

# *... In touch with* **TALTA**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TORONTO AREA LIBRARY TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATION - OALT/ABO, Toronto Region

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## *From the Editor*

Here we are again! A new membership year has begun. As has been the custom of the past, this first issue includes a retrospective look at the annual conference. I am pleased also to be able to share a letter I received from Sylvia Hall of Vaughan Public Library and a responding letter from Frances Davidson-Arnott. The exchange is interesting and well worth a look.

Our regular columns have been maintained. Grace Lofters has provided some job placement facts and Marina Ross provided a list of new TALTA members. The Statistics Canada column resumes with an article from our new liaison, Liz Lovis. (Some of you will remember Liz as the dynamic speaker in your Stats Canada workshop at Kaleidoscope.) We also have some continuing education opportunities listed and announcements on committee work.

In this issue, Kathryn Kern delivers her first message to members as our president. Kathryn will use this column to keep us up to date with TALTA plans and to be a continuing voice of encouragement through-out the year.

Enjoy this issue and remember to feel free to be "in touch".

Linda Yarema, Editor.

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Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Association of Library Technicians/Association des Bibliothéchniciens de l'Ontario

## *President's Message*

### **GET INVOLVED!**

When I arrived in Toronto to start a new job nearly four years ago, one of the first things I did was to look up my local professional association - TALTA. Very soon after, I became INVOLVED. Little did I know that that involvement would lead to the role of president. But my initial motivations for getting involved succeeded - I've gotten to know many interesting and dedicated people and I'm more aware of changes and trends in the field affecting career opportunities.

I encourage all of you to GET INVOLVED with TALTA. The benefits are many. You get to meet and to know new people which may lead to networking connections, job opportunities and good friendships. You develop new skills or strengthen existing skills which can be put on your resumé, (yes, even skills gained outside the workplace are marketable). You can make a difference in the direction your chosen profession is going. Since a large amount of your time will be spent or is being spent working as library technicians, don't you want a say in what a technician is and does?

In the upcoming months, you will have many opportunities to get involved. The time commitment will vary according to activity but it can be as little as a few hours. Whatever your choice, I encourage you to GET INVOLVED and reap the benefits.

Kathryn Kern, President

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### *✍ Letters to the Editor ✍*

I received an interesting letter from Sylvia J. Hall, Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan Public Libraries:

*Dear Ms. Yarema:*

*An article from the November 1988 issue of "In Touch with TALTA" has been brought to my attention recently, in which there was a report on a talk given by Frances Davidson-Arnott on September 13, 1988.*

*The list of "Who Enters the Library Training Programme and Why", presents a very negative picture of aspiring library technicians.*

*I can only assume that it was taken out of context and that it does not convey the intent of Ms. Davidson-Arnott's remarks.*

*It certainly does not reflect the motivation or commitment of the Library Technicians with whom I have had the pleasure of working for many years.*

*Yours truly,*

*Sylvia J. Hall*

I asked Frances Davidson-Arnott if she'd like to repond to Ms. Hall's letter. I received this reply:

*Dear Linda*

*Thank you for giving me an opportunity to reply to Ms. Hall's letter.*

*The report cited in "In Touch with TALTA" does, in fact, reflect my statements as accurately as a report excerpting passages could. I prefaced the section with a comment that this is quite a complex subject and that the reasons for choosing a library techniques career may well change after the person enters the work force. I must stress that my comments concerned those coming into library techniques programs, not those entering library work. Also, it was not an exhaustive list. Some people tell me that they chose the program because they like books, like the atmosphere in libraries, or enjoyed working as volunteers in school libraries or working as pages in school or public libraries.*

*I don't believe it is a "negative" picture. As a profession we have not gotten across to the general population the real nature of the work. To think, then, that people who have never worked in a library would base their choice of a career in library techniques on grand, altruistic values is naive. For many new students the difference between a librarian and a library technician is unclear. For the minority who clearly understand the difference and have a choice of either career, I believe the choice reflects some of the items in my list.*

*For many, the choice is not between being a librarian or a library technician, but between being a library technician and something else requiring a reasonably short training period. For those, I believe several of the reasons that I cited apply. Many also want to work with or help people, and earn a reasonable wage while doing so, in a clean and pleasant environment.*

*The picture is somewhat different for part-time students who already work in libraries. I was not directing my comments to the motives of that sector. I believe that most in that group are trying to advance their careers and ensure job security while also increasing knowledge in order to perform the job better.*

*I want to make it clear again that my observations were just that, based on conversations with students. This little controversy suggests that it would be an interesting topic to follow up with a research project.*

*When I consider my own reasons for choosing a career in*

*librarianship, I realize that they were based on the amenities of library work and not on the things that I now consider to be the higher values of librarianship. I wonder if that is not typical of most career choices.*

*Sincerely,*

*Frances Davidson-Arnott*

Editor's response:

I agree with Ms. Hall that the reasons people have given for entering library technician programs do not reflect the motivation or commitment of technicians in the work force. I will also add that they are not even reflective of the motivation and commitment necessary for technician students to successfully complete technician programs. What they do reflect is ignorance about library professions. This ignorance strikes me as being largely the fault of the library professions since their members do little or nothing to market the professions. If the image of the library professions was different, perhaps people would start citing more interesting and admirable reasons for wanting to become part of them.

Almost 10 years have passed since I graduated and I know that at that time, myself and many of my class mates cited reasons found on Ms. Davidson-Arnott's list. I do not know if people are still doing this. I agree with Ms. Davidson-Arnott that it would be interesting to find out.

#### **TO THE MEMBERSHIP:**

We all know that the library environment is changing but are these changes affecting the reasons given for entering library professions. You can help me find out. I'd like to encourage the membership to write me with your thoughts on the subject. Tell me why you became a library technician. What kinds of expectations did you have before, during and after your training? How long have you been a technician? Do you intend to continue in library professions? Why?

**You can write to me c/o TALTA. I also welcome your calls. Your contributions will be collected and a selection printed in upcoming issues. I look forward to hearing from you.**

Ed.

Frances Davidson-Arnott and Sylvia Hall, thank you for writing. It is gratifying to have representatives of our teachers and our employers show continued interest in our profession and our association.

## ***Job Placement Update***

Grace Lofters has been the job placement liaison since succeeding Kelly Walsh in April this year. Since then, Grace has been approached by 16 employers seeking technicians and has 15 technicians listed with the placement service.

#### ***Some reminders about the service:***

- Grace needs 6 copies of your resumé and a letter stating job preferences, location and hours being sought.
- The service is for TALTA members! Call Marina Ross if you want to know about membership (w) 480-7674, (h) 755-8030.
- Grace is not a hotline service! Do not call her every day. Remember this is a voluntary position. Do not plague Grace with unnecessary phone calls.
- Do call Grace when you have accepted a position. It is a waste of everyone's time to set up interviews for people who are no longer seeking employment.
- Send resumes to: Grace Lofters, TALTA Job Placement, 9 Rollins Place, Islington, Ont. M9B 3Y4.

## ***TALTA WELCOMES***

### ***THESE NEW MEMBERS:***

Bank of Montreal  
(Business Information Centre)  
Russell Berlin  
Ana Maria Brou  
Kathleen Brown  
Carol Cheh  
Michelle Clayton  
Jane Marie Cowan  
Delphine Followes  
Jill Goericke  
Nancy Helm  
Kathleen Kickes  
Sheri Jackson  
Catherine Kong  
Jessy Mathew  
Joanne Mehring  
Joan Purcifer

## *News from the Advisory Committee*

The Seneca Library Techniques Program Advisory Committee meets twice a year (April & Sept.) to provide advice and direction to the director of the Library Techniques program. The committee is comprised of Seneca faculty and professionals from various types of libraries. TALTA provides a representative to sit on this committee to provide the working technician's perspective. For the past two years, TALTA's representative has been Sally Clark-Mills. This year Sally is resigning from the committee and Catherine Honkawa has been nominated to replace her. We'd like to thank both Sally and Catherine for efforts past and present.

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## *News From the Pamphlet Committee*

Catherine Honkawa, Mary Alice White and Kathy Major have good news. The printing/pricing process for the TALTA pamphlet and fact sheet are almost complete and final design ideas are being revised. We can look forward to having the final prototypes available by TALTA's ABM in March 1990.

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## *Canada Tax Foundation*

Ron McLeod is the librarian at the Canadian Tax Foundation and was an accomodating host at the tour on July 6th, 1989. In addition to Mr. MacLeod, the library has a technician, Lyse Kobayashi and a person who comes in one day a week to do the loose-leaf filing.

The Canadian Tax Foundation was set up in 1945 by the Canadian Bar Association (CBA) and the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA) to address the needs of tax practitioners (lawyers, accountants, business people). The mandate of the foundation is to disseminate and publish tax and public finance information. Part of its purpose is to provide access to interpretation of tax legislation. Each year after the federal budget is released, the CBA and CICA do a brief for the Ministry of Finance on the implication and concerns the legislation creates for tax practitioners. This is a strictly interpretive role. The foundation is not a lobbying body and does not give tax advice.

The Tax Foundation is completely supported by membership dues and conference revenue. It now has approximately 15,000 members world wide.

The foundation staff consists of 22 people. The administration staff and conference planning and publications staff run the foundation, plan conferences and publish materials. About 6 - 10 books are published annually, including 5 conference reports. *The Canadian Tax Journal* is also published by the foundation. It comes out 6 times a year. The library staff are responsible for handling the requests of the other foundation staff as well as the foundation members and the general public. Mr. MacLeod estimates that the library handles 90 reference questions weekly.

The online services that the library uses are Infoglobe, Lexis/Nexis and CA Tax Online. Mr. MacLeod likes Lexis/Nexis for the access to U.S. announcements and periodical indexes it provides. He likes CA Tax Online for the access it provides to the Income Tax Act - the complete text is online and can be word searched.

The collection consists of about 28,000 volumes including subscriptions to over 160 loose-leaf services. Retrospective material is kept such as old editions of texts and old government bills from across Canada. The library also has annual reports from government departments dating back to the 40's and 50's, and Canadian federal budgets since 1867. In addition to Canada, other countries such as Russia bring the collection's coverage to 194 jurisdictions. The library's tax collection is so comprehensive it may well be considered Canada's answer to the Harvard Business School's tax collection.

The catalogue has about 1756 subject headings. Most records average about 6 subject headings but it is not unheard of for a record to have as many as 22 subject headings. This is perhaps reflective of a subject matter whose terminology is not easily defined. Tax practitioners who are lawyers may not use the same terminology as those who are accountants. It is also reflective of the diversity of material and necessity for accuracy.

Before wrapping up, Mr. MacLeod found many opportunities throughout his talk to share anecdotes with us. He told us that in his work at the foundation he has become accustomed to being frequently asked if he finds his work "taxing". He also said that over the 13 years he's worked in the tax field, networking has continued to play an important role in helping become acclimatized to the difficult subject matter. Phrases such as "spousal rollovers" begged explanation and other tax librarians proved to be invaluable in helping Lyse and himself to cope.

Everyone who attended enjoyed the benefits of Mr. MacLeods' experiences and knowledge. His sense of humour and comfortable speaking style helped enormously to make the subject matter interesting, approachable and somewhat less "taxing" for those of us who tend not to deal with tax issues if we can avoid it.

# TALTA

Ontario Association of Library Technicians / Association des Bibliotechniciens de l'Ontario  
Toronto Region

## GUEST NIGHT

Tuesday, September 19, 1989

7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

The Metro Reference Library  
Meeting Room "B"  
789 Yonge St.

[The Metro Reference Library is easy to get to by TTC. Take the Subway to Bloor and Yonge. The Library is a short block north of Bloor St. on the east side of Yonge St.]

TALTA's 1989-90 Season gets under way with guest speaker Joan Lowden, Associate with Price Shulman & Associates, Organization Development Consultants. Her talk will focus on "Networking: A Powerful Tool or a Waste of Time?"

Spend an evening with your colleagues...fellow TALTA members, guests, students. Everyone is welcome, so feel free to invite a friend.

There is no fee for this program.

If you have any questions about the program please call either:

Mary Alice White, 767-7787 (Home) or 965-2300 (Work)

OR

Margaret Bryan, 362-1812 (Work)

## *Kaleidoscope '89 A Retrospective View*

### **Workshops in Review:**

taken from comments submitted by Mary Alice White

**Trends in Library Education:** each speaker presented an overview of the type of library training done through their institution's program, from traditional (Seneca) to controversial (Granton). Interesting, but 7 panelists were too many.

**Resumé Writing:** very enjoyable workshop with much discussion that included career planning and job searching. The handouts were based on Bolles' "What Colour is your parachute?" Very good.

**Planning for Library Automation:** good exposure to the process for those with little experience, and many good tips offered to those with some exposure; budgeting, planning and implementation of systems were looked at. Very good.

**Statistics Canada:** the Canadian census process and Statistic Canada's publications and information services were discussed. Interesting but requires experienced, dynamic speaker to keep subject from being too dry. One excellent speaker, one fair.

**How to Buy a Computer:** well prepared, well presented introduction to the basics of buying a computer. Good introduction for some, good review for others.

### **Other Workshops Offered:**

CD-ROM in Reference  
Care of Newspaper Collections  
Communications  
Disaster Planning  
Introduction to Online Searching  
Library Services for the Disabled  
Map Collections  
One-person Library  
Pay Equity  
Puppet Power  
Reference Collections  
Research Collections  
Trends in Library Automation

### **Exhibitors:**

Brodart  
Butterworths  
CanebSCO  
Carr MacLean  
Children's French Store  
John Coutts  
Create-A-Book  
Federal Publications  
M.E.Phipps  
Pig Tails  
Records & Information Management Services  
3M Canada

### **Entertainment:**

Opportunities to mix and mingle were many. There was the wine and cheese party, the newcomers breakfast, the banquet with speaker Howard Engel, creator of Benny Cooperman and the "Fifties Night". Those who attended found the Fifties Night particularly enjoyable as it provided several opportunities to compete for prizes - and for those of us who did not want to show off our prowess with a yo-yo or whoola hoop, we had the chance to enjoy the sportsmanship of others.

### **Annual Business Meeting:**

Members present agreed OALT/ABO needs to take a more proactive role in representing technicians and so the **Ad-hoc Committee on Political Awareness** was created. Co-chairpersons are Ron Cheney of Halton/Peel and Christiane Lamoureaux of Ottawa. Each region is to have at least one representative on the committee. There is no restriction to the number of representatives on the committee and it is expected that the membership will change as the topics addressed change. The first issue being concentrated on is standards for library technicians. We'd like to see a uniform definition reflected in the job descriptions set up by employers.

Anyone interested in the work of the committee can **contact Ron Cheney** who is easily accessible to TALTA members. **His phone numbers are: (w) 863-1133 ext. 5257, (h) 457-3237.**

### **Comments from First Time Attendee:**

New member Toni Arigonello, attended the conference for the first time. Toni said she thought the atmosphere at Kaleidoscope '89 was great and loved meeting technicians from so many different locations. Toni enjoyed the Pay Equity, Statistics Canada and Reference workshops she signed up for but felt the descriptions given in the kits could have been more detailed. She looks forward to next year's conference at Geneva Park. I'm sure many of us join her in anticipation of it.

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## *Pathways in 1990*

Huronía Regional Branch is hosting the 1990 OALT/ABO conference. "Pathways" is the chosen theme: we travel them in our careers and we'll be travelling them at Geneva Park, the beautiful conference site located near Orillia.

The conference is scheduled for May 13-16, 1990. Plans for workshops are underway. For more information, contact Elaine Wallis 383 Highland Ave. Orillia, Ontario L3V 4E5.

## ***Ryerson Reunion***

A reception will be held in the Oakham House dining room on Saturday, October 14, 1989 from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first graduating class of the Library Arts program. All alumni and friends of the program are invited to gather and share memories. An information flyer will be mailed out later this summer. For further information or to assist us with the search for graduates, please contact Mary Ann Hutton ('71), 1085 Steeles Avenue West, Apt. #508, Willowdale, Ontario, M2R 2T1, tel: (416) 667-8339 (evening)

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## ***Continuing Education***

### **FLIS is offering:**

**Online information retrieval: an introduction.** Three 2hr sessions on: Sept. 27, Oct. 4th, and Oct. 11th; Nov. 30th, Dec. 7th, and Dec. 14th; Feb. 6th, 13th and 20th  
\$165.00 (call to find out the deadlines for payment)

**Desktop publishing: putting the pieces together.**  
Oct. 20th (all day session, lunch provided)  
\$120.00

**Fundamentals of records management.**  
Oct. 27th (all day session, lunch provided)  
\$120.00

**Indexing special collections and databases.**  
Nov. 10th (all day session, lunch provided)  
\$120.00

Please note: there is an additional fee of \$10.00 if you register after the deadline. Info.: Marcia Chen at 978-7111.

### **Seneca College Presents**

#### **Post Diploma Workshops for Library Technicians:**

**Vertical files: making the miscellaneous meaningful.**  
Instructor: Wendy Craig, Manager, Library Services, Ontario Ministry of Revenue  
Date: Saturday, November 18, 1989

**Techniques in visual communication.**  
Instructor: Moyra Fulwell, Co-ordinator, Visual Merchandising Seneca College  
Date: Saturday, November 25, 1989

Registration flyers will be available by September.  
Cost per workshop: \$50.00

### **Statistics Canada is offering 2 workshops on statistics:**

**The beginners guide to surveys.**  
Nov. 15th, 1989 (all day session)  
\$60.00 (deadline Nov. 7th, 1989)  
contact: Penny Basset at 973-6574)

**Survey methods and questionnaire design.**  
Nov. 28 - 30th (3 all day sessions)  
\$395.00 (deadline, Nov. 21st, 1989)

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## ***From Stats Can***

### **CANSIM... the tip of the information iceberg**

Cansim (Canadian Socio-Economic Information management System) is a database network run by the Electronic Data Dissemination Division (EDDD) of Statistics Canada. The EDDD using CANSIM with specialized data manipulation and analysis packages, graphics packages and bibliographic search services can provide customized inventories of data on current and historical statistics.

The bibliographic search service is a database consisting of a directory of all CANSIM disseminated data and references to current publications using the data.

CANSIM data retrieval services are offered by Statistics Canada personnel in the Regional offices as well as in Ottawa. The time Series Database, called the Main Base, offers detailed data on many subjects, especially concerning business and the economy. (A time series could be a month to month, quarterly, annual etc. comparison of data for a particular subject.) The Main Base and software is maintained at a commercial service bureau in Montreal.

In addition to the Main Base, a Mini Base is offered in magnetic tape or diskette form to secondary distributors who want access to the data to offer in customized form to their own customers.

(Secondary distributors sign a licensing agreement with Statistics Canada outlining all contractual obligations.)

All CANSIM data is available on paper, diskette or magnetic tape and prices vary according to the complexity of the data request and output medium desired. To access CANSIM, contact the nearest Statistics Canada Regional Office.

## Announcements

### OALT/ABO at CLA

OALT/ABO wants regional suggestions for a workshop at the 1990 CLA conference. Please contact Kathy Major, TALTA's board rep. with your ideas. Suggestions are due before Sept. 15/89

### Do You Have Something to Say?

Linda Davies, 1267 Cardinal Court, Sudbury, Ontario P3A 3C2 welcomes submissions to the provincial newsletter. If you have something that you'd like to share with the entire membership, contact Linda.

### TALTA's Turn

TALTA is hosting the 1991 conference. Volunteers are needed to help arrange accomodation, workshops and facilities, kits, publicity, registration, entertainment. If you have ideas, talents or a bit of time, consider lending them to the conference committee. Kathryn Kern looks forward to hearing from you.

### Job Descriptions Wanted

The Ad Hoc Committee on Political Awareness is working towards standardizing job descriptions for technicians. The first step in this process is to collect what exists. If you have a copy of your current or recent past job descriptions, please send them to Ron Cheney at 28 Allendale Rd., Brampton, ont. L6W 2Y8.

### A Call For Arms -

**Kathryn Kern** is looking for people interested in helping with the salary survey. The old survey has to be looked at and revised, mailed to the TALTA membership, collected and analyzed. This is very interesting work. Volunteers are needed now.

**Marina Ross**, Treasurer/Membership and **Margaret Bryan**, Publicity Co-ordinator need people to help revise the TALTA directory and to sit on the In-Touch Committee. The work is fun, the company is good and committee work looks good on any resumé.

**Linda Yarema**, Editor wants budding authors to help collect, edit and organize articles for the newsletter. Anyone interested in sitting on an editorial committee should get in-touch.

### A Word of Thanks

TALTA would like to extend a hearty thank you to **Dye & Durham Co.** Limited for their generous help in obtaining stationary. They were able to get us the right supplies at a cost that meant savings for us.

### Reminder

Please send all changes in membership record to Marina Ross ASAP. We are revising the directory.

### TALTA EXECUTIVE 1989/90

PRESIDENT: ..... Kathryn Kern ..... (W) 865-2240  
 VICE PRESIDENT: ..... Mary Alice White ..... (W) 965-2300  
 SECRETARY: ..... Barbara Cayley ..... (W) 364-4242  
 TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP: .. Marina Ross ..... (W) 480-7674  
 PUBLICITY COORDINATOR: .. Margaret Bryan ..... (W) 362-1812  
 BOARD. OF DIRECTORS REP: . Kathy Major ..... (W) 495-5209  
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR: ..... Linda Yarema ..... (W) 364-1241

### Request for Change in Membership Record

Name of Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: Home  Work   
Requested Changes  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ New #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: Home  Work  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: TALTA, 66 Bonniewood Rd., Scarborough, Ont. M1K 2M1



*Warm Congratulations*

*Networking*

*A Power Tool or A Waste of Time*

TALTA's September meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 19th, 1989, at the Metro Reference Library, Room B. Joan Lowden, an organization development consultant will be speaking to us on the legitimacy of networking. There is no charge for this first meeting - so come and bring a friend.

Caroline Werle's company *Records and Information Management Services Inc.* celebrated its 10th anniversary on May 17th this year. It's hard to believe that 10 years could go by so quickly! We wish Caroline continued success with her company. There are many of us who have benefited from Caroline's experience.

Gertrude Fabro, a recent member of TALTA won an SLA student award for placing highest in her Special Libraries course. Gertrude just graduated from Seneca this year and is enjoying working part time at the Bendale Library in Scarborough while scouting various full time opportunities. Gertrude is particularly interested in working in special libraries, as is natural for the winner of this award. Good work Gertrude!

*... In touch with*  
**TALTA**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TORONTO AREA LIBRARY TECHNICIANS ASSOCIATION - OALT/ABO, Toronto Region

P.O. BOX 441, DON MILLS, ONT. M3C 2T2