



Words from the President

Happy New Year's everyone!

Well, it's here ... 1999. The last year of the decade, the last year of the century, and the last year of the millennium is "big stuff"! From the discussion that went on at the December meeting, it is apparent the "rebel" Huronia Branch would like to see some 'big stuff' happen within OALT/ABO.



We seem to be at a standstill both provincially and regionally. There doesn't seem to be any new members to be had, and here in Huronia, we are as much of a social group as anything else. It would be nice to think this will change, but since this has been the status quo for several years now, there is no reason to think it will change anytime soon. (We have sent membership forms to three or four new LTs in the area with no response.) Apparently, no one is interested in what we have to offer. I guess all we can do is to continue to let the Provincial know how we feel, as popular as it makes us, and try to change our focus regionally. We may want to make the annual meeting in Owen Sound, a "bring a non-member" meeting and maybe we need to find a workshop topic for the fall. Any suggestions can be passed on to your executive.

I hope to see everyone at the March 13th meeting in Owen Sound (and I hope there is now enough snow for those members who pursue winter sports!!!)

Gale

January 4, 1999
2morcaus@ionsys.com

WANTED

**Hurononia Executive
to lead the region into
the new millennium**

Let your name stand in the elections being held on March 13, 1999 at the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library (Does anyone need a map?)

Final details to be sent closer to the date, re time and lunch. Hear and see how Owen Sound P.L. has set up their Electronic Information Centre and see the Children's centre with the "Wizards".

For more information contact Janet Iles, jiles@bmts.com
519-376-2105 (h) or 519-376-6623 (w)
(Executive please bring 2 copies of your reports)

40,000+ km on the road by Janet Scheibler

Hi! I see in *Networks* that everyone thinks that I have fallen off the face of the earth. Not quite, but I have been trying to see as much of it as possible, checking out a few libraries along the way. In the past ten months or so since I retired, Doug and I have put on over 40,000 km.

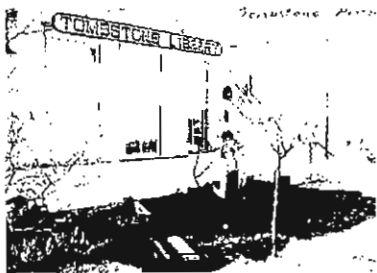
Last February and March, we went south, first to Florida for a week or so, then across Alabama, Louisiana (New Orleans, of course) and into Texas. After visiting the LBJ Ranch around Austin we continued on west, but encountered car trouble around Fredericksburg. While Doug got the car fixed, I explored the town and visited the local library.



Fredericksburg, Texas Library

It is a very beautiful old building but quite lacking in Canadian history (I saw only Francis Parkman's history of New France in the 971 area and out of four authors I checked (Atwood, Davies, Mowat and ?) only Atwood was represented.

Leaving Texas, we quickly crossed a corner of New Mexico into Arizona. Before arriving in Phoenix, we spent some time exploring Tombstone, including the fight at the OK Corral and Boot Hill. The library there is tiny and over-crowded.



Tombstone, Arizona Library

Sun City, just on the out-skirts of Phoenix, is the ideal place to retire. It is built for seniors around golf courses and golf carts are legal on the streets of Sun City. En route north to Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon, we explored the Sedona and Jerome area. Jerome is, or was a ghost town. It is now mostly inhabited by artisans who have brought it back to life. Jerome library is in the basement of an old building, down a set of steep, outside stairs, and a notice on the door asks that you to please not put books through the book chute when it is wet outside. Their collection of books was ancient with some gems going back to the 1800's. And they weren't even archived.



Jerome, Arizona Library

We "did" the Grand Canyon (awesome!) then headed up into Utah intending to get up to Salt Lake City then across to Reno, Nevada. Our car again started balking just as we were heading into the Bryce Canyon area, so we stopped at a wayside garage. In the end, we decided to have it towed 60 miles across the mountain to the GM dealer in Cedar City. (Thank heavens, for CAA Plus!) In the course of that trip, we climbed as high as the 10,000 foot level while the tow-truck driver pointed out places where cars had missed a curve and disappeared into the canyon below! After getting the car repaired again, we set out for Salt Lake City. There, I checked out the LDS genealogical library. (I want to go back.) We visited the church where the Mormon Tabernacle Choir sings (not the Tabernacle itself, which is only open to the faithful.)

En route to Reno (from the sacred to the profane!), we checked out the salt flats where the world's land speed record was set (it was under water!) We had intended to head back east after leaving a donation in Reno, but a quick look at the map showed us that we were within 200 miles of the West coast so decided to go on to San Francisco, so we could say we had been coast to coast. After a short drive up the Pacific Coast Highway, north of San Francisco, we turned back and headed inland again, partly because we were getting short of gas and it was too far to the next town and partly because I was driving and Doug accused me of trying to kill him by taking the switch-backs too fast! (And on his birthday yet!)

From San Francisco we headed south through central California as far as Bakersfield, then it was back east along the old Route 66 (not much left of it; it is now I-40). We ran into a bit of snow around Amarillo (the first adverse weather, we had encountered, when all around us were getting torrential rains and/or tornadoes, depending on where we were.) On the way through Memphis, we visited Graceland to pay our respects (and our money!) to Elvis before continuing on to Nashville. We arrived there on a Friday night so, of course, we had to go to the Grand 'Ole Opry on Saturday night. At this point, we had been on the road for six weeks and not been lost (just a bit turned around now and then.) In Nashville, we got lost, and I mean lost, for an hour. And that was on foot! — inside the Opryland Hotel!! In our estimation, the Grand 'Ole Opry is a show of has beens and wanna-be's. There is usually only one current big-name star appearing weekly to do a set (two or three songs). We happened to catch Vince Gill pushing his newest release.

We left Route 66 (aka I-40) at Nashville to head north through Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan and home through Sarnia. We arrived back home just after the last ice storm in March.

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In August/September we went north to Alaska, this time with the truck and 5th-wheel. We left just after the August Civic Holiday weekend, and put in long days in order to get to Brooks, AB in time for my grandson's baptism on the following weekend. After several days there (very hot!!!) we continued on to Banff then north on the Columbia Icefields Parkway to Jasper. We spent a couple of nights in campgrounds in Banff and Jasper National Parks (surrounded by elk grazing at our doorstep in the Whistlers campground south of Jasper). The Athabaska Falls is worth a visit if you are in the Jasper area. From there we continued on to Prince George, BC for a visit with my sister and her family. While there we went to Barkerville, an old gold-mining centre, now a ghost town being resurrected by BC Tourism. Barkerville was once the largest city north of San Francisco and west of Chicago. (Sure not evident today!) The library there has been re-constructed to appear much as it did in its heyday. A street-corner harangue by a "member" of the "Literary Society" urged everyone to support their local library.



Barkerville, British Columbia, Library

After leaving Prince George, we went up the Stewart/Cassiar Highway through the centre of BC. A side-trip to the Stewart, BC-Hyder, Alaska area proved very interesting. We observed grizzly bears fishing for salmon in a stream. It was spawning time so the stream was full of

dead and dying salmon. Quite a smell too! In this area we viewed the continent's 5th largest glacier, the Salmon Glacier, a picture of which recently appeared in the *Canadian Geographic Journal*. From this area we continued north to meet the Alaska Highway just west of Watson Lake, then swung west towards Whitehorse, Yukon. This town did not impress me much when we first arrived but going through it again a week or so later, it felt quite familiar and welcoming. We visited Sam McGee's cabin here. From Whitehorse, we continued in a northerly direction towards Dawson City where we spent two days here exploring the sights. The library here is part of the school. It was not open during the time we were there.



Dawson City, Yukon, Library

I spent a pleasant hour and a half listening to Thomas Byrne tell the life-story of Robert Service and recite some of his poetry. Just across the road from the Service cabin is Pierre Berton's birthplace. It is a private residence now where the current writer-in-residence lives. Down the road a piece, is Jack London's cabin. We visited the gold fields and toured an old dredge that Parks Canada is resurrecting.

From Dawson City we headed north over the Top of the World Highway towards Alaska. The name is justified as we literally travelled the top of the mountain ridge. The Canadian portion of the road was hard-topped but after crossing the border into Alaska at Border Junction the road became much more difficult. It is certainly not for the faint of heart. I'm glad we were not pulling anything bigger than our 24-foot model. After a break for coffee and pie at Chicken, Alaska, population 10, we finally arrived in Tok

where we spent the night.

At Tok, we left the Alaska Highway headed towards Anchorage. We did not stop there, however, but continued on to Seward, in the Kenai Peninsula on Prince William Sound. Here we visited a brand new marine research facility built largely with money received after the Exxon Valdez disaster. At the local library, we viewed a film about the earthquake that hit Alaska on Good Friday in 1963. While waiting for the program to start, I chatted with the circulation assistant about their efforts to automate. She half jokingly offered me a job. Their chief librarian had just resigned — the third in as many years! At Seward we also visited one of the few glaciers that are accessible on foot, the Exit Glacier.

Leaving Seward behind with a fresh fall of snow up in the mountains, we headed up towards Denali National Park. At Anchorage, overlooking Cook Inlet, we could see Mount McKinley far off in the distance. Of course, by the time we got there the next day it was covered in cloud. Since both of us have visited Denali before (and not seen anything more than a moose) we decided to forgo a visit to the Park and continue on to Fairbanks.

The weather in Fairbanks was wet and cloudy and had been for about a week. We debated about booking a tour to the Arctic Circle. It consisted of a one hour flight in a Navajo (6 passengers) north to a pumping station on the Alyeska Pipeline just inside the 66th parallel, then a bus trip back down the Dalton Highway to Fairbanks (220 miles or so). (The Dalton Hwy runs 799 miles from Prudhoe Bay on the Beaufort Sea to Valdez on Prince William Sound.) In the end, we decided to go for it and the next day dawned sunny and warm. In all, it was a 14-hour day, but well worth it. Our tour guide was very well informed about the pipeline (construction and operation), wildlife, native population, history, tundra, vegetation, etc., etc. and brought it alive for us.

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We made several stops along the way, the main one of course at the Arctic Circle where he rolled out a piece of red carpet with a yellow dotted line on it representing the 66th parallel and we all stepped across it just to say we had walked across the Arctic Circle. (Folklore, or maybe just the tour operators!, tells us that anyone who steps across the Circle becomes five years younger. Needless to say, I jumped across it several times and came home only ten years old!). We had the opportunity to walk out onto the tundra to experience the sponginess of it and to see the vegetation up close. It was very beautiful and colourful at that time of year. We had a stop for supper at the Yukon River where they took us out onto the river in a powerful launch and fed us cold cuts (billed as a dinner cruise on the Yukon River!). There are only three bridges spanning the Yukon in all its miles and this was one of them (we also crossed the other two in the course of our trip.) We stopped at a couple of places where the pipeline is built above ground and were able to walk right up to it and under it and marvel at the engineering involved. It was after dark before we arrived at Joy, Alaska, population about three, where the shop keeper stays open until the last tour bus has left. Upon coming back out to the bus, the Northern Lights were in full display. Quite a thrill! The day had been absolutely beautiful with sunshine and not a cloud in the sky. Next day was cold and cloudy again.

From Fairbanks, we headed back east down the Alaska Highway towards Tok to complete a circle. From Tok we continued south-easterly to cross back into Canada at Beaver Creek and on back to Whitehorse. This time we stayed a couple of nights in Whitehorse. It was from here that we took a side trip (*sans* trailer) down to Skagway, Alaska over the Chilkoot Pass. This time we were not so lucky with the weather. It was over-cast and rainy and as a result, at the summit of the Pass, visibility was almost zero. Needless to say, we couldn't see much of the mountains. We did however have lunch in Skagway and

explored the town a bit. There were three cruise ships in port that day so that meant 3,000 extra people in a town of about 1,000. With the intermittent rain and cool, stiff breezes, we did not linger too long. We did find the library but it was closed. Back over the Summit we found the fog had lifted somewhat and we could get a feeling for what the gold miners must have endured 100 years ago.

From Whitehorse, it was east towards Watson Lake, the town of 10,000 sign posts! I'm not sure how many there really are, but signs are being added at the rate of 2,000 a year. The tradition was started back in the '40's by a homesick soldier who was stationed there during the building of the Alaska Highway. He put up a signpost pointing towards his home town. After a brief visit to the Visitors' centre, where we watched a very interesting film on the building of the Alaska Highway we continued on our way towards Dawson Creek, BC. Dawson Creek is the official Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway.

From Dawson Creek, one quickly becomes aware that the terrain has changed. Travellers are now in the Peace River country, the most recent part of the country to be homesteaded. It is beautiful farmland, much like the prairies, but not as vast. At Grimshaw, AB, near the town of Peace River, we once again left the trailer in a campground and set out for a side trip; this time to Yellowknife, NWT (1,000 km away). Much of the way is through forest and farmland. Once across the Mackenzie River by ferry (more like a barge) the terrain changes to rock and water. We travelled through a bison sanctuary where one had to be on the watch for bison on the highway. We saw at least 30 of the beasts grazing along the side of the highway. The last 100 km into Yellowknife is gravel and on a wet day can be very messy. Fortunately, when we drove up, it had not rained much for at least 24 hours, so it was not too muddy. It was quite rough though. Once in Yellowknife, we found a place to stay (very expensive) and explored the town. From the top of a high rock one can get a

360 degree view of the city. The new museum/cultural centre is very interesting and the legislative building is unique. It is built of glass and stone (concrete?) and resembles an igloo (somewhat).

On the way back down to Grimshaw, we stopped at Hay River on the shores of Great Slave Lake. I have never seen such an expanse of sand beach with not a soul on it. Hay River itself is a small town and smack in the middle of town is a towering apartment building. Even the trees up there are not as high as one-storey house. It looked quite incongruous.

We picked up the trailer and continued through the Peace River country towards Edmonton. We had intended to stay in that area for a night but decided to push on to my daughter's in Brooks, about five hours away. It was familiar territory for us and by this time we were anxious to be on our way home. At this point, we would have both gladly gone straight home but Doug's sister-in-law was expecting us in Swan River, MB. To get there, we went north-east from Regina through the Qu'Appelle Valley where the Riel Rebellions took place.

In Swan River we were taken to visit a facility that collects and ships the urine from pregnant mares. It is used to manufacture birth-control pills. The barn accommodates 419 mares. It was empty at the time of our visit because the horses were all out in the pasture. They were due to be brought into the barn for the winter in a few weeks time. After a few days in Swan River, we were happy to head east once again. We stopped briefly in Winnipeg and Dryden to visit relatives but were anxious to get home. We arrived home five days short of two months. We saw a lot of interesting places and people; did some things we had only dreamed of doing.

In the end there is no place like home. For the time being we will be content to stay home.

Janet Scheibler,
December 1998

This is the text of the e-mail sent to the regional directors and Gislaine Janveaux following the December 1998 meeting by our regional director, Pat Henry:

At Huronia's regular meeting last night, which was very well attended with only one member not in attendance, there was a lengthy and very intense discussion about the PR campaign funding initiative.

As a result of this discussion the Huronia members vote a resounding NO to the cost of the display and also NO to spending \$500 to create a letter directed to employers.

I have been asked by our members to communicate to the board members and executive why we made these decisions.

First of all, why should we pay an outsider to research us and draft a letter describing us for employers and potential employers to read. Within our organization (which WE do not have to research) surely there is the expertise to compose such a letter - either the PR Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Board of Directors or some one else in-house in conjunction with the Board. Money can then be spent on producing a professional looking document and the mailing costs. Why pay someone to research us and draft a letter - especially for \$500 - we would still bear the production and postage costs! However, on a larger scale, the members questioned how successful this initiative would be. It has been done before with brochures and the information sheet. Does anyone have accurate statistics showing how successful the last employer mail out campaign was? Is it worth the cost? Please consider this carefully. It was felt that employers who already employ technicians know us and our

skills already and potential employers for the most part also know about what we can do and probably want us but have neither the positions or the funding to hire us. Just look at the cut backs in the public libraries, government and school environments. Face it - the job market for technicians is NOT growing and we will be lucky if it at least remains static and does not decline (I personally am not overly optimistic that this will not happen) As for the display - again a resounding no. It is very expensive to design and then build and do we really want to pay some one \$650 to research who can build it for us for \$1000 - - read \$1600 total for this portion alone. It was also felt that this display, although maybe nice to have, would have limited use at maybe 3 conferences per year and this use did not justify the total cost. Some costs, we feel, are still hidden and would not show up until we were well into the project.

Looking at the big picture, our members felt that if the organization wants to go forward with a PR initiative, that initiative should focus on the members and should come from within. Items such as how do we attract new members, how do we keep the members we have and how do we attract past members back into the fold. What can we as BRANCHES and a PROVINCIAL organization give these people that they would want - - want enough to belong to our organization. This is where our focus must lie! If we can strengthen from within - then we will shine and be strong without. An example of our poor image and declining membership was illustrated to us last night during our discussion. A local public library in our region employs 7 Library Technicians - only 2 of which are

members of OALT. The others, if they belong to any professional organization, belong to OLA as they perceive that organization to give them "more bang for their buck" -- i.e. larger, more diversified conferences, a wider scope of interests and contacts and political lobbying power. The remaining 5 LTs have no desire to join OALT because we can do nothing for them -- sad but true -- this is their perception and we are sure it can be found throughout the province.

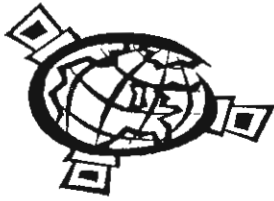
What can we do to change this? This is where we must put our dollars and develop a PR campaign focused on the members and the members desires and needs.

Your comments would be welcome by the Huronia members. Please email them directly or email me and I will forward all comments on to our members.

Pat Henry

Revised information from Gislaine

I apologize for confusing everyone. These are the figures: \$1350 for the display, \$500 for the letter, \$600-1000 for the materials for the display, and an unknown amount for translation. No more than \$500 though, as per quote from Paul Nicholls. Total: \$2651.50 including GST, but not including translation. (allowing \$600 for materials) Please send your votes to me with a copy for Nanci. Again, my apologies, all the confusion was brought about by me. Gislaine Janveaux, PR Co-ordinator, Ontario Association of Library Technicians



Internet connections

It never ceases to amaze me what you can find on the World Wide Web. Yes there is a lot of junk but there is lot of exciting and informative sites to be found. Please don't forget to share some of your favourite sites with your fellow members. The first group I want to mention are home related. If you are a regular viewer of *HGTV Canada* you will have discovered that many programmes now have websites. If you want entertaining ideas *Savoir-faire* is both the show and site to check out at <http://www.savoirfaire.ca/home/home.html>. Whether you are planning on renovating your kitchen or bathroom or just looking for a few ideas on how to spruce things up, the following sites are a few examples of what is available. Most manufactures of products are creating websites not only to show off their wares but to give helpful advice. Check these out: <http://www.kitchensandbathrooms.com/> (HGTV television programme), <http://www.kitchenman.com/>, <http://www.kitchen-bath.com/fixins/>, <http://www.nkba.org/consumer.html> (Consumer advice from the National Kitchen and Bath Association), and <http://www.terrylove.com/index.htm> (plumbing questions). At www.homefurnish.com you will find furniture, decorating and interior space planning ideas. Suggestions are given how to create the feel you want for your room. On a different topic, check out this science site that is part of the Toronto Public Libraries website. The presentation is so appealing and as it grows the site will be so useful for young and old alike who have an interest in science <http://sciencenet.tpl.toronto.on.ca/>.

Conferences

Perspectives '99

Have you marked May 13 to 16, 1999 on your calendars *and* asked for these days off work? Since Huronia members are so concerned about the future direction of OALT/ABO, it is important to have a good showing at this upcoming conference. Perspectives '99 will be held at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel in Sudbury. Check the last *Newsletter/Nouvelles* for more details.

LTIG and OALT/ABO to Co-host breakfast at CLA Conference in Toronto, June 19, 1999.

The Library Technicians' Interest Group of CLA, and the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des Bibliotechniciens de l'Ontario are joining together to co-host a breakfast at the Canadian Library Association's annual conference in Toronto, on June 19, 1999. All members attending the breakfast, will be invited to stay for the session immediately following: **Tips for the New Supervisor — Step into the Management Ladder in Style**. The speaker is Dr. Ganga Dakshinamurti, University of Manitoba Library.

Your boss is away, so you're supervising the weekend volunteers; or, you've been promoted, and former deskmates now report to you; or, your organization is flattening, and you find you're in charge of support staff who don't work in the library. There are many ways you can become a first-time supervisor, but like life's other "firsts", such opportunities can be scary!. The speaker, who has been a manger of library technicians, and has herself survived many "firsts" will give us tips on getting it right — the first time!

The first 25 registrants will have their breakfast paid for. Stay tuned for further information and costs.
Pennie Lee, Ex-officio OALT/ABO (416) 325-1204 leep@gov.on.ca