

chivists are recognized as having something to offer to the discussion of this very difficult area of public business.

The Canadian literature on the question of access to government information remains limited despite considerable recent public agitation. The *Minutes of Proceedings* of the Forsey-McCleave Committee provide the most extensive collection of opinion and argument on all sides of the question, and may be recommended to anyone with an interest in probing the matter.

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Annual Report, 1976/1977. MULTICULTURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF ONTARIO. Prepared by R.F. HARNEY. [Toronto: The Society], 1977. [24] p. maps. Free (Available from the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 5 Hoskin Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1H7).

A first annual report has been published by the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, a non-profit corporation formed in 1976 and funded by lottery revenue. Its objectives are to promote and advance studies in the history of ethnocultural groups within Ontario, to collect and catalogue relevant materials, to arrange for their safe-keeping and accessibility, to encourage the publication of primary research on the ethnocultural groups and to publicize their important contributions to the growth and development of Ontario. It is a handsome production, with imitation parchment pages and a cover displaying facsimile "ethnic" documents.

The contents are standard fare as annual reports go, including lists of personnel and board members, a financial statement, charts outlining research distribution, and a partial list of accessions. Professor Robert Harney, President of the Society, manages some skilful pen work to present the objectives and aims of the society while describing nearly every activity. However, he leaves the reader asking how and when the materials will be transferred to the Archives of Ontario, which is stated to be the primary depository of material collected.

Some of the aims of the Multicultural History Society — the promotion of ethnic studies, the publishing and publicizing functions — are not traditional archival occupations. The selection and acquisition of materials for preservation, their arrangement and description, however, are. Although Maurice Careless, Chairman of the Society's Board of Directors, states that the Society's task is "above all archival — to collect and save," the Society functioned for a year without an archivist on staff, an oversight seemingly vindicated by the fact that "in the ten months before [they] had a professional archivist or archival space, not a single piece of material entrusted to the Society by researchers was misplaced or damaged." The exact role of the archivist now hired is not clear. Researcher/collectors outnumber archivists thirty-five to one (with the exception of archivists employed by the several co-operating institutions). Their training consists of a seminar and instruction by Professor Harney and the librarians on the methods of tape recording historical source material and of gathering and submitting photographs and written material. This is followed by the archivist's instruction in technical procedures. Among the responsibilities suggested for the archivist, those that stand out are: "copes . . . with the concern and occasional hostility of those who represent more traditional provenances and collecting jurisdictions," and "maintains the balance between the enthusiasms of our crusade to save ethnocultural and non-English language material from oblivion and the more deliberate and professional tempo of archives development."

These statements show an awareness of the existence of archival principles, but the Society's "principal [sic] of ethnicity as an organizing principle for [their] collection of

materials" is no more than a subject approach. It sets a precedent for the creation of similar collecting societies to promote commercial, labour, religious and other kinds of history. And it precludes the capacity of our government archives with their "total" collecting mandates and our religious, business and association archives to provide a rational acquisition strategy that will preserve all records which should be preserved.

The initiative and undertakings of the Society are commendable. The oral tradition of Ontario's ethnic communities was not being preserved, ethnic records were not being sought systematically and thoroughly, relevant records in the immigrants' countries of origin were not being copied, concern was not being given to saving the records of multicultural broadcasting. But why was a new body needed? Was it because the existing archives lack the energy and flexibility to carry out such a programme? Was it that their capabilities are unknown? Was it that they were outdone by the appeal of a new bureaucracy? Perhaps it was simply that they lack the three million dollars that endows the Multicultural History Society's efforts.

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A Handbook for the Travelling Exhibitionist. BARBARA TYLER and VICTORIA DICKENSON. Illustrations by DANIEL NORRIS. Ottawa: Canadian Museums Association, c1977. 51 p. illus. ISBN 0 919106 05 6
Members: \$4.00, Non-members: \$5.00.

Do not be fooled by the drugstore paperback title or the snappy little cartoons that illustrate this book's main ideas. It is a very handy instructive guide to the mechanics of putting together travelling exhibitions. Although the book is aimed principally at the personnel of human history museums, most of what is said applies equally to those working in archives.

Obviously the appearance of such a work reflects the enormous increase in the number of travelling exhibits being created and exchanged by cultural institutions in this country, including archives. I am sure the authors would agree that this phenomenon has not proceeded entirely smoothly. While some very good travelling exhibitions have been mounted, there have been headaches with content, budget, design, security and scheduling. This manual offers a remedy by identifying the various factors to be considered in planning and execution and by proposing a straightforward and systematic approach to the whole question. Their words are given added force in two ways. Delightful cartoons by Daniel Norris dramatize, often very humorously, their ideas. In addition, example and emphasis are provided by developing, in the course of the book, an imaginary exhibition focussed on the beaver as a Canadian symbol.

The book is divided into six major sections: "In the Beginning," "The Budget," "Up the Critical Path," "The Vital Functions," "The Last Hurdle," and "The Verdict." Two further sections provide a bibliography and appendixes, the latter giving sample forms for loan agreements and condition reports. Each of the major sections is split further. As an example, the vital functions chapter discusses interpretative research, design, scheduling, catalogues, publicity, packing and shipping, and installation. The following quote gives a sample of the brisk and informative tone: "Large structural components may enhance your exhibition and go a long way toward locating the proper aesthetic environment, but they will be objects of horror at every other stop on the circuit. Many museums, especially those housed in historic buildings, only have standard single doors, 7 feet high by 3 feet wide, and many have ceiling heights of only nine feet." In several of the sub-sections archivists will miss consideration of archival material as a special class of object. This lack is most noticeable in the discussion of