

Notes and Communications

Canlit Project, Queen's University Archives

In March of 1982, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council awarded a special grant of \$75,000 to the Queen's University Archives to produce a prototype computerized data base for the collection of Canadian literary papers held there. Included in the collection are the papers of Lorne Pierce, Al Purdy, Ralph Gustafson, Hugh Garner, Bliss Carman, and many other writers. Although most Canadian repositories produce indexes and finding aids, and report their holdings to the National Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories, access to Canadian literary papers is still a manual, time-consuming and repetitive task for both scholar and archivist. The establishment of the data base reduces search time to seconds and provides for complete access to all items requested, using a variety of indexing points.

A workable and very flexible system of data retrieval has been developed in the Canlit project, along with a format and terminology consistent with professional standards. All records entered are immediately accessible on a computerized data base. All manipulations postulated for the complete data base are available at present for the records in the existing data base.

The methodology, format and terminology defined by the project for papers of individuals can be used in other areas of archival holdings, such as records series for collections of institutions. A small proportion of the Oberon Press Records has already been catalogued and the collection will provide a major testing ground in 1983-84. We are confident that our format and terminology could be applied by other institutions which may wish to establish archival data retrieval systems.

An advisory committee consisting of representatives of the Public Archives of Canada, the National Library, several academic repositories, and scholars representing research needs has been established. Archival representatives include Professor Terry Eastwood, U.B.C. Faculty of Library Science, Jean-Pierre Lukowycz, Public Archives of Canada, and Guy Dinel, Université Laval; Queen's representatives include Margot McBurney, Chief Librarian, and George Taylor, Assistant Director, Computing Centre. Gene Clevenger, Systems Librarian, Douglas Library, has worked very closely with the project team consisting of Project Manager Anne MacDermaid, Canlit Cataloguer Robyn Zuck, and three data entry clerks, in devising various ways to access archival information.

GEAC hardware has been chosen as a vehicle for the Canlit project because of significant short-term and long-range savings and because of the flexibility which

GEAC could offer in terms of accessing information. The decision to choose GEAC was also based on the perceived need to remain closely tied to the campus and regional and provincial networks of information sharing. In addition, GEAC is being used for other archival applications, such as some university records management at the University of Guelph. Broader applications at Queen's are thus envisaged for the longer term after the Canlit project is itself completed.

RECORD DESCRIPTION

The format chosen by the Canlit Project for the bibliographic description of the Archives' records follows AACR2, using a revised draft of chapter four (manuscripts) issued by the Library of Congress in December 1981. The description now being used at Queen's reflects the most recent revisions currently in practice at the Library of Congress. We are using the CANMARC name authority file to verify AA2 headings, whenever possible.

In order to provide the best possible access, there are three levels of entry for the material: the collection level includes the bibliographic description of the complete collection of an individual or institution; the series level describes the arrangement of material within the collection, such as correspondence, manuscripts, financial records, and so on; and the item level describes each individual item. The Archives has approximately one hundred literary manuscript collections; within each there is an average of five to six series; the vast majority of the records are therefore item level entries.

A comparison was made between field elements included in the MARC format and the GEAC format. The GEAC record format was then defined using subfield codes (not presently in use in the GEAC system) to distinguish the fields for future compatibility with the MARC format. Making full use of the optional fields allows us to access material, not only through the standard indexes, but also by the FORM, such as letter or book review; STATUS, which includes collection or item level entries; and by DATE, either single or inclusive. A table of codes for the FORM and STATUS fields was prepared listing the types of material being entered. A field-by-field description was prepared outlining the required elements and idiosyncrasies of each field.

PRODUCTS

A mini-record containing abbreviated author, title, subject, and call number fields, as well as the optional fields, is being created for every access point in our file. This will enable us to provide off-line searches, combining any of the access keys to produce, for example, all the correspondence between Hugh Garner and Macmillan Company of Canada during the years 1960-65. Or a bibliography may be produced, such as a listing of Bliss Carman's poems. As well, a microfiche index of our holdings will be available, providing a portable dictionary catalogue of all possible access points. As the catalogue grows, this index should become a useful tool to be used internally as well as being distributed across the country on request.

Information Kits including sample printouts, tables of codes, and field-by-field descriptions are available from the Canlit Project, Kathleen Ryan Hall, Queen's

University, Kingston K7L 3N6. We welcome inquiries, and look forward to receiving comments and suggestions from archival colleagues.

Anne MacDermaid and Robyn Zuck
Project Manager Canlit Cataloguer

Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archivists

The Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archivists was established recently, and at its founding meeting Memorial University Folklore and Language Archivist Philip Hiscock was elected chairperson for the coming year. Over fifty archivists and collectors from all parts of the province met in St. John's on February 3-4 at the Colonial Building to launch the provincial association which will provide a forum for communication between those involved in the collecting and care of archival material throughout the province and a link with other provincial and national groups.

In addition to the business of the meeting, the members were addressed by William Frost, Deputy Minister of Cultural Affairs, and by Nancy Stunden from the Provincial Archives of Manitoba who talked of the experiences of their provincial association. Dan Moore from the Public Archives of Canada led another session of the conference, answering a wide variety of questions from the members most of whom had a good opportunity to meet informally with both speakers during the two days. Others elected to the executive committee were Lawrence Jackson, vice chairperson; Margaret Chang, secretary; Heather Wareham, treasurer; Naboth Winsor, communications; David Davis and Nancy Grenville. The association will be publishing a newsletter and a directory of archival collections in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Philip Hiscock
Association of Newfoundland and
Labrador Archivists

Guide to Archives in the Toronto Area

The Toronto Area Archivists Group has just published in January 1983 the third edition of its *Guide to Archives in the Toronto Area*. The 174 pages of this new edition include 134 Archives in the Toronto Area and Southern Ontario, more than twice the number of institutions described in the second edition (1978).

The *Guide* is organized according to type of repository. Categories include business, educational, government, medical, performing and visual art, religious, and ethnic and special interest archives. In addition there are sections devoted to special collections, historical societies, and museums and art galleries. Entries generally contain the following information for each institution: founding date,