

year reinforcing the trend to greater participation in small groups. More and more people seem to prefer smaller sessions because they permit intensive subject coverage, promote a free exchange of ideas and encourage interaction which is the main purpose of such gatherings. Perhaps future programme committees would consider altering full panel sessions to enhance their value by having formal papers prepared for distribution at the conference instead of relying only on oral presentations. The chair would then play a more significant role stimulating discussion. Without being unduly formal or placing impossible commitments on participants and organizers alike, printing selected papers on main conference themes would not only serve conference purposes, eliminating much catechismic repetition and permitting all registrants to benefit, but they could serve as an outreach to a wider archival public by providing a permanent printed addition to archival literature.

The forty-second annual conference was its predicted and predictable success executed with characteristically American panache and polish. The smooth scheduling of over forty-eight separate sessions testified to the efficiency of the programme and local arrangements committees. For the first time in a long time we were treated to a well researched, scholarly presidential address balanced with just the right amount of humour for the after dinner atmosphere. "Photographs as Historical Evidence: Early Texas Oil" was the subject of Walter Rundell's illustrated presentation, an eminently appropriate and much appreciated highlight of this year's conference.

Barbara Lazenby Craig
Archives of Ontario

Archives Day '78

At its June 1978 annual general meeting the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) resolved to designate a day as Archives Day. The idea was to encourage the various national, provincial and local archives, archival associations and interested groups and individuals to mark the occasion by special events which would highlight the role and service of archives to our community. In cooperation with the Association des archivistes du Quebec it was agreed to designate 15 November 1978 as Archives Day and through a committee of representatives from across Canada, the ACA began its planning.

It was recognized at the outset that the committee's primary role was that of coordination, that the major responsibility for interesting repositories and groups to become involved had to lay necessarily with the local archives and regional archival associations. Via newsletters, correspondence, telephone calls and meetings of regional associations, ideas were exchanged on how best to mark Archives Day '78. Everyone recognized the need to develop interesting, low-costing yet meaningful projects. Thus stress was placed on the practicality of open houses, exhibits, press releases highlighting recent acquisitions, and other forms of media coverage. The ACA and regional associations were not in a position to offer financial support and many repositories were not able to expend more than minimal amounts, given other priorities and the shortness of time. The committee was also cognizant of valuable experience the exercise would provide for the ICA sponsored Archives Week activities in 1979 and thus activities were planned with one eye on the next year.

By 15 November a good number of archival associations and archives at all levels had gathered together a variety of interesting ideas to mark Archives Day '78. The Provincial Archives of New Brunswick, University of New Brunswick Archives, and the Archives of Ontario staged highly successful open houses which afforded the public the

opportunity to view at first hand archival operations and question professionals on all aspects of their work. The Archives of Ontario also used the occasion to mark its 75th anniversary. The Public Archives of Nova Scotia exhibited several recent acquisitions; the Toronto Area Archivists Group also sponsored a display at Toronto City Hall and the Public Archives of Canada, the Provincial Archives of Manitoba and Alberta and Edmonton City Archives were involved in special displays. The Saskatchewan Archives Board was very active in the Saskatchewan Heritage Conference while other repositories and regional associations were featured on radio, television and in the print media. The Eastern Ontario Archivists Association offered "Archives in the Attic", an archives appraisal day to which the public was invited to bring their personal archives for historical evaluation and tips on conservation of archives in the home. The Mennonite Heritage Centre of Winnipeg chose Archives Day '78 to unveil its new archival facility. Public lectures and special meetings of archival groups were among a host of other activities that helped observe Archives Day '78. In the province of Quebec, displays, round tables, films, and a variety of publicity ventures highlighted a "La Semaine des Archives" sponsored by the Association des archivistes du Quebec.

Archives Day '78 was successful in view of the interest it gathered across the country, particularly when one considers the short space of time and resources available. It was disappointing, however, that a number of major repositories did not participate though most have indicated a strong willingness to take part in Archives Week '79. As a dress rehearsal for Archives Week '79, the first nation-wide Archives Day was profitable: events were tested and public response was favourable. I am most confident that with the additional time that is available for planning, Canadian participation in Archives Week '79 will be bigger and better.

Carman Carroll,
Chairperson,
ACA Archives Day Committee.

Charles Bruce Fergusson

The death of Charles Bruce Fergusson, Nova Scotia's third Provincial Archivist, occurred on 20 September 1978 in Halifax. Bruce Fergusson had just retired after thirty-two years as an archivist, twenty-two of these years as Provincial Archivist. He had overseen extraordinary growth, not only in the holdings of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia but in their use, typified by the more than thirteen thousand researchers who visited the archives in 1977. This was a five fold increase since he had been appointed provincial archivist in 1956. An energetic practitioner of the total archives concept, Bruce Fergusson was responsible for large acquisitions of municipal, county, court and school records. The library doubled its numbers of books and pamphlets to 40,000. In 1956 the Public Archives of Nova Scotia had a fine collection of prints, paintings and drawings but few photographs; by the last years of his stewardship, the photographic collection was expanding annually by thousands. Similarly, the map collection was expanded and spawned a developing collection of architectural plans. The photographic, map and architectural collections proved their value as the conservation and restoration movements gained force in the last decade. Without these collections, much of old Halifax could have fallen to the bulldozer, since they provided an unrivalled source for researchers.

One of Bruce Fergusson's first actions on becoming Provincial Archivist was to begin a microfilming programme which resulted in the accumulation of over ten thousand reels of microfilm. Programmes were carried out with a very limited budget and staff, for instance in 1957 the budget was \$35,000 with an archival staff of four.