

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

VALLA MCLEAN, PRESIDENT



I want to thank Andrew Chernevych for serving as president of the Archives Society of Alberta from 2018 to 2020. In addition to myself, the current Board includes three newly elected and enthusiastic board members Erin Hoar (Vice President), Ashley Halko-Addley (Secretary), and Jordan Roy (Individual Member-at-Large). The Board also includes two returning and no less dedicated Board members, Jason Nisenon (Treasurer) and Melissa McCarthy (Institutional Member-at-Large). Along with Rene Georgopolis as Executive Director, Jason and Melissa have a vast and invaluable knowledge of the history of the Board. I would also like to welcome Melissa Owen as our new Office Coordinator and thank Maryna Cherynyavska for her continued work as the Database Administrator. Sadly due to budget cutbacks, we had to let Gemma Zarillo, our Financial Coordinator, and Soyoung Yun, our Administrative Assistant, go. I want to thank them for their contributions to the ASA and wish them the best of luck in the future.

No longer able to meet in person, the Board and the ASA committees continue to meet online. The Education Committee has a social media workshop planned for November 27. Planning for the 2021 conference is keeping the Conference Program Committee busy. I know from experience that planning a conference is a complicated endeavor. This year's committee has the added task of deciding if the conference will be held in Edmonton or virtually and then plan for that type of event.

I've had the chance to visit Rene in her new location at the Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre. It's a lovely space and a considerable improvement over the previous office, which was very, very small. We are excited by the prospect of hosting our workshops and the Archives Institute in the new location.

Since March, I've been fortunate to work from home most days of the week, and I am relieved that the university archives still exist. I know many people have not been so lucky. Jobs have been terminated, and the doors of archives are now temporarily or permanently shut. It feels as if archives are under attack. It feels like we have to justify why archives should exist. And while these things aren't necessarily new, I often find myself thinking about advocacy and what we might do differently. At a recent Board meeting, I suggested we create an advocacy working group to conduct an environmental scan of what other archives, libraries, and museums are doing and develop some resources to help make advocacy easier for everyone. Not surprisingly, I am not the only Board member who thinks we need to shine a bright light on this topic. So stay tuned for some new initiatives coming from the Board or the Outreach and Communications Committee.

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2020- 2021

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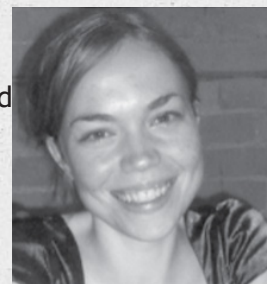


The Archives Society of Alberta is supported in part by a grant from the Government of Alberta.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE ARCHIVES ADVISOR

RENE GEORGOPALIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ARCHIVES ADVISOR

Now that we are more or less settled in our new office space, ASA has been organizing events this fall. We hosted an online member-only session called Reopening Strategies for Archives. We heard from Musée Héritage Museum, University of Alberta and Provincial Archives of Alberta on how reopening has been going at their sites. We hope the session was informative for those who attended and some of the ideas can be incorporated into other member's reopening planning. We also hosted a Social Media Training workshop this fall and the registration was full. ASA has also been preparing to offer its Archives Institute in a virtual format for the first time and those participants began the course in January. Advising is still continuing and ASA is making plans for its 2021 Conference which will be held in May.



I hired a new Office Coordinator, Melissa Owen, who was responsible for bookkeeping and administrative tasks, and then she resigned as she received another job. Now we are working on hiring someone to manage our books and I will take on the administrative work for now. Additionally, we hired a new intern, Timothy Arthur, thanks to a Young Canada Works grant. Timothy will be working on making the Provincial Archives of Alberta Subject Headings (PAASH) machine readable. He is working at ASA from mid-November until March. We intend on having the revised PAASH available in AOR and for many of our institutional members' in-house databases. This project is quite exciting as it benefits many of our members and makes this province's holdings more accessible.

I think the biggest challenge that I see in the archival community right now is funding cuts. With the pandemic, the state of Alberta's economy and cuts from the provincial government, we are seeing some sites temporarily shutting down archives. As municipalities and post-secondary institutions receive cuts, those organizations who do not see their archives as valuable are laying some staff off and/or closing archives down. Advocacy is so important for our field right now. ASA's Board has been discussing working on advocacy to better support our members.

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## ASA'S NEW OFFICE SPACE

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ASA has shared an office with the Alberta Museum's Association (AMA) from 2002 to 2020. In 2002 we moved into an office at 9829 103 Street in Edmonton. And then, in 2010, we moved into an office with the AMA at 10408 124 St in Edmonton. Our old office at the 124 Street location was just under 200 square feet in size and we shared a kitchen and a boardroom with the AMA. Sharing a space with the AMA was great since we receive funding from the same government body and it gave us a chance to collaborate and learn from each other.

Although there were benefits to sharing a space with AMA, ASA struggled with its small space in many ways. In 2014 when we hired the Flood Team, we did not have any working space for new staff. We travelled nearly weekly to meet with each other which was not a good use of our time. When we received additional grants to hire staff to work on projects, we had to tell them to work from home and would provide them with a cellphone and laptop as there was no room at the office for additional staff. The ASA office was full of boxes under the desk and on top of our filing cabinet and closet. The space was not ideal for having meetings with others so often we would arrange meetings at a nearby coffee shop or at one of our member sites. We really needed a larger office.

We had been trying for a long time to acquire a new space but since our budget is so small for an office, we were unsuccessful. In 2019, Kathryn Ivany, City of Edmonton Archivist, informed us that there was possibly a space available at the Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre. Additionally, the AMA's lease with the 124 St building was coming to an end in March 2020. For the same price as what we were paying for our 200 square foot office, we luckily acquired a new office which is about 1600 square feet at the armouries. It is larger than what we require, but once we are able to offer workshops and in-person meetings again, we now have a permanent workshop and meeting space in Edmonton. The extra space is appreciated during the pandemic as we are able to physically distance easily.

The Prince of Wales Armouries Heritage Centre is a historical building in downtown Edmonton. There is free parking available. ASA paid for a few renovations on a shoestring budget including electrical work, fresh paint and moveable glass walls for an office. We bought a new board table but received used furniture from the AMA at no cost including two desks and a shelving unit. The space has an abundance of natural light as we have five south facing windows!

Here are some images of the new space. We hope that at some point soon we can invite our members to see the office in-person.



# STUDENT WORK TERM AT SOUTH PEACE REGIONAL ARCHIVES: A REFLECTION

KAYDENCE REDDING



Over the past four months I have had the incredible opportunity to work at South Peace Regional Archives (SPRA) as the Archives Assistant (Student). SPRA is a public, non-profit archives located in Grande Prairie, Alberta. Our purpose is to gather, preserve, and share the historical records of municipalities, organizations, businesses, and families. We serve and accept donations from all over the South Peace Region, including: Birch Hills County, City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview, MD of Spirit River, and Saddle Hills County. My position, Archives Assistant (Student), is made possible through funding from Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations. As the Archives Assistant (Student)

I contributed to the South Peace Regional Archives by providing public education regarding the importance of archives and respond to the TRC Calls to Action by producing Indigenous centered content and liaising with the Indigenous History Committee on my projects.

Over the summer, I was most excited to create a #ThrowbackThursday social media campaign for the SPRA Facebook page. The first #ThrowbackThursday post launched in early July; the page gained about 120 new likes in just over a month. I found this project to be especially rewarding given the current Covid-19 pandemic. The positive feedback these posts received lets me know that they are bringing the public a little excitement once a week during this challenging time. I also developed my writing and communication skills by contributing articles to the SPRA quarterly magazine, *Telling Our Stories*. I wrote a total of three articles: two focused on the Indigenous history of our region and one was about the sport of Pigeon racing—something I was surprised to learn was once very popular in the South Peace.

I also had the opportunity to complete writing projects for various public outreach events. The first was a short biography for the SPRA Historical Cemetery Tours about Leo and Marie Ferguson, two Indigenous individuals who lived in Lake Saskatoon and were important members of the community. In June, I prepared and delivered a Culture Bites presentation with the Grande Prairie Public Library over Zoom. In my session, I provided a tutorial on how to research Indigenous individuals using the SPRA website, based on the process I used when researching Leo and Marie Ferguson. I also discussed potential challenges of researching Indigenous peoples and some reasons for these challenges.

During the summer, I processed 50 cm of textual material from an accrual to the Schenk Family Fonds and 68 cm of textual material from the Art Gallery of Grande Prairie. This allowed me to gain industry-specific skills required when working with archival materials, including proper handling techniques, arranging, and describing. I used these skills as I processed the two collections, and as I completed an inventory of the map cabinet. One of my favorite parts of processing the Schenk Family Fonds was seeing the photographs it contained. After I finished processing the collection, I learned about digitization practices by digitizing these photos.

## STUDENT WORK TERM AT SOUTH PEACE REGIONAL ARCHIVES: A REFLECTION (CONTINUED)

Working at SPRA during the Covid-19 pandemic has created many unique challenges and opportunities that summer students of the past and future will never likely experience. The pandemic resulted in SPRA closing to the public and volunteers temporarily. Unfortunately for me, this meant that I was unable to work with the SPRA's many volunteers, or be able to assist in-person researchers. Both of these experiences were things I would have loved to take part in, and I am disappointed that I did not have an opportunity to do so. On the other hand, Covid-19 presented me the chance to attend several professional development sessions remotely that I otherwise would not have been able to. The rise in virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom meant that seminars that were originally scheduled to take place in person all over the country were suddenly available online. Through these talks, I was able to expand my knowledge of local and Canadian history, Indigenous history, and residential schools while also gaining a better understanding of what it means to work in the heritage field.

My summer at South Peace Regional Archives has been incredibly rewarding and enjoyable. I have learned about the important role archives play in preserving our history, and I am immensely proud to have played a part in this. I have become connected to the people I encountered in the records I worked with over the summer, like Leo and Marie Ferguson and the Schenk family. I have been able to take a look into these people's lives and, through their records, I feel like I have gotten to know them. This unique feeling of connectedness is one of many perks that come along with working in an archives. While it is true that I have always loved learning about history, I often focused on faraway cultures, countries, and communities. I rarely took the time to gain an understanding of the past that surrounded the South Peace Region, despite being born and raised there. One of the most meaningful experiences I have taken away from my summer in the archives is being able to be so immersed in my local history. Every day I have learned something new. I have been able to share exciting stories with my friends and family about the history of the stores we shop in, the life stories of the individuals our streets and schools are named after, and even about ghost towns we drive by regularly but never knew existed.

Adult Program



### Researching Indigenous Heritage

@ South Peace Regional Archives



South Peace Regional Archives 155.02.16

This speaker series showcases the knowledge of cultural organizations in our community.

Attend these bite-sized presentations to broaden your horizons!

Join the Kaydence Redding for this month's Culture Bites!  
Kaydence will discuss her the newest additions to the archives' popular Cemetery Walking Tours and demonstrate how to conduct research using the resources on the archives' website.

Her presentation will explore some of the unique resources and challenges of researching Indigenous individuals using archival records, and introduce the South Peace Regional Archives' upcoming reconciliation initiative.

**Time:** 6:15 pm to 7:00 pm  
**Date:** Monday, June 22  
**Location:** Zoom

To register call 780-357-7455  
or visit [www.gppl.ca](http://www.gppl.ca)



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South Peace  
REGIONAL ARCHIVES

## STUDENT WORK TERM AT SOUTH PEACE REGIONAL ARCHIVES: A REFLECTION (CONTINUED)

Working at SPRA has allowed me to encounter the bountiful and captivating history that the South Peace Region has. From this, I have been able to gain a whole new appreciation for the place I call home.

I am a student at the University of Alberta, entering my second year in the fall. I have always had a deep passion for history; however, it was not always easy for me to see the career opportunities this could bring. Working in an archives has given me insight into an industry I did not know much about, and has shown me that there are many ways to follow my passions. While I started this position as a Political Science student, my experiences over the summer have inspired me to pursue History instead. I am very excited to be returning to school in September with this new area of focus.



**South Peace Regional Archives**

Published by Kaydence Redding [?] · August 20 ·

This #ThrowbackThursday takes us back to 1941 with this fun image entitled "Boys with Bicycles" which shows Max Henning, Herb Shields, Jim Carlisle, Jerry Strang, Colin Cann, and Rod Fawcett heading out on a bike ride. For many of us growing up, both in the past and the present, our bicycles provided us with our first taste of freedom. The long school-free summer days meant endless fun and exploration was to be had, and our bicycles seemed to put the whole world in the palm of our hands.

Photograph: SPRA 0399.11.01



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 Meg Archer, Doris Naumann and 23 others

3 Comments 6 Shares

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## ASA'S PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA SUBJECT HEADINGS MIGRATION PROJECT

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ASA has received a Young Canada Works grant for a project which will allow us to migrate PAASH so it can be added to Alberta On Record. Our intern is working on this project until March 31. The results of this project will be shared with ASA members who may also be able to use PAASH in their in-house databases. ASA is very excited about this project as it will increase search-ability of archives in the province. Stay tuned for updates on PAASH migration.

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## SAVE THE DATE - ASA CONFERENCE 2021: ARCHIVES IN INTERESTING TIMES!

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ASA is happy to announce that our 2021 Conference planning is underway. The conference will be virtual this year and will take place May 27 to 28. So save the date for our upcoming professional development opportunity. Information on the conference will be up to date on our website here:

[https://archivesalberta.org/professional-development/conference/.](https://archivesalberta.org/professional-development/conference/)



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## PEOPLE AND PLACES

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Jim Bowman has retired. Happy retirement!

Also, Shamin Malmas, former President of ASA, had a baby this past summer and more recently started a new position at Simon Fraser University Archives and Records Management in BC. Congratulations Shamin!

South Peace Regional Archives hired a new archivist, Stephanie Friesen.

The Archives Society of Alberta News is published quarterly by the Archives Society of Alberta. Submissions, questions and suggestions should be directed to the Newsletter Editor c/o:

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Individuals and institutions are encouraged to submit articles, reviews, reports, photographs or letters to the editor to the Archives Society of Alberta News, Issues #1, 2, and 3. Submissions are preferred in electronic format as Word files for textual submissions, or as JPG files for graphic submissions.

Please note:

Issue #4 is reserved for Annual Reports of the Society and its committees.

The views expressed in the Archives Society of Alberta Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Archives Society of Alberta or its Editor.



The Archives Society of Alberta is supported in part by a grant from the Government of Alberta.

## ARCHIVES SOCIETY OF ALBERTA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2021 – 2022

Name (Institution or Individual) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Fax ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Voting Delegate (Associate) \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Affiliation (Individual Members) \_\_\_\_\_

### TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

Please Check

- Archives Employee..... \$60.00
- Students, Volunteers, Seniors ..... \$30.00
- Associate Institutional Member ..... \$90.00
- Institutional Member (Please contact the ASA for further information)
- Yes, I would like to volunteer for an ASA Committee

Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheque or money order payable to the Archives Society of Alberta and mail to:

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Memberships may now be purchased online!

<https://archivesalberta.org/membership/becoming-a-member/>