the needs of the institution using the display.

If your institution is interested in borrowing the display, please contact the ASA office at 780-424-2697 or mgourlie@shaw.ca.



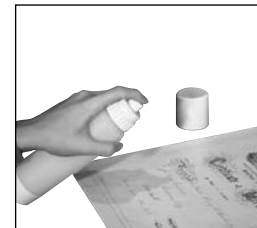
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE RECORDS AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH

April 22, 2008 (Red Deer, Alberta) – The Red Deer and District Archives are pleased to announce that the records of 18 different Women's Institute branches from across Central Alberta are now processed and available for public research. The Women's Institute was founded in 1897 in Stony Creek, Ontario, by Mrs. Hoodless. It was originally formed as a way to educate rural women in domestic sciences, which would benefit women and their families, and to play a charitable role in the community and the world. Their aim was the betterment of life individually and nationally, leading to their motto "For Home and Country." The Women's Institute (also known as W. I.) grew dramatically across Ontario and in 1909 Alberta women organized their first Women's Institute in Lea Park, Alberta. More than 100 years after the first Women's Institute was formed in Canada, these women's mark remains imprinted on Canadian history and was instrumental in the foundation of modern-day opinions and practices. These collections will be of great interest to individuals interested in women's organizations, family life, and the histories of many communities around Red Deer. Please call Archives at (403) 309-8403 for more information, visit the Archives at 4525 47A Avenue or visit www.reddeer.ca under Archives. Funding for this project was made available through the Archives Society of Alberta.

For more information, please contact: Shelley Respondek Red Deer and District Archives (403)-356-8902

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PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CITY OF CALGARY, CORPORATE RECORDS, ARCHIVES

April 2008 brought staff changes to The City of Calgary, Corporate Records, Archives. Archivist **Chantelle Opyr** left to accompany her husband Zach Sonnleitner as he pursues his MBA studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. As we wish Chantelle the best in her new adventures, we are also pleased to welcome **Lynn Bullock**, our new Archivist. Lynn was the Curator/Archivist for nine years for the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Regimental Museum and Archives prior to joining The City of Calgary's Archives.

CHANGES TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

The Archives Society is pleased to announce that, effective June 1, 2008, the amount that individual members can claim from the Professional Development Travel Assistance (PDTA) fund will increase from one half of expenses up to \$500 to one half of expenses up to \$750. This increase will allow the PDTA budget to keep pace with increasing costs relating to accommodation, meal and travel expenses. Please note that the PDTA grants are only available to current ASA individual members.

The PDTA forms reflecting this change are now available on the ASA website at http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=71. If you have any questions about the fund or the application process, please contact the ASA office at 780-424-2697 or mgourlie@shaw.ca.

ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

The ASA will present a workshop, "Oral History Collections: Management and Digitization," at the University of Calgary on October 17-18, 2008. Presented by Erin Suliak and Norman Glowach of the NWT Archives, the workshop will focus primarily on the management (as opposed to the creation) of oral history collections in archival institutions, including a discussion of digitization.

For further information and a registration form, please visit the workshop section of the ASA website at

http://www.archivesalberta.org/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=50.

SUBMISSIONS? QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Archives Society of Alberta Membership Application 2008 - 2009

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

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

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