

Occasional Papers series. (Earlier items dealt with office automation, the moving of a records centre, and the management of records of social service departments.) Carl Newton, who is the corporate records manager of British Petroleum, argues forcibly in the publication reviewed here that the time is appropriate for records managers to engage in strategic analysis and planning. His guide analyzes the concept and presents two models illustrating how it might be done. One is a business firm; the other, a civic government.

Newton pays considerable attention to statistics and cost figures. While they are not specifically applicable to Canada, the techniques used certainly are relevant. All readers will appreciate his conclusion. It lists the sorts of challenges facing records managers and archivists that strategic planning might address. A mere listing of them indicates the relevance of this book for archivists in Canada: the growth of information; technology; social change; "freedom of information;" falling profits; productivity; privatization; and new work patterns.

This is a solid effort which should interest all archivists who are interested in the advantages of long-term planning.

Jay Atherton
Records Management Branch
Public Archives of Canada

Shadows in the Sun. JOCELYN HALEY. Toronto: Harlequin Books, 1984. 382 p. ISBN 0-373-70122-5 \$2.95 pa.

The Public Archives of Canada finally has it made. No more toiling over brochures entitled *Bilingual District Advisory Board Records for Pleasure and Profit*. It can scrap the projected blockbuster exhibitions such as "Furry Symmetry in Transition: A Cartographic History of Seventeenth-Century High Prairie Gopher Skinning." It can forget the Lloyd Francis tapes; the Erik Nielsen affair is history. A new and quite unexpected mentor has catapulted the grey lady of Wellington Street onto the world stage — Manila, Sydney, Moose Jaw — everywhere, in fact, that there are drug stores or paperback racks. Yes friends, Harlequin Books, those nice folks who gave you the plot that launched a thousand titles, the McDonalds of the publishing industry, has made the Public Archives of Canada a whopper among archival institutions!

Well, sort of.

The PAC does not actually appear in *Shadows in the Sun* until page 376, six large-print pages from the end. But the description is detailed and graphic. And the PAC did rate a Harlequin "Superrromance" — the hotsy modern ones in which the hero and heroine do more than hold hands; they sometimes even get married.

Amanda Manley, the heroine of the piece, is a fiery red-haired photographer with a studio on the Sparks Street Mall. She is definitely modern — the author constantly harps on the facts that she can't cook and detests housework. Her paramour is the darkly handsome Piers Redden, a native of Toronto. (Can a Torontonion be named Piers?) The plot is fraught with "the complexities of loving." As the back cover explains:

If only ... if only Mandy were really the carefree photographer she seemed to be. If only she was truly free to join her life with that of Piers Redden, whose fathomless eyes probed the mysteries of her soul.

Clinging to a fading dream, Mandy's eyes hid the pain of a heart bound to a promise that had long since lost its meaning, while Piers's penetrating glance belied his secret sorrow.

No matter how hard they fought the truth, they were meant to love one another. So they loved — with a wondrous intensity that swept all the costs of loving aside.

Without giving away too much of the plot, your reviewer can reveal that the archival hook is the fact that Piers is an historian of eighteenth-century Quebec and Acadia. Of course, this hunk is no ordinary historian:

He did not look like an historian. That called to mind piles of musty books and tattered maps and an elderly gentleman with bifocals stooped over them. He looked more like an adventurer, a man who would sail the Caribbean single-handed, or canoe down the Nahanni.

Nice to see our fraternal cousins, the historians, get shafted as the dusty gnomes for a change. Still, no grass grows between Piers's toes. He is the master of repartee:

Mandy murmured, 'We do have the most peculiar conversations, Piers. Are you like this with everyone?' There was self-derision in his smile. 'Far from it. You should be flattered, Mandy. You make me forget all my normal inhibitions.' 'I can't picture you as a particularly inhibited person.' 'That's precisely what I am.' 'Bent over tattered old manuscripts with a magnifying glass in your eye,' she said jokingly. 'You're out-of-date. We use microfilm nowadays.'

Piers has published four thick academic tomes, two in French. 'Each one represents at least three years' work,' he moans, 'and if I break even I'm lucky.'

Not to worry, old son, most historians I know — let alone the poor blighters slaving away on eighteenth-century French Canada — would burn their mothers or even their archives passes to recoup their research expenses.

Luckily, Piers (he is never Doctor or Professor Redden) can afford a few of life's little extras — like Louis XV furniture in his bedroom — because he whips off a detective novel on the side every year or so.

Enough of the serious stuff. What about the good bits on the Public Archives?

They come in the last act after the lovers have thrown off all personal access restrictions, so to speak. Mandy rushes into Piers's apartment. He is not there.

Where to look for him?

Guess.

She fought down a rising panic, carefully hanging the shirt on the back of the chair and trying to think. If he was away, then she had no choice but to wait until he came back. But if he was in Ottawa, there were surely only a certain number of places he could be. The Public Archives was the natural place to start looking.

She hurried downstairs and out into the street again, passing the Garden of the Provinces and waiting impatiently for the lights to change on Wellington Street.

The downstairs lobby of the archives was cool and spacious with its panels of etched glass, its gold pillars and marble flooring. Blind to its beauty, Mandy signed the register and took the elevator to the third floor, which housed the Manuscript Division. The reading room overlooked the river; a commissioner was seated at his desk beside the door.

The description is accurate enough, whatever you think of the author's taste in architecture.

Ever impetuous, Mandy steams past the commissioner and presses her face to the glass. He is there! The rest is too good not to quote at length:

She let out her breath in a long sigh, her body sagging against the door. 'Can I help you, miss?' The commissioner was regarding her doubtfully. He probably thought she looked quite acceptable in her full-skirted summer suit and her pretty shoes, Mandy decided with an inward smile, but that she was behaving rather oddly. She gave him the benefit of a dazzling smile. 'I want to talk to the dark-haired man seated at the third table. His name is Piers Redden.' 'Do you have a pass, miss?' 'No.' 'Then I'll have to get him for you. Wait here, please.'

More delay. As he went through the door, she shoved her toe in the gap in a manner Mike Riley [Piers's fictional detective] would have approved. She saw the commissioner walk across the room and whisper something to Piers; saw Piers frown and look over at the door; then saw him push back his chair and get to his feet, knocking a pile of books off the table in his haste. It was all she needed. Pushing open the door, she ran across the room between the tables. They met mid-way. Piers put his arms around her, lifting her off her feet and squeezing the air from her lungs as he bent his head to kiss her.

It was a kiss that said everything she needed to know: he still loved her and wanted her. When he finally released her, her cheeks were pink and her eyes sparkling. Forgetting everything but the miraculous happiness of being in his arms again, she said exultantly, 'Piers, I love you!' 'Sweetheart, I love you, too.' 'Excuse me, sir, miss ... this is most irregular.' Piers put her down so that her feet were, both literally and figuratively, on the ground again. She looked around her. Without exception everyone seated at the tables was looking at them, some grinning, some shocked. The commissioner was plainly scandalized that there should be such goings-on in his hushed and solemn domain. 'The young lady has no pass, sir. Most irregular.'

The Public Archives comes out of this rather well. The author gets its name right — which is better than half the national press corps can do — and the staff, as personified by the commissioner, comes across as a mite fusty, but polite and deferential and, most importantly in terms of image, firmly right-minded about regulations.

We should be charitable and assume that the author originally had Piers reading manuscripts and that some philistine editor, concerned that the novel might fall into the

hands of readers less erudite than ourselves, altered it to the pedestrian “books.” It is true that the manuscripts or books or whatever, do get unceremoniously dumped on the floor, but young love can’t be expected to concern itself with archival preservation.

There was some initial concern in the higher echelons of our national archives that the staff might be infected by this admittedly racy passage with some funny notions about trying to pick up something other than documents in the reading room, but those fears proved ungrounded. The staff after all are both archivists *and* civil servants.

As for Piers and Mandy, they scurry back up Bay Street to his apartment where we encounter them for the last time. He says:

‘We have two choices [*sic*], Mandy. We can get out of bed and clean this place up. Or we can stay where we are and make love again.’ ‘That’s easy,’ she murmured. ‘You know how I feel about housework.’

Sure beats riding off into the sunset.

In case any cynics out there are speculating on which PAC archivist should soon be able to afford Louis XV furniture, let me assure you that Jocelyn Haley is a full-time novelist living in the Annapolis Valley and a former biologist (it helps with the complicated bits.) It says in the front of the book that she has written eighteen other Harlequin romances, sometimes as Sandra Field or Jan MacLean, but I am positive Jocelyn would only write a book of this calibre under her real name.

Louella Lancelot-Horsely
The National Archives in Ottawa