

required. Although tintypes and ambrotypes have a very thin nitrocellulose emulsion, the magnitude of the decomposition products of the nitrocellulose is such that isolation from existing collections may be needed but unique storage rooms are not required. Excessive light levels may cause damage to varnish and tinting. Each case should be wrapped and stored independently of others to reduce wear and, if possible, should be stored vertically in slipcases. To minimize handling of the originals because of their brittle support, ambrotypes and case photographs should be photographed with a fine-grained, large format film to facilitate research.

### Points of Interest

Various factors discussed in this paper require further investigation. For example, Robert Organ of the Conservation-Analytical Laboratory, Smithsonian Institute, recommended in a private communication the use of a sulfide-absorbing matt between the daguerreotype's metal matt and the plate. This would neutralize sulfide gasses entering the case. Another point emphasized the possibility of emulsion damage during the process of image consolidation for ambrotypes.

In the course of treating the daguerreotype plates, it was noted that those with a yellow-gold tint were less tarnished, suggesting that gold toning may be a possible tarnish inhibiting treatment for conserved plates. It was also observed that the modified thiourea formulation (see footnote 1) lost its action very quickly with each plate treated, and in the case of heavy tarnishes it could not complete the cleaning cycle. A fresh bath was therefore prepared for each plate, and a second bath used for the most heavily tarnished plates. The second bath had double the weight of thiourea, and once the cleaning action had slowed in the first bath, the plate was transferred to the second until cleaned.

The treatments mentioned in this paper are now being prepared for accelerated aging tests in order to establish their utility as conservation processes.

### Bibliographic Note

In addition to observations deriving from the experimental process, and the generous assistance of David Dudley and Robert Senior, both of the Canadian Conservation Institute, the following works were consulted for the preparation of this paper: Carl Dame Clark, *Pictures: Their Preservation and Restoration* (Maryland: The Standard Arts Press, 1959); *The Focal Encyclopedia of Photography* (Norwich, England: Fletcher and Sons Ltd., 1969); Peggy Ann Kusnerz, "Preservation of Case Photographs," a reprint from *Michigan Museums Review* in *Canadian Museum Association Gazette*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1973; Eugene Ostroff, "Conserving and Restoring Photographic Collections," *Museum News*, issues for May, September, November, 1974; Eugene Ostroff in *Caring for Photographs*, by the Editors of Time-Life Books (New York: Time Inc., 1972) pp. 34-38. Two lecture hand-outs were also used: D. B. Thomas, Keeper, The Science Museum (United Kingdom) "The Wet Collodian Process" and A.T. Gill, Curator, Royal Photographic Society (United Kingdom) "The Daguerreotype."

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## FOCUS: Simcoe County Archives

Whatever else the uncharacteristic, not to say chauvinistic, Canadian Centennial celebrations did, they left, along with a plethora of centennial parks, a very valuable addition to the cause of historical preservation in Simcoe County. The Simcoe County Archives springs largely from the same nationalistic urges which brought us Expo '67.



*Front view, Simcoe County Archives*

Bald statistics do not tell the real story of the first county archives established in Ontario,<sup>1</sup> for the institution is more the product of dedication on the part of individuals and groups, and perhaps, perseverance in the face of adversity. The physical plant has remained unchanged from the original design of 1966. The major alterations have come in the form of a one hundred per cent increase in staff—to two, and modified methods of operation. The hours of the Archives have been lengthened until by the summer of 1976 reference services were available seven days a week. Shorter winter hours from October to April give a breather to the staff, yet Simcoe County Archives remains one of the few

1 Simcoe County Archives opened November 22, 1966, as a County Centennial project. The concept of having an archives was supported, if not suggested by the Women's Institutes of the County and the late Neil Morrison. Mr. Norbert Moran was appointed first County Archivist and continued in this position until his retirement in January 1975. Working single-handedly until 1973, Mr. Moran built the basis of the collection. The 2500 square foot building contains a stack room, reading room, work room and washroom, and was generally laid out with the advice of Mr. A. Murdoch of the Ontario Archives. All rooms are air-conditioned and de-humidifiers operate in the stacks. The whole repository is physically combined with the Museum on a seventeen-acre wooded site north of Barrie, Ontario. In 1976 Ms Su Murdoch, Assistant Archivist and Peter Moran, Archivist, comprise the entire full time staff. By October 1976 the Archives held about 1,400 linear feet of material, serviced more than 380 researchers a year, and had received at least 70 accessions. No formal records management function has been given to SCA: consequently, most of the material comes from private donations. The annual budget is approximately \$29,000.00. Services include the use of a Recordak viewer, Xerox copier, tape recorder, and a photographic copy camera.

repositories offering full services on Saturdays year round. This sort of growth has extended into other aspects of the "total archives" ideal toward which Simcoe County is striving. Diffusion has grown to the point where, at present, almost one-quarter of the staff's time is devoted to aspects of archival work outside of the building. Frequent "travelling road shows" using duplicate material such as newspapers and photographs visit area schools, giving students an opportunity to become aware of the Archives and familiar with primary material. Yearly seminars for local teachers began in 1976 to encourage better use of archival resources. Other community involvement includes speaking to women's institutes, church groups and service clubs about means of preserving their records and private papers. The production of the first in a series of "jackdaws" or learning kits was recently completed. This premier effort was called "The Railway Comes to Simcoe County," and utilized facsimiles of maps, newspapers, broadsides, manuscripts and photographs to illustrate the need for construction and the impact of the first railway in Upper Canada. Similar projects in the future will illuminate early agriculture, navigation and lumbering for any level from senior public school to grade thirteen. A local radio station has agreed to foster another form of diffusion by broadcasting a weekly program on side-lights of local history using scripts prepared by the staff of the Archives.

Much of this spreading abroad of archival resources has derived from ulterior motives. The establishment in 1966 of Simcoe County Archives in the shadow, quite literally, of the County Museum, has contributed to a continual struggle to keep a separate identity. Museums are known entities, archives, especially local archives, are not—at least, not yet. For a number of years, in the name of economy, the Archives shared a common brochure with the Museum. Consequently, too many people in the region believe the Archives to be merely another part of the Museum. Thus, much of the diffusion programme is a form of self-defence.<sup>2</sup>

The more traditional work of an archival repository has not been neglected at Simcoe County. Acquisitions, researchers, mail inquiries, even spill-over tourists from the Museum, have all increased each year. By the end of 1976, probably more than four hundred researchers will have used, in person, the facilities of the Archives. This number of users after only ten years assumes importance when looked at in relation to other, larger, institutions.<sup>3</sup> To serve researchers, a series of inventories or descriptive lists of material relevant to local government, various subjects, and private collections, have been produced and are being cross-referenced. New emphasis, despite the lack of a formal records-management role, is being placed on acquiring local records, but manuscript items continue to compose the largest part of the material on deposit. For the first time, County government is about to consider delineating the role to be played by the Archives, and this formal outline of duties may give the institution the authority to collect records in an organized fashion. Perhaps the sad spectacle of Boy Scouts rescuing discarded 19th century records from the dump will be replaced by some system of management by the Archives.

2 In view of the confusion of identities in the minds of local people, any local archives should avoid being physically attached to a local museum. The conflict of priorities, roles, public relations, and especially, fund raising, more than out-weigh the values. SCA and the Museum are ruled by a common Board of County Council which often views the Archives as merely another part of the Museum. As an example, the Archives hours of operation are geared to the hours of the Museum because it is regarded almost as but another display area of the Museum. Yet the Archives receives no revenue from Museum admissions. Tourists from the Museum have been known to elbow poor researchers out of their chairs in a rush to see "the old paper."

3 Without making too much of figures out of context, it is interesting to note that the Public Archives Report 1971/1972, page 19, gives the 1959 number of researchers in the Manuscript Division of PAC as 480. After ten years of existence, SCA has almost reached this figure. Of course, recent PAC figures tell a different story; yet the point remains, local archives service a substantial number of researchers.

Whether salvaged by the Boy Scouts or donated by private individuals, all material at SCA is housed in a controlled environment, with a stress on stabilization by means of central air-conditioning and humidity control. Deacidification of valuable items and wide use of acid-free containers and folders, along with minor repairs and fumigation are the limit of conservation capabilities at present. Much of the problem of conservation results from a lack of funds or suitable sources for materials, but SCA has solved the problem in one small area. The lack of acid-free folders and envelopes posed a problem until the local Adult Re-training Centre provided the answer. ARC Industry makes up envelopes on request using specially designed cutting dies, acid-free stock, and adhesive provided by the Archives. Quantities of one hundred and up are ordered as needed at a unit cost of less than seventeen cents. Thus, the minimum order requirements and the high tariffs occasioned by ordering from American sources are avoided. If only a domestic source of paper could be found! In the same vein, other improvisations in supplies and equipment such as cabinets, fumigators and display materials are used. For example, classroom sets of an 1875 reprint of a local newspaper were obtained in return for supplying copies of early photographs to a trust company.<sup>4</sup> The new fumigator, patterned after one shown in George Cunha's book *Conservation of Library Materials* (vol. 1, 1971), was built at cost by a friendly handy-man. "Cajolery" has become a practised art and part of the job description of the staff.

In the area of reference guides and finding aids, the Archives is engaged in a process familiar to most institutions—that of changing over to a new system. The main reference aids to date are accession records, inventories, and an out-of-date main card index. A relatively novel (for local archives) finding aid has been produced with the aid of a local library using O.F.Y. and Ontario "Experience" grants; a reasonably comprehensive index to the *Barrie Northern Advance* newspaper has been completed for the period 1847 to 1914. The hope is to have the *Magnet/Advance* index completed to the demise of the paper in 1940, thereby offering researchers one of the few complete indexes to a provincial weekly newspaper available in Canada. SCA holds what is believed to be the longest file of this newspaper, which is in the process of being microfilmed.

The subject of microfilm brings up the negative aspects of the story of Simcoe County Archives. No microfilming facility is available in our local area. Consequently much material, badly in need of copying, is in danger of being lost. Attempts to retard deterioration by establishing a stable environment may save what is stored in the Archives, at least until copying is possible, but the veritable mountain of material outside must wait in garages, basements, or attics. After ten years of active collecting, SCA is rapidly running out of space and staff to preserve all deserving documents. While microfilm is not a panacea for all problems of preservation, space and reference, it would be a godsend. To this end, an ownership/user programme to acquire is being considered. By this plan, SCA would share costs with a regional library system. The obvious question of priorities will, of course, arise. If the difficulties of co-existence with a sister organization such as the Museum are troublesome, should we anticipate greater problems finding peace between an archives and a library?

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4 The trading of copies of historically interesting material for immediate benefit or "future considerations" has posed a problem at SCA. How much commercial use should be made of archival resources? Is a copy of an old city map in a bank lobby more commercial than a photo used in a popular history by Pierre Berton? What should archives seek from such users? SCA has recently begun a policy of supplying material for such use, but with some return to the Archives. Copy photographs for commercial use are supplied in return for 16" x 20" mounted prints being given to the Archives. The entire question of Archives and the Commercial World is worthy of the attention of the Association of Canadian Archivists. In the meantime, SCA will continue to bargain with commercial interests, keeping in mind donors' wishes, copyright and archival practices, of course.



*Reading Room, Simcoe County Archives*

The many problems of any repository might simply be put down to one cause—money. Simcoe County Archives has attempted by direct appeal to the Ontario Cabinet to raise funds on behalf of local archives, but to no avail. All funding still comes from the local municipalities of Barrie and Orillia, with the County of Simcoe underwriting the greater part of the budget. Until such time as the higher authorities are prepared to see local areas receive their share of the money needed to preserve archival resources, all local archives will continue staggering beneath the crushing burdens of lack of space, staff, and facilities. Perhaps the recently formed Association of Canadian Archivists' committee on local archives will be the agent which brings, as Sir Arthur Doughty has called it, "civilization" to the local areas.

In spite of what may seem to be carping comments made above, the future of SCA appears to be bright. The efforts at diffusion are slowly bearing fruit as is shown by the yearly increase in all aspects of archival work. A tenth anniversary "Archives Week" is planned, beginning 21 November, 1976, featuring displays of original maps (from Munster's 1540 map onward) and photographs of Barrie circa 1875. An open house will be held with tours of the Archives and short talks given on "How to save your old newspapers," and "Proper framing of prints." The winter circuit of speaking engagements and "travelling road shows" to the schools has begun. SCA is actively encouraging the proper storage of privately held manuscript treasures in the hope that eventually some material of value might reach the Archives in better condition. To this end, SCA sells at cost small Hollinger boxes to women's institutes and individuals.

Earlier, allusion was made to diffusion projects using radio. In reality, much of this sort of thing is more in the nature of publicity than true diffusion. The length to which the search for publicity will go is considerable. To encourage greater awareness of our existence, a bike-a-thon rider was sponsored by the Archives staff in September, 1976. Riding to raise money for workshops for the retarded, who, incidentally, produce our acid-free envelopes, an individual wore a T-shirt emblazoned with the legend, "Think Archives!" We have not yet assessed the impact of this stunt.

The creation of a county archives in 1966 was a unique, almost daring decision on the part of County Solons. SCA has attempted to maintain this tradition of innovation, while dealing with problems peculiar to small and impecunious institutions. The unique questions facing small archives include: whether to remain small but highly organized, or growing, recognized, and a little chaotic perhaps; whether to push community involvement such as school tours beyond what senior institutions might consider proper; whether to augment tiny budgets by capitalizing on the commercial possibilities of archival materials. The Association of Canadian Archivists will be, *must be*, of great assistance in helping places like SCA answer such challenges for the benefit of Canadian historical studies.

Peter Moran  
Simcoe County Archives

✓ *a note to archives, libraries and historical societies*

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