

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: REPRESENTATION

PHILIP PYPE, PRESIDENT



Archivists are adapters. We are constantly responding to the needs of the public and institutions we serve. We pull on our skills and courage as information professionals, handling an exploding quantity of records, more complex bureaucratic and regulatory systems, and users who expect almost instantaneous results.

Because of this, we are also adopters and developers, leveraging new and improving technology to assist in collecting, preserving, and accessing the historically and administratively significant records of our holdings.

In the past year, there has been much discussion of artificial intelligence: will it displace some of our core functions or is it a tool to be harnessed? Can it be trusted? These are questions to which I only have partial answers. I use AI occasionally, for transcription assistance of recordings, and have used it to help write an administrative history. Is this the thin edge of a wedge that will make my labour redundant, or apps that allow us to have more time to deal with the boxes, pallets, and servers full of records we contend with?

To this I have three points: 1) the amount of records that we contend with continues to grow exponentially (more and more will be electronic), while funding for many of our programs cannot keep pace if methodologies do not stay the same; 2) although AI may be a game changer on a scale we have not dealt with before, we have repeatedly adopted and adapted technology, such as databases (in-house and web-based), digitization (10 years ago the cloud was a very scary place), and digital ingest—now they are commonplace in our daily work lives, if not fundamental to our activities; 3) lastly, and most importantly, we do not need to face these changes in isolation: professional organizations such as the Archives Society of Alberta allow us to address these things with a variety of services and functions such as list-servs, conferences, workshops, and advisory services.

The future is daunting, but also exciting, especially as we share our knowledge and passion for what we do.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

RENE GEORGOPALIS

Our spring season was full of activity, including many more events than the ASA typically organizes in a month. From April to May, we hosted four engagement sessions with Indigenous archives to help with determining the needs of Indigenous archives in the province and set forth a plan for better supporting these archives. The report was finalized in August 2024 and can be read [here](#). We also delivered an Indigenous Archives Training pilot course to members of University Blue Quills in May. Finally, we held our AGM, Institutional Forum, and one-and-a-half-day Excellent Archival Reference workshop in May.



Our Supporting Indigenous Archives project was completed over the summer and the ASA is proud of having been able to work on this project. I would like to thank Jesse Carson and Adrienne Larocque for the work they have done, as well as the participants of the training and engagement sessions. I believe the project is a good start to better supporting Indigenous communities with their archival programs.

This fall, a couple of our members hosted film nights. The Provincial Archives of Alberta hosted a film night on October 4 which featured the film, *The War*



Between Us by director Anne Wheeler. Anne Wheeler and the lead actor, Meiko Ouchi, spoke at the film night. Congratulations to the Provincial Archives of Alberta for hosting a successful event. Additionally, the University of Alberta Archives organized a film night called *Vintage Views* on October 30. The night included candy from times past and featured films that highlighted some milestones on campus such as when HUB mall and the SUB building were new. Since I am an alumna of the U of A, the film night was fun and nostalgic and I felt that the U of A Archives organized a successful event. It was lovely to see archives organizing these outreach initiatives.



This fall, the ASA delivered the 6-day Archives Institute course in person for the first time since the pandemic. It was a joy to teach in person again. In the coming months, we will be hosting a CCI workshop called *Care and Handling of Photographic Materials* as well as an Institutional Forum in which the archives within our province are able to hear about the latest archival news and discuss institutional updates. We are looking forward to seeing members at both events.



SPRING GATHERING

BRONWYN BURLINGHAM



At the end of May, ASA members had the opportunity to come together in Calgary for our AGM and Spring Gathering events.

Our first day and a half in Calgary was devoted to the workshop, *Excellent Archival Reference*, delivered by Robin M. Katz, a Los Angeles-based archivist and librarian with expertise in the area of primary source literacy. The workshop, held in the beautiful downtown branch of the Calgary Public Library and the nearby Municipal Building, was very well received: attendees noted the practical applications of the workshop within archival work and the benefits of discussing hands-on strategies to support reference service in an archival context.

Following the reference workshop, the ASA hosted an Alberta on Record workshop, led by our Database Administrator, Jia Jia Yong.

The ASA held our AGM and awards presentations on the final day of the Spring Gathering. Leslie Latta, of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, was recognized with an Honourary Member award, and The City of Edmonton Archives was honoured with an Outreach Award for their Community Outreach Initiative project.



It was great to connect and learn alongside so many of our members, and we look forward to our next gathering.



ASA BURSARY RECIPIENT

EMMA HUTCHINSON

My name is Emma Hutchinson, and I am one of this year's recipients of the *ASA Bursary for Graduate Students in Archival Studies*. I'm a first-year student in the University of Manitoba / University of Winnipeg Joint Master's Program (JMP) in History, taking the Archival Studies stream. As I've started my year in the JMP, I have been very grateful for the ASA bursary, which has allowed me to purchase textbooks and print reading assignments without worrying about the cost. It particularly means a lot to me to know that the archival community in Alberta is supporting me as I begin my studies; while I chose to leave the province to go to school, I hope to return to pursue my professional career, and the support of the ASA as I begin my journey helps confirm for me that there is a supportive professional community in my home province.



When I graduate, I would ideally like to work in an academic archives setting. Academic archives interest me particularly because of the opportunity to combine hands-on professional practice with research and publication. I have always enjoyed research, and I am excited by the thought of both helping researchers in the archives and contributing my own voice to the field. I am really looking forward to pursuing both a major research paper and an archival internship during my program, and I'm excited to see where I end up two years from now. Thank you to the ASA for supporting my studies!

ANNUAL REPORT

BRONWYN BURLINGHAM



Staff at the ASA have been working toward a new image for our annual report.

This year, we worked with a graphic designer to create a document that is modern and clear, and we are so pleased with the result. Facts and figures are presented in an enticing format that reflects the vision of the ASA.

Members will have received a digital copy of the report in early October, and it can also be found [here](#).

We hope that our members enjoy the enhanced readability of our new annual report.

FEATURED: PAUL D. FLECK LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES, BANFF CENTRE

PAUL HICKLING

1) What is your position and how long have you been working at the archives?

I started working at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity's Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives in January 2023 as an Archives Assistant, working with Jessica Zimmerman. When Jessica left her role, I had the opportunity to move into the role of Archivist in April 2023.



2) What types of records do you acquire at your archives?

Our collection consists of archival material created by alumni, faculty, and staff of Banff Centre, focusing on their experiences at Banff Centre and in the broader community. Additionally, we collect the records of individuals and organizations that have played a significant role in arts and culture, mountain culture, and leadership that have a connection with Banff Centre. The bulk of our collection is textual records, photographs, and audio/visual material in a wide variety of formats.

3) What is the physical extent of your site's holdings?

Our holdings contain over 200 metres of textual records, 180 000 photographs, 3000 technical drawings, 2400 audio recordings, and 1400 film and video recordings.

4) What do you think is the biggest challenge at your archives currently?

One of the biggest challenges the Archives faces at the moment is the current lack of Records Manager at the organization. As a result, these responsibilities generally fall to our department. It takes some effort to balance working with departments to ensure proper records retention and disposition, while trying to keep a steady grasp on reference requests, research appointments, and processing the backlog.

5) Which project at your site do you feel most proud of?

We have recently revamped our user-facing catalogue. Although it is still a work in progress, it is nice to provide a new way for researchers and alumni to browse a portion of our records.

More generally, I really enjoy having the opportunity to assist researchers with their academic work. My motivation for working in archives was to help others find information they would otherwise be unable to access to help them realize their own visions.

6) What is your favourite item in the holdings?

One of my favourite parts of our collection is our maquettes. Banff Centre originated as a theatre school in 1933, and creating maquettes has been a tool for set designers to conceptualize the stage space they have to work with, and then use these models to communicate the scale of their ideas to their team.



This maquette was produced for *The Good Woman of Szechwan* in 1980 by Set Designer Laszlo Funtek.

CITY OF RED DEER ARCHIVES: WESTERNER DAYS

JILLIAN STANIEC



This year is the 60th anniversary of the City of Red Deer's Archives, so we've been doing a lot of extra outreach and activities to celebrate and get our name into the community.

A significant new community activity for us was with The Westerner, our local fair and exhibition. We assisted The Westerner with the development of a brand new Central Alberta History pavilion for their 5-day long event. Our main role was scanning over 400 images for potential use in their reuseable exhibit panels.



We were also able to get a booth in the pavilion to connect with visitors about the archives. At the booth, we gave visitors Red Deer Archives notepads, handed out colouring pages that we made based on archival images, explored binders of photographs with unknown people or places, and held a daily draw for a Red Deer history book. By having such a variety of options, we were able to connect with a wide variety of visitors about our records, our archives, and archives in general. Our staff even fielded three questions about how to get into the archival profession!

This event was considered quite successful for us, with personal connections made with just under 1000 people, including potential donors and some direct reference requests. That said, we hope that in the future they may do more programming in the space which may draw a few more people into the space for more than just cooling off from the +30 degree days.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Please send announcements of retirements, newly-hired staff, or any other personnel changes to admin@archivesalberta.org to have them included in this section.

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SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

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

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