

TECH TALK

Volume 25, No 5. March 1998



President's Message!

Another year has come and gone and **OALT/ABO Thunder Bay Region** has provided its membership with monthly workshops of varied interests. It is always a challenge to find new and different ideas and I think our Executive has done a wonderful job.

I would like to thank all the *Executive members* for their hard work and dedication. You have made my job easier and provided great opportunities for our membership.

Our *Annual Dinner and Business Meeting* will be held *Thursday, March 26, 1998* at the Faculty Lounge at Lakehead University. This is our last meeting of the year and is our 25th Anniversary Celebration. Please make every effort to attend this event. A big thank you goes out to the *25th Anniversary Committee: Karen Cocks, Helen Heerema, Kathy Crewdson, Kathy Walkinshaw and Ella Uremovich* who have worked very hard to make this evening a success. Thanks so much.!!!

Elections will take place at this meeting for Executive positions and the nominating committee has ensured a full slate.

Thank you to everyone for making my two years as President most enjoyable. I have learned so much and met so many great people.

I leave this position in most capable hands and I know the future of OALT/ABO Thunder Bay Region is secure.

Carol Young

Provincial Report



OALT/ABO Board of Directors and Executive Meeting

*(North York Memorial Hall)
Saturday February 21, 1998*

Mary Beth Kupferschmidt of Vision PR gave an update of her activities concerning the PR campaign. She has been working closely with Lohania as they are hosting the Annual Conference this year.

Halton Peel donated \$200.00 and *TALTA* donated \$3000.00 to OALT/ABO to help offset the costs related to the public relations campaign.

Pam Casey has agreed to chair the PR committee until a new chairperson is elected at the annual conference. She will set up a teleconference with the PR committee.

Fulcrum '98 will be held in London, May 21-24, 1998. Conference packages will be sent out to all members shortly.

The Internet committee held a teleconference and has made a number of recommendations to the executive. Major updates to our website will be done on a quarterly basis and minor updates will be completed on a monthly basis. Because of the cost and time lag of having French translations, it was recommended that minor updates be posted in the language of submission while major updates and official business continue to be translated. A portion of the OALT/ABO newsletter will be added to the website. *The President's Message* and the *Table of Contents* will be featured. The website will be utilized as a communication medium in conjunction with the *25th Anniversary/PR Campaign*. There will be a *25th Anniversary link* outlining special events, regional achievements, archival materials and an overview of library technicians in the past, present and future.

Sudbury will host the 1999 conference and *Ottawa* will host the 2000 conference.

Nominations are open for executive positions in OALT/ABO. Anyone who would like to serve on the provincial executive, please let me know.

The next meeting will be held April 4th, 1998.

Submitted by:
Valerie Barten
Regional Director

Report on the 1998 Provincial Conference -- Fulcrum '98

London, Ontario will be the site of the *25th Annual Conference of the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des Bibliotechniciens de l'Ontario* and this promises to be OALT/ABO's most memorable gathering ever! From *Thursday, May 21 through Sunday, May 24* at *Spencer Hall Conference Centre*, many excellent programs will address this year's Conference theme "*Fulcrum '98*".

In its simplest meaning, "*Fulcrum*" refers to a *turning point* or *pivotal point of support*. In today's working environment, Library Technicians face a turning point working in both non-traditional libraries and performing non-traditional roles. At *Fulcrum '98* participants will reflect on today's Library Technician, the role of our Association and the fact that we are currently at a pivotal point in our chosen field.

Fulcrum '98 opens with exhibitors from various disciplines appealing to all backgrounds of library personnel. Immediately following this on Thursday afternoon, participants are invited to join in *celebrating the wonderful achievements of OALT/ABO* at a *special reception* -- a time not to be missed! This *Conference* will provide no shortage of opportunities to hear outstanding speakers, attend an exciting array of workshops, relive a few memories at our *Anniversary Lunch* and *memorabilia displays*, plus keep informed on the developments in

DIGITAL ARCHIVING IN THUNDER BAY

by Linda Bukovy

On Thursday, February 12, 1998, I attended a seminar put on by the Northern Ontario Archivist's Association at the Thunder Bay Museum. It was called "In Thunder Bay of All Places: Digital Archiving: Lakehead University and Thunder Bay Public Library Initiatives". The speakers were *Alicia Colson* of Lakehead University Summer Institute of Advanced Studies (LUSIAS) and *Shawn Allaire*, the Thunder Bay Public Library Digitization Project Coordinator. *Alicia Colson* spoke first about the levels of data that researchers use in acquiring information i.e.: primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. She then showed a slide of a cliff by a lake, saying that this was a sample of a primary source. With a change-over of a slide, she produced a visual image of not only the rock face but a pictograph that had been barely visible in the original slide. No longer are archivists relying just on written manuscripts and photographs, microfilm and microfiche (all which with incorrect handling and storing are prone to damage and disintegration); with the technology available, the archivist can access minuscule details using computer enhancement as the slide of the pictograph had demonstrated. In addition, it is hoped that this technology will allow more people access to information with it being provided first in CD-ROM and then in Internet forms, thereby allowing the original materials to rest a little bit easier in a more secure state.

Many aspects are involved in bringing this technology to fruition e.g.: computer hardware, software design, scanners, CD-ROM, and Internet technology. One concern that came up is that in an archivists' world, things progress slowly and there is a future concern that the technology will become obsolete (an example of this would be the 8-track tape cassettes and tape decks that in the 1970s were part of a music lover's collection). Alicia acknowledged this, saying that the rate of change for the format is extremely fast; there is always new hardware coming along and it's always changing. Recopying costs of the media are inevitable and should be factored in, and it is hoped that having the scanning of the materials done at the highest resolution would help in providing the clearest, cleanest copy from which to work.

One thing that came to light was that *LUSIAS is putting on workshops* teaching the processes of this technology during May and July, 1998. The deadline to register for the **May session is March 31**, and for the **July session, April 30, 1998**. For more information, please contact Alicia at Lakehead University or by email at ajmcolson@lusias.org or <http://www.lusias.org>.

Shawn Allaire who is the Digitization Project Coordinator for the Thunder Bay Public Library related that this technology is considered an information management tool that is providing new options for access and manipulation of archival photographs.

The partners in this project are the Thunder Bay Public Library, Thunder Bay Historical Museum, Red Rock Public Library and Schreiber Public Library. It is hoped that this technology

will serve Thunder Bay and the outlying regions. It was begun in June 1997 with a grant from the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation. There are plans to develop a searchable database where people can access archival photographs of the region and it is hoped to be accessed through the Thunder Bay Public Library's web site.

There are many steps to translate this into a viable operation. A photograph is scanned into a computer (twice, once at a low resolution and again, at a high resolution), creating a database; this plus textual information is then "burnt" into a CD-ROM using a CD-ROM writer unit. With graphic image on the disc, it can be pulled up on the computer screen, enhanced and zoomed in to access information that had previously been hard to see. Shawn put an overhead up that was to show a photograph of a drawing by William Armstrong, an artist who documented many places in North Western Ontario. However, at 200 dpi (dots per inch), the picture looked like a bar graph. She then put up another overhead that showed the image as having been scanned at 400 dpi -- the picture of a church came up, and Shawn told us that you don't lose detail when you magnify from this setting, and the next overhead show us the clarity. The naked eye could hardly make out an open boat on the 400 dpi overhead. When this area was zoomed in on and enhanced, the resulting overhead revealed passengers sitting in the boat. As a matter of interest, scanning done at 600 dpi is currently considered the best for archival storage. To augment the picture, text is added to the page which gives descriptions i.e. people, signs, objects, location, date of photograph and the photographer (the text is published in **hypertext markup language (HTML)**

which makes it accessible for Internet users).

If this seems far too simple ... it is. Approximately six steps are followed:

- 1) **benchmarking** which includes noting the dimensions of document and the details; other document attributes, index formulas
- 2) **scanning & indexing** the materials which include capturing, formatting, compressing, authenticating the materials and establishing quality control
- 3) **file management** which include storage and back-up, scaling for access, and error detection and correction
- 4) **networking** which include establishing the file servers, protocols and authorization
- 5) **displaying** that will allow the compressed files to open into a format that can be easily accessed by a viewer
- 6) **printing**

So far, the four partners in this project have each contributed twenty-five black and white photos that have been taken prior to 1935; this is being done to avoid copyright issues. (Research is being done in the field of copyright law and the Internet.) In addition, it was hoped that text-based material such as newspapers could be scanned, but currently the technology requires that only pristine material be used (black ink on pure white paper), so this has to sit for awhile.

The time passed quickly by; this is a fascinating topic for those who are in the library and information fields, especially those in Northwestern Ontario where distances between towns make it harder for people to access archives to do research. Shawn ended her talk saying that there are constantly new things to learn and there is an incredible potential for research in this area.

OALT/ABO TRIVIAL PURSUIT!!

1. When was the first regional chapter of OALT/ABO formed?

In 1977

2. It wasn't called OALT/ABO way back then, but what was our Regional association called?

Lakehead Library Technician Association

3. What was the Provincial association called?

Canadian Library Technician Association

4. Where was the first OALT/ABO Conference held and what was it called?

It was in Toronto and was called Impact 1974

5. When was the first issue of TECH TALK published?

It was published in January 1985(vol. 10, no.3)

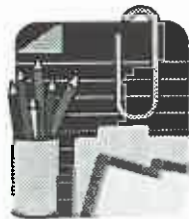
6. Who suggested the name TECH TALK ... and why?

President, Helen Heerema. "It may sound like a clock, but you know that Techs move with the times" (vol. 10, no.3)

7. How many Regional Branches were there in 1975? Name them.

There were 8. Hamilton, Lakehead, London, Ottawa, Sudbury, Northern Regional (Schreiber), Toronto, Niagara Halton-Peel was established in 1976 and Huronia in 1979.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ... Kathy Walkinshaw



The *Corporation of the City of Thunder Bay* is a leader in its approach to controlling records. CTB presently use an automated records management system to control active and inactive

records. *CARMA* or *Computer Assisted Records Management* came to the City in 1995 in the form of a software records management package called *GAIN*. The *GAIN Pilot Project* team was made up of staff from the departments of Transportation & Works, Archives, Social Services and Information Systems. I joined the CTB as a member of that team.

Automation of records management functions brings with it the capability for faster searches, a reduction of manual effort, instant updating of indexes and file information, and savings in the amount of office space and equipment tied up by records. Automation also benefits the Corporation by aiding us in meeting our *MFIPPA* (Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) obligations.

I am presently employed by the City of Thunder Bay, Transportation & Works Department as a *Temporary Records Management Analyst*. My first task in this position was to *develop a keyword list* and then enter information about the publications and reports held in the *Engineering Division Library* into the database so that engineering staff could search for materials held by call number, subject codes, keywords, author, publisher or words in the title.

The *second phase* of the project moved to the *textual records* held by the department. The *file plan*, or *intellectual framework* for the organization of department records, was then entered into a second database in *GAIN*. Records were structured into a logical and systematic arrangement or grouping of categories based upon a *scheme of natural relationships*. This process physically groups similar records together in the filing cabinets and makes the active records easier to access.

Active folder records were entered into the folder database and a *barcode label* was generated for each folder in the

department. The *barcoded folders* could then be tracked throughout their life cycle - from creation, to permanent storage. *GAIN* even tracks which shelf the box is placed on in the *Records Centre*. Boxes holding folder records at Archives are also barcoded and the box barcode and the folder barcode become linked.

Folder records have large extended description fields that can be used to maintain information about the contents of the folders -- for example subject headings, lists of claimants, location information etc. This allows very specific searches to be performed and is extremely useful for large collections of records that cover a broad range of topics.

Training materials had to be written to help new *GAIN* users become familiar with the software. A significant portion of my time was spent working with the *City's Records Analyst/Archivist, Jennifer Mohan*, developing instructional materials and user guides. We then provided hands on training for City staff in basic searching in the various databases, advanced searching and data entry skills. I presently spend several hours every week providing support for new *GAIN* users as they become familiar with the software and incorporate it into daily office practices.

I have also had the opportunity to assist with *System Administration* of the *GAIN* software. This has given me an opportunity to learn about developing and maintaining support tables of user codes and location codes. Periodically the databases require indexing and back ups are also required. When new versions of the *GAIN* software are made available I will bring up a test version of the database, load the update and test the new version to be sure there are no major problems. All system errors are tracked and reported back to *GAIN*.

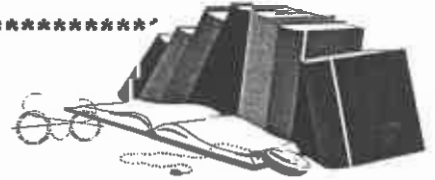
Some of my days at work are spent entirely at my work station - head to head

with my computer, entering new records into *GAIN* or puzzling over a new file plan. At other stages of the project I am at the front of a room providing training to staff from many different departments. Sometimes I find myself out at division offices gathering information about their record requirements. As *GAIN* moved through the many divisions of Transportation and Works I had the opportunity to meet new staff and learn new skills.

It has been exciting to watch *GAIN* improve efficiency in tracking active and inactive records. The software will contribute to the preservation of the corporate history of CTB.

In future I think we will see more and more teams which include archivists, information technicians, records managers and systems experts, working together on projects such as this.

BOOK TALK by Linda Bukovy



Great Dames. Edited by Elspeth Cameron and Janice Dickin. Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 1997. 340 p. : ill.

Great Dames is a collection of biographies of twentieth-century Canadian women written by Canadian women. At first glimpse of the title page, the reader automatically assumes that the book is about the elite women of the Upper/Lower Canada social structure, but this is far from the case. Among the biographies are *accounts of lives of Mennonite women*, an *Ojibwa ethnologist*, *women who had run afoul of the law* and the way that the law treated them in return, *settlers in British Columbia*, *the Prairies and Northwestern Ontario*, and *the owners of a publishing house devoted to*

the works of women of colour and minorities. Women of the sciences and arts are also included.

At the onset, the editors asked the contributors to write about a woman whom they had come in contact with, either through research or through their own personal and private lives, and that these people would *"not be obvious candidates for longer biographies."* The editors have written a strong introduction relating the many challenges there are in the writing of women's biographies such as lack of archival materials for many of these people. Since a woman's name would change through marriages, the researcher would often run into difficulties in collecting information, especially when consulting different sources. (One contributor listed all of her subject's names before the article began.) Another obstacle is that in researching, the researcher may find the subject referred to under the husband's name (Lady Frederick Banting) and/or linked to her husband's deeds.

The biographies are engrossing!

Alternative styles are used in the biographic approach: i.e. diaries, conversations, and chronological narrative. In one biography, the pseudonyms are used for the five subjects because of a promise of anonymity by the researcher to these women. Throughout the biographies there is *a strong sense of unity*. Biographies are linked together in common chapters i.e. *"Just the Facts?"*, *"Traditional Lives"*, and *"Breaking into Men's Professions"*.

Throughout the articles there are descriptions and explanations of the existing social - economic conditions that help the reader to understand the surrounding situations that faced and shaped the subject. There is a thread of continuity through these biographies in that all the women are

confronted with situations that they overcome with inner strength.

There are footnotes throughout the articles and each biography is followed by a bibliography (notes), citing oral and written sources. A list of the contributors/writers is included; the majority of them are from the academic world. An exhaustive index concludes the book.

After reading this book, *I feel that this book has made an important contribution towards the art of writing women's biographies*, and to paraphrase a popular cable television program, *"In every life, there is a story"*.

Editors Footnote: Linda Bukovy was the lucky recipient of our door prize from our January Meeting. A copy of **Great Dames**, being the prize, but ultimately, we as readers of this review have also become winners as Linda has interpreted the story line for us all in such an eloquent fashion. Thank you Linda!



Congratulations go out to Debbie Squier-Bernst who is now working at Fort William Collegiate as their new Library Technician.

Kathy Deguns has been hired as Sir John A. MacDonald's and Oliver Road School's Information Services Technician. Good luck in your new posting, Kathy.

A belated congratulations goes out to Jodie Cataldo who is in a temporary position at Algonquin and Prospect Schools. She too is in an IST role with the Lakehead Board of Education. She is filling in for Helen Hakula who is on a temporary leave until June.

Rumour has it that Carol Young and family ventured to Vail Colorado for their March Break vacation. Hope the skiing was great.

Valerie Barten on the other hand went to balmy Florida to soak up some sunshine while visiting her folks.

Gwen Gamble also headed toward a warmer destination (The Dominican Republic) this past week to get some well deserved R & R.

Margot Ponder traveled to Toronto for a change of scenery.

INTERNET ADDRESSES:

OALT/ABO Home Page:

<http://www.interlog.com/~oaltabo/home.htm>

Canadian Children's Book Centre:

<http://home.echo-on.net/~ccbc/>

Children's Book Publishers:

<http://www.scils.rutgers.edu/special/kay/publish.html>

COLT (Council of Library/Media Technicians):

<http://lib-www.ucr.edu/COLT/>

Canadian Job Source:

http://www.rus.rrl.uwo.ca/~jlaw/job_can.html



I can't believe that two years have already gone by!! Time sure flies by when you're having fun. Being newsletter editors for the past few years has been a real education and challenge for Tara and myself. There was so much to learn in a very short period of time. Deadlines, graphics selection, layout, writer's block ... the whole enchilada.

We have tried in all earnest to feature interesting, informative, enlightening as well as entertaining articles pertaining to our profession and hope we were successful.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this issue of TECH TALK (Linda Bukoy, Kathy Walkinshaw) as well as those who contributed to previous publications.. Without your input ... there would be no TECH TALK. Remember ... an editor is "a person who selects or commissions material for publication". (Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder p. 458.) We merely made sure your voices, opinions, and concerns, were heard throughout the region.

Tara and I would like to wish our future editor(s) lots of luck and continued success with TECH TALK.

*Sincerely,
Karen Cocks
Tara Wyght*

