Archival Professional Development
The role of the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA)
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Association of Canadian Archivists
ACA’s mandate

- Providing **leadership** for everyone engaged in the preservation of Canada's Documentary Heritage
- Encouraging **awareness** of archival activities and developments and the importance of archives to modern society
- **Advocating** the interests and needs of professional archivists before government and other regulatory agencies
- **Communicating** to further the understanding and cooperation amongst members of the Canadian archival system, and other information and culture based professions
e-Archivaria and The Canadian Archivist

- Freely available on the ACA website
- Most recent 8 issues embargoed.
- Searchable by issue, author or title.
- [http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/archivaria](http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/archivaria) (e-Archivaria)
- [http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/ca/index](http://journals.sfu.ca/archivar/index.php/ca/index) (The Canadian Archivist)
What is the Canadian Archival System?

• Sharing responsibilities for conserving Canada’s documentary heritage is a fundamental principle in the establishment of the Canadian archival system.

• While each institution and the various levels of government are responsible for developing and maintaining archives, professional associations are entrusted with developing archivists.

• For the Canadian archival system to function smoothly, each component in the system collaborates and cooperates in promoting common interests and in solving common problems.
The Canadian Archival System

Canadian Archival System

- Canadian Council of Archives (CCA)
- Bureau of Canadian Archivists (BCA)
- Librarian and Archivist of Canada
- Provincial / Territorial Archivists

Provincial and Territorial Councils

Archival institutions

Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA)

Archivists

Association des archivistes du Québec (AAQ)

Archivists
The Canadian Archival System

“Of all national assets, archives are the most precious: they are the gift of one generation to another, and the extent of our care of them marks the extent of our civilization.” Sir Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist, 1904-1935.

In the beginning …

- Early nation building and the Public Archives Act of 1912
- The Commission on National Development in the Arts (Massey Commission)
- The Commission on Canadian Studies (Symons Commission)
- Consultative Group on Canadian Archives (Wilson Report)
Massey Commission (1949)

- Anti-American in nature
- Chaired by Governor General of Canada, Vincent Massey.

“Our use of American institutions or our lazy even abject, imitation of them has caused uncritical acceptance of ideas and assumptions which are alien to our tradition.”
Symons Commission (1972)

- examined the role of universities in Canadian Society
- Similar to Massey report, brought an inherent anti-American bias
- First clear articulation of “Total Archives”

sought to prove that “Canada provides a North American alternative to life under the Government of the United States.”
Consultative Group on Canadian Archives (1980)

• envisioned a comprehensive system of archives in Canada
• Desired records to remain in the region they were created
• encourage cooperation among existing and new repositories
The Canadian Archival System

“We recommend that the archives in each province form a coordinated network to establish common priorities and to develop services, facilities and programs of benefit to all.” the Wilson Report, 1980.

Canadian Council of Archives

Its tasks are to:

• identify national priorities;
• make recommendations concerning the system’s operation and financing;
• develop and facilitate the management of programs to assist the archival community;
• advise the National Archivist;
• promote better communication between components of the Canadian archival system and;
• communicate archival needs and concerns to decision-makers, researchers and the general public.
The Canadian Council of Archives

CCA

Provincial and Territorial Councils

Association of Canadian Archivists

Association des archivistes du Québec

Librarian and Archivist of Canada

Bureau of Canadian Archivists
The Canadian Archival System

“The Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) is a coordinating body whose mission is to sustain and nurture the nationwide efforts of over 800 archival organizations who share a common passion for Canada's rich and wonderful history.” CCA press release, 2005.

Canadian Council of Archives

To support the archival system, the CCA has various committees - the Canadian Committee on Archival Description, the Preservation Committee, and the Standards Committee.

The CCA administers financial assistance provided by the Canadian Department of Heritage via Library and Archives Canada through various programmes - Control of Holdings, Professional Development and Training, Special Projects, Conservation Plan for Canadian Archival Records (CPCAR), and Conservation Training and Information.
The Canadian Archival System

“This has been an extraordinary and productive agenda, putting in place the essential infrastructure of a profession and of coordinated archival service, accessible to Canadians.” Ian Wilson, Librarian & Archivist of Canada, 2004.

Canadian Council of Archives

The CCA could be said to be making progress in developing a Canadian archival system. Between 1985 and 1995 …

• $18,000,000 had been expended.
• 34,500 meters of textual materials, 4,000,000 photographs, 160,000 maps and architectural drawings, and 104,000 hours of sound and moving image records were processed.
• Rules for Archival Description (RAD) and the Canadian Archives Information Network (CAIN) were developed.
• CCA funds also made possible services such as provincial and territorial councils’ archives advisors programmes, preservation consultant programmes, and professional development training programmes …
ACA and Professional Development

- Reflected basic educational need for archival training
- Partnership with Universities and The National Archives
- Never attempted systematically
ACA’s Early Professional Development

• “instruction in archives can be extraordinarily dull unless the tedium is relived by the copious use of illustrations and specimens, and by visits to repositories and repair shops.”

Alan Ridge, McGill University archivist and editor, *The Canadian Archivist*, 1968
English Canadian Archival Studies Programs

- University of Manitoba (Department of History)
- University of Toronto (Faculty of Information Studies)
- University of British Columbia (School of Library, Archival and Informational Studies)
- McGill University (School of Library Science)
The Archives Society of Alberta established its new ADVISORY SERVICES PROGRAM in 1995. Advisory Services is one of several programs offered by the Society to support and encourage the development of sustainable archives in Alberta.

**Advisory Services Provides:**

- advice to archival institutions working to improve procedures and practices
- advice to organizations desiring to care for their archival records
- advice to organizations that may wish to start an archives

**How:**

- advice and information may be delivered through site assessments, individual consultation, education and training, telephone, fax, and through the ASA resource library

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE:**

- members of the Archives Society of Alberta
- organizations and businesses that wish to start an archives
- organizations and businesses which hold significant records which may be available for public research

**Contact:**
ACA’s recent PD offerings

- ACA Institute- strives for high level theoretical offerings
- Past topics include macro-appraisal, Australian archival system, electronic records management
- Prominent instructors
- Mentorship program
Review & Renewal Process

• In 2004- ACA was thirty years old
• Committee struck to review the structure and operations of the Association
• association to focus on advocacy, outreach, professional development, internal and external communications, as well as governance
Review & Renewal: ACA’s Professional Development goals

1. ACA focus on professional development, rather than basic education.
2. ACA conduct periodic surveys of employers and archivists to ensure its professional development program responds to their needs.
3. ACA enter into discussions with CCA and provincial / territorial archival associations about partnerships in creating an English language national program of professional development.
4. Include archival educators in this process.
5. Review mandate and role of education committee.
6. Investigate the feasibility of hiring a permanent Education Officer
The future of preserving Canada’s past …

“The archival community had great dreams twenty or thirty years ago and we have accomplished a great deal for Canadians. My expectation is that we can collectively show the same leadership, collaboration, foresight and courage in renewing our vision and our approaches for the decades to come.”