



NewsLETTER NouVELLES

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**Happy New
Year from
your
Association**



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

New Horizons ~ Stella Clark

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope everyone had a great Holiday Season, and I am looking forward to this next part of the year with the OALT/ABO executive where we welcome a new year, new webpage, new membership year.

We have been very fortunate in having new members step up this year with Jenn Clarke taking on the newsletter. Thank you so much Jenn! The entire executive has been working hard to keep things going forward smoothly. The conference is proceeding and looking to be as exciting as the past conferences. The nice thing about changing the venue each year is that the "flavour" is different each time. There is still time to offer your help and support to Theresa – whatever you can do will be greatly appreciated.

Maria has been working hard to make our presence known at the OLA Super conference, and has managed a whole stream of workshops from OALT/ABO to be included. Our hope is that many library technicians who only attend OLA will be attracted to our association, especially those who have not had any knowledge of what we can offer them. Maria is a great promoter of our association, and I look forward to her term as president next year.

Don't forget to submit nominations for the Presidential Award – support your fellow members who are doing their best to promote OALT/ABO and their profession.

And now is the time to start thinking about the executive positions for 2008/2009. Our brainstorming session at the last conference focused on "what I can do for my association".

This could be your time to step forward and offer your services to your fellow members. New people, fresh ideas and ways of handling our affairs are what make the difference. We have over three hundred members, and we need input from people who are in the prime of their career years as well as from those who have years and years of experience. All of us who have participated have gained much more than a line to add to our personnel files – friendships, new knowledge, and confidence are only a few of the immeasurable benefits of joining the executive. Come on in!

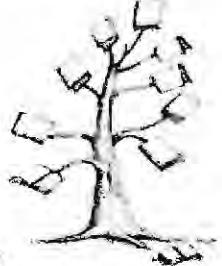
A good library is a place, a palace where the lofty spirits of all nations and generations meet.

— Sam

Note written ~ Carrying Place

~Stacy Goddard

Congratulations on a wonderful fall newsletter. The articles were all exceptional and I feel this was the best coverage of the Conference ever. I was able to relive the experience and enjoy socializing again with the participants. Seeing the students' submissions reminded me how enthusiastic they were at Humber and having French translations of them was a bonus. I hope we see more bilingual articles in future. The article on the day in the life of an itinerant library technician was, in my estimation, a blueprint for how to get the job done, not to mention a great read. Maria, you have done us proud. Jenn, these are big shoes to fill and judging by your bio in the newsletter, you will have no trouble with the task ahead.

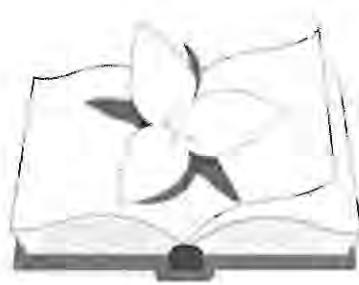


This Issue....

The Winter 2008 newsletter has been a great reward to put together. Thank yo everyone who got involved. It was a pleasure!

Here are the highlights....

- *Launching the New Website*
- *The ever popular Day in the Life of*
- *Keeping up with the Web Tools*
- *Calling for submissions!*



Until next time,

Jenn

Newsletter Editor

"Be of service. Whether you make yourself available to a friend or co-worker, or you make time every month to do volunteer work, there is nothing that harvests more of a feeling of empowerment than being of service to someone in need.~ Gillian Anderson



An important note from our president

.....And now is the time to start thinking about the executive positions for 2008/2009.

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Are you up for a challenge? Do you believe in make a difference? Join us!

Executive Members

President (One year commitment)

Candidate ~ Maria Ripley

- ❖ President is the official representative for OALT/ABO
- ❖ Upholds the mission and purpose of OALT/ABO
- ❖ Chairs Executive meetings and Annual Business Meetings
- ❖ Prepares an annual report of Association activities for the membership



President Elect (Two year commitment moving to President second year)

Candidate ~ Vacant

- ❖ In the absence of the President or at the request of the President, the President Elect shall perform the duties and exercise the power of the President.
- ❖ In the event of the President's resignation, President Elect shall assume the duties of the President if circumstances permit
- ❖ Maintains minutes of all Executive meetings
- ❖ Prepares and distributes agendas and minutes to the Executive and Appointed Officers

 *Treasurer (One year commitment)*

Candidate ~ Claudia Scharmann-Persaud

Membership (One year commitment) - Candidate ~ Melissa Hall

- ❖ Responsible for keeping all financial records and carrying out all financial transactions of OALT/ABO
- ❖ Presents a written financial statement to the Annual Business Meeting and at each Executive meeting
- ❖ Compiles and maintains annual membership list, directory and supplements
- ❖ Responds to membership enquiries

 *External Communications Coordinator (One year commitment)*

Candidate ~ Maggie Weaver

- ❖ Prepares all OALT/ABO marketing and publicity
- ❖ Acts as liaison between OALT/ABO and other library associations, Library & Information Technician programs, other library education courses, OALT/ABO members and libraries
- ❖ Coordinates sponsorship

 *Internal Communications Coordinator (One year commitment)*

Candidate ~ Jenn Clarke

- ❖ Disseminates information about OALT/ABO, issues and developments in library and information science and library technicians to Association members
- ❖ Coordinates newsletter distribution
- ❖ Ensures website content is current
- ❖ Responsible for Listserv
- ❖ Prepares salary survey



Conference Coordinator (One year commitment)

Candidate ~ Vacant

- ❖ Responsible for coordinating the annual OALT/ABO Conference with a volunteer team by selecting location, arranging programming and activities
- ❖ Submits a Conference budget and written financial statement at the Annual Business Meeting and at each Executive meeting
- ❖ Presents Conference information to the Internal Communications Coordinator for distribution to the membership
- ❖ Coordinates Conference promotion and sponsorship with the External Communications Coordinator.



Chapter Coordinator (One year commitment)

Candidate ~ Vacant

- ❖ Advocates on behalf of Chapters and Chapter members
- ❖ Responsible for inter Chapter communication
- ❖ Provides upcoming information about Chapter events to the Internal Communications Coordinator
- ❖ Submits Chapter programming and additional funding requests to the Executive for approval.



Launching a New Look in our New Year!

The OALT/ABO Executive is pleased to announce the launching of our new website! The web address is the same, at www.oaltabo.on.ca, but the site has experienced a total make-over.

Phase One – the public side - of the make-over is now complete. Navigation is now easier with a more intuitive index. The increase of white space has also made the site easier to read. The public side was addressed as a first priority, as the main premise of this Association is to promote a wider understanding, acceptance and advancement of LIT graduates and students, and to further the cause of LITs in the work force. What better way to do this than have an attractive website to attract new employers?

Some of the features you will find on this site are: our mandate, mission, benefits of joining, information about Library Information Technicians (LITs), events and news updates, and information about joining the discussion group.

Phase Two will involve development of the Member's side. We welcome your input at any time – this is YOUR website, after all. We expect the member's side to be up and running by the end of 2008. We encourage you to join to get full access to all the latest news and information about your profession.

Please note that the mandate at this time is to only launch the English side of the website. Once this is complete, the Web Committee will be approaching the Executive for funds to hire a French translator to help us complete the French side.

We would like to thank Maria Ripley, Pat Buczkowski and their team of volunteers for all their hard work!



Anyone interested in running for a position should contact Stella Clark (President) immediately



pclark8@cogeco.ca 905-664-7712

Service is the rent we pay for living
~ Marion Wright Eddleman



The future of OALT/ABO depends on its members volunteering!!

Did you know?

- *There are almost 3 times as many public libraries in Canada than McDonald's restaurants - 3153 libraries, including branches.*
- *More Canadians visit libraries than take part in golf, hockey, baseball, and swimming combined.*

*More facts can be found at
www.cla.ca*



Creating your virtual library~

Stay tuned for your Spring Newsletter. Website Designing with Dreamweaver for the technicians in all of us.

Step by step language to create a virtual site of your dreams.



ExLibris Association Annual Conference

~Douglas Willford

The 21st annual conference of the Ex Libris Library Association was held November 5th at the North York Central Library with about 40 members in attendance. President Arn Bailey welcomed the delegates and in his address noted the number of positive things taking place: an increase in membership, a sound financial base, our great newsletter ELAN and the number of ongoing projects such as the Biography and Website. Mr Bailey also highlighted the success of the library tours in particular the Library of Parliament and the National Gallery of Canada. He also spoke about our ongoing presence at the CLA Conference, British Columbia Library Association Conference and the Ontario Library Super Conference. In conclusion Mr. Bailey expressed his appreciation for the association's bright future to the hard work and dedication of the Executive and the Committees: "working together to bring positive results.



Two very interesting sessions were held, one in the morning and the second in the afternoon following lunch. The morning session entitled: "Independent Book Sellers; Challenges in the Big Book Store Era" was a panel discussion with representation from a broad spectrum of independent book sellers: Brenda Bickram, Books for Business; Leonard McHardy; Theatre Books; Sheila Kauffman, Another Story & Alison Fryer, The Cookbook Store.

The main thrust of their presentations was the necessity and ability to adapt to the threat of the Big Box Stores such as Chapters/Indigo. In order to do this they have undertaken the following steps: diversification, specialization (developing a niche market), having a very knowledgeable staff, doing special orders, attending trade shows and having author signings to assist in promoting local authors. Of course the issue of the strong Canadian dollar was discussed noting that the bookstores are caught between a rock and a hard place. This exists in part because bookstores have a large inventory which was purchased when the dollar was much weaker. Therefore most bookstores must wait until their existing stocks are sold before they can lower the price substantially.

The second session given by Gwen Harris entitled "Life on the Web as a Social Place" provided a good overall view of such popular social websites as: Facebook, My Space, MSN, Yahoo Messenger and Twitter. In her presentation Gwen noted how drastically the internet has changed in just the last three years particularly in the area of social networking. In terms of overall usage this area is still the major domain of young people (generation X & Y) but is now being used right up to Seniors. She went on to note that with more advances in wireless technology and equipment social networking will be used even more by what she called "Digital Immigrants" vs. Digital Natives (those born after 1980). Over and above all it was a great conference and I would encourage Library Technicians who have retired or are thinking of retirement to consider joining Ex Libris. For more information visit their website at: <http://exlibris.fis.utoronto.ca/>



Web 2.0 Tools: RSS



~ Angela Carito-Walmsley

During your travels on the web, you've probably noticed the acronym, RSS, and its counterpart, the orange icon . If you spend countless hours visiting websites and blogs for updated content, consider RSS your new best friend on the web.

What is RSS?

The RSS acronym often stands for:

- Really Simple Syndication
- Rich Site Summary
- RDF Site Summary (RDF stands for "Resource Description Framework")

There is no clear definition for the acronym, however, Really Simple Syndication seems to be the most popular choice because it really is simple!

If you've ever clicked on an RSS icon, you've probably noticed strange code displaying in your browser. That code is XML, or Extensible Markup Language. RSS is a way to share and receive information using that XML code.

1. Finding an RSS reader;
2. Subscribing to feeds.

1. Finding an RSS reader

An RSS reader (also called an aggregator) is a software application that allows you to read blogs and websites that publish RSS feeds. An RSS reader takes that XML code and converts it to a format you can read.

There are a range of different readers; many of which are free to install on your desktop or accessible on the web. Readers can be web-based, browser-based, or use a downloadable application. The choice depends on how you want to access your feeds.

Web-based readers

Use a web-based reader if you want to read your feeds from any Internet-accessible computer. With a web-based reader, you'll set up an account online. RSS content will be delivered to your reader, and you can login to read your feeds from any computer.

Popular online newsreaders include Google Reader (<http://www.google.com/reader>), Newsgator (<http://www.newsgator.com>) and Bloglines (<http://www.bloglines.com>).

Browser-based readers

Internet Explorer 7.0, Firefox, Opera and Safari, all have RSS built into the browser allowing you to subscribe to and receive feeds.

Desktop-based readers

These are software applications that require you to download and install the reader on your desktop. Examples of desktop-based readers include Feedreader (<http://www.feedreader.com/>), Feeddemon (<http://www.feeddemon.com/>), and NetNewsWire 3.0 (for the Mac) (<http://www.newsgator.com/Individuals/NetNewsWire/Default.aspx>).

The disadvantage to browser-based and desktop based readers, is that you are tied into subscribing and reading your feeds from one desktop or location. A web-based reader offers you the most mobility.

Additional readers can be found at:

Yahoo RSS Readers & Aggregators

http://dir.yahoo.com/computers_and_internet/data_formats/xml_extensible_markup_language/rss/rss_readers_and_aggregators/

Google Directory: Feed Readers

http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Software/Internet/Clients/WWW/Feed_Reader/

2. Subscribing to feeds

If a website or blog offers RSS feeds, it will often display an icon with the words "RSS", "Feed", "XML" or "Subscribe".

The website may also display the orange icon  or any number of clickable icons.

Here's a sample of some of the icons you may see on a website or blog:



(Source:

<http://www.cadenhead.org/workbench/news/2872/support-common-feed-icon>

Clicking on the icon will display the XML code we talked about earlier.

To subscribe to a feed, right-click (alternate-click) the icon and select "copy link location" or "copy shortcut".



Go to your reader and look for an option to "add feed". Your reader will allow you to simply paste the feed URL you just copied into the "add feed" option.

That's it! Once a website or blog publishes updated content, it will be delivered to your reader.

Finding feeds

Looking for feeds in a subject area or topic? Take a look at search engines and directories devoted to indexing blogs and RSS feeds.

Libworm The Librarian RSS Engine
<http://libworm.com/>

Technorati <http://www.technorati.com/>

Google Blog Search
<http://blogsearch.google.com/>

Syndic8 <http://www.syndic8.com/>

Search 4 RSS
<http://www.search4rss.com/index.php>

RSS Locator <http://www.rss-locator.com/>

Bloglines (select "Search for feeds")
<http://www.bloglines.com/search>

RSS News Feeds Directory
<http://www.webdevtips.co.uk/webdevtips/resources/rssdir.php>

Caution! RSS feed ahead.

One of the best pieces of advice I ever received when I first learned about RSS was to start small. You may be tempted to subscribe to many feeds, but oversubscribing will defeat the goal of RSS in the first place! RSS, like email, can easily become overloaded. Start with a few feeds that you really want to follow and grow your subscription list slowly.



Learn More

"RSS in Plain English", 3.5 minute video:
http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english

RSS Compendium: <http://allrss.com/>

RSS Specifications : everything you need to know about RSS: <http://www.rss-specifications.com/>

The RSS and Javascript Cookbook : Tools:
<http://paulandmeredith.pbwiki.com/Tools>

The Ultimate RSS Toolbox: 120+ RSS Resources:
<http://mashable.com/2007/06/11/rss-toolbox/>

*Angela Carito-Walmsley blogs at
<http://angelacw.wordpress.com>*



angelacw@rogers.com

This is an opportunity to introduce yourself!

~ Theresa Ziebell

* Make this an opportunity to learn more about your Association and fellow professionals. Mark your calendars, car pool, bring a student LT with you. Your presence is important in success!*

Mark Your Calendars!

2008 OALT / ABO CONFERENCE

St. Lawrence College
Kingston
May 6-10, 2008

Theme: Destination Kingston

"The Conference Committee has been working steadily over the past year, putting together a strong continuous learning program, a not-to-be-missed pre-conference workshop on integrating resources, tours, banquet and more."

Conference Planning Team:

Theresa Ziebell : Chair

Maggie Weaver
Rachel Auclair
Michelle Durand
Andrea Burrows
Linda Landreville
Lori O'Connor
Catherine Case

Marilyn Ottenhof
Joanne Lalonde
Anna Monk
Brenda Mac Donald
Yvonne Fleming
Maria Ripley
Irène Kumar

SEE YOU THERE!



Don't Miss

Changing Faces

~ Tim Hutton

I fell into the library profession by accident. Returning to fulltime studies at the University of Toronto in 1991, I needed part-time employment. I found it at the university library, working as a student worker in what was then called the Circulation department. I never really considered a career in librarianship, but personal choices kept me at the library for seven years. It offered flexible hours, time for me to care after my first child, and a fun and stimulating work environment. By 1997 I decided I wanted to work in the profession full time. I considered pursuing a Masters degree in library science, but the competitive entrance requirements, and the length of the program led me to apply to the library technician program at Seneca College in Toronto.

I enrolled in the "accelerated" library technician program at Seneca because courses from my university degree were applied to my diploma requirements. I found that the program gave me a firm grounding in the technical aspects of working in libraries. Several teachers made a deep impact on me. Karen Olsen told us on the first day of class that if we thought working in libraries was about solitary work in backrooms we were dead wrong. Library work involved dealing with people and having people skills. Deborah Kay showed me that library workers could have a sense of social justice and style beyond the worn-out stereotypes.

Then program director, Frances Davidson-Arnott had an uncanny knack for assigning me to perfect field placements. With typical practicality, Frances suggested my third and final placement be at Royal St. George's College, a small independent school for boys just five minutes down the street from where I was living at the time. This two-week placement turned into a permanent job in September 1998. The annual salary was not large, but my spouse had just given birth to identical twin boys. Working down the street allowed me to go home at lunch so she could take a much-needed break.

My initial duties were those typical of a library technician: cataloguing, processing, collection maintenance, and clerical work. Within a short period of time those responsibilities expanded. I had a hand in acquisitions, budgeting, and teaching. The leadership of Royal St. George's, under headmaster Hal Hannaford, encouraged risk taking and opportunity. I was given a chance to teach in the classroom in 2001, and I have taught off and on since then. This year I am teaching Civics to grade 9 students in the traditional classroom setting and to grade 10 using an online, self-directed course that I have designed.



Knowledge is Power

Changing Faces continues

~Tim Hutton

In 2003 the teacher-librarian moved to another school, and the school's administration, in their wisdom or folly, offered to give me the job. In the four years since I feel I have grown tremendously as a professional because I have been given this opportunity. I currently teach civics to over 140 students in two grades, teach regular library instruction to primary grades, and provide research support and instruction to students and teachers in the middle and high school grades. This is accompanied by my responsibilities to manage and build a collection of print and electronic resources that must fit the needs of a broad range of students.

I am not sure how to explain how I got to the position I am in now. Being open-minded and willing to learn and take on new tasks is important. In this day of rampant accreditation, some employers still value experience and a willingness to learn on the job. I would cultivate these opportunities and take advantage of them wherever they exist. Continuing education is also important. Over the years I have dabbled in university courses, and library-oriented professional development.

My colleagues in the independent school library world have been supportive and inspirational. I encourage any library technicians who have the time to pursue a university education. Many of the students I work with think of university as the primary route to a satisfying job, but more than a fair share have completed programs at colleges after their first degree.

In the same way, I think it would benefit technicians to add to their skill set with a liberal arts education.

In the fall of 2008 I will be pursuing a Masters in Library Science through the distance program at San Jose State University. This new opportunity will allow me to apply what I have learned on the job in a classroom setting.

I think the single biggest factor is to think differently. I took my job at St. George's for unusual reasons: it was close to home and it allowed me walk home at lunchtime. I accepted the trade off of a slightly lower starting salary and I have reaped the benefits over the last ten years. The environment at the school, one of risk taking and opportunity, allowed me to advance in practical terms beyond what my diploma would usually allow me to do.

**Are you interested in obtaining
your Masters in Library
Sciences?**

Visit

<http://www.sjsu.edu/>



"What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul."
- Joseph Addison



Dolores Harms Penner
Program Manager
905 -575-2309



dolores.harmspenner@mohawkcollege.ca

Library and Information Technician program at Mohawk College

- Information on this program is at <http://disted.mohawkcollege.ca/libred/library.html>
- For further information, email the Program Manager at dolores.harmspenner@mohawkcollege.ca

<http://ce.mohawkcollege.ca>



Continuing your education matters

~ Dolores Harms Penner

Happy New Year to OALT/ABO members from the faculty and staff of the Library and Information Technician Program at Mohawk College! May this new year bring you energy and enthusiasm in both your personal and professional life. At Mohawk our convocation is held annually in October. This past October we were very pleased to recognize 39 graduates from the library technician diploma program and 11 graduates from the records management certificate program.

Winter term courses in our program began on Friday January 11. We had a successful fall term and expect that the same will be true for winter. These are the largest graduating classes that we have ever had in our program

OALT/ABO members may be interested in courses in our program for professional development, and can consider themselves as meeting the prerequisites for any course. Our courses are all taught online.

And the award goes to...



Mohawk Awards

We honoured five of our graduates in particular with awards based on their academic achievement: *Shauna Ives* and *Nancy Therrien* with the Geraldine Hughes Cataloguing Award, *Tanya Sicoli* and *Judy Tuck* with our Library Technician Award, and *Lenore Bergson* with the OALT Award.

All of our graduates can be proud of their hard work in achieving their goal by completing the program.

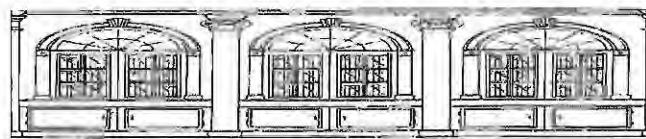
Our course offerings for upcoming terms are listed at

<http://disted.mohawkcollege.ca/librec/library.html> under "next semester".

Registration for spring term opens on March 3, 2008 and courses run from mid-May until mid-August. In late January, Mohawk will again be joining with the library technician programs from Seneca and Algonquin colleges, as well as the OALT/ABO, to share a booth at the OLA Super Conference in Toronto. If you are at the conference, please stop by to say hello.

If there are any questions about our courses, please contact me at 905-575-2309 or email dolores.harmspenner@mohawkcollege.ca

Respectfully submitted,
Dolores Harms Penner
Program Manager
Library and Information Technician Diploma Program
Records and Information Management Certificate Program
Mohawk College



"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore is not an act, but a habit"

Aristotle

Another Day in the life of a Library Technician

~Bradley Holstead

In the 12 years that I have been involved in library work, the way things are done has changed beyond measure. The world's libraries are all at the patron's fingertips, and a wealth of knowledge is for the taking via the internet. Not since Gutenberg has there been such a leap forward in communications. My time at Victoria University Library has let me witness these changes first hand. I've been lucky to have done a multitude of tasks under one roof, and am richer for the experience.

After graduating from Seneca College's tech program, I was called back to E.J. Pratt Library: one of my field placements had taken place there. It was supposed to be a three or four week job, entering data for the new library web site: I don't think any of us realized that a web site is a living thing, constantly changing and never static. I remember the thrill of first experiencing the internet, thinking this is how our parents must have felt first seeing television! While in school, I think maybe 20 minutes of one class was spent on the Internet, which I don't think is the case now. At that early stage, I was using Notepad to create the code for the website manually. I had no email, so had to walk any updates over to the main U of T library. How times have changed... now creating a basic web page is no more difficult than writing a paper. However, to create a web site that stand out takes design skill, creativity and imagination.



I was also lucky to be able to put my diploma in photography to work, taking photos of the library and surrounding area for the web site. I've also copied old photos, creating negatives where there were none before.

Through this type of creative work I also learned some rudimentary desktop publishing, creating flyers, cards, etc. for the library. Although I still oversee the library's web site, a lot of the work has been allocated to various staff members. Pratt has afforded me many opportunities to learn and grow. I spent three years working part time in the library's systems department, maintaining and servicing computers. I was sent on courses, and learned how to assemble a computer from scratch. I learned a great deal about operating systems and other software as well, knowledge that has come in useful almost every day since. But although interesting, creating web pages and working on computers was not what I was trained for, and not what I truly wanted to do. Finally after 5 years I had an opportunity to work in the circulation department. There I helped patrons locate resources; answered reference questions, supervised the annual library inventory, and handled interlibrary loans. This is why I wanted to be in a library, to be around books and help people find them.

Another Day in the life of a Library Technician

~Bradley Holstead

I love working with people. Helping someone find a piece of information is like detective work, putting out feelers, checking various sources, navigating through databases. It's a great feeling to find the target, and to see the satisfaction (and often relief) of the patron.

The internet has made finding information so much easier. Gone are the rows of Humanities Index, Social Science Index, and other finding aids. Now all we need is a click away, and more often than not the article needed is available online, and printable. No more legging it to another library, only to find the volume needed is missing!

I've been lucky to have been able to see and work with many different rare materials. From first editions of Erasmus, to original lead type for the first Cree Bible, to Coleridge's school work, to illustrations printed and coloured by Blake himself, I've had the good fortune to have some amazing treasures pass through my hands.

Lock up your libraries if you like, but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind.

~Virginia Woolf



More recently, my work entails taking these treasures and capturing them digitally, either scanning or photographing them. This allows them to be seen easier and more often, and preserves them by not being handled so much. A scholar in New Zealand who needs to see one letter written by Coleridge can view it online. We also take requests from around the world, digitizing an item and either mailing it on a CD-ROM, emailing the file, or mounting it on the library's web server where it can be downloaded. It's a great feeling to be able to save and preserve these rare treasures, while at the same time letting more people all over the world use and enjoy them.

I've been a kind of Renaissance man, with irons in many fires. I knew I would enjoy working in a library, but I had no idea I would learn so much!

Virginia
Woolf as
Feminist



Cover by Bradley Holstead



Project News

Multi-million dollar revitalization of Toronto Reference Library underway

PATRICIA WILLIAMS

staff writer

The Toronto Public Library has launched a \$30 million revitalization project intended to transform its flagship Yonge Street reference library into a facility geared to meet the needs of 21st century patrons.

This is the first significant renovation since the library opened in 1977. "Public libraries are vital to Toronto's cultural and economic health," said Linda Mackenzie, director of research and reference libraries. "The Toronto Reference Library in particular is a cornerstone of city life." The building's original architects, Moriyama & Teshima, are responsible for the redesign. Their mandate was to retain the architectural beauty of the landmark building while creating "a striking and bold" design for the future. New elements will complement traditional spaces to respond to the range of library uses and users. The original building was designed by Raymond Moriyama. The redesign is being overseen by his son Ajon. "It's been a wonderful process working with a father and son design team," Mackenzie said. "Ajon has been very respectful of his father's original design. But he has also really responded to our design brief. "The redesign is a very effective marriage of past and future." The project will be carried out over a five-year period. The first phase involves construction of an events space to mount large-scale programs, conferences and community events. A \$4.7 million contract has been awarded to Ross Clair Contractors Inc. "They've done a little preparatory work on interior hoarding," Mackenzie said. "They'll be moving ahead this month with a full-scale construction start. We're hoping this work will be wrapped up within 16 months." Subsequent phases include construction of a new main entrance cube, a redesign of the Yonge Street façade to make the library visually transparent and open to the community, and a complete renovation of the upper floors. Plans also call for creation of a two-storey special collections centre, a renovated and expanded exhibits gallery and a coffee shop and gift store. The revitalization project will be funded through a combination of public and private sources. A private sector fundraising campaign is being spearheaded by the Toronto Public Library Foundation. "This is going to be a phased project," Mackenzie said. "We will be determining what components go into each phase as we proceed with fundraising, taking into account the operations of the building as well." The library will remain open during construction.



MORIYAMA & TESHIMA ARCHITECTS

A new main entrance cube (at right) will help transform the Yonge Street façade of the 30-year-old Toronto Reference Library.

~Pencils, Pens, Notepad, Laptops ready?

The next newsletter will go to print on April 15, 2008~

(Deadline for submissions is 15 days prior to print date ~please email Jenn at clarkemuse@hotmail.com with any questions or suggestions.)



People to Watch For~

At the next OLA conference the following Reference Library Technicians: Dorothy Gagnon and Cyndi Smith, from Georgian College will be doing a session on *Information Literacy and the Contributions of Library Technicians in the Academic Library*. The session consists of: Practical application of ACRL Information Literacy Standards for Academic Libraries in these fields: Library orientation; Reference service provision; Copyright; Interlibrary loan delivery; Technical instruction; Collection development; Professional development. These contributions are modeled by the library technicians in collaboration with faculty librarians at Georgian College. Stay tuned for their article on the subject in our next newsletter!

<http://www.accessola.com/superconference2008/showSession.php?lsession=1000&usession=1090>

- Please join us in dialogue! Our Discussion List is hosted by Yahoo! Groups. Please be sure to get yourself signed on so you are kept-to-date with sharing job postings, questions and concerns from your fellow LTs as well as all the latest news and events.

We need your assistance?

- What would you like to see in the member's only section of your site?

Send an email with the subject line "Members Only Web Page" to Maria at: info@oaltabo.on.ca to share your ideas.



**You are the key to success~
One voice ~**

I have a confession to make. When I first heard that my children's school library was no longer run by a teacher-librarian, but instead by a library technician, I was disappointed.

Who runs our province's school libraries? Does it matter? As the article by Glenn Turner in this issue indicates, there are many different service models in place throughout the province, with a mish-mash of staffing models. Staffing is a contentious issue and the manner in which the boards and some principals have historically handled school library personnel has unfortunately helped to create a rift between two groups that should be close allies. These two primary groups are teacher-librarians and library technicians.

What's in a name, and how do these two jobs differ? Each position has its own role and responsibility. Teacher-Librarians are first and foremost teachers with a specialist in Librarianship. They provide comprehensive instruction in information literacy to students independently through classroom teaching or collaboratively with the classroom teacher. They choose appropriate materials that directly link to the Ministry of Education curriculum; they maintain library policies and manage library budgets. Library technicians have a two-year college diploma and are trained to perform various hands-on tasks that include cataloguing and classifying of materials, data input to assist in acquiring print and nonprint materials, and circulation procedures. In a school library, a library technician would provide support to, and work in partnership with, the teacher-librarian to provide a harmonious welcoming library for all students.

I work in a different board than the one in which my children are enrolled. At a parent council meeting, I offered to volunteer in the school library and the principal put me in touch with Ms J, the library technician. She said she could use some help weeding the professional collection in the school library, as she was not familiar with the Ministry documents. When I came in during part of a professional activity day, I was surprised to see the condition of the non-fiction shelves. "Don't the students borrow non-fiction books?" I asked. "Yes, they do quite a bit" she replied, "but I always fix the shelves after classes visit." The shelves would have made Melville Dewey proud; every single book was in order and aligned precisely – this was a big contrast to my school library, with its untidy shelves (despite having student library helpers and a senior volunteer in once a week to help maintain order).

The distinction between the role of the teacher-librarian and library technician often gets blurred and disconnected. In some school library settings, especially elementary schools, budget cuts force the staffing component of the school library to be limited to one person. In many cases this is a library technician due to the lower salaries. Library technicians have the expertise to train and assist students, such as locating resources and one-on-one research assistance; however they should not

New Beginnings: TL & LT not TL vs LT
By Maria Ripley with Diana Maliszewski
Cont- 20

be expected to teach a class information literacy skills as they are not qualified to teach under the Ontario College of Teachers' policy. At the same time, expecting teacher-librarians to maintain the school library collection to professional standards, all within the confines of the instructional day, is not feasible with all the other teaching responsibilities. While researching this article, we have heard of many exceptions – of library technicians who do incredible things with the classes and students they see, and of teacher-librarians who keep immaculate shelves and pristine collections – but think of the possibilities, to paraphrase Rich DuFour, beyond "the Tyranny of OR" into "the genius of AND"! With a divided focus, something has to give, and running a school library should not be a one-person task. *Achieving Information Literacy*, the Canadian School Library Association's standards, states that an acceptable level of staffing in elementary schools with 300-499 students is 1.0 teacher-librarians and 1.0 clerical/technical staff.

A helpful analogy would be that of doctors and nurses in a hospital. Although each profession can do the work of the other, it is not often expected that the nurse would perform the duties of a doctor and vice-versa. Both professionals are within the health sector and are trained differently for different purposes but the same goal. Hospital environments would not choose one profession over the other – both doctors and nurses work in harmony to provide the best service to their clients.

Cynics and realists are probably chuckling at this point in the article – how is this realistically possible, considering that having any qualified personnel in a school library is more of a gift than an expectation? Battling for the meager placements and misunderstanding the roles of each profession has bred tension and antagonism. Teacher-librarians have worked so long to advocate for the position of teacher-librarian as library instructional leader that the advocacy inadvertently ignored other school library personnel who matter. Library technicians exist in a netherworld of being support staff but viewed in a different light than office administrators.



*Strength lies in differences,
not in similarities.*

~ Stephen Covey

The OSLA has begun the reconciliation with changes to its by-laws. The new by-law wording states:

2. The objects of the Division are:

- a. to further the development of school library programs and school libraries in Ontario,
- b. to strengthen and unify the voice of teacher-librarians as curriculum leaders,
- c. to work with the full library community on shared issues and programs,
- d. to represent the profession of teacher-librarianship as a subject association recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Education,
- e. to provide professional development opportunities for teacher-librarians and other qualified school library staff, and
- f. to promote research related to effective school libraries.

The second point clearly delineates the role of teacher-librarian as curriculum providers. The fifth point explicitly includes individuals such as library technicians. For the purposes of this article, we focused on library technicians not to exclude other library service providers but to reflect the most common working situation in Ontario school libraries.

Both teacher-librarians and library technicians need to work together, instead of being critical of each other. Some secondary school libraries are models of what is possible when teacher-librarians and library technicians work together. A library technician in York Catholic District School Board reported that "At the secondary level the relationship between the teacher-librarian/library technician I feel is more successful because they both work together everyday as the position is full-time for both of them." Yes, money is tight, but if both sides keep giving the key message, that both teacher-librarians and library technicians are necessary for a fantastic school library, then like waves on a rock, eventually resistance will be worn away and changes will occur. It may take years, but it is worth the wait. Can a teacher-librarian buddy up with a library technician to exchange services – not as a master and servant relationship, but as equal partners sharing tools and assisting with operations? We think it is possible...let's think outside the box! Begin with mutual respect and take it from there.

A few weeks after my visit to my children's school library, I received a phone call from Ms. J. She wanted to reciprocate and offered to come to my school to help reinvigorate my messy shelves that I had complained about when I compared them to her pristine, immaculate ones. She came and it was wonderful. It just felt...right. I was able to concentrate on my lessons while she shelf-read and managed to put the shelves into order. Both tasks benefited the students – having resources organized made finding needed resources possible, and having lessons on how to use the resources with a critical eye made learning relevant skills possible.

Call for submissions!

OALT/ABO Presidential Award

The purpose of the OALT/ABO Presidential Award is to recognize outstanding contributions or major achievements of an OALT/ABO member in promoting and / or developing the Association.

The award is presented annually to any full member, in good standing, of OALT/ABO excluding the current Provincial President, members of the Award Committee and past recipients. This award recognizes the contributions of Library Technicians from communities across Ontario, whose leadership, commitment and persistent endeavours have contributed significantly to advancing the Association and our profession.

The OALT / ABO Presidential Award Selection Committee consist of the previous award recipient and two additional members, in good standing, of OALT/ABO. The Selection Committee will seek candidates who generally meet the following criteria:

- Member of OALT/ABO.
- Evidence that the Association has played a significant role during the individual's professional career.
- Demonstrated leadership in helping others achieve full participation in the library profession within the Association and/or within the work place.
- Outstanding contribution in building the Association either regionally or provincially.
- Advanced recognition of the Library and Information Technician profession through publications, seminars, or workshops.

Two members in good standing, who are not related to the candidate, may sponsor candidates for the OALT / ABO Presidential Award. Confidential nominations must be submitted in writing, by April 1st of each year. The application form may be found on the web site, or obtained by contacting the current committee chairperson, Maggie Weaver or by email at kweaver5478@rogers.com.

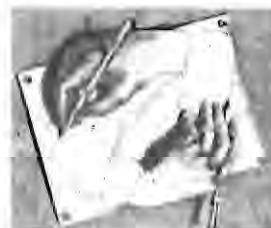
Confidential submissions should be addressed to:

Maggie Weaver
OALT/ABO Presidential Award Committee Chairperson
kweaver5478@rogers.com





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