

October 1981

After a quiet summer, OALT/ABO in Sudbury is anxious to greet the fall with this special issue and a general meeting in October. (Mark your calendar--plan to attend!)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Executive Meeting: On August 30, 1981, the Sudbury executive met to set dates for upcoming events and to discuss the topics which were on the agenda for the October 3 board of directors meeting in Toronto. Here are some of the items covered:

1. Recommendations made by the members of the executive regarding what the funding committee at the provincial level should be investigating and for what purposes they should be gathering their resources, were noted by the president.
2. The membership packages were to be compiled by Sept. 15. This has been accomplished and appointments for the drive will be made with libraries in the region in order to meet with prospective members. We would like to visit technicians at the S.P.L., NCRLS, Sudbury Board and Cambrian College in early October.
3. Judy Laplante has made a list of industries, businesses, etc. with 300 or more employees within the region served by our branch, to submit to the provincial executive. To reiterate the purpose of this search, OALT is undertaking a job survey to explore new areas where library technicians might find employment.
4. Our fall meeting will take place at the North Central Regional Library on October 14 at 7:30 p.m. Vicki Skelton will demonstrate the use of their computer terminal

to obtain cataloguing information from UTLAS. A film entitled "The Chips Are Down" will follow and refreshments will be served.

5. A Saturday workshop which was to take place in October, has been rescheduled for the spring. If you wish to help organize this activity or wish to contribute ideas, please contact me.

Monique Fuchs

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I will be attending the OALT/ABO Board of Directors' meeting scheduled for October 3, at the Northern Library in Toronto. Anyone wishing to become familiar with our provincial organization may attend these meetings. Accommodations can be arranged for you.

Monique Fuchs

A TRIBUTE TO EMPLOYERS

by Colleen Weaver

This past summer I had the unpleasant experience of being unemployed. I had just graduated from college as a library technician and there were no job prospects in sight.

I had already sent out applications to all the obvious places, and was walking the streets every day looking for a job. After a number of weeks, I was reaching the depths of depression thinking that I would never find myself a job, much less a career. Then, one day when I was at home thinking all was lost, the phone rang. It was the Ministry of Education wondering if I wanted a job for the summer. Of course I jumped at the opportunity and was with them for the next three months. Once I started working, I discovered that two of my classmates were also employed by the Ministry for the summer.

What all this is leading up to is that I want to thank the Ministry for helping

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A TRIBUTE cont.

me and my classmates get a start in our careers. I found it to be a great experience and a wonderful opportunity.

So here's to the Ministry of Education, and other institutions like it who helped any library technician begin a career. Thank you, it was much appreciated!

(Colleen Weaver is a 1981 graduate of Cambrian College)

TECHNICIANS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM by Dick Jones

The North Central Regional Library System has employed library technicians almost since the first of them graduated from the community colleges and, with the odd exception, has found them to be a valuable addition to the ranks of library workers. At the time of writing, technicians are employed in the cataloguing, books by mail, inter-library loans and A/V departments. The technicians in the cataloguing department are responsible for the great bulk of cataloguing, not only of North Central's own acquisitions, but also for libraries like Sault Ste Marie, Timmins and Valley East. We catalogue materials for eleven libraries in northeastern Ontario using an automated system supplied by University of Toronto Library Automation Systems. With this system our technicians can catalogue up to 10,000 titles a year. We feel that with the ever-increasing use of automated data bases which supply catalogue data for as much as 90 per cent of material, cataloguing becomes much less of an "art form" and more a production line technique, which should enable libraries to use fewer librarians and more technicians in technical service departments.

A/V has always been a prime area for technician use and this seems to be emphasized in the colleges. We do not in fact have a large A/V department but such service as there is has been developed almost entirely single-handedly by our part-time A/V technician. She was transferred from cataloguing two years ago and, by establishing proper rotating schedules around our many small libraries for video equipment and carrying out an aggressive publicity drive, has enormously increased use of our videotape collection.

Our mailbox library and inter-library loans service both have technicians as section

heads and in both cases they work with minimal supervision.

There is no question that we have been generally well pleased with the performance of library technicians over the years since they first graduated from the community colleges. This is not to say that we have been uniformly pleased. At times in the past the technician program at Cambrian has left much to be desired and we have found big gaps in knowledge of basic library skills. We have always felt that attitude toward the job is as, or even more, important than a diploma and believe that the college should show greater selectivity in choosing students. While we do not expect library technicians to be immersed in Kafka or to eschew rock music for grand opera, we do feel that students should have good language skills and show some interest in the aims of a library service, which are to acquire, organize, exploit and circulate books, films, records and so on.

North Central presently employs 4 2/3 permanent and one temporary technicians and we can think of projects which would employ three or four more. Unfortunately we are not likely to have the money available to develop these programs. Frankly, the chances of our being able to increase our establishment in the near future are remote and so as far as the local job market goes we will only hire when we need a replacement. It is unwise to speak for other people but as far as we know other local library employers are in the same position.

From this point of view it is perhaps as well that the Cambrian library technician program has folded as it is unfair to train people in techniques for which there is no demand. However, Sudbury is not the world and we understand that most students who graduated with good marks and are willing to relocate are able to find jobs in libraries. We have been told that there are a number of Ontario library technician graduates in Alberta. We would like to see the Cambrian program continue but only if we were convinced that the Cambrian administration were prepared to take library service seriously. The college library does not seem to occupy the position it should in the life of the campus, and without a well-organized library using the most up-to-date techniques to lean on, we do not believe that a library technician program can be successful.

(Dick Jones is Director of North Central Regional Library)

SUDBURY'S TOY LIBRARY/PLAY CENTRE

by Marie St. Pierre

The Sudbury Association for the Mentally Retarded boasts a toy library/play centre which has benefitted its members for the past three to four years.

The idea of a toy library in Sudbury was introduced by Dr. Colin Pryor who was working with children with special needs. He was familiar with toy libraries in England and he became interested in establishing such a program for Sudbury.

The institution of the library was only the beginning. Two students from the Cambrian College Library Technician Program worked as volunteers to help set up a cataloguing system and a circulation department for the library.

Toys are shelved following a color code. This color code is also found in the card catalogue and on the circulation card which accompanies each toy. The catalogue is arranged alphabetically by the name of the toy and also contains cross references. There have been some modifications to the original system and there will probably be more as the library grows and changes.

The staff meets regularly to discuss and choose new acquisitions. They depend on the recommendations of the Canadian Toy Testing Council, and also accept donations from individuals. Up until now, the library has been funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Apparently there are to be some changes in this area in the future.

Although the toy library is part of the Association for the Mentally Retarded, it serves a wide range of patrons. Children who are physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped, as well as "normal" children and their parents are helped. In fact, 60 per cent of the library's users are children with no special problems.

There is a limit of 100 member families who use the library on a regular basis. This limit has been established to prevent over-loading of the facilities since the collection is a small one. Membership is also restricted to those under 9 years of age, since it is felt that older children's interests are not compatible with those of youngsters using the library. Participating families pay a semi-annual fee of \$5.00. At \$10.00 a year, this is

an inexpensive way to keep your child regularly supplied with new toys.

Needless to say, the waiting list is long. Exceptions are made for special cases, e.g. children who are judged to be at "risk", i.e. mentally retarded, physically disabled, developmentally delayed; single-parent families; families suffering from financial hardships and children who have been referred by an interested agency.

Toys are loaned two per child, for a period of two weeks. There is a late file and parents are contacted when a toy is overdue. A fine system is in the offing to discourage delinquency in this area, although it has not been a great problem so far. Toys are also put on hold for special requests.

The lending is only one part of the program. There are workshops for parents to help them with activities such as singing, storytelling, investigating science in the backyard, etc. (It was mentioned to me that the skills of a library technician might be helpful during one of these workshops). There are also plans for excursions in the future.

For parents who are on the waiting list, there is an information service available. This is especially useful to young parents who want advice on toys recommended for children at various stages of development. Parents can profit from the knowledge and experience of the staff of four as well. This group includes the program director, Lois Mahon, whose main responsibilities include administration, evaluation, budgeting and supervising staff; as well as three play advisors. The qualifications for this latter position are mainly an understanding and awareness of the needs of children and their parents. Some experience in the field of social work is advantageous.

The library housing the material is very small. Parents and children make their choices and take the toys home or into an adjoining playroom where there is a two-way observation mirror and sound system to assist parents and play advisors. This room is large, with one full wall of windows to let in the light, making it a cheerful place to be. A "jungle gym" and assorted toys are also available here for play therapy. A few children's books complete the area, but parents are generally encouraged to make use of the juvenile collection at Sudbury Public Library.

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SUDBURY'S TOY LIBRARY cont.

The program goals, as quoted from one of the toy library's publications are:

1. To promote positive play interaction between children with, and those without special needs, to facilitate reciprocal learning.
2. To facilitate communication between parents and their children, and between parents.
3. To assist each child to develop his or her abilities to the fullest.
4. To assist parents in recognizing both the strengths and weaknesses of their child.
5. To promote effective parenting.

It is unfortunate that there are so many other children unable to profit from such a program, simply because additional facilities are not available. Maybe the SPL could help by supporting or setting up a program. After all, play is children's work and toys are their tools, the tools by which they learn to express themselves. In this respect, toy libraries provide a necessary community service.

There is one other toy library emerging in this district. In the community of Mindemoya, Edith Garrett has been instrumental in introducing the concept, in cooperation with the Sudbury Sanitorium and the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

My thanks to Lois Mahon for giving me an opportunity to learn about the important and valuable service provided by the only toy library/play centre in Sudbury.

(Marie St. Pierre works at the Ministry of Education Film Library in Sudbury)

providing shady lanes and parks to make the walking pleasant in the summer's heat and high humidity--and to think that all this is available only two hours drive away from New York City, that thriving metropolis of culture, shopping, entertainment, and quality restaurants.

A real sense of history is all around the New England area, from the Boston Post Road which makes one think of Paul Revere, to the ancient farmhouses and buildings of Yale itself. You are reliving those times, for it is impossible to be in the area without American history inundating you. A couple of hours spent in the Peabody Museum of Natural History or the Museum of British Art is just part of the experience--a very natural pastime. The beauty is breathtaking, the culture awesome.

University courses themselves don't really appear to vary from one place to the next. If you had to work hard to get good marks in high school, you'll have to work hard at university. If you found your literature courses at Laurentian a breeze, then Yale will probably strike you the same way. But the other aspects of studying at a foreign university, taking in another country's loves and experiences, involving oneself in opportunities that may never reach Sudbury, or that we are all too busy to enjoy when living at home--these are what make taking courses elsewhere appealing. These are the true benefits of studying at a place like Yale.

(Bette Heard is employed by the Sudbury Board of Education and had the opportunity to study at Yale University for the summer)

YALE UNIVERSITY--JUST FOR PRESTIGE?
by Bette Heard

Yale University is a beautiful campus spread throughout downtown New Haven, Connecticut. Stores, restaurants, bars, banks, movie theatres--generally anything one could possibly need, are all within easy walking distance, sometimes right next door or across the street. The older buildings have English ivy climbing the outside walls and creeping along the ground. Sidewalks are shale slabs, not cement. Trees grow all over the grounds,

**Library technician program
steps up recruitment**

Niagara College will increase recruitment efforts in an attempt to curb the decline in enrolment in its library technician program. A new brochure will be distributed to high schools nation-wide and active recruitment will take place in the Hamilton area where no full-time library technician course is offered.

from: Focus (March-April '81)

CHILDREN'S CHOICES

by Linda Davis

Two new titles by the award-winning Quebec author, Ginette Anfousse, have recently arrived on the scene. Le savon and L'hiver le bonhomme sept heures (La courte échelle) present further episodes in the life of Jiji and her "honest-to-goodness-baby-aardvark-who-really-eats-ants", named Pichou.

Following the same format as previous books, the latest stories are told in a lively manner, accompanied by large, colorful illustrations. The situations described are familiar to children--feelings about a mother's emphasis on bath time after daily play, and concern about the imaginary man who mysteriously appears each winter night at 7 o'clock to see if all children are asleep. Throughout, a wide-eyed and lovable Pichou offers comfort and companionship to Jiji.

The four earlier titles are also available in English. It is hoped that these two recent ones will soon be translated as well. Suitable for reading aloud to pre-schoolers, these books will also be enjoyed by beginning readers who will find them entertaining and true-to-life.

A bargain at \$3.95 each, these books make wonderful gifts. Public and school libraries should make them preferred acquisitions--they're certain to be popular.

Written & Illustrated by Ginette Anfousse:

French

- La cachette, 2e édition, 1978.
 - La chicane, 1978.
 - L'hiver ou le bonhomme sept heures, 1980.
 - Mon ami Pichou, 3e édition, 1979.
 - Le savon, 1980.
 - La varicelle, 2e édition, 1979.
- (All published by La courte échelle)

English

- Chicken Pox, 1978.
- The Fight, 1978.
- Hide-and-Seek, 1976.
- My Friend Pichou, 1978.

(All translated by Mayer Romaner and published by NC Press)

(Linda Davis works for the Ministry of Education Library in Sudbury)

DID YOU KNOW?

...that Donald Krueger's paper entitled "Microcomputers in Libraries: Issues and Applications" will appear in the October

DID YOU KNOW? CONT.

issue of Canadian Library Journal. This paper was presented on June 15th at the CIA conference in Hamilton.

...one of the editors of AACR2, Michael Gorman, has written a more accessible and descriptive guide to the original work, entitled The Concise AACR2 (Chicago: ALA, 1981, 164 p.):

...the North Bay Psychiatric Hospital has a professional library of approximately 4,000 book and 100 periodical titles.

CAMBRIAN CLAIMS NO JOBS FOR TECHS--CANCELS PROGRAM by Monique Fuchs

In May 1981, the last of the library technicians graduated from the program offered since 1969 at Cambrian College. The elimination of the Library Technician Program became imminent in September of 1980, when new registrations were not accepted for students wishing to enter first year. It was in March that Cambrian College ultimately decided to dissolve the only program of its kind between Ottawa and Thunder Bay.

"What happened?!" is the question which is troubling most of the veterans of the program and the Ontario Association of Library Technicians. We are aware that the Library Technician program had known some problems in the past but never anything which would lead to its abolition.

The conclusive decision came from the President, who was advised by Dean Terry Blundell, and Sylvia Thornburg, the Chairman of the program. In February, the Library Technician Advisory Committee met with Sylvia Thornburg to discuss the major influences weighing against the program and the factors which might have favoured its continuation. It seems the negative factors painted a much clearer picture in the eyes of the Cambrian administration, especially during such times of budget constraints and accountability.

The primary reason for discontinuation of the program, according to Sylvia Thornburg, is the poor placement statistics which were recorded for this year's graduates (for the period April to September). Only 1 of 11 graduates had full-time employment. Although, in 1980, 8 of 11 graduates found jobs. These numbers seem to indicate that Cambrian was running behind the provincial records for placement.

The second element which opposed the resumption of the program, says Sylvia, was the feeling of the Advisory Committee that new employment
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CAMBRIAN CLAIMS NO JOBS cont.

opportunities for library technicians in Sudbury were almost nil. Some members even suggested that any positions which might be vacated would not be filled because of budget cuts.

To add to these circumstances, both faculty members, Vicki Skelton, who is now employed by the North Central Regional Library System, and Adolphe Amadi, a five year veteran on staff, resigned. If the program had been strong and had the college not been in a budget crunch, Sylvia felt that she might have justified continuing the program.

The last factor which convinced the administration to cancel the program was the decline in enrolment. In February, 19 applicants wished to enroll in the program for 1982.

The suggestion made by the Advisory Committee to improve the program's predicament included curriculum revisions geared to new job markets, "increased efforts to sell the program to potential students and employers" and support by the college to adequately staff and promote the program. The Sudbury Branch of OALT/ABO submitted a brief which included recommendations to alter the present program but received no response from Cambrian's administrators. When asked about the submission, the Chairman replied that she vaguely remembered it and assumed Betty Heard would report to OALT/ABO as our representative. Unfortunately, although Betty is a member of OALT/ABO, she does not act on the Advisory Committee as a representative of our association.

Since the program did not appear viable nor cost-effective, the Cambrian administration could not grant a commitment to restaff. When asked why the staff turnover has been so high in the Library Technician Program, Sylvia Thornburg replied, "Teachers are difficult to attract to the north," and, "Professionals are accustomed to facilities and entertainment that Sudbury has not been able to provide."

To reinstate the Library Technician course, Sylvia believes that there would have to be additional and ongoing employment opportunities. She also volunteered the comment that the College will consider the request by library technicians in the field for extension

(evening) courses to broaden or improve their knowledge.

It is felt by some technicians that their credibility will be questioned now that the program has been discontinued. Sylvia's response to this statement is that this was not true and she would regret such an attitude by the graduates of the College.

As a personal comment, Sylvia Thornburg feels that Cambrian is being criticized for cancelling the program and that it is not warranted. The basis for the termination of the Library Technician Program was made for the well-being of students.

(Monique Fuchs is a library technician with the Ministry of Education. She interviewed Sylvia Thornburg at Cambrian College.)

Readers' comments are welcome and may be addressed to APROPOS, Box 2351, Sudbury, P3A 4S8.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Eleanor Clarke has moved to Morden, Manitoba, where she is working in a high school library.

Yollande Laurin, a 1981 graduate of Cambrian College, has accepted a position with Toronto Public Library in the cataloguing department.

Joanne O'Connor, a new member, is now working in the Ministry of Education Film Library in Sudbury.

North Central Regional Library System has become a member of our local branch of OALT/ABO.

ANNOUNCING...

Reserve Wednesday, October 14th to meet with other OALT/ABO members. Our get-together will be held at North Central Regional Library, 334 Regent St. S., beginning at 7:30 p.m. An interesting evening is planned—Vicki Skelton will provide us with a look at the computerized cataloguing system employed by North Central. Also on the topic, a film, The Chips Are Down will be presented.

Join us on October 14th and bring your co-workers along!

Our next newsletter is scheduled for January/February. Articles of any length and subject matter are welcome and needed! For further information, contact Monique Fuchs or Linda Davis at 675-4428 or 1-800-461-0183 (within area code 705).
