



# NewsLETTER NouvELLES

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## From Our President

~ Stella Clark



*'Newsletter/Nouvelles is published three times per year in the Fall, Winter and Spring and is available with membership in the Ontario Association of Library Technicians / Association des Bibliothécaires de l'Ontario. We welcome your feedback as well as your letters, articles and photos, but must reserve the right to edit for style and space.*

Well, here we are again – waiting for the end of a long miserable winter, and looking forward to spring, and to the conference coming up in Kingston. It seems as though the last of the snow is not going to disappear until May – at least in our front yard. Here it is the first of April, and it is piled up almost to the top of my poor little Japanese Maple! I can only see a few little sprigs of the branches – how can the new shoots appear? And by the time the snow is gone, my tulips won't have any time left!

At least the thought of the conference brings with it thoughts of warm sunny days, and fun evenings out. My memories of the past conferences have been ones of very pleasant days – last year we had a lovely walk to the bay – I know it was chilly, but we still enjoyed it. The planned entertainment has been so successful, and I am really looking forward to this year's boat cruise.

I think it is most important that we all take full advantage of what the conferences have to offer – in the workshops, and the time with each other, especially now as more Chapters fold.

Thunder Bay has decided to close, and almost certainly Halton-Peel is going to close. We did know that this was likely to happen, which is why we changed the whole make-up of the association.

But it is still sad to see, as this was our best opportunity to get together, make friends with people in our line of work, and learn more about library work and library technicians.

Communication is changing, with more and more information and connection online, and that is a good thing when we are all over the province. Our listserv is very active, which is great. I am hoping to put faces with all those names that appear with questions and information. Job opportunities appear regularly for those looking to start or change a career.

When no-one stepped up as President-Elect by the middle of the year, I said I would take it on, and so became President for this year. I have been grateful for all the help provided by our executive – we have such a wonderful team.

## ***From Our President ~ cont'd***



In last year's April issue, I wrote an article about why I joined the executives – both at Chapter level and at Association level, and gave you my "bio" as a member. I joined in 2000, and have been on an executive ever since. Of course, at the time the issue came out, I was not going to be in any position after the conference, but somehow that didn't happen.

I am looking forward to Maria Ripley taking over at this conference as our new president – she has been a dynamic force this year, and I am sure she will continue taking us forward. I would encourage you to think about offering to step in as President-Elect. This would be a good year to learn from Maria to be ready for 2009. OALT/ABO is proving to be a force in the library world, and we need people who will work with other associations to make us even stronger.

I am proud to be a member of OALT/ABO, and will continue to support our association, and our new executive, but I am also looking forward to being on the sidelines. ♦

*The very essence of leadership is  
that you have to have a vision.*  
~Theodore Hesburgh

## ***In This Issue....***

First of all, thank you to all the members that participated in making this newsletter possible. It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm for the association and all the knowledge we can gather from one another and share. I feel incredibly fortunate to be a volunteer on behalf of a dynamic group of people. One of this editions feature is the history of Library Technicians in Canada. I look forward to the Fall newsletter and hope that you all have a wonderful spring ahead.

### **Here are the highlights....**

- ✓ A note from our President
- ✓ Brainstorming from Our President-Elect
- ✓ The History of Library Technicians in Canada
- ✓ Keeping up with the Web Tools
- ✓ Virtually speaking toward success
- ✓ All hands on deck!
- ✓ Did you know...
- ✓ An OLA Conference Perspective
- ✓ Welcome to the new members
- ✓ Top ten website mistakes

See you in the Fall,  
Jenn  
Newsletter Editor ♦





## What are You Waiting For?

~ By Tracy Morgan



If you haven't registered yet for the Conference, what's holding you back? OALT/ABO Conferences are fabulous! They're affordable. They're a chance to network with fellow Technicians and discuss just about anything. Our work is so diverse. It's fascinating to see where we are and what we've been able to do with our Diplomas. You may have read what follows in a previous *NewsLETTER* *Nouvelles* but it's worth revisiting this time of year:

Looking forward to Conference of course. Always do. My first Conference was a l-o-n-g time ago in a Region far, far, away – Geneva Park. I still remember my workplace laughing at my expense account – a bus to Orillia when others were booking flights to Florida. I digress. What I really wanted to talk about was the dance. Yes, there was a dance. Did I know what to expect? No way! Obviously that DJ wasn't with it either as he played a few fast songs (dance floor packed) and then a slow one (or two or ....) Dr. Phil would ask him today "How's that workin' for ya?" Although it wasn't working for him (I wasn't sure he ever noticed), it did give almost all the dancers (and I don't recall being one of them) a chance to rest. There were a few men among us (o.k. maybe just a couple). They were kept busy.

Why wasn't I on that dance floor? Well it was my first conference. I didn't know more than a handful of people. Initially I may have been in as much shock as that poor DJ. What did he see? A mass of terribly, tackily dressed (I think it was a "tropical" theme) "ladies" dancing with each other most of the time and likely glaring at him (when he "slowed things down") the rest of the time. What did I see? A remarkable group of confident females. Women perfectly comfortable in their own skins and comfortable being themselves with each other. These people were part of a professional association, took their work seriously but not themselves! WOW. Who knew a couple of crazy broads slow dancing with each other (to make a point to a dense DJ) would become mentors?

(You can find their names among our Presidential Award recipients.) That dance was where I began to think of OALT/ABO as family. "Friends are the family you choose for yourself." (Edna Buchanan) Our conferences are safe places; welcoming places; places to take chances; places to grow.

Fast forward to 2003 and Toronto's "interactive" DJ. Now that man knew his business! There was one small "problem" with him. He introduced OALT/ABO to props. If you don't know what I'm referring to, there are (unfortunately for some of us) pictures. Another thing? He was so interactive; he came out from behind the "turntable" to interact with me. His exact words (I'll never forget) – "Can I try something with you?" Who knew I could jive? Ballroom dancing classes never indicated to anyone that I had the "music in me". Another lesson learned from OALT/ABO. You can do anything with the right partner! I'll never jive again unless I find that DJ and I can't dance to "Footloose" without Susan Morley (but that's another story).

If I can get even more philosophical, perhaps the overwhelming response to that DJ had more to do with us knowing what would work for us and going out and finding someone who could deliver it! No one knows us like we do. That's why we have to do everything we can to keep our "little" Association alive and well. We are unique. We are in charge of our own destiny. We've been going since 1973. Only we can stop us now.

Come to Conference in 2008! Show our Association that we're still going strong. This may be the first time we've tried a Conference outside the geographic boundaries of a Chapter. This is something OALT/ABO hopes our members want and something we look forward to trying again. We've "Set Sail"! We're going where no OALT/ABO has gone before. We're taking this show on the road! Hope to see you there. ♦

## All hands on deck!

~By Theresa Ziebell

The theme for this year's Conference is "Set Sail" which isn't surprising considering that Kingston is the fresh-water sailing capital of North America and host to many regattas. The heart of Kingston, nicknamed the Limestone City, is located where the waterfront of Confederation Basin faces the historic City Hall.

Did you know that Kingston is home to Canada's oldest law enforcement agency? -- the Kingston Police Force. And that Canada's Penitentiary Museum is housed within the former Warden's residence of Canada's oldest penitentiary?

Our destination has 20 museums and historic sites waiting to be explored. For the history buffs, in your spare time visit any of the following: Bellevue House National Historic Site, Canada's Penitentiary Museum, Cataraqui Cemetery, International Hockey Hall of Fame and Museum, Kingston General Hospital Walking Tour, Marine Museum of the Great Lakes. Forts and military history can be enjoyed at Fort Henry National Historic Site, Kingston Mills Blockhouse, Military Communications and Electronics Museum, Murney Tower National Historic Site, Princess of Wales' Own Regiment Military Museum, Royal Military College Museum. Geology and archaeology enthusiasts have no fear, there's the Kingston Archaeological Centre and Miller Museum of Geology to see.

With this varied choice of museums, don't hesitate to bring your husbands, sons, fathers and brothers. They can keep themselves easily occupied in this city as you enjoy the Conference activities.



The logo on the registration package that has been sent out and posted was created by Piroška Blanchette of Thunder Bay. It displays a tall ship named the Kingston with billowing sails, proudly bearing the OALT/ABO logo and 35<sup>th</sup> to commemorate this special year. The logo will also appear on the conference bags. The nautical theme continues at the Banquet.



Having learned so much myself as Captain of the Kingston, it was natural to have "learning" wash over this Conference just like salty sea spray on a ship.

This year, as in 2005, we're offering a hands-on cataloguing workshop. The workshop provides a continuing education opportunity not often available. Cataloguers, convince your employers to support you with this training! As of March 27th, 14 people have registered for this Pre-Conference Workshop, only leaving room for another 11. Avoid disappointment and register early!!

Thursday night, experience a Sunset Dinner cruise and step aboard the Island Star and under a glass canopy enjoy a meal, the sunset and entertainment.

On Friday, the morning tours feature Queen's Learning Commons (QLC) and the newly renovated, state of the art Bracken Health Sciences Library. The QLC is located in Stauffer Library and brings together in one place a comprehensive set of academic support services and resources for their students.

## All hands on deck!

~Cont'd

Staff from a number of service units gather here to assist students through individual counseling, workshops, peer mentoring and collaboration, and give improved support for accessing and exploring digital resources and technology.

In the afternoon, visit The Agnes Etherington Arts Centre, Kingston's main public art gallery. The Centre has recently acquired its second original Rembrandt painting. The W.D. Jordan Special Collections Library has environmentally-controlled stacks to house 120,000 volumes. On exhibit are the original six volumes donated to Queen's in 1840 by Judge James Mitchell, M.A.: a Latin Bible (1592), a Greek New Testament (1760), a French New Testament (1664), a Greek lexicon (1821), and a copy of Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1760) in two volumes.

Join us on Saturday afternoon at the AGM, followed by our first High Tea Event, serving freshly brewed tea, warm fruit scones with preserves and assorted finger sandwiches.

Speakers and staff from St. Lawrence College, Queen's University, Kingston Frontenac Public Library and Correctional Services Canada are very much looking forward to this Conference and extending us a warm welcome.

One of the best benefits of belonging to OALT/ABO is attending the annual conference. Leave feeling renewed and recharged to meet future work challenges. Seeing old friends and making new ones is always fun, so join the crew for a smooth sail to Kingston in May! ♦



"He who would travel happily must travel light."

~ Antoine de St. Exupery

## Destination Kingston

OALT/ABO Conference 2008

St. Lawrence College

May 6 to 10th, 2008

Conference Planning Team:

Theresa Ziebell: Chair

Maggie Weaver ~ Marilyn Ottenhof ~ Rachel Auclair

~Joanne Lalonde ~ Michelle Durand ~ Anna Monk

~Andrea Burrows ~ Brenda MacDonald ~ Linda Landreville

~Yvonne Fleming ~ Lori O'Connor ~ Maria Ripley

Catherine Case ~ Irene Kumar ~ Pam Manders

Linda Cahill ~ Shem Smith

Come sail away  
to a wonderful  
learning  
experience





## Brainstorming "Speak or Pass": We Heard, We Listened, and We Accomplished ~By Maria Ripley

What exactly is "brainstorming"?

Brainstorming is a technique that groups use to generate ideas on a particular subject. Each person in the group is asked to think creatively and come up with as many ideas as possible. One of the reasons brainstorming is so effective is that the brainstormers not only come up with new ideas, but they are also inspired by other people's ideas and build on them.

Historically brainstorming in OALT/ABO was an exercise undertaken by the incoming and outgoing Executives to prioritize the Association's goals for the next year. Brainstorming was not open to the general membership. That changed sometime in the 80's and now, all OALT/ABO members are welcome to participate.

For the last two years following our AGM Association members have had the opportunity to participate in brainstorming sessions lead by Tracy Morgan, OALT/ABO's 2006 President using her past Philip Crosby Associates, quality training techniques. Crosby's brainstorming format allows everyone in the room a chance to speak or pass keeping ideas flowing until every idea is recorded; nothing is analyzed, discussed or rejected. This proved to be a positive activity for all in attendance; and has given the Executive some things to focus on.

The last two brainstorming session topics were "What Do I Want for My Membership Dollar?" and "What Can I Do for my Association". I am proud to share that we have accomplished many things from our "lists" and we hope you are inspired by what has been done.



*Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world! ~Joel Arthur Barker~*

**What Do I Want for My Membership Dollar?**

*"Keep having a conference!" / "Move it all over the province" / "Create a fee that will remain constant"*  
Yes, yes, and yes! Our conferences have been one of our successes and will continue to be. Our 2007 "Equi-Libra" conference held at Humber College in Toronto under the leadership of Melissa Hall was a great success and our 2008 "Set Sail / Larguer les amarres!" under the leadership of Theresa Ziebell to be held at St. Lawrence College in Kingston will follow suit. Thank you to these two ladies and the many others who took a leadership roll in organizing conferences for the last 35 years! Rumour has it we have people interested in planning our 2009 conference and the "grapevine" says that the location might be Barrie! Are you interested in being part of the planning team?

Other conference issues shared were to keep the brainstorming session and stabilize the conference fees. Both will continue to be Executive priorities in the coming years. If you have an idea for an Association brainstorming session we'd like to hear it.

*"We need a discussion list that works!"*

We've had some issues with our past discussion groups – i.e. Smartgroups but I think our Yahoo! Group is working well keeping members in-the-loop. There has been talk of our discussion group becoming a "members only" discussion list; discussions are still on-going with this one. I'd like to see us utilize some of the features of Yahoo! In particular the calendar – know of an upcoming event that others might be interested in? Add it to our Yahoo! Group calendar and set a reminder so all members receive it.

### *"A 'meatier' newsletter"*

You got it! The 2006 and 2007 Newsletters were proudly produced at 16, 24, 32 and 36 pages! Thank you to all who contributed and remember newsletter submissions are one small thing you can do to participate in your Association. Welcome Jenn Clarke as the 2008/2009 Newsletter Editor.

Voices have shared that electronic newsletters are the way to go for many reasons. The Executive is still contemplating this. The newsletter is one of a few tangibles we produce and we still feel that a print copy is more valuable than an electronic copy. Once the 'members only' area of the new web site is complete, we hope to scan past newsletters and post them there.



*"Members only section" / "Mentor database" / "Job board" / Professional Resource Listing" / "photos" / "Past Executive lists", etc., etc.*

We have an arm-length list still to accomplish, but we are pleased to announce the launch of our new web site as of January 1, 2008. Thank you Pat Buczkowski, Angela Carito-Walmsley and others who helped where they could with the development of our new professional looking site. Please share any input you might have to enhance or promote it. Some of the ideas from the brainstorming included items such as developing a job board, a professional resource list, and a mentor database, just to name a few. If you have time to assist with any of these projects we are always in need of more help and the time commitment wouldn't be all that onerous if different people helped out. Anyone interested in becoming the OALT/ABO web master?

*"Increased affiliations with other Associations" / "Corporate sponsors" / "New logo" / "Promotional stuff" / "Continue student awards"*

OALT/ABO is proud to say our affiliation with CLA and OLA is strong and steady. This past September OALT/ABO was contacted by OLA to organize three sessions for the 2008 OLA Super Conference and we were quite successful. Thank you to members Cathy MacLean, Kathryn Suffoletta and Chris Whittaker for their *Library Technician's: Movin' On Up* session, to Beth Murray-Bannister, James Wagner and Brenda Maxwell for their *Cataloguing: Back to Basics* session (the third session was outsourced) and to Cyndi Smith, Kathryn Suffoletta and Christine Penn for volunteering to be our session convenors. This year I am proud to announce we are officially part of the "Super Conference Planning Team" and will be acknowledged as such in the conference program. Anyone have session ideas? Would you be willing to be a speaker? Send in your ideas!

We have been asked to the table by the Ontario School Library Association (OSLA) to become part of an Advocacy Task Force to lobby to the Ministry of Education for clear guidelines for staffing and funding of school libraries. The OALT/ABO Executive is supportive of this and feels strongly that this group is necessary. If someone is willing to represent OALT/ABO at the table, please send us your name, why this would be of interest to you and how you would be a good candidate for the position.

2007 fundraising efforts have been fruitful to the tune of \$1500 plus in-kind donations for the 2007 Conference. Efforts have been repeated for the 2008 conference and Membership Directory. Future goals are to seek corporate sponsorship for our web site and various other things. Thanks so much to those organizations and companies who continue to support us financially with our endeavours – Carr McLean, OLAStore, Algonquin College, Education Safety Association of Ontario.

## **Brainstorming "Speak or Pass": We Heard, We Listened, and We Accomplished** *~Maria Ripley, cont'd*

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OALT/ABO's presence on the OLA exhibit floor during Super Conference as well as our partnering with the community college programs – Algonquin, Mohawk, Seneca - for booth space will continue. In the coming year a new promo item will need to be sought out as a booth give-away since almost all our 2500 pens have been dispersed!

Student awards continue to be given out at the colleges on our behalf.

*"Continue with the Salary Survey" / "Promote active participation" / "Greater outreach to members" / "Be more proactive" / "Travelling Workshops/Toolkits" / "Social Events that rotate regionally", etc., etc.*



Our 2007 Membership Directory will be printed this year and will be available at the Conference in May. It will include the 2007 Salary Survey and our updated Constitution. Workshop planning continues to be a challenge but we hope to work on this. Any ideas for workshops topics and speakers are always welcome.

As you can see there is still much more that could be done to move our organization forward and we hope that each and every member will consider taking on a small role to make things happen. Currently there is a core group of volunteers – your Executive and a handful of others willing to help but they are a small group compared to the number of members (385) we currently have.

Think about what you could do to motivate your colleagues and your Association!

### **What Can I Do for My Association? What Can You Do for Your Association? What Can We Do for Our Association?**

Thank you to those members who in the last year:

- attended a conference – OALT/ABO and/or OLA planned sessions
- introduced a speaker
- were speakers
- volunteered to round up donations
- participated in conference planning
- assisted with set-up, tear-down and clean-up at events
- assisted with the development of the new logoc web site, stationary, etc.
- posted something to the discussion list
- wrote a newsletter article
- completed the salary survey
- promoted OALT/ABO to colleagues by encouraging them to attend a chapter meeting or to become a member
- continue to educate their employers about the value of OALT/ABO
- continue to be passionate about the Association and what we can do
- volunteer to be on the Executive – both Association and Chapters
- continue to have fun as Library Technicians

Our Association is only as strong as its most dedicated volunteers. Please consider helping out where you can. This year's incoming Executive is short a few key players – President-Elect 2009, Chapter Coordinator, Conference Coordinator as well as volunteers to help with the workload. We hope you will consider stepping up!

I expect 2008 to be very inspiring and rewarding. I look forward to working with the 2008 Executive as we "Set Sail" navigating ourselves forward for the next 35 years! ♦

Maria Ripley, President-Elect 2008  
info@oaltabo.on.ca



# 2008 OLA Super Conference Impressions

~By Cyndi Smith



Dorothy Gagnon (to the right) & Cyndi Smith (to the left)  
~OLA CONFERENCE

During the past several conferences, I have attended sessions that dealt expressly with material that related to my job in the reference department of an academic library, yet predominantly the material was unique to the librarian perspective. Each session, I felt I was presuming upon a world not *quite* but *almost* my own. I nonetheless continued to attend, participate and benefit from all professional development possible. OLA sessions always benefit my library, my customers and me. However, this year I noted a revitalizing change to the lineup of sessions: many openly offered the technician outlook and/or their contributions. Several included technician specific content and a few spoke purely from the viewpoint of the library technician.

On Thursday, I attended one session that openly addressed the division between librarians and technicians and solicited technician opinion and ideas. The panel of speakers, made up of librarians who were technicians in the past and a technician who was content to remain as one, was broad minded and forward thinking, demonstrating respect and confidence in technicians as the peers of librarians. It was a spirited dialogue of the entire room, which ended with the unanimous decision that this discourse must go further and deeper at a future date.

The excited buzz in the air at the conclusion of the session was palpable. On Friday, it was my privilege to co-present a session, with an experienced reference library technician from my college.

During the conference, I attended two of the sessions presented by technicians in the co-venture of the OALT/ABO and both of these were very well attended, with excellent material and delivery style. It gave satisfaction to see how far and how well technicians could go in their fields. It is quite a different matter to address the importance of library technician input to librarians rather than simply other technicians. It is exhilarating, powerful, slightly frightening and entirely correct to do so. Both librarians and technicians share real estate in library science but from different perspectives. Each ought to discuss their challenges and their contributions, sharing their perspectives.

I do not believe that the material changed; I believe it was the whole tone of the conference. It seemed to my eyes that library technicians had finally stepped up to the plate to be on the team, rather than being in the audience as spectators. A truth that was written several years ago which I discovered in my review of the library literature is that technicians need to take every opportunity to speak up, to reach out, to contribute, and to participate in the world of library science, by speaking, writing, teaching and learning. My colleague, Dorothy Gagnon, articulated that silence means agreement. This conference, I felt that library technicians were not silent. While this gives us every reason to believe that the voice of library technicians will not be silent in the future conferences, it also places a burden of responsibility upon all of us to follow this pattern. ♦



## **OLA Super Conference Session # 1817**

*~By Kathryn Suffoletta*



Since I was privileged to be attending the entire OLA Super Conference 2008, I answered an appeal from Maria Ripley for members to convene the sessions that OALT/ABO was responsible for. I volunteered to be the Convenor for a Saturday morning session entitled *The Benefits of Sign Language for Children*. The presenter was Laura Berg. The session was amazing! Laura very convincingly demonstrated the many cognitive and social benefits of teaching sign language to hearing children starting at a very young age.

Her presentation, which can be found at [www.accessola.com/superconference2008](http://www.accessola.com/superconference2008) under session materials, is very authoritative and was well presented. But the most amazing parts were the videos of Laura's daughter Fireese demonstrating her signing skills at various ages and the impact it has had on the development of her spoken language, letter recognition, and spelling skills. Laura provided an opportunity for audience participation when she taught us some signs to incorporate while singing nursery rhymes and preschool songs, demonstrating how fun and engaging it can be. Laura's extensive credentials and experience can be found on the website of the company she founded [www.mysmarthands.com](http://www.mysmarthands.com). ♦

*It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent but the one most responsive to change.*

*~ Charles Darwin*

## *Did you know?*

Hamilton Public Library this year has had 3 presidents:

CEO Ken Roberts is the incoming president of CLA

Darcy Glidden is past president of OPLA, and Stella Clark is current president of OALT/ABO

Hamilton Public Library has been in the forefront of many innovations, and has won many awards in the past few years, the latest being Hamilton's Century Award for providing service to the public for over 100 years. ♦



### **Welcome to Our New and Returning Members!**

Erika Dlugokecki  
Cathleen Golding-Corcoran  
Sheila Howlett-Soltysiak  
Jill Landriault  
Joanne Le Blanc  
Catherine McEwan  
Jennifer Oja  
Chelsey Rathwell  
Sonia Vaz

Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine  
College Boreal  
Ottawa Hospital, Library Services  
Royal Ottawa Health Care Group  
SCO Health Service

# Your Online Connection to Education

*Respectfully submitted by, Dolores Harms Penner*

Greetings to OALT members! This message is to let you know that there are a number of courses being offered in the online library technician program from Mohawk College this summer. They are as follows:

LIBRLT110 Introduction to Libraries and the Information Industry  
INFOLT390 Personal Computer Support  
INFOLT402 Electronic Publishing  
LIBRLT220 Information Work I  
LIBRLT420 Information Work II  
LIBRLT425 Information Work III  
LIBRLT435 Client Services  
LIBRLT302 Descriptive and Access Cataloguing I  
LIBRLT305 Descriptive and Access Cataloguing II  
LIBRLT325 Indexing and Abstracting  
LIBRLT351 Serials  
LIBRLT350 Acquisitions  
MGMT10041 Library Financial Management and Budgeting  
LIBRLT385 Children's Services and Issues  
COMMLT225 Genre Fiction and Readers' Advisory Service  
LIBRLT375 School Libraries  
LIBRRM103 Archives

Courses begin on May 9 and end on August 15/08. Registration for these courses opened in early March. Those who have graduated from a library technician program are considered to have met the prerequisite course requirements for any of these courses. These courses work well as professional development for those who would like to update their skills or explore a new topic.

More detailed information is on our web site <http://disted.mohawkcollege.ca/librec/library.html> under "next semester", or feel free to email me at: [dolores.harmspenner@mohawkcollege.ca](mailto:dolores.harmspenner@mohawkcollege.ca)



At Mohawk our convocation is held annually in October. This past October we were very pleased to recognize 39 graduates from the library technician diploma program and 11 graduates from the records management certificate program. It was a wonderful celebratory evening.



## *Excellence in Education*

We honoured five of our graduates in particular with awards based on their academic achievement: *Shauna Ives and Nancy Therrien with the Geraldine Hughes Cataloguing Award, Tanya Sicoli and Judy Tuck with our Library Technician Award, and Lenore Bergson with the OALT/ABO Award.* All of our graduates can be proud of their hard work in achieving their goal by completing the program. ♦

*Library Here is where people,  
One frequently finds,  
Lower their voices  
And raise their minds.*

*~ Light Armour.  
McGraw-Hill, 1954.*



# Virtually Speaking to Success

~By Mary Anne Harrison



As I sit here writing this entry for the current newsletter of the OALT/ABO, I am thinking about what has brought me to this place in my life. Becoming a "student" again was to say the least daunting. Why did I want a career change at this stage in my life? Was I prepared to go back to school mid-life? Would I be able to juggle my work schedule, family life and homework? Who would fix dinner while I was doing homework?

After some serious soul searching I registered for the online education Library Technician program through Mohawk College. I am currently taking my 3<sup>rd</sup> course of the program and I have surprised myself in so many ways.

Discipline was a worry to me. I have always been able to meet deadlines when it comes to submitting work, after all I'm an Educational Assistant working in a high school, and the push to make sure that students hand in assignments and prepare for tests and exams is part of the job. The question was, could I "walk the walk" as well as I "talk the talk"? The answer was yes I could. There is no question that you have to set aside time to do the work.

The instructors are understanding and are prompt with replies to any question asked.

The online chats and discussions give you a chance to "meet" your fellow classmates and you don't feel like you are the only one taking the course. You can take as many courses as you think you can handle each semester (I'm the turtle, sticking to one each semester) and the program that I am enrolled in will take approximately 4 years to complete.

With full time enrollment not an option for me, the online education option is the perfect fit in my life right now.

Even though I have many more courses to take to finish my online education course and reaching my goal of receiving my Library Technician Diploma, I am extremely proud of setting out a new career path and my achievements so far.

The options that have already reached my way and those as a future Library Technician keep me focused and striving each day for greater opportunities ahead. ♦



*A library is not a luxury but one of the necessities of life.*  
— Henry Ward BEECHER

# **A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations**

~By Douglas Willford

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The beginnings of the individual Provincial Library Technician Associations can be traced back to a conference entitled "The Library Technician At Work: Theory and Practice" sponsored by the Canadian Library Association held at Lakehead University, May 8-9, 1970. As a result of this workshop an ambitious group of library technicians headed by Charlotte Elwert took on the task of forming a national association called The Canadian Library Technicians Association (CLTA). However, CLTA was short lived and morphed itself into a number of provincial associations.

At the writing of this article there are now six known provincial library technician associations. Two of these will be described below: the British Columbia Library Association Library Technicians and Assistants Interest Group (BC LTAIG) and the Alberta Library Technician Association (ALTA).

The fall issue of *ELAN* will complete these histories: Saskatchewan Association of Library Technicians (SALT), Manitoba Association of Library Technicians (MALT), Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des Bibliotechniciens de l'Ontario (OALT/ABO), and Nova Scotia Association of Library Technician (NSALT). More complete information can be found on their Web sites. In some instances material for both these articles has been copied from the various associations' Web sites.

*(More complete information can be found on their Web sites. In some instances material for both these articles has been copied from the various associations' Web sites.)*



British Columbia Library Association

## ***British Columbia Library Association Library Technicians and Assistants Interest Group***

The idea of an organization to represent Library Technicians in B.C. had been considered by the students of the Langara College program in the early 1970s. However, it was not until the fall of 1974 that the idea started to become something concrete.

## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

*~cont'd*

Ruth McLaren (nee Clark) was one of the founding members who made the first officially recorded plea to organize based on the following objectives: 1) Education of the B.C. library world; 2) Professional development of the library technician by means of workshops and guest speakers; and 3) employment information whereby library technicians would have access to job opportunities.

With the assistance of Virginia Chisholm, coordinator of the library program at Langara College, invitations were sent to former graduates encouraging them to join the newly formed association. At about the same time the first newsletters and a list of possible workshop ideas were produced, contact made with other newly formed provincial LT associations, and a job contact service was established.

In 1979 the name of the organization was changed to British Columbia Association of Library Technicians (BCALT). By the mid 1980s another name change took place to Library Technicians of British Columbia (LTBC). Because of continued low membership and participation, the organization established closer connections to the BC Library Association (BCLA). Annual surveys continued and the requisite AGM, but attempts to facilitate increased membership or participation in events were not successful.



At 1991 LTBC AGM the organization was dissolved by unanimous vote of the members attending, and a letter of application to become an interest group for library technicians and assistants to be affiliated with the BCLA, with LTAIG as its acronym. By the mid 1990s the interest group continued to exist primarily as a virtual entity with a small "executive committee" guiding the group. The primary activities included job postings and other messages distributed electronically.

Since 2003 the LTAIG Executive Committee has produced a brochure, a Web site ([www.bcla.bc.ca](http://www.bcla.bc.ca)), an electronic newsletter, and established electronic connections with other Canadian LT organizations. The first electronic survey of Canadian LTs was conducted and the results made available to all on the LTAIG Web pages.

Conference sessions sponsored by LTAIG are included in the annual BCLA conferences, and socials are hosted in conjunction with the conferences.



### *Alberta Association of Library Technicians*

The Alberta Association of Library Technicians (AALT) was established as a result of a challenge that Bill Manson, a Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) library instructor, issued to each SAIT library technician second year class. Every year he dared them to form their own organization and finally the 1973-1974 graduating class accepted his challenge. Led by Bernice Neufeld, the group researched the requirements of forming an association and the planning began.



## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

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Then came the day that this informal group realized that they were ready for the next step, to gather as many technicians together as possible and to elect an executive and so, under the leadership of Bernice Neufeld, plans for the first annual conference were started. As Bernice stated in her article in a 1980 issue of the AALT Technician, "to start with I had no money, no experience, only grand ideas and believe me they were grand." The conference was held in Red Deer, Alberta, on February 21 to 22, 1975, with 37 people attending the Annual General Meeting. The Alberta Association of Library Technicians was created and the first executive was elected with Judy Thomas as President, Jennifer Connors as 1st Vice President, Doreen Bills as 2nd Vice President, Carol Dubuc as Secretary, Carol Lukasiewicz as Treasurer, and Kathy McNeely and Shirley Bateman as Councilors. The AALT Constitution was finalized and submitted to the Alberta Government Companies Branch and on September 8, 1975, the Alberta Association of Library Technicians was officially incorporated.



### *Continuing Education*

The first AALT workshop titled "What is a Computer and What is it Doing in My Library" was held in 1976 in Edmonton on September 24 and in Calgary on September 27. The original executive structure had one councilor responsible for all professional development workshops. Because of geographical and logistic problems, in 1990 the position was divided into Programs North Councilor and Programs South Councilor with Red Deer being the dividing line.

### *Executive Changes*

In 1988, the position of 2nd Vice-President took on the additional responsibility of Publications Coordinator. This position was later dissolved during the Executive restructuring May 1996. In 1990, the two year term positions were changed to one year, which encouraged members to volunteer for the positions and the two councilor positions became five specific positions: Membership, Newsletter, Public Relations, Southern Region Programs and Northern Region Programs. At the 1996 Annual General Meeting, the AALT Executive structure changed, removing the Past President position and adding President/President-Elect, Journal Editor, and Member-at-Large, and merging the Treasurer and Membership positions. In May 1998, Public Relations was renamed Marketing, the Journal Councilor position was replaced by the Web Site Coordinator (the Journal Editor position remained), the positions of Grant MacEwan and SAIT Student Representatives were officially added to the Executive composition, and three Executive work groups were introduced, Administration, Communication, and Professional Development. In May 2000, the AALT Executive was renamed the AALT Board of Directors with the Councilors becoming Directors and the President, President Elect and the Member-at-Large forming the Executive Committee. In May 2002, the position of Treasurer/Membership was separated into two positions, Membership Chair and Treasurer.

### *Finances and Grants*

Membership rates in 1979 were \$7 for Personal Members and \$5 for Associate Members. In 2000, AALT's fiscal year-end was changed to December 31 to coincide with the Membership yearend. In 1976-1977, AALT received their first grant from the Alberta Government. In 1988, AALT received a grant from the Alberta Foundation of the Literary Arts and in 2004-2005 they received a grant from the Community Initiatives Program (CIP).

## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

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AALT provided its first bursary in 1979 and established its first award in 1993. AALT adopted the motto "Technicians and Technology: Partners in Information." in 1997.

### Governance

In May 1994, the Standing Orders were rescinded pending their incorporation into the operating policies of the Executive Handbook. In June 2000, the AALT Board Handbook was created.



### Mentoring Program

The idea for the AALT Mentoring Program was created during the 1992-1993 year and was officially launched in 1994. In 1996-1997, the Mentorship Program became the responsibility of the Member-at-Large. As an ongoing project, it was continually being revised. In 2005, it was temporarily shelved for major revision.

### Publications

The first *AALT Technician* was published in 1975 and in February 1981, it was assigned the ISSN 0228-9490. Over the years its frequency has changed many times from four issues a year to five. In 1996, the *AALT Technician* was reclassified as a journal. In January 1997, the mission statement of the *AALT Technician* was changed to read "The Official Voice of Library Technicians in Alberta." In 2005, the *AALT Technician* left its printed format to become available online at the Members Only Section of the AALT Web site.

The first *AALT Membership Directory* was created in 1979 and starting in 2005, it was available only online in the Members Only Section of the AALT Web site.

Although the official date of the first AALT brochure is still being researched, AALT changed from the red and cream version of the brochure in 1989 to the blue *Library Technicians in Alberta: Purveyors of Information*. A new brochure, *Library Technicians of Tomorrow* was created in 1992. In 1994, a revised brochure was created with the heading "Technicians and Technology: Partners in Information." In the spring of 2000, the single AALT brochure was divided into two, *Alberta Association of Library Technicians: Communication, Cooperation, Continuing Education* for member recruitment, and the *Alberta Association of Library Technicians: Partners in Information for Library Technician* promotion.



### Web Site

Throughout its history, the AALT Web site has always been the work of dedicated volunteers members. The first AALT Web site was launched in the spring of 1995 on the Calgary FreeNet servers. In 1998, the site was moved to a new server, the address changed to aalt.org and the page took on a new look reflecting AALT's adoption of yellow into the official colours. In 1999/2000, the Web site was redesigned. In 2003, the AALT Web Team performed a series of user studies on the Web site to help with the planning and design of a new version of the site. In 2005, the Web site (www.aalt.org) was totally redone and introduced to the membership at the 2005 annual conference.

## A Brief History of Canadian Library Associations

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### Final Thoughts

During AALTs formative years, there were numerous personality and ideology clashes particularly between Calgary and Edmonton members. It was commonplace to have leaders serve their terms on the executive and then fade away afterwards, often cutting their ties with the organization that they had poured so much of their heart and soul into. Some had such bad experiences that they will not even talk about them, but by reading through past Annual General Meeting minutes, conflicts definitely come through. All this illustrates is that AALT was created with passion, and with passion comes strong emotion and firm beliefs and it was these beliefs that formed AALT's rock solid organizational structure. Current and future members owe much to individuals like Bernice Neufeld who took on challenges and showed their dedication to Library Technicians through their work with AALT.

The last issue of *ELAN* contained the brief histories of the British Columbia Library Association Library Technicians and Assistants Interest Group and the Alberta Library Technician Association. The history of the remaining four associations is described below. As stated in the previous article, in some instances material for both articles has been copied from the associations' Web sites.



SALT  
Saskatchewan Association of Library Technicians



Manitoba Association of Library Technicians

The SALT Newsletter was first published in 1976 and it changed to a quarterly publication in 1985-86. The Job Line began in 1994 when Meagen Yuriski (the Vice President at the time) decided to put job bank messages on her personal answering machine. In 1995 Sophie Malinoski volunteered to put an extra phone in her home and look after the SALT Job Line on her message manager. The SALT Web site ([www.lib.sk.ca/salt](http://www.lib.sk.ca/salt)) was created in 1998 by Sophie Malinoski who maintained it until October 2002. In December 2000 the telephone Job Line was discontinued in favour of the Job Bank on the Web site.

### Manitoba Association of Library Technicians

The Manitoba Association of Library Technicians (MALT) was one of the first library technician associations in Canada. It developed from seminars offered through the Manitoba Schools Library Association conferences where library technicians employed in the various school divisions recognized a need for continuing education of those in the workforce. Library technicians gathered in late 1970 and, after a subsequent meeting in 1971, a consensus among those who attended resulted in the formation of the Manitoba Association of Library Technicians. The annual membership cost of \$1.00 covered the mailing of a two-page newsletter. It was not until around 1973 that an official constitution and an elected president started. The constitution has the objectives to promote and advance the role of library technicians and respond to issues that relate to the entire library community. These objectives are carried out by an elected executive committee.

### Saskatchewan Association of Library Technicians

The Saskatchewan Association of Library Technicians (SALT) was formed in 1976. In 1978 SALT became a Saskatchewan Library Association (SLA) affiliate.



## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

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MALT was established as a nonprofit organization so that grants could be applied for without facing complicated taxation laws. In the late-seventies the Manitoba Cultural and Heritage Department through Public Library Services under an annual grant matched membership dollars on an annual basis as long as the association followed stipulated grant guidelines which were: continuing education, projects within the library community, participation in provincial library conferences and a yearly audit to be supplied with the grant application.

Membership fees were increased 5-6 times in relation to the increasing costs of printing and distribution out of the newsletter. The institution fee has been increased to offset the numerous services offered by MALT, such as the newsletter, jobline (answering machine), mail, salary survey, and production of the MALT brochure. To raise money to purchase a microcomputer and establish a shared office with the Manitoba Library Association MALT entered into the endeavour of selling Grey Cup tickets in the late 1980s, which resulted in an income of about \$2,000.00 dollars as a nonprofit organization.

An annual general meeting is held in the spring. Membership in MALT is open to any interested person. MALT produces a quarterly newsletter, is involved in sponsoring various programs, workshops, etc., and maintains a job bank that advertises library positions. The Web site can be found at [www.malt.mb.ca](http://www.malt.mb.ca). A representative of MALT participates on the Library Education Advisory Committee of Red River Community College.



### *The Early Years to 1974*

The beginnings of the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des bibliothécaires de l'Ontario (OALT/ABO) can be traced back to a workshop held at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, on May 8-9, 1970, entitled "The Library Technician At Work; Theory & Practice". This workshop was coordinated through the work of graduate library technicians and the School of Library Technology at Lakehead and sponsored by the Canadian Library Association.

As a result of the 1970 workshop the Canadian Library Technician Association (CLTA) was formed in Thunder Bay, Ontario, in June 1972. The president was Charlotte Elwert who worked as a lab assistant in the School of Library Technology. Charlotte was a very dynamic individual who fought very hard for the survival of CLTA. Unfortunately, CLTA survived for about two years and then was forced to fold due to the following factors: tried to undertake too much at one time (bit off more than they could chew); the membership was primarily based in Ontario; lack of funds; other provincial associations were beginning to form and they catered to their own members.

*"A circulating library in a town is as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge!  
It blossoms through the year!"*

*~Richard B. Sheridan (1751-1816)*

## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

*~cont'd*

CLTA did produce about two or three newsletters, some of which are housed in the provincial archives.

A seminar entitled "Where We Are Going And Why," sponsored by the Provincial Consultative Committee on Library Technician Training, was held at Queen's Park on May 9-10, 1973. This seminar was chaired by a very dynamic individual named Vic Whatton, who served as secretary of the PCCLTT. One of the strong overriding messages that emerged as a result of this seminar was that library technicians must organize themselves into an association.

A meeting of approximately 25-30 graduate library technicians and a profession advisor (Dan Sudar, Director, School of Library Technology, Lakehead University) met at Humber College on October 26, 1973, to discuss the idea of forming a strong provincial association. OALT/ABO's interim executive elected consisted of: Douglas Willford, President, Micheline Overall, Secretary-Treasurer, and Charlotte Elwert, Programming and Publicity. Two major objectives were established at this initial meeting: draft a constitution and organize a conference.

Shortly after this meeting five regional chapters emerged consisting of: Lakehead Library Technicians Association (Thunder Bay); Northern Library Technicians Association (Schreiber); Ottawa Regional Branch (Ottawa); South Central Library Technicians Association (Hamilton); Toronto Regional Library Technicians Association (Toronto).

A meeting was held in Ottawa on February 23, 1974, to bring together ideas and begin drafting the constitution, which was to be presented at the first conference to be held at the Leslie Campus of Seneca College in Toronto on October 18-20, 1974.

Another brainstorming session to deal with the constitution and the drafting of two resolutions -- Committee on Qualifications and Certification and the Membership Committee -- was held in Schreiber, Ontario, in July 1974. Also, planning for the first conference was well underway by the planning committee.



OALT/ABO's first conference, called Impact "74", was held on October 18-20, 1974, at the Leslie Campus of Seneca College in Toronto with approximately 175 delegates in attendance. At this conference the association was formally founded with the passing of the constitution. Also the two resolutions: Committee on Qualifications and Certification and the Membership Committee were approved and passed. Two more regional chapters were announced located in Sudbury and London. A new executive was elected consisting of: President: Eleanor Miller (Ottawa); Past President: Douglas Willford (Toronto); Secretary-Treasurer: Campbell Leckie (Hamilton); Planning and Publicity: Barbara Sibley (Oakville).

## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

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Ottawa Regional Branch announced that they would be hosting the second annual conference to be called "Information – The Name Of The Game."

*POST 1974: (Taken from an article written by Janet Scheibler, January 1993)*

By 1975, there were eight regional branches: Hamilton Regional Branch, Lakehead Regional Branch, London Regional Branch, Niagara Regional Branch, Northern Regional Branch, Ottawa Regional Branch/Section Regionale d'Ottawa, Sudbury Regional Branch, Toronto Area Library Technicians Association. Halton-Peel Regional Branch was formed in 1976 and Huronia in 1979. London Regional Branch suspended operations in 1981 to be reborn again as LOHANIA Regional Branch in 1983. This new region incorporated the former regions of: London, Hamilton, and Niagara. Also, Northern Regional Branch became incorporated into the Sudbury Regional Branch.



February 1, 1979 was a landmark day, when we received the "Letter Patent" officially incorporating the association.

In or about 1980 a committee under Better Choquette (Gore) and Paulette Burton produced a document entitled "A Proposal For Change" which looked at revamping the organization of OALT/ABO. Although well-written and researched, the document did not go far.

In 1983, OALT/ABO celebrated ten years as an association with a conference in Sudbury with the theme Decade 1. In 1993, at the celebration of the twentieth year the conference was held in Ottawa with the theme Reflections.

In May of 2003 a revised constitution was presented and approved at the annual conference. The main significance of this revised constitution saw a change in both the executive structure and in the make-up from regions to chapters. As a result new chapters have come on board: Book Chapter and School Chapter but at the same time some of the former regions have folded mainly: Huronia, LOHANIA, and Sudbury. At the writing of this article the Halton-Peel Region is undergoing a review. With the new chapter structure perhaps a morphing process will evolve to continue where the former regions have left off.

Our accomplishments are many: every year OALT/ABO hosts a successful conference; our membership is constant; we are and have been since our inception officially bilingual; we have produced many publications by and about library technicians; our salary surveys are becoming a tool used by employees and employers alike to establish fair remuneration packages; our Constitution and Policy Statements on Standards and Certification are regularly being updated; we have sponsored essay contests and established Presidential and Innovative Awards which are presented annually at the conference.

*"The part of my education that has had the deepest influence wasn't any particular essay or even a specific class; it was how I was able to apply everything I learned in the library to certain situations in my life."*

~Gloria Estefan



## A Brief History of Canadian Library Technician Associations

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Our future looks bright. We need the ongoing support of dedicated individuals such as those first 25-30 technicians who saw the need for organization that can foster and promote the skills and ideals of library technicians. Visit the Web site ([www.oaltabo.on.ca](http://www.oaltabo.on.ca)).

### *Nova Scotia Association of Library Technicians*

The Nova Scotia Association of Library Technicians (NSALT) is a young organization, formed in March 2007. The history goes back approximately one and a half years before that when a group of Nova Scotia library technicians got together and started talking seriously about forming an association. Over the course of that year the by-laws were written. Finally in February 2007, a group of four decided the time was right and set the wheels in motion.

Previous to this association, there have been Library Technician Interest Groups as part of the Nova Scotia Library Association. Erica Smith has been the convener since 2001 when the interest group resurfaced after a number of years.

NSALT is a nonprofit, province-wide organization. The objective is to promote a wider understanding, acceptance and advancement of library technician graduates and students in Nova Scotia, to further the cause of library technicians in Nova Scotia, and to respond to issues that relate to the entire library community. These objectives are embodied in Association bylaws and are carried out by an elected executive committee. Visit the Web site at <http://users.eastlink.ca/~ericasmith/>

*"Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life. Libraries change lives for the better."*

~ Sidney Sheldon

## *Institutional Membership Pilot Project*

Melissa Hall and I are examining the association's current Institutional Membership (IM) policies and structure. What we are proposing is to restructure the IM to provide members with the cost benefit of a group rate and the perks of a personal membership.

We propose a 2-year pilot project with a test group of 6 institutions.



If you are interested and would like more information contact us or plan on attending the ABM where we will be presenting our proposal.

Melissa Hall, Membership Coordinator

Annette Desrosiers

## **TEAMING UP IN SCHOOL LIBRARIES: A COLLABORATION SUCCESS STORY**

# **Library Technician and Teacher Librarian as Partners**

*by Sharon Filiatrault, Library Technician, St. Patrick's High School, Ottawa*

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On many days at St. Patrick's High School in Ottawa, we have to put up the LIBRARY FULL sign at lunch. Every study carrel and table is full, as are the computer stations and couches, with the occasional student or small group on the floor. Terry Craig, Teacher Librarian, and myself, Library Technician, collect money, circulate library materials, hand out printing, answer reference questions and supervise the students. As students leave, those waiting at the door are let in to take their places. The library buzzes with activity, and we have become adept at serving students while at the same time watching for those sneaking in food, grabbing pages from the printer without paying or surreptitiously checking their facebook accounts.

If library success were measured solely in numbers of students choosing to come to the library, then we are on the right track. We believe this success is a direct result of the team approach we take to all aspects of library service. We are fortunate that the Ottawa Catholic School Board employs two full-time staff in our secondary school libraries. Terry and I consider ourselves to be equal partners in education and collaborate fully in the delivery of school library service. We recognize that each of us has valuable experience and expertise that combines to create a welcoming and rich high school library.

Each library team will work out how they can collaborate most effectively, depending on individual skills and interests.

Here are a few things that we do to maintain a collaborative work environment:

### ***Communication***

This is the key to effective collaboration. Terry and I share every e-mail, memo or letter related to library work. We keep each other informed throughout the day about all library matters, and always consult each other when considering changes, initiatives or decisions. We do this by sitting down during a coffee break each morning to talk about what's going on in the library and the school. Not only does this provide continuity of service for our users, it also validates each of us as essential partners in the library.

### ***Equal time***

Our school day is divided into four periods. We each spend two periods at the Circulation Desk serving staff and students and the other two periods off-desk, completing tasks specific to our individual roles. This way we are both visible to the students, we both know how to do all of the circulation functions, and we both have interaction with students.

It also reinforces the idea that we have equal authority and roles in the library. At the same time, we acknowledge that we have important work to do away from the desk and we each need uninterrupted time for it.

### ***Team Approach to Instruction***

When planning class visits, whether they are orientation or research visits, we both speak to the class. Terry addresses research skills, while I demonstrate the technical aspects of how to use the online catalogue. Again, this reinforces to students that we're a team and we have distinct but equal roles in the library.

*Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.* ~Andrew Carnegie

## Teaming Up in School Libraries: A Collaboration Success Story

~Cont'd



### *Consultation*

Terry and I collaborate on Acquisitions to make sure that we both agree on how to spend the library's budget. While Terry is more familiar with curriculum needs, I am familiar with the collection. We each have valuable suggestions and opinions in terms of where we need to develop the collection and how to allocate funds to best serve the staff and students. It's very helpful to have someone to bounce ideas off of and bring perspective to decision-making.

### *Flexibility*

One of my interests is creating displays and bulletin boards in the library, changing artwork and moving furniture frequently to make the space inviting and fresh. Terry is happy to let me run with that and is open to trying my ideas and seeing what happens.

Terry has a gift for counseling and tutoring individual students who may need some extra attention. His office is a warm and welcoming place where students can come and chat, have a cup of tea and be listened to with compassion.

I try to help with this by taking over library duties when I know he needs time with a student. This kind of flexibility is crucial to collaboration. We can be confident that the other person will always step in when needed, and be open to new ideas or changing circumstances.

### *Support*

As library staff, we are a support system for each other. Although we work with all school staff, neither of us is part of a department or other group within the school.

This is why it's important that we provide support for each other when needed. When one of us is having difficulty, the other can step in with words of encouragement or advice, or just be a sounding board. Similarly, we can share our successes and accomplishments with each other.

We both know how lucky we are to enjoy this type of working relationship. While much has been written about the importance of collaboration between Teacher Librarians and teachers, very little has been said about the crucial partnership between Teacher Librarians and Library Technicians. It's essential that this kind of relationship be fostered within the school library to improve both library service and job satisfaction. While we each have important individual roles, as a team we are unstoppable! ♦

*Books are the quietest and most constant of friends; they are the most accessible and wisest counselors, and the most patient of teachers.*

*~ Charles W. Eliot*



# Keeping the Tree Alive Through the Branches

~By Jennie Clarke

How do you create a minimal masterpiece for visitors? What should we look for when creating our websites? Clear, clean and minimal pages full of information. Does this make sense? When I started designing web pages back in the 90s, it was all about colours, bold and shocking backgrounds, icons that swirled and patterns that dazzled. If you did not have the latest flash craze on your page it was seen as boring and not with the times. Surfing around looking for clipart and new fads online was what most webmasters or mistresses did for hours on end.

There has been a great evolution since then. 21<sup>st</sup> century web users have asked for something different. Nowadays pages do not buzz like they used to. There are so many distractions in the real world many look to the virtual world for down time. The least amount of diversions is what makes a person visit a page, tell others about it and revisit. Over time, many have suggested that the glamour and glitter of websites have only slowed the process down. The World Wide Web was the world wide wait. Today people need to get to a page, find what they need and move on. Thankfully, this can be achieved because as designers we have moved away from the stars and sparkles to the orderly page. The chances of a visitor sticking around while pictures flash, teddies dance or twirling arrows direct you are slim. If you want a page that works with any market, the rule is short, clean and sweet.



Libraries are fitted for the walls of knowledge. So, how do you get this all in short, and sweet? The answer is in the tree. Start with the roots or the clients. Surveying our clients is the best way of knowing. Once this is achieved, the bark. Keeping in mind the clients make each link a minimal one to two words. Keep the links one colour and whatever you do: NO FLASHING!! Rollover images are a great trend as it helps the newbies to your page identify where they can navigate to move around the page (or tree). Columns to the left and promotions to the right are a standard rule. White backgrounds are also very popular. However, any solid colour will do as long as it is gentle to the eye. If you have to move your mouse ring more than three times, the page is too long. Remember, you want people to return and feel at ease when they visit. ◇

## Ten Golden Rules

- ❖ State your purpose for your webpage
- ❖ PDF files – great for printing but terrible for online reading
- ❖ When you click on the link – make sure the colour changes
- ❖ Bullets – Tags – Short lists are best
- ❖ Avoid banners or animations (especially on a professional site)
- ❖ Consistency is key
- ❖ Standard font – the fancier, the more likely a user will not be able to read it
- ❖ Keep photos to thumb size with the option to zoom
- ❖ Allow for several options when downloading forms
- ❖ Remember to stay current with contact information and date

# ***Learning 2.0 @ LUL: A wonderful on-the-job learning opportunity!***

*By~Jennifer Oja~Library Assistant~Lakehead University Library*

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In the summer of 2007, *Learning 2.0 @ LUL*, was offered to all Library Staff at Lakehead University as an introduction to Web 2.0 tools on the Internet. In this self-discovery program, participants had the option of working individually or in small groups, and activities were completed at each individual's own pace. Each participant was given 3 hours of work time to work on activities related to the program. There were no tests or exams involved and a small reward was given to those who completed the program.

The first activity was to create your own blog where you could share results of each activity and log your experiences with the various web applications and technologies that were looked at each week.

The goals of the program were to: 1) Expose Staff to new tools; 2) Encourage play; 3) Empower individuals; 4) Expand the knowledge toolbox; and 5) Eliminate fear.

Tools explored in this program included: blogs and blogging; RSS feeds; podcasting; YouTube; Del.icio.us; Flickr; Firefox and add-ons; and Gaming. All of these social software tools can enhance existing Library services and should be embraced by Libraries of all types to try and provide new services particularly to reach the online patron. Though I make reference to examples of how these tools are useful to Lakehead University Library, an academic library, all types of libraries can benefit from these tools.



## ***Blogs and Blogging***

Short for web log, blogs are web-based logs of information and are an easy way of publishing content on the web without having to know html language. Entries are listed in chronological order and archives are automatically generated by the software. The blogging software that we used in our program was Blogger, but there are many other free programs available on the Internet.



Check out my blog that can be found at: <http://lulpublic-joja.blogspot.com/> This was my first ever blog and I found it very easy to set-up, maintain and add content to, during the course of the program. This definitely proves that anyone can do it, even those who feel that they aren't that computer savvy! Our Electronic Services Librarian has created a blog that deals with new e-resources at Lakehead University. This blog, *ER Update*, can be found at: <http://new-library.lakeheadu.ca:8080/>

Though my blog was to share my experiences with *Learning 2.0 @ LUL*, *ER Update* has a very specific focus dealing with electronic resources. Blogs of any topic can be created with blogging software, and the sharing and exchange of information on various subjects can be accomplished quite easily among users.

## Learning 2.0 @ LUL: a wonderful on-the-job learning opportunity!

~Cont'd

### RSS Feeds

RSS (Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication) is a format for delivering regularly changing web content. Many blogs, news sites, E-Journals sites and other online publishers syndicate their content as an RSS feed. It allows you to easily stay informed by retrieving the latest content published from the sites you are interested in and you save time by not having to visit each site individually. This would be a very valuable tool for a student or faculty member doing research in a particular subject area and could use it to see the newest articles being published and available from a certain Journal title. One can set up RSS feeds easily and on many sites, general or specific, to help the researcher get access to the newest information published on topics of their interest.

*Bloglines* is an example of a free online service that allows you to search, subscribe, create and share news feeds, blogs and rich web content. Once you set up an account (that requires *no* special software), you can instantly begin accessing your account any time, from any computer or mobile device. The service will alert the user when they have any new posts or podcasts from their collected feeds, so they do not have to keep checking each feed individually to see if there is anything new there. All of your feeds are in one spot!

### Tagging with *del.icio.us*

Del.icio.us is a social bookmarking site, where you can add entries, like a url website, and then describe it using "tags". Tagging is assigning a keyword or term to a website, podcast, video, photograph - whatever (sort of like Library of Congress Subject Headings) but the difference is that they are defined by you. The benefit of it is that you can collect all your bookmarks or favourites in one place and also see what other people have found using similar tags.

Once you create an account and have added entries, you can access your del.icio.us account from any computer therefore your "bookmarks" are portable and not just accessible from your home or work computer where they may have been created. Library patrons using our website (library.lakeheadu.ca) can tag entries with del.icio.us that they have found in our online catalogue. You can think of it as the user assigning their own subject headings and because they are defined by them, they are much more meaningful. They also have the opportunity of sharing their findings with those

### Wikis

A wiki is a collaborative website and authoring tool that allows users to easily add, remove and edit content. An example of a wiki is Wikipedia - a free content, multilingual encyclopedia written collaboratively by contributors around the world. Features of a wiki that are advantageous are:

- ✓ Anyone can add or delete a post
- ✓ Changes are instantaneous - no need to upload to a server
- ✓ Only requires a computer with internet access
- ✓ Users do not need to know html or java to add entries

Lakehead University Library uses a wiki to house their Library policies and procedures, manuals, departmental forms and reports. The wiki is accessible to all Staff but to contribute or make changes to it, one must login with a valid username and password.

Learning 2.0 @ LUL was administered through our Library wiki. All of the weekly lessons were posted there and further readings and information were also given to help the participant with that week's topic.



## Podcasting

Similar to a radio or television series, a podcast is simply an audio file or video broadcast that is distributed over the Internet. You can listen to one episode at a time with your web browser or you can listen to the entire series using software that you install on your computer or on your MP3 player.

You can also subscribe to an RSS feed that will alert you when a new podcast is released and available that is of interest to you.

There are numerous podcasts online on various Library topics. Of particular interest is one by Stephen Abram, a Library 2.0 advocate, which can be found by searching Google using this phrase: **Online Northwest 2007 Keynote: Stephen Abram** which runs for about 45 minutes.

One benefit of podcasting that I feel is applicable to Libraries or for any workplace environment is in helping with skills development. Podcasts could aid in delivering professional development to Staff without them having to leave their desks. Various podcasts about Library 2.0 and other Library topics are available online and new ones could be created by an organization that might be of interest to their Staff.

So that is *Learning 2.0 @ LUL* in a nutshell! I encourage you to explore these social software tools and look for opportunities of incorporating them into your Library. Ask for this type of program to be offered at your workplace! It's an efficient and cost-effective way of professional development and staying current of new Internet tools. ♦



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*The aim of education is the  
knowledge not of fact, but of values*

*~Dean William R. Inge*

## **Knowledge Ontario Where it's at!**

January 2008 saw the launch of the latest database for the ever popular Knowledge Ontario. Ask Ontario is in the first phase of askON (ONdemande). It is joint virtual reference library. Ten public libraries including Hamilton through to Kingston plus several colleges and universities including Algonquin, Mohawk and Seneca will all be participants of the launch.

We can all be a part of the growing number of libraries participating in learning through Knowledge Ontario. The ever popular Our Ontario, Connect Ontario and Resource Connect continue to meet the demands and expectations of library clients throughout the province and around the world. Be a part of the knowledge, visit the website soon! ♦

<http://www.knowledgeontario.ca/>



### ***The Toronto Catholic District School Board invites applicants for the position of Library Technician***

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For general information about Toronto's Catholic schools, please visit [www.tcdsb.org](http://www.tcdsb.org). ♦