



Association
of Canadian
Archivists

theBulletin

April - May 2012



*1937 Postulants Group Photo in the Garden, Presentation Motherhouse, Cathedral Square, St. John's, NL..
Presentation Congregation Archives*



Association
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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the Spring 2012 edition of the Association of Canadian Archivists' Bulletin.

In this issue we have a wonderful article featuring the Presentation Congregation Archives of St. John's, Newfoundland. Also included is Valerie Léveillé's "Controversy and Consequences of Bill C-19: An Act to Amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act". Valerie's paper focuses on Clause 29 of Bill C-19 and provides a careful analysis of how this legislation will affect the business of archives and recordkeeping. There is also a write up about a recent Nelson Mandela movie night at the University of Toronto, as well as information about upcoming new exhibits being launched across the country.


To find out more information about the upcoming 37th ACA Annual conference in Whitehorse, June 7-9th, visit the conference page of the website at www.archivists.ca.

I hope you enjoy the issue. As always, if you have any comments or future contributions, please send them my way!

Happy spring everyone!

Regards,
Carrie Limkilde

Organizing data for eloquent presentation!




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Special Interest Section Meetings in Whitehorse

Are you going to be attending ACA 2012 in Whitehorse? Are you a member of one of ACA's Special Interest Sections? Most of the Special Interest Sections will be holding their annual meetings in the afternoon on Wednesday June 6th. Whatever your area of interest is, please take this opportunity to discuss current issues, make plans for the coming year, and network with colleagues from across the country! Check out the Conference-at-a-Glance to find out when and where your SIS is meeting.

If you haven't joined a Special Interest Section yet, it's not too late. You can do it easily and instantly on the ACA Members' website. Just log in and choose **Member Directory** from the menu that appears on the right hand side of the screen. Under **My Coordinates** (on the left), click on **Special Interests (SIS)**. Select up to three Special Interest Sections from the list that appears, hit "Update," and you're done!

There will also be a chance for all students attending the conference to meet one another, exchange ideas, ask questions, and compare experiences. Please join the Director at Large at The Deck for a beverage and chat at 3:15 on June 6th. And if it's your first conference, don't forget to sign up for the First Timer/Mentor/Fellow Reception – the Mentors and Fellows are one of the most friendly, fascinating, and supportive groups of people you're ever likely to meet!

Hope to see you in June!
Heather Beattie, Director at Large

ACA Outreach Committee reviews the Archives Society of Alberta's web tutorial:

**By Nick Richbell, Collections Registrar & Archivist,
McGill University Health Centre, Montreal**

Archivists are not only responsible for safeguarding our organization's institutional memory, nor are we solely in the reference room to allow experienced researchers to access our holdings. We, as archivists, are also educators. We share a collective responsibility to reach out to the public-at-large in order to let them know that there is more to life than Google and Wikipedia as tools for research; we must teach them that archives are real, tenable, and exciting places where their research should bring them. They should have the opportunity to share with us the magical pleasure of holding a primary resource document from the early 19th century in their own hands!

The Outreach Committee is happy to take this opportunity to share some outreach champions with you, starting with the Archives Society of Alberta. Visitors to their website

can follow a well thought out, excellently constructed interactive web tutorial at <http://www.archivesalberta.org/webtutorial/openme.html>.

Visitors to this tutorial can explore on their own or follow a virtual guided tour where they will learn about the different areas of an archives, from the reference room to the stacks to the archivists own office. The reference archivist giving the tour provides a brief but comprehensive summary of the workings of the area you are visiting, both in text and spoken word. Then, by clicking on "continue" you find even more information about your area, whether it's a researcher's point-of-view or an explanation of the temperature/humidity gauge.

There are also a multitude of FAQs which provide further background information on what you have seen during the tour. If you are not sure what a *fonds* is, the FAQ will tell you. If your interest is piqued by the concept of a *finding aid*, the FAQ will educate you. Again, the information presented here is clear and concise: easy to follow and absorb, the ASA has made an excellent effort to make this information not only accessible but understandable in a fun and interesting way. People who want to delve deeper into the archival world can read from a wide selection of researcher or archivist essays: the former sharing their experiences of interacting with archives as a donor, an academic or a student; the latter providing further details on the role of archives and what we do.

The ASA has used their resources to produce an innovative tool that raises awareness of and educates the public about archives. By utilizing this video game-like exhibit, young gamers will without doubt find the tour immersive as they will already be familiar with the "click-to-explore" type buttons used. The interactive and visual nature of the site will also hold the visitor's attention: they are not going to be weighed down with a list of links leading to dry and lengthy text. This exhibit uses technology in a simple, but effective way showing that archives are not dark basements full of dust and roaches, but they are a place to explore, to inspire and to learn. We take our hats off to the ASA for their continued efforts in raising awareness of our archival world!

Save the Date! Digital Preservation Management: Short-Term Solutions for Long-Term Problems

The Association of Canadian Archivists and the McGill University School of Information Studies is pleased to announce a three-day Digital Preservation Management workshop, September 26th – 28th, 2012.

Instructors: Dr. Nancy McGovern and Kari Smith with Dr. Carolyn Hank
Location: Montreal, Quebec, CANADA
Dates: September 26-28, 2012
Registration: Complete details will be made available on the ACA website shortly.

For general information on the Digital Preservation Management workshop series, please visit www.dpworkshop.org. Please write to dpmanagementworkshop@gmail.com for information about the workshop's content.

About the Workshop:

The Digital Preservation Management Workshops, a series presented since 2003, incorporate community standards and exemplars of good practice to provide practical guidance for developing effective digital preservation programs. The workshops were initially developed at Cornell University beginning in 2003 under the direction of Anne Kenney and Nancy McGovern. Since 2006, McGovern has continued curricular development and directing the workshop from ICPSR at the University of Michigan. This has included development of Special Topic advanced workshops and a Train-the-Trainer program. Through 2010, the workshop series was originally developed with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Heather MacNeil appointed *Archivaria* Senior Associate Editor

Jean Dryden, General Editor, *Archivaria*

I am delighted to announce that Heather MacNeil has been appointed Senior Associate Editor of *Archivaria*, effective immediately. Heather will become the General Editor in June 2013, and will be responsible for 5 issues (#76 (Fall 2013) to # 80 (Fall 2015)).

Heather MacNeil is eminently well-qualified to take on the role of General Editor. She has been an associate professor in the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto since 2008 where she teaches courses on archival concepts and issues and the arrangement and description of

archival documents. Prior to this she was an associate professor in the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia.

She has published extensively on a variety of topics, including archival theory and history, privacy, descriptive standards, and the trustworthiness of records in traditional and digital record-keeping environments. She is the author of two books: *Without Consent* (1992) and *Trusting Records* (2000) and co-editor (with Terry Eastwood) of *Currents of Archival Thinking* (2010). She has been principal investigator on two SSHRC-funded research projects: "Archival Description and the Apparatus of Authenticity," (2004-2007) and "Archival Description as Rhetorical Genre" (2009-2013). She has served on the Editorial Board of *Archivaria* since 2000 and also served on the Publications Board of the Society of American Archivists from 1999 to 2005.

She was one of the founding organizers, with Barbara Craig and Philip Eppard, of the International Conference on the History of Records and Archives (I-CHORA) and guest-edited, with Craig and Eppard, "The Inaugural Conference on the History of Records and Archives (I-CHORA): Exploring Perspectives and Themes for Histories of Records and Archives." *Archivaria* 60 (Fall 2005): 1-274. She was also a guest editor, along with Craig, Eppard and Brenda Lawson of "The History of Personal Archives." Special issue of *Libraries and the Cultural Record* 44:1 (2009): 1-152.

She is the recipient of the Hugh A. Taylor Prize (2010), as well as a special W. Kaye Lamb Prize (2004) for directing the compilation of an index and list of subject headings to *Archivaria*, vols. 1-54

In sum, Heather is a recognized scholar and educator, an excellent writer, and an experienced editor with an extensive network of colleagues in the national and international archival community. The ACA and *Archivaria* are very fortunate that someone of her calibre is willing to take on this responsibility.

I look forward to working with Heather in her new role.

Archives News:

The Memory of the World in the Digital Age: Digitization and Preservation

26-28 September, 2012, Vancouver, British Columbia

UNESCO is organizing an international conference to explore the main issues affecting the preservation of digital documentary heritage and to develop strategies that will contribute to the greater protection of digital assets. The conference will bring together professionals from the heritage sectors, as well as a range of government, IT industry, rightsholders and other stakeholders to assess current policies in

order to propose practical recommendations to ensure permanent access to digital documentary heritage. For more information visit: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/events/calendar-of-events/events-websites/the-memory-of-the-world-in-the-digital-age-digitization-and-preservation/>

Grey Roots archives are online for public research

Grey Roots Museum and Archives is now online. *Eloquent Systems* was awarded the contract November 7, 2011 and delivered a working system by December 22 along with 50,000 legacy records migrated from Excel spreadsheets.

The archival holdings in **Grey Roots Museum and Archives** include both municipal and private collections covering the history of Grey County. They include over 500 collections which compose over 3,600 linear feet of material. With a mission to promote preservation, understanding and communication of the unique heritage of Grey County, the Archives holds municipal materials, upper and lower tier, as well as material that comes as the result of private donations.

Fortunate to receive the support of the Government of Ontario through the Programs and Services Branch of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in the form of Museums and Technology funding (Museums and Technology Fund), a Request for Proposal for the project was released in late September, 2011. Eloquent Systems was awarded the contract on November 7.

“Our first priority was to help the researcher better understand what holdings are available via the Internet. In particular, photographs and their display on demand.” said Karin Noble, Archivist. *“There is a lot of power in Eloquent Archives software that we will put to good use as we get time to learn to take advantage of all the features.”*

About Grey Roots Archives & Museum

Grey Roots Museum & Archives has grown and developed into a unique facility from the County Museum's beginning in 1955 and the later establishment of a County Archives in 2000 in order to promote and preserve the heritage of Grey County. For more information contact [Karin Noble, Archivist](#), or go to their [Website](#).

For further information about Eloquent Systems contact Merv Richter at 800-663-8172/101 or merv@eloquent-systems.com

Archives of Ontario Presents: *Finding your War of 1812 Ancestor at Doors Open Toronto 2012*

George Spragge Classroom
Archives of Ontario
134 Ian Macdonald Blvd.
Saturday, May 26th at 1:00 p.m.

In keeping with the theme of this year's Doors Open Toronto: The people and personalities that are associated with Toronto's history in commemoration of the bicentennial of the war of 1812, the Archives of Ontario is holding a special panel featuring:

- Janice Nickerson. M.A. Upper Canada Genealogy, an author and lecturer, who will speak on “Casualties of the York militia in 1812: Using archival records to tell their stories”.

- Guylaine Petrin, a librarian at York University-Glendon, has also used the Archives of Ontario extensively. Her stories focus on traitors during the conflict and reasons for ‘political migration’.
- Serge Paquet: Through the words of those who were there: the War of 1812 in personal records of the Archives of Ontario. Serge has agreed to participate in the panel by presenting a truncated version of his presentation he will be giving to OGS conference in Kingston on the following Saturday.

For more information contact David Tyler at email: david.tyler@ontario.ca or 416-212-2037

Estonian exhibit at the Provincial Archives of Alberta

The Provincial Archives of Alberta is celebrating the province's Estonian heritage with a new exhibit in its public gallery: *Alberta's Estonians 1899 – Present*.

The exhibit marks the completion of a five-year heritage project by the Alberta Estonian Heritage Society. It explores the reasons Estonians chose to immigrate to Alberta, highlights Estonian communities and contributions to Alberta, and features social, political, cultural and economic history and personal stories.

The heritage project also involved the production of a 30-minute documentary and a richly illustrated 300-page book about Alberta's Estonian community. A comprehensive heritage website was also completed. All archival materials collected for the project have been donated to the Provincial Archives to ensure public access to this rich historical information.

For more information visit: www.provincialarchives.alberta.ca or call 780-427-1750 (dial 310-0000 for toll-free access within Alberta).

Cuadra Associates Releases Version 2 of STAR Knowledge Center for Archives with a new research services module.

For more information on Cuadra products, contact Ilene Slavick at 800-366-1390 or 310-591-2490 or visit the company's web site: <http://www.cuadra.com>

Robert Garon (1942-2012)



Robert Garon
courtesy of Michel Roberge

Robert Garon was the provincial Archivist of Quebec from 1980-2000. He made many significant contributions to the archival profession including aiding in the establishment of the Canadian Council of Archives. He was also instrumental in the development of Quebec's modern archives legislation which served as a model for other provinces. He helped launch the International Association of Francophone Archives and was a key

organizer of the International Congress on Archives in Montréal in 1992. Colleagues Marcel Caya and Marion Beyea comment "He will be best remembered as an eternally optimistic colleague – always ready to help and find solutions to problems, no matter how hard the difficulties."

Robert (Bob) Morin (1940-2012)



Robert (Bob) Morin

Robert Morin, a long-time member of the Canada's records management community and well-known in ARMA circles, passed away on February 17th 2012. He worked with the National Archives of Canada, the Province of Alberta and the City of Saskatoon. Bob was a member of ARMA and was Vice President

of the North America International Records Management Council. He was a sports and outdoors enthusiast. "Bob was almost single-handedly responsible for implementing a systematic records management program at the City of Saskatoon (including establishing its archives)." Jeff O'Brien, City Archivist in Saskatoon states, "He was hugely respected among the records management community. People who were familiar with his work in other jurisdictions spoke of him in tones almost approaching reverence. His illness took him from us long before his time, and we are lessened thereby."

Tony Rees (1948-2012)



Tony Rees

Anthony Leighton (Tony) Rees died suddenly at his home in Gland, Switzerland. Tony was born in Wales and raised in Toronto from age nine. His archival career spanned 20 years, beginning at the United Church Archives in 1973. He was Archivist of Fine Arts at the City of To-

ronto and later became the Supervisor of the City of Toronto Archives. In 1981, he moved west to become the first City Archivist of Calgary. He was also a records manager and archivist for the 1988 Calgary Olympic Games and Chief Archivist at Calgary's Glenbow Museum. He has held numerous leadership positions on local, provincial and federal professional organizations including first Vice-Chairman & Chairman of Toronto Area Archivists Group, founding member of the Association of Canadian Archivists and founding member and head of the Alberta Archives Council. He is the author of three books: *Hope's Last Home*, *Polo: The Galloping Game*, and *Arc of the Medicine Line*.

Remembering Tony Rees

By Christopher Nokes

Although most of my knowledge of Tony Rees was gained vicariously through reported conversations between he and Jane Nokes the one and only and my wife of forty years and letters written in that lovely self-deprecating witty encyclopaedic style in broad-nibbed navy-blue ink with his Mont Blanc sword and later less and less frequent emails I did spend some precious few memorable times with Tony at Wymilwood (try Thales to Aristotle) at the Ritz Café (it's always evening at the Ritz) and with my copy of the Alexandria Quartet in hand at the Lothian Mews (it defeated me) though no words defeated him especially musing about literature and history and yes Jane as we did often. Tony transformed from teacher Milton under one arm and Blake under the other (I want all of you to go out into the real world and get laid) to archivist and historian to cowboy and writer who cut his literary

teeth on Hunter S. Thompson McMurtry (BLD) McPhee and McCarthy. He connected with the Milk River (on my way to someplace else) and Lewis and Clarke and unrecorded pioneers of the West rising out of the plains and Badlands like El Greco dust-devils their dreams swallowed by the landscape these secondary and tertiary characters defining for Tony the real history of Hopes Last Home and Arc of the Medicine Line. He ultimately transformed to French philosopher there in Gland Switzerland with Donna at the UN and Tony somewhere sipping coffee (I'd kill for a cup of coffee) — kill for a glass of Provence red or twenty-five year old Macallan — and casting a large shadow against some incongruous mixture of Roman and Mediaeval stone or surrounded by hanging wisteria spring tree catkins and blue Alpine squill and nodding to familiar passers-by outside Café le Rallye and greeting new old friends in a town already infatuated with this tall Canadian adaptation of Sam Shepherd Clint Eastwood and Peter Coyote rolled into one.

A man more French in English than French. And the instant love and admiration he honestly did not expect. But there it is as reflected sun warms his back as he slips into his latest favourite author like soft buckskin while the cycle of days begins again and again. Hello and small talk to his newest Heidi (there's more than coffee Tony) and impressing all who come and all who venture to approach this lonely heart. This lonesome dove. A little bit of this good life. A little bit of Paradise. And still channelling Cormac McCarthy Tony has now transformed into the metaphysical cowboy he offered up in fiction once upon a time — and a very good time it was too — and he rode out somewhere above *the round dais of the earth . . . into the swarming stars . . . not under but among them and . . . rode at once jaunty and circumspect . . . newly loosed in that dark electric . . . in a glowing orchard loosely jacketed against the cold and ten thousand worlds for the choosing.* Tony. Home at last. Home at last.

More on Merger

Dr. Guy Berthiaume, President – CEO of the Bibliothèques Archives nationales du Québec (BanQ), sent a follow up e-mail to the article in the last Bulletin entitled “Professional Associations and Mergers of Archival Institutions in Canada.” He stated that there was no difference between his position “and that expressed by Archivist Carol Couture” towards the merger between the various national libraries and archives in Quebec. He felt that the harmonization was positive. Dr. Berthiaume kindly sent the text of his speech from the conference of the Association des archivistes du Québec in 2010, and indeed he said: “de façon générale, le bilan que nous pouvons faire de la fusion après quatre ans de fonctionnement est plus positif.”

This statement was as opposed to my article which noted that he had “supposedly stated at an AAQ conference two years ago that there weren't any particular advantages to the merger but that it did not hurt.” This latter part of the quote was taken directly from an e-mail I received from someone who was at the conference. It perhaps reflects what the person hearing this speech took away from it rather than what was actually said, but there was a curious sentence towards the end of Dr. Berthiaume's speech. Without placing too much meaning in it, perhaps it left a lingering question in the minds of at least a few attendees: “L'expérience de BANQ démontre que la cohabitation des fonctions de bibliothèque et d'archives – même que des professionnels qui oeuvrent dans chaque domaine – est non seulement possible mais *peut-être* [emphasis mine] mutuellement profitable.”

Dr. Berthiaume also said in his speech that around the beginning of the 1980s, UNESCO published several documents promoting the advantages that archivists, librarians and information scientists (documentalists) would have if they worked together. Indeed, I found online that there was an entire conference on harmonization in 1984:

“International Symposium on Harmonization of Education and Training Programmes in Information Science, Librarianship and Archival Studies.” I concentrated my article specifically on Canada at the request of ICA's Section on University and Research Institution Archives, but I think with a little delving, there is a lot more to this history than would seem on a cursory examination of the topic.

On further reflection about the merger of Library and Archives Canada however, while one can only speculate what motivated Roch Carrier to first propose the merger, it may be a case where it didn't really matter what the advantages were. Maybe after convening four committees to study how the two institutions, the National Archives and the National Library, could cooperate, it became apparent that the poisoned nature of the relations between the two institutions and their organizational cultures would not allow them to move forward in an independent fashion. And surely it is no coincidence that it was someone outside the library profession that was able to make the proposal. It would be worthwhile for someone to interview M. Carrier to get his take on the whole matter.

Shelley Sweeney
University Of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

“The federal government should never delete or destroy any documents or records”¹: Controversy and Consequences of Bill C-19: An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act²

By Valerie Léveillé
MAS/MLIS Candidate
School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies
University of British Columbia

Introduction

In 1995, Canada amended the *Firearms Act* which required all owners to legally register their non-restricted firearms (i.e. hunting rifles and shotguns); the program and database that would go on to regulate and maintain these records would subsequently be known as the “long-gun registry”. Since its introduction, the program has been the subject of major debates and controversies, receiving both praise from its supporters and condemnation from its critics. The motivations surrounding this backlash are mostly of a political nature, but recent events have shifted attention to shed light on issues regarding accountability and transparency in government information management. In November 2011, six months following a majority win for the Conservatives, Stephen Harper and his government tabled Bill C-19: *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act* in the House of Commons. On February 15 2012, the bill was amended in the House of Commons and, once it is approved by the Senate, it will guarantee the termination of the long-gun registry program in Canada and its database of approximately 7.1 million records.

The dissolution of the long-gun registry has created a very divisive battle amongst Canadians, and has consequently been the cause of rising political tensions in Parliament that have finally culminated with tabling of the bill. The general shift of sentiments regarding gun-control and crime regulation in Canada, to the introduction of an act to destroy the registry program has, without doubt, generated much controversy and animosity on the political scene. The bill alone has generated many emotions from both ends of the spectrum; from those who have relied on the registry to fight gun-related crimes and those who have become victims of such crimes, as well as those who have owned guns for leisure and sporting purposes, but who have felt targeted as criminals ever since the instalment of the *Firearms Act* in 1995.

It is however the final clause of this bill the focal point from which the issues addressed in this paper unfolds. Clause 29

of Bill C-19 calls for the immediate destruction of the records database and, as a result, it has generated much concern within the legal and recordkeeping communities in Canada. While the motive that led to the addition of this clause has, in itself, raised many questions, the overall process that would lead to the destruction of the database has raised general concern with regard to government transparency and accountability. In a move that overrules current legislation and undermines government information management regulations--archivists and records professionals warn--the passing of this bill and the destruction of the records’ database will set a terrible precedent for future standards of government recordkeeping practices.

The history of gun-control in Canada

In order to fully grasp the issue, as well as place it in its proper historical context, an overview of the events that led up to the tabling of this bill is needed. Canada has maintained a strong stand on gun-control that extends past the first implementation of the long-gun registry. The first laws that restricted the possession and use of firearms were enacted in 1877. This was followed by the implementation of a nationwide permit system for the carrying of small arms in 1892. Mandatory registration of all firearms became law in 1934 and a centralized registry was created and furthermore maintained by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in 1951. Less than a decade later, the introduction of Bill C-150 created a category system that defined and identified the differences between “restricted”, “non-restricted”, and “prohibited” weapons. Long-guns were henceforth identified as “non-restricted” weapons; this comprised hunting and sporting rifles, shotguns and airguns with an overall length of 660mm or greater.³ In 1977, the Firearms Acquisition Certificate (FAC) was introduced with the passing of Bill C-51: a mandatory screening system, which included a criminal record check, was now required prior to the purchase and ownership of any firearm. Additions were made to the FAC in 1991 with the implementation of Bill C-17, which required all firearm applicants to complete a mandatory training course and a detailed questionnaire, and wait 28 days before a decision on their application was made. With the introduction of each new bill, the acquisition of a new firearm became a progressively elaborate process for aspiring firearm owners.

¹Comment made by Canada’s Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault during a meeting of Parliament’s Safety committee. QMI Agency. “Feds and info commish spar over long-gun data”, London Free Press, (Nov. 22 2011).

²This paper was prepared in partial fulfillment of course work for ARST 516: Management of Current Records in the Masters of Archival Studies Programme at the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of British Columbia.

³Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Storing, Transporting and Displaying Firearms*, (Nov. 23 2004).

This sequence of events eventually leads, in 1994, to the introduction of Bill C-68⁴, otherwise known as the *Firearms Act*.⁵ The act, adopted by Jean Chrétien's Liberal government in 1995, introduced a series of laws that would henceforth regulate the possession, the transport and the storage of all firearms, no matter the class. The long-gun registry was, therefore, created as a by-product of the mandatory registration process. The Canadian Firearms Program⁶ was officially created the following year as the blanket organization that would oversee the administration and proper implementation of the act. Under the Canadian Criminal Code, the program became responsible for regulating the ownership of all firearms in Canada, maintaining a current database of all registered firearms, and distributing fines and penalties when deemed necessary. Formally under the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Safety, the supervision of the program was transferred to the RCMP as of 2006. This move was the result of the *Firearms Act*'s mandate of increasing public safety and reducing gun crimes, "while allowing Canadian police authorities to more effectively coordinate gun control activities with other crime control measures".⁷ This administrative structure is still in effect today, and the database that is regulated by the RCMP currently accounts for 7,865,994 registered firearms, of which 7.1 million represent non-restricted firearms alone.⁸

A series of lawsuits⁹, internal audits¹⁰, and budgetary criticisms, as well as general concerns with the accuracy of the information found on the registries, and the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the program ultimately led to the demise of the long-gun registry. As of May 17, 2006, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day and the Conservative government set forth a motion to eliminate the long-gun registry all-together. Bill C-391, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the *Firearms Act*, was introduced by the Conservative government as a result. In addition to transferring the responsibility of the registry to the RCMP¹¹, the bill stated that owners of non-restricted firearms would no longer be required to register their weapons. Until 2011 this bill was met with much animosity and resistance by the opposition, which ultimately led to recurring failed attempts at passing the bill by the minority Conservative government. Never-

theless, the push to abolish the long-gun registry was used as a primary driving factor in a renewed Conservative election platform during the 2011 federal election campaign. Less than six months after Stephen Harper and a majority Conservative government were sworn into power, *Bill C-19: An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act* was tabled in the House of Commons. On February 15, 2012, a mere 3 months after the act had undergone its first reading, the bill was approved by the Commons on a vote of 159-130. Once the act is confirmed by the Senate, which is likely since the Conservatives also hold a majority there, the bill will receive Royal Assent by the Governor General of Canada and will subsequently be passed into law.

Clause 29 of Bill C-19: *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act*

Bill C-19, containing a total of 31 clauses, has remained relatively consistent with the Conservatives original agenda. While clauses 2-8 of the new bill amend sections of the Criminal Code that relate to the possession, destruction, and seizure of firearms, clauses 11 to 29 amend a series of sections of the original 1995 *Firearms Act* that pertains to the transfer, lending, importing and exporting of firearms. Although the abolition of the long-gun registry has been met with a significant amount of disapproval from opposing parties and the Canadian public alike, it is the final clause of the Bill that has left many, especially those from the legal and recordkeeping community, concerned.

Clause 29 of Bill C-19 calls for the complete destruction of the database on which the long-gun registry is currently maintained:

29. (1) The Commissioner of Firearms shall ensure the destruction as soon as feasible of all records in the Canadian Firearms Registry related to the registration of firearms that are neither prohibited firearms nor restricted firearms and all copies of those records under the Commissioner's control.

⁴ Bill C-68 was originally known as "An Act Respecting Firearms and Other Weapons".

⁵ While a variety of interpretations is offered of the underlying motivations that lead to the introduction of this bill, one of the most widely-accepted explanations is the "Montreal Massacre" at l'École Polytechnique of 1989.

⁶ Formally known as the Canadian Firearms Center. The Canadian Firearms Program is a result of the amalgamation between the Canadian Firearms Center, created by the Federal Government in 1996, and the Firearms Support Services Directorate of the RCMP.

⁷ Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Canadian Firearms Program*, (Sept. 4 2009).

⁸ As of September 2011. Sources: RCMP, Statistics Canada, Canadian Association of Police Chiefs, Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians.

"Scrapping the long-gun registry: some relevant numbers", *CBC News*, (Oct. 28 2011).

⁹ In June 2002, a lawsuit was filed against the federal government by the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., a group overseeing the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The group claimed that the registry interfered with the Inuit's traditional way of life (i.e. to be able to trap, hunt and fish without licensing or fees). The case persisted until 2004. "TIMELINE: The gun registry debate", *CBC News*, (Oct. 25 2011).

¹⁰ The internal audits were a result of suspected discrepancies in the projected cost of running the program. The federal government was audited by Auditor General Sheila Fraser in 2002, and again on May 16, 2006.

"TIMELINE: The gun registry debate."

¹¹ Which we already know was successfully implemented.

(2) Each chief firearms officer shall ensure the destruction as soon as feasible of all records under their control relate to the registration of firearms that are neither prohibited firearms nor restricted firearms and all copies of those records under their control.

(3) Sections 12 and 13 of the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* and subsections 6(1) and (3) of the *Privacy Act* do not apply with respect to the destruction of the records and copies referred to in subsections (1) and (2).

Thus, when *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act* will be passed, it will result in the destruction of approximately 7.1 million records. This will violate two federal laws: the Canada's *Privacy Act*, as well as the *Library and Archives of Canada (LAC) Act*. Without explicitly stating the value of the records in question, clause 29 of Bill C-19 briefly outlines the laws above mentioned and wilfully acknowledges that the destruction of the database could, in fact, violate current legislation. However, its response to this problem is: "New section 23.1(2) specifies that, despite sections 12 and 13 of the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* and sections 6(1) and 6(3) of the *Privacy Act*, the Registrar shall not retain any record of that request."¹² The bill will simply disregard current legislation and proceed according to schedule. The government's choice to simultaneously acknowledge as well as disregard existing acts has alone been a source of much controversy.

An act to amend current legislation

Since its publication in November 2011, many members of the law community have spoken out on the consequences that the destruction of this registry could have on government information management practices. Primarily, the destruction of the registry fails to comply with a series of laws that ensure the protection of privacy and access to information. The Canadian *Privacy Act* (1985), an act "to extend the present laws of Canada, protects the privacy of individuals and provide individuals with a right of access to personal information about themselves", is one of these laws.¹³ Section 6(1) of the *Privacy Act* "requires government institutions to retain personal information that has been used for an administrative purpose [...] for such period of time after it is so used as may be prescribed by regulation."¹⁴ The purpose of this section is to ensure that all individuals to whom these records pertain have a reasonable opportunity to obtain access to the information found in

their records, a notion that is in direct correlation with, and protects the rights outlined by the Canadian *Freedom of Information Act*.

Moreover, the destruction of the data found on the gun registry undermines a series of acts that have been issued as of means of supporting accountability and transparency with regard to government recordkeeping practices. By instituting a series of procedures that regulate the retention, access and disposition of these records, the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, the *Privacy Act*, and the original *Firearms Act* have helped guarantee the consistent management of the long-gun registry records, thus ensuring a trustworthy and transparent recordkeeping system for these government records. According to section 4(1) of the *Firearms Records Regulation*, all records kept in the Canadian Firearms Registry "shall not be destroyed until after the expiration of 10 years after the date of the last administrative action taken regarding the information in the record."¹⁵ Moreover, the *Privacy Act* introduces other restrictions regarding the required retention period for records of this nature. This particular act requires the retention of all records containing personal information for a period of two years; this is a concern for Privacy Commissioner Jennifer Stoddart, whose role includes ensuring the protection of the rights outlined by the *Freedom of Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*. The records must be made available for a designated amount of time in order to allow for the possibility of information requests, either by private citizens or for use as evidence in court proceedings. The destruction of these records not only infringes the rights of the specific individuals named in the records themselves, but could also affect individuals not directly mentioned in these records (i.e. those affected by gun-related crimes).

Section 6(3) of the *Privacy Act* also stipulates that government institutions must dispose of records of any personal nature according to the regulations enforced by the institutions that have, within their legislation, the power to regulate the control, retention and disposal of these records.¹⁶ In 2004, the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* was amended by the federal government as a means of achieving a high standard of regulation and control with regard to government recordkeeping practices. Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is entrusted with the responsibility of acquiring, preserving and making available Canada's documentary heritage for the benefit of present and future generations; the act itself has the ultimate goal to preserve "the continuing memory of the government of Canada and its institutions".¹⁷ Under the act, LAC is also given responsibility for

¹²Bill C-19: An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act (2012), Section 29(1)-(3).

¹³Privacy Act, R.S.C., c. P-21 (1985), Section 6(1).

¹⁴Legislative Summary of Bill C-19, 14.

¹⁵Firearms Records Regulation, SOR-98-213, (1998), Section 4(1).

¹⁶Privacy Act, Section 6(3).

¹⁷ An Act to establish the Library and Archives of Canada, to amend the Copyright Act and to amend certain Acts in consequence, S.C. c.11 (2004), 1.

the management of information by government institutions¹⁸, which also includes the destruction, disposal and rights of access to these records, as is outlined in section 12 of the act:

12(1) No government or ministerial record¹⁹, whether or not it is surplus property of a government institution, shall be disposed of, including by being destroyed, without the written consent of the Librarian and Archivist or of a person to whom the Librarian and Archivist has, in writing, delegated the power to give such consents.

12(2) Despite anything in any other Act of Parliament, the Librarian and Archivist has a right of access to any record to whose disposition he or she has been asked to consent.²⁰

Section 13 of the act then addresses the transfer of any records having historical or archival value to the Librarian and Archivist of Canada:

13(1) The transfer to the care and control of the Librarian Archivist of government or ministerial records that he or she considers to have historical or archival value shall be effected in accordance with any agreements for the transfer of records that may be made between the Librarian and Archivist and the government institution or person responsible for the records.

13(3) If government records referred to in subsection (1) are, in the opinion of the Librarian and Archivist, at risk of serious damage or destruction, the Librarian and Archivist may require their transfer in the manner and at the time that the Librarian and Archivist specifies.

13(4) Except as otherwise directed by the Governor in Council, the Librarian and Archivist shall have the care and control of all records of a government institution whose functions have ceased.²¹

The records of the long-gun registry that are at risk of possible destruction are evidently covered by a series of existing regulations that governs their retention, their disposal but also their possible transfer to the archives.

It could be argued that the government, by choosing to announce its intention to destroy the database is, in itself, being transparent; however, this intention, as observed, conflicts with a series of laws, and in doing so, does not “comply with applicable laws and other binding authorities”.²² An organization’s credibility rests on its ability to conduct its activities “in a lawful manner”, which, in turn, will help ensure that the organization is meeting the standards of transparency and accountability that all organizations should strive to achieve.²³ ARMA International’s Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles (GARP), specifically the Principle of Compliance, even goes so far as to suggest that an organization’s failure to observe these regulations could damage its “credibility and may impair its standing in legal matters or jeopardize its right to conduct business”.²⁴ Unfortunately, history has continuously shown that unless poor information management also impacts the pockets of tax payers or, more seriously, their basic human rights, poor government recordkeeping practices are, much to the record professional’s dismay, rarely condemned to the extent of discrediting an entire organization or, in this case, an entire government body.

The destruction of the registry records – controversies and consequences

Government transparency is not only achieved when a retention period is set, but also when it is respected. A secure, appropriate and documented disposition process must be conducted by the same institution once the documents have met the end of their life-cycle.²⁵ The Principle of Disposition, as it is outlined by the GARP principles, states that “an organization shall provide secure and appropriate disposition for records that are no longer required to be maintained by applicable laws and the organization’s policies.”²⁶ It is, therefore, not only the creation and retention of records that must comply with the legal and regulatory environment, but the methods adopted for the disposal of these same records that are of an equal, if not greater, importance to ensure that all levels of government are meeting appropriate standards for accountable and transparent re-

¹⁸ An Act to establish the Library and Archives of Canada, Section 7(d).

¹⁹ Section 2 of the Library and Archives of Canada Act defines a “record” as “any documentary material other than a publication, regardless of medium or form.”

²⁰ An Act to establish the Library and Archives of Canada, Section 12(2).

²¹ An Act to establish the Library and Archives of Canada, Section 13(1), 13(2), 13(4).

²² ARMA International. *Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles*, 2009, 6.

²³ ARMA International, 6.

²⁴ ARMA International, 6.

²⁵ ARMA International, 8-9.

²⁶ ARMA International, 9.

cordkeeping practices.

Previously to the adoption of Bill C-19, the records produced by the long-gun registry were subject to an explicit retention schedule, one that controlled them throughout their entire life-cycle. When these records meet the end of their designated retention period, the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* then outlines the steps that are required for their proper disposal and destruction. These steps include, among others, obtaining authorization from the Librarian or Archivist of Canada. If there is doubt on the disposal of records due to their potential historical value, the records will be transferred to an archives based on the recommendation of the competent archivists; the reason for this is that the decision process has to be governed by an individual or an organization that is qualified and is in a neutral position. The long-gun registry is, without doubt, an important attestation to Canada's role and position on gun control between the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. The records are of a significant historical value to the country's heritage and it can be argued that their access and retrieval will be important for future historians. It is in this regard that the registry is of such a concern for Library and Archives Canada and why there are many people who question why the transfer of these records to LAC has not been the government's choice.

This concern was raised by the Association of Canadian Archivist (ACA) and their president Loryl MacDonald who, in a letter addressed to Public Safety Minister Vic Toews on November 8 2011, expressed concern about clause 29. She urged the government "to trust the records management processes already enshrined in current legislation" and entrust to LAC, who would "ensure accountability and transparency with regard to the destruction of government records."²⁷ Toews responded by stating that the series of records that have been generated by the long-gun registry have no value: "Just because the Liberals spent \$2 billion on a long-gun registry does not mean it is worth anything"²⁸ Furthermore, when asked during a committee hearing to comment on the reasons why the government has opted not to transfer the records to LAC, Conservative MP Garry Breitkreuz, an individual who has been credited by *Forbes Magazine* as the man behind the abolition of the register, responded by stating that "Archivists want accurate information" and "They wouldn't want to collect a lot of garbage"²⁹. He believed that the Conservative government

would be acting irresponsibly if it were to turn over these "inaccurate" documents to the archives.³⁰ There are countless rebuttals and comments that can be made in regards to this statement; the banality of Breitkreuz's statement truly speaks for itself. However, if it is indicative of anything, it is of this MP's general lack of knowledge and regard for the archival profession and, specifically, for LAC's mandate and role regarding the preservation of Canada's documentary heritage.

MacDonald's concerns regarding the government's position on the long-gun registry records are not without reason. The government's anticipated move to bypass existing rules on the retention of records echoes an all-too-familiar scenario for MacDonald, who has also recently noted that this same government has yet to agree on the transfer of future census to LAC.³¹ Former head of LAC Ian Wilson recalls a similar scenario from 2000, when in an attempt to establish the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC), section 54 of the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act*, tabled by the Liberal government at the time, proceeded to override and substitute Library and Archives of Canada's proposed retention schedule for such documents.³² This example suggests that questionable record retention practices are not limited to the current government. Historically, the federal government has come under fire on multiple occasions for retaining records concerning some of the country's "most discredited programs"³³: notably, those related to the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War and to Aboriginal children forced into residential schools during the first half of the 20th century. The destruction of the long-gun registry proposes a slightly different scenario from those mentioned above and it creates an entirely new set of challenges for future archivists, record keepers and researchers; instead of presenting a problem of obstructed access to the records, the registry would simply cease to exist, averting any possible future enquiries regarding its content or use.

Concerns about the destruction of the registry have also been voiced by Quebec's provincial government, which has publically requested that the registry data be passed onto the province so that it can establish its own registry system. Public Safety Minister Robert Dutil of Quebec has even announced that the province plans to launch a court action to prevent the destruction of the registry before the bill is

²⁷ Letter Re: Bill C-19, *Ending the Long-gun Registry Act, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act*. To The Honourable Vic Toews, from Loryl MacDonald, President, Association of Canadian Archivist. (November 8 2011).

²⁸ Glen McGregor, "Keep gun records, archivist group says", *Ottawa Citizen*, (Nov. 1 2011).

²⁹ Frank Minitier, "Meet the Man Responsible for the Death of Canada's Gun Registry", *Forbes*, (Feb. 29 2012).

³⁰ "Watchdog criticizes plan to destroy gun registry data".

³¹ This move reminds us of other questionable government recordkeeping practices that were involved with the abolishment of the mandatory long-form census in 2010.

³² "Former chief archivist on gun registry shredding", *Ottawa Citizen Blog*, (Nov. 11 2011).

Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act, S.C., c. 17 (2004), Section 54

³³ Glen McGregor. "Proposed destruction of long-gun database sets 'dangerous precedent': archivist", *The Ottawa Citizen*, (Oct. 31 2011).

enacted by the Senate. Although the usefulness of the information currently found in the registry is debatable for the Quebec government, the existing registry could and would be helpful in serving as a template for a future long-gun registration form in Quebec. This request, however, was rejected by Vic Toews. In a statement made to an Ottawa Valley farm, Toews declared that the Conservative government “will not participate in the re-creation of the long-gun registry”³⁴ by leaving these records “loose” and accessible to those who can create a new registry.³⁵ The government’s position and actual capability of withholding registry data from other government institutions has been criticized by many members of the opposition on several accounts. During one meeting, NDP justice critic Jack Harris and MP Françoise Boivin argued that the registry cannot be considered the property of a private party, but is instead public property that belongs to all Canadians. By obstructing access to the records by other Canadians, Harris and Boivin believe that the government is not acting within its rights as the government of Canada. Privacy Commissioner Jennifer Stoddart also commented on the government’s position to withhold the information in the registry from Quebec, adding that “there is nothing in federal privacy legislation that would prevent the government from sharing the long-gun data with the provinces”.³⁶ Furthermore, the government’s fear of participating in the creation of a new long-gun registration program if it were not to destroy the registry is irrelevant given the current political context; unless an untimely election were to be made, the Conservative government is scheduled to remain in power until 2015, at which time the current information found in the long-gun registry would be outdated. Any party coming into power would have to update or reformat the registry program in its entirety in order to effect any changes in the legal and political environment.

Since the role and responsibility of LAC regarding records’ retention and disposition has been overruled, the proposed quick and expedient physical destruction of the registry has also raised some questions regarding cost³⁷ and, above all, procedure. Little information has been disclosed concerning the current status of the Canadian Firearms Registry database. Many questions are still left unanswered: e.g. Are the non-restricted firearms records stored on the same database as the restricted and prohibited firearms? Have the records been backed-up on external servers? If so, will these servers also be destroyed? Who will be responsible for disposing of these records and how will they proceed with the destruc-

tion of these records? etc. Since the current maintenance of these records falls under the responsibility of the RCMP and the Commissioner of Firearms, so too will their destruction upon the passing of this bill. The process that will need to be undertaken in order to ensure secure and orderly destruction of these records is a cause for concern. In his article titled “Proposed destruction of the long-gun database sets ‘dangerous precedent’: archivist”, journalist Glen McGregor suggests that the process required for the proper disposition of these records will extend beyond the simple click of a “delete” button: “The [destruction of these records] could be a complicated process if the records of non-restricted long-guns are integrated in the backup version with listings of other registered firearms that cannot be erased.”³⁸ Without commissioning a proper analysis of the current state of this database, the government’s proposed actions are troubling, especially for the individual or the institution charged with the destruction of these records. There is a suspected high risk factor in the Government’s current proposal. If the process that will ensure the destruction of these records fails, whether inadvertently or not, government accountability with regard to these records could extend far past the long-gun records.

The move to destroy the database, a move that is now inevitable since the bill’s approval in the House of Commons, is one that will highlight the federal government’s failure to meet the recordkeeping standards set by international organizations, such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and ARMA International. These organizations create and distribute recordkeeping standards as a means of encouraging correct and appropriate methods of information management; every organization, including the Canadian federal government, should strive to meet these regulations in order to ensure that they are meeting acceptable standards for transparency, accountability and integrity. The fear instilled in many who oppose clause 29 of Bill C-19 derives from the likelihood that these actions could establish a “dangerous precedent” for future information management practices for government records.³⁹ If a federal institution publically renounces and fails to meet international recordkeeping standards, and even flouts existing federal laws pertaining to the keeping of records, it is hard to image a scenario where private or smaller-scale organizations would feel encouraged to behave any differently.

³⁴ Jim Bronskill. “Long-gun records to be killed”, *Winnipeg Free Press*, (Oct. 26 2011).

³⁵ TondaMacCharles. “Bill to end long-gun registry will destroy data already collected”, *The Star*, (Oct. 25, 2011).

³⁶ “Watchdog criticizes plan to destroy gun registry data”.

³⁷ While the cost of the long-gun registry program has been outlined on numerous occasions by supporters of Bill C-19, the cost of the destruction of the database has yet to be disclosed. However, given that this paper aspires to remain on the political sidelines with regards to this issue, the debate regarding money spent and monies to be spent shall not be addressed any further within the context of this paper.

Megan Fitzpatrick. “New long-gun registry bill would destroy records”, *CBC News*, (Oct. 26, 2011).

³⁸ McGregor. “Proposed destruction of long-gun database sets ‘dangerous precedent’: archivist”.

³⁹ McGregor. “Proposed destruction of long-gun database sets ‘dangerous precedent’: archivist”.

Conclusion

The Conservative government's intention to destroy the long-gun registry and the 7.1 million records registered on its database violates key clauses found within two federal laws that were specifically set as standards for ideal government information management. In addition to containing information that may be requested under Canada's Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection laws, the long-gun registry is also an important attestation to Canada's role and position on gun control and is, as a result, of significant historical value. The destruction of this database will then not only occur in contravention of current laws, but it risks setting a dangerous precedent for future government information management practices. Moreover, the government has yet to offer a credible explanation as to why it wishes to destroy the records database with such political expediency; whether a cost-risk analysis has been conducted behind the scenes and has produced favourable results for the Conservatives, or the anticipated gain from such an initiative has been levied as greater than the possible loss, the risk of this government being held accountable for its actions are minimal. As history has proven on many occasions, the details and consequences of a government's most controversial undertakings are often brought to light only after its time in office has come and gone.

On November 28, 2011, US President Barack Obama released a Presidential Memorandum that addressed the management of government records. The release of the memorandum aimed to encourage the reform of "records management policies and practices" within all levels of departments and agencies of the government, so as to improve government transparency and accountability.⁴⁰ This memorandum is a first step towards improving the level of US government information management at a time when the American government has come under fire on numerous occasions with regard to questionable and controversial recordkeeping practices. Although it can be argued that the Canadian government has not yet reached a critical level of poor information management similar to that of the US, it is also not unreasonable to question whether it *must* do so in order for similar measures to those adopted by the American government to be implemented. An organization as powerful as the Canadian government is expected to exercise appropriate and commendable recordkeeping practices, if only to serve as an example for other institutions.

⁴⁰ Barack Obama. Presidential Memorandum – Managing Government Records. The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, (Nov. 28, 2011).

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New Art Exhibit opening at the Archives of Ontario

The Archives of Ontario is opening its first-ever fine art show on April 27th, 2012.

Gifted: Donations from the Ontario Society of Artists (OSA), showcases the OSA's generous 2007 donation to the Government of Ontario Art Collection.

Dynamic and contemporary, the 39 works were given by 37 OSA members. They include watercolours, oils, acrylics, photographs, and drawings, representing a wide variety of subject matter and styles.

The OSA has a long and impressive history of encouraging, supporting and promoting the province's visual arts community. Founded in Toronto in 1872 by seven artists, the Society's progressive aim was to provide better public access to art and art education. Its first exhibition was held a year later, featuring 252 works by 22 artists. Over 5,000 people attended.

A strong link was created between the Society and the provincial government at that exhibition, when the government made some of its first art purchases there. Well over two hundred years later, works from the OSA are finding homes in the Government of Ontario Art Collection. And

the recent donation being displayed in this exhibit has served to strengthen and revitalize the historic connection.

Gifted is curated by the Archives' own Outreach Officer Stewart Boden and runs until October 12 in the Helen McClung Exhibit Area at the Archives of Ontario. The Archives is open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday to 8 p.m. and Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit our website at ontario.ca/archives.



A Harmony in Grey and Yellow, 1897
Mary Augusta Hiester Reid, OSA
Oil on canvas, 34.3 x 90.2 cm
Government of Ontario Art Collection
Archives of Ontario 619739

An interview with Sister Mary Perpetua Kennedy of Presentation Congregation Archives in Newfoundland by Wanita Bates.

Wanita Bates, a freelance photojournalist and broadcaster sat across from a Presentation Sister on a train travelling from Dublin to Belfast, and has had a keen interest in this Order ever since. She has done several radio pieces about the Presentation Sisters in St. John's, NL, including one that won a Gabriel Award for International religious broadcasting. Bates has been working in the Archives helping with the digitizing process, a job that she likens to "eating an elephant, one bite at a time".



Presentation Motherhouse in Cathedral Square built in 1853. The Presentation Motherhouse was the first English speaking Motherhouse in Canada. Presentation Congregation Archives

Inside a gray stone building that sits overlooking St. John's harbour are close to 180 years of the history of the order of Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Order from Galway, Ireland.

The first four Sisters crossed the cold North Atlantic in 1833 to carry out the work of their foundress Nano Nagle. The Sisters missions blanketed the province. They taught in coves, bays, island, inlets, tickles and in the big land, Labrador.

With all these teachers and convents in communities around the island comes a lot of archival material.

The Congregational collection includes manuscripts, artifacts, record books, photographs and personal papers, all documenting the history of the Presentation Congregation in Newfoundland from the arrival of the first four educators in 1833 to the present day.

The formal organization of these accumulated materials began by Sister Mary Francis Tobin in 1972, and has been continued by the Sister Archivists ever since.

Sister Mary Perpetua Kennedy, PhD is the archivist today for the Presentation Congregation. Working alongside her in the archives is Sister Mary Patricia Whittle. They both know that the records from the past are just as important as looking towards the future.

Sister Perpetua has worked in the archives for the last 20 years and is about to retire in June 2012. She describes the importance of their holdings as, *"the story of their everyday, to be passed on to the future."*

Sister Perpetua is looking ahead to what the archives will look like in the future and she has begun the process of digitization their records. With almost 180 years of history, it is not easy work but with the help of a provincial Cultural Economic Development Grant it has begun.

Since 2010 there have been just under 10,000 images scanned with over one third of these available in-house in a searchable data base. The identifying and cataloguing of these scans is an ongoing process.

While we always knew the names of our Sisters from the past, since digitizing the photographs began, we have been able to put a face to them. It is not unusual to see a table full of Sisters poring over old black and white photographs, calling out names, locations and remembering the event.

"How do I feel to be the archivist?" says Sister Perpetua, *"I love it. I'm not sure whether its pride or satisfaction, but its wonderful work, and very interesting and it are a great service to the congregation."*

Sister Perpetua will leave the Archives a better place than before. And as the numbers of people entering religious life dwindles her spirit is not dampened. "I have great hope for the Presentation Sisters," she explains, *"we don't have as many sisters in quantity but we have them in quality, and we serve the people the best way we can."*

And in the Archives the best we can is to make it easier for the public to access our records. Since the digitizing process we have seen the benefits of our searchable data base. With these scanned and filed images, the search for finding these materials becomes easier and more accessible to the general public. On a weekly basis we get requests coming in from members of the public in the form of students and former students, teachers, authors, community and church groups for information about Sisters, where they taught, their classes or their convent schools. The ready access to the images in our collection permits more extensive use of them.

Sister Mary Patricia Whittle will continue on the work of Sister Archivists in the Presentation Congregational Archives.



The black and white page is from an album that Sister Mary Teresa Francis Tobin would have written the identifications for in the mid-1970's. She was the first Sister to become the Congregational Archivist.

Nelson Mandela Movie Matinee at UofT's Faculty of Information

By Richard McKibbon

As many of you may have heard, on March 27th, The Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory launched The Nelson Mandela Digital Archive. This undertaking, which was funded by a grant by Google, provides public access to the personal records of Nelson Mandela, which includes photos, letters, videos, and personal documents from his archives. One of the series in the collection consists of twelve desk calendars, spanning the years 1976 to 1989, that were used by Nelson Mandela to record the daily events of his life while in prison. Produced by the South African Tourist Board, the calendars provide an interesting view of apartheid era South Africa in the images that accompany each month. The images consist of spectacular portrayals of the South African landscape and wildlife as well as pictures of modern life in white South Af-

rica. Whites are almost always depicted as participating in leisure activities, while Blacks are consistently portrayed in traditional dress living in picturesque villages. When looking at them, one is forced to wonder what Nelson Mandela thought of these representations of his country as he sat inside his prison cell on Robben Island. However, while we may not know Mandela's thoughts on the images contained in the calendars, the diary like entries that he made in them provide a detailed account of his day to day life in prison.

Last summer, during my internship at the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory, I had the chance to work extensively with these calendars, creating descriptions for the pages that were to be included in the Digital Archive. The calendars are fascinating items to read as they reveal aspects of Nelson Mandela's prison life that one would normally not be privy

to. As a natural record keeper, here Mandela meticulously recorded the minutiae of his day to day life in prison in the form of names of visitors, his daily blood pressure readings, his dreams, important birthdays, and the titles of books and films that he watched. The list of movies the prison authorities screened for him is particularly interesting, and at times, quite hilarious. Many of them were short documentaries, which he refers to as “library films,” and, oddly enough, included sexual education films such as Venereal Disease: The Hidden Epidemic, and one aimed at teenage girls called, Making Decisions about Sex. Fortunately, he was also shown quite a few of our own Canadian NFB shorts and other documentaries on world affairs that may have been of more interest to him. The list of feature films he watched is also quite intriguing. It’s hard to fathom why prison officials in South Africa at the time would show Nelson Mandela the decidedly pro communist film *Reds*, which chronicles the life of American radical journalist Jack Reed who wrote about the Russian Revolution in his book, *Ten Days that Shook the World*. While less strange from an ideological point of view, try to picture Nelson Mandela, sitting in prison, watching *Police Academy II* or *Revenge of the Nerds*. One can’t help but wonder what he thought of those two comedic gems. While we’ll probably never know his opinion, as he rarely wrote down anything but the titles, my personal favourite film entry involves a very small piece of commentary. On April 16th, 1986, Mandela writes that he watched a film called *Electric Boogie*, by which I’m guessing he meant *Electric Boogaloo*. What were his thoughts on this classic 80’s breakdance film? Nelson Mandela writes: “a baffling new dance.”

While I was working on the calendars, it occurred to me that a great way to raise awareness about the archives, and the internship, would be to hold a Nelson Mandela Movie Matinee at the Faculty of Information when I returned to school in the fall. The idea would be to screen some of the films that Nelson Mandela watched in prison and have a short presentation about the internship and the work being done at the Centre of Memory. As the events coordinator for the ACA Student Chapter at UofT, I decided to present it as an ACA event and planned for a screening in the Media Commons theatre of Robarts Library to take place in January, a few weeks before the internship deadline for 2012. Luckily, the Media Commons has an extensive film collection and I was able to find quite a few of the movies that were included in the calendars. While there were many possible choices, including such films as *The Last Emperor*, *Amadeus*, *An Officer and a Gentleman*, and *Sophie’s Choice*, I decided to show two lesser known films that most people probably hadn’t seen before. The first film was an NFB documentary on the perils of nuclear war called *If You Love this Planet*. On its release in 1982 it was designated “foreign political propaganda” and suppressed by the U.S. government; however, despite this it won an Academy Award for Best Documentary (Short Subject) that same year. The second film I picked was *First Contact* (1982),



Nelson Mandela Calendar
 Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory (NMPP-PC-2009/5.1-11-25)

which was nominated for an Academy Award in 1984 and is about the “discovery” of the interior of New Guinea in the 1930’s by Australian gold miners, and the first contact between whites and the tribes people that inhabited the New Guinea highlands. The documentary combines original film footage taken by the miners and later interviews with both the surviving miners and tribes people.

The event turned out to be a success with roughly fifteen people attending from both the ARM path at the Faculty of Information as well as interested students from other paths. Also in attendance were former Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory intern, Lindsay Chick, and even a few alumni! Overall, I think that the event was successful in raising awareness about Nelson Mandela, the Digital Archive Project, and the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory internship position that is offered to students at the Faculty of Information every year. The films were fantastic, and the feedback I received was great. Watching the same films that Nelson Mandela saw while he was imprisoned on Robben Island in the 1980’s offers a unique way to make a connection with this world renowned human rights leader and icon of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. As this year’s Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory intern, Emily Sommers, has been nominated as Chair of the ACA Student Chapter for 2012-2013, I’m hoping that the event will continue to be put on by the student chapter in upcoming years.

Archival Gold at MacBride Museum

Two diaries from one man who slogged away in the gold-fields, and emerged with a valuable treasure

The MacBride Museum of Yukon History is fortunate to have two of H.V. Sutherland's diaries in its collection. They tell the story of Sutherland's journey to the Klondike Gold Fields and his hard life in the Yukon.

The diaries themselves—small brittle books with dark red covers now held together by clear tape—are fantastic objects to explore.

The first one, which is titled Klondyke Diary 1898-1899, begins with these words inscribed in the front cover: "My diary up to this date was stolen from me along with my watch as a lay unconscious after a tree fell on me and was left for dead by the trail. All surprised when I walked into camp..."

Sutherland was a meticulous cataloguer who described what he did; what he ate and what he saw each day. He recorded his hardships in vivid detail.

Here are a few of his entries:

"Drizzle. The men hacking. Nearly all old men – hopeless faces. Men work donkeys, horses and dogs, all of which carry packs. Such hopeless faces.

One flapjack today at noon," wrote Sutherland on September 14, 1899.

More than a month, on October 27, later he wrote: "Left at 9am. Terrible work bringing 250 lb sleds up and over mountain. Five men and his dogs in a fight. One killed; we looked on. Raw beans at 1pm. I was sick afterward. Camped for night at roadhouse after a terribly hard day's work... Brown's birthday. He wished he was dead."

And on Saturday, November 12 his only entry was: "A good miner = A man with a strong back and a weak mind." As the years wore on Sutherland did a lot of picking in frozen muck with little to eat. Hunger was a part of everyday life.

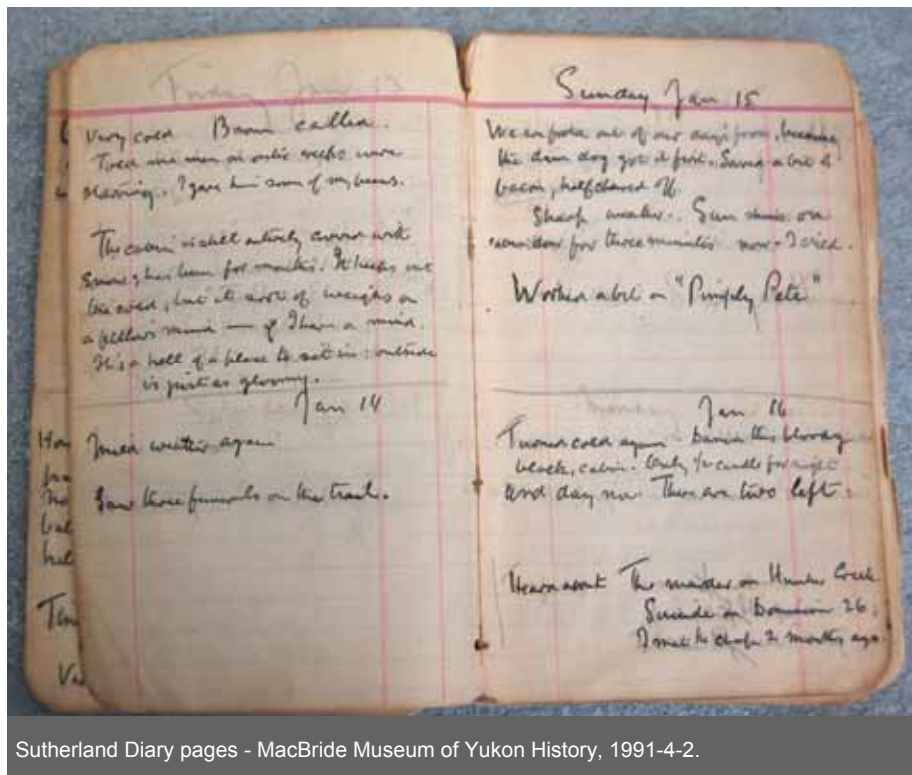
In one particularly tragic series of entries he tells how he went to Dawson and sold his gun to buy food, but the food was stolen when he returned to his cabin. Then, for the next few days he has nothing to eat but a candle and some boiled moccasins. (Incidentally, he says it takes about two hours of boiling to make a moccasin chewable.)

Though Sutherland did not strike the mother lode of the dull yellow metal, he emerged from the Klondike with what may be considered a more valuable treasure.

While mucking in the creeks, he kept his sense of humour and emerged with a few books of verse that were later published in New York City.

He penned Bigg's Bar and other Klondike Ballads, Out of the North and Memoirs of a Marionette – books that are also held in MacBride Museum collection.

The writing earned the author a note in the New York Times in 1901: "The 'Ballads' are humorous and deal with the life in Dawson and around the creeks in the old days when fingers took the place of forks, and 'sourdoughs' and 'chechakos' hobnobbed together."



Sutherland Diary pages - MacBride Museum of Yukon History, 1991-4-2.