

Philadelphia as a means of experiencing other institutional environments. The result was a loss of time and even temper on at least one occasion.

Issues of a domestic nature dominated many of the deliberations, particularly the plenary session on the Public Documents Commission created by the 93rd Congress to explore the problems and issues involved in the location and maintenance of the records of public officials. Nevertheless, the principles at issue had a relevance for Canada even though so far we have been spared a Watergate to bring these issues to a head.

Next year, the conference will be held in Washington at the same time as the International Council on Archives in the 200th year of the Republic, and the 40th of the S.A.A. The theme will be "The archival revolution of our time", and Canadians will have plenty to say about that!

Hugh Taylor
Public Archives of Canada

Architectural Records and Archives

Concern for Canada's architectural heritage is growing across the country. Public interest in the preservation of architectural works has been demonstrated by the recent proliferation of societies and citizens' groups concerned with the rapid metamorphosis of the built environment; the consequent destruction of historic buildings has generated some fierce political and legal battles. Governments on all levels have responded: the City of Ottawa has employed a "heritage planner"; the Province of Québec has new legislation protecting designated buildings; the Federal Government has established Heritage Canada. More examples could be cited.

Recognizing that archivists have a significant role to play in this area, the Canada Council agreed to sponsor a five-day conference entitled "Architectural Records and Archives in Canada". The request for the support came from the Archives Committee of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada.

During the week of August 11 to 15, 1975, thirteen individuals with widely varied professional affiliations convened at Stanley House, the century-old summer residence of the former Governor General on the south shore of the Gaspé Peninsula. Participants included archivists specializing in various media, senior administrators of archives, the President of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, a restoration architect, an architectural historian, and two librarians. The mix of professions and experience, drawn from all parts of Canada, and the delightful setting of Stanley House, were conducive to stimulating discussions covering all aspects of architectural records and archives.

Anyone wishing additional information about this conference can contact me at the National Map Collection, Public Archives of Canada. A full report based on more than forty hours of tape-recorded proceedings is being submitted to this journal for the next issue.

James W. Knight
Archives Committee
Society for the Study of Architecture
in Canada

The Add. MSS. System — PABC

On January 1, 1975 the Public Archives of British Columbia inaugurated a new system of cataloguing manuscripts. All material catalogued since that date has been listed in a new catalogue. Material described by the old method will be recatalogued, but until the recataloguing is completed, researchers will have to consult both the old and new catalogues, which are located together in the reference room.

The major disadvantage of the old system was the way it treated larger collections. Although each unit was kept together physically on the shelves, the series and items of which it was composed were catalogued individually without a description of the unit as a whole. This made it easy to assign subject headings to specific parts of a collection, but difficult both for the Archives to produce descriptions of its holdings and for researchers to cite PABC materials with reasonable brevity.

At first we had hoped to correct this fault by recataloguing only the larger collections in order to provide general descriptions and finding aids. However, problems such as overlapping or conflicting subject categories and a very cumbersome numbering system led to the conclusion that the recataloguing of the entire manuscript collection would be more efficient. The manuscript group system was rejected because most units were too complex to fit into a single, narrow subject group. Furthermore, the use of broader categories would result in lengthy listings which would tend to defeat the purpose of having groups. It was decided, therefore, to adopt an additional manuscripts (Add. MSS.) system.

In the Add. MSS. system, units are simply given successive numbers — Add. MSS. 1, Add. MSS. 2, and so on. A later addition to a unit already held is not integrated with that collection, but is assigned a new Add. MSS. number as it is catalogued. The unit is then brought together by means of the card catalogue in which title cards are filed alphabetically. Both title and subject cards bear appropriate cross references when a single finding aid covers two or more additional manuscripts.