



Archival Connections

Newsletter of the Catholic Archivist Group

Volume 4, Number 3

December 2007

From the Chair – Éloi DeGrâce (Archdiocese of Edmonton Archives)

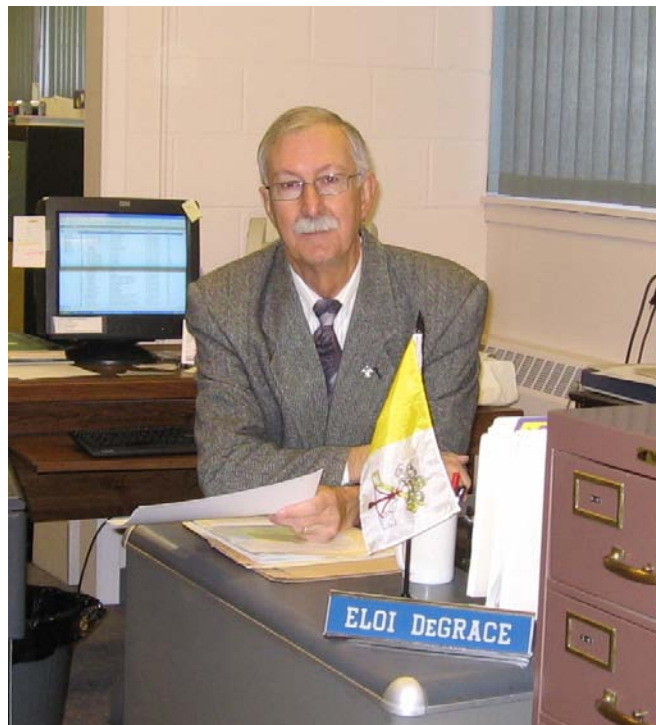
I want to echo Father Jacques Monet's words at our last AGM in Montreal when he said "archives ministry is a ministry of service". On my flight back to Edmonton, his words came to my mind and I thought: whom do we serve?

In classifying documents and files, we focus our attention on the people who will need to use them regularly. Our most important user groups seem to me to be the administrators and staff of a religious community or the chancery staff of a diocese, who refer to the documentary evidence of what their predecessors thought, said or accomplished to assist in decision making today.

Members of a religious community, as well as priests and staff of parishes in a diocese, are also served by the labours of the archivist. They appreciate our skills and abilities in helping them recall souvenirs that may be buried deep in their memory, especially when asked to write their memoirs or a parish history.

We also serve researchers who want to discover or learn additional information about the activities of our organization in a more or less distant past. On many occasions, while helping researchers, an archivist may discover that patience is really a virtue worth possessing.

As archivists, we are guardians of the precious documentary heritage left by the many good stewards who came before us. Our work is a service to the memory of those holy women and men who created the documents we cherish in memory of the good works they



produced. If someone were to ask me who the saints of the 20th century are, I'd like to think that an archivist might help answer that question. Hopefully, in our archives, one will find evidence that saints lived here among us, and further find therein enough documentation to be inspired by their good deeds.

Sister Rose-Marie Dufault and RHSJ Community Honoured

Sister Rose-Marie Dufault has much to celebrate. August 19th marked her 50th Anniversary of Profession as a Religious Hospitaller of St. Joseph, and on September 21st, she was awarded an honorary doctorate at Assumption University's fall convocation. This prestigious award honoured not only Sister Rose-Marie, but all of her RHSJ Community for their years of dedicated service in the healthcare field in Windsor.

Sister Rose-Marie held various nursing positions during her time in hospital ministry as well as a seat on several boards and committees. Since her retirement in 2003, Sister has continued to oversee and promote the heritage of the hospital while serving her religious community as Archivist and Secretary-Treasurer of the local Council. In addition, she serves on various task forces and committees at the Diocesan and Congregation levels.

“As I look back on the past 50 years of religious profession, I am filled with gratitude and awe at the many blessings the Lord has bestowed upon me. His fidelity and grace has sustained me through many exciting adventures, challenges, opportunities to serve at many levels and in many ways,” said Sister Rose-Marie. “Throughout this journey, He has gifted me with many good companions, associates and friends for which I am most grateful. I have always been very proud to be a Religious Hospitaller of St. Joseph and it is with hope and confidence in the future that with God's help, I will continue to live out my religious commitment to the best of my ability.”

Bishop Robert Harris presided over a special Mass in celebration of Sister's 50th Anniversary on August 19th in the hospital chapel, which was attended by many. We take this opportunity, on behalf of her CAG family, to wish Sister continued good health and happiness in her many involvements.

News from the Archives of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peterborough

Sister Jean Rooney has retired as the archivist for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peterborough, and effective September 2007, Joe Keast, who had been assisting Sister Jean, has been appointed to replace her. Happy and well-deserved retirement, Sister Jean, and welcome, Joe!

Archivist wanted – Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

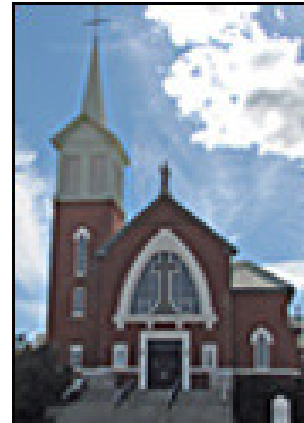
La Corporation Épiscopale Catholique Romaine de Grouard

Invites applications for the position of

Archivist

Full-time, Permanent

Duties to commence February 2008



The Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan coordinates activities for and provides central services and pastoral leadership to its nearly 100 parishes, missions and institutions throughout the Peace Country in north-western Alberta.

Position Summary:

- Assume responsibility for the administration, maintenance and management of the archdiocesan archives and records management office. The archives exist to collect, preserve and make available the records of enduring value which pertain to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan. These records are the collection of all the acts of curia and all documents concerning the spiritual and temporal affairs of the parishes and institutions of the archdiocese.
- Research activities, develop and implement archive policy and procedures and records management policies, collect archival holdings, microfilm sacramental register, and provide educational assistance to the parishes in the establishment of their private archives.
- Establish an annual budget for the Archives portfolio.

Qualifications:

- Minimum two years previous administrative experience combined with relevant post-secondary education.
- Knowledge of archival theory and practice would be an asset.
- Strong MS Office skills including MS Access will be required.
- Knowledge of the structure and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
- A member of or eligibility for membership in the Archives Society of Alberta and the Catholic Archivists Group.

If you have related experience, are a motivated self-starter who is organized with high attention to detail and accuracy, enjoy working within deadlines as part of a dedicated and capable team we would be pleased to receive your application. Please submit your resume in writing or by email, along with the names of three references, including your pastor, no later than January 1, 2008 in confidence to:

Chancellor
Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan
210, 1st Street West
Box 388 McLennan, AB Canada – T0H 2L0
Email : jrjcmj@serbnet.com

We thank all applicants; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

News from the Outreach Committee



The Outreach Committee's mandate is based on the 2006 AGM where members expressed support for a web presence. Outreach proceeded on the assumption that while some of us might have a knowledge of and an interest in web design, we would not ask our membership to take on the significant volunteer commitment that would be required to complete this task. Thus, while Outreach has been amassing information about web features and costs, a major focus of our conversations with web designers over the past year has been on which individual will best serve the needs of the Group especially during this critical initial plunge into cyber space.

At the CAG annual meeting in Montreal, the Outreach Committee shared the results of their investigations into the how's and wherefore's of a future CAG web site. The concept of a web presence is simple on the surface but a study of the decisions that need to be made to make this a reality reveals a complex and intricate process.

At an evening information session, Outreach discussed various types of web sites, features we might wish to incorporate into our site, and the software required to make these features accessible to our members. All of these factors have an impact on our future site's effectiveness as a communication tool for the Group. Of particular importance is the selection of the software that powers the web site. This software determines the sophistication and complexity of the site and will limit how members may use the site. In tandem with this is the knowledge that a site's software requirements also directly impact on the initial design as well as on-going maintenance costs for a site.

The discussion generated by Outreach's presentation led to a consensus that Outreach should move forward with the development of a basic static site. A resolution was passed at the AGM the following day and now Outreach is hoping to have a working web site in place by this winter. A major design element that needed to be addressed before proceeding with the web project was the selection of a logo. A logo is the symbolic representation of a group. Further it embodies the spirit of an organization and provides a focal point around which all other design elements are centered. Last year Outreach ran a logo design contest through the Newsletter. One entry was received and it provided the

basis for a lively discussion in Montreal. At the CAG AGM a resolution was passed which adopted this submission as *provisional*. This will allow Outreach to proceed with the development of the web site, while also giving members another opportunity to submit logo suggestions. Everyone had such great ideas and suggestions in Montreal that we felt we had to extend the contest for another year. So, get your thinking caps on!!!!!!! All entries will be published in the Newsletter and a final decision will be made at the CAG annual meeting AGM in Edmonton in 2008.

The following are the two submissions received to date: a modification of the logo presented at our September AGM in Montreal by SM Laurette Couture, and a new logo submitted by Éloi deGrâce. A graphic designer will be hired to polish up the winning logo.



It has been a busy but immensely satisfying year for the Outreach Committee. Our thanks to everyone for their input and patience.

JoAnne Allison – archives@pgdiocese.bc.ca or fax 250-964-2101
Laurette Couture, cssf - lcouture@mcsnet.ca or fax: 780-645-6099

Memories of Montreal – Jo-Anne Allison (*Diocese of Prince George*)

In September 2007, 53 congregational and Archdiocesan/Diocesan Archivists met in Montreal to renew friendships, make new contacts, and learn about preserving records in the digital age.

Villa St Martin was an ideal location for the 24th annual conference of the Catholic Archivist Group. The delightful sunshine and the beautiful grounds along the Rivière Des Prairies lead to many pleasant conversations and impromptu exchanges of ideas. In addition, the generous welcome and warm hospitality we experienced there helped to make this annual meeting one of the best ever. The planning committee must also be commended for their special efforts to make us *Bienvenue*. Events like the wine and cheese welcome reception, the banquet, and the social after the Outreach Committee's presentation, created and encouraged an ambience of friendship and congeniality.

Much was accomplished at this Annual Meeting. We learned about the various options open to us for the preservation of written records from one of North America's foremost experts in the field, Dr Greg S. Hunter. At the AGM we accepted an interim logo for the Group and we passed a resolution to move forward with the development of a web page. In addition, we welcomed our new President Éloi DeGrace and said a hearty *Merci* to our outgoing President Sr Gayle, who has done so much for CAG in the pivotal years since CAG's separation from CRC-O in 2004.

As we walked through Old Montreal we were reminded that these streets are part of the fabric of our collective past. However it isn't a past that is gone and forgotten. Indeed, quite the contrary – Old Montreal is vibrant and colourful and full of life – as are our Archives!

This is our challenge. We must maintain and preserve the records and artifacts which document our history while at the same time bringing our Archives and all of the riches they contain into the digital age. Preserving the past isn't enough; we must also celebrate the relevance of our Archival treasures in the present day context so that our users can build firm cornerstones for the future.

Archives are not merely spaces or rooms or buildings. As with churches, Archives are about people. It is our job to conserve and protect but also it is up to us to embrace and celebrate the stories that are found in our Archives to the benefit of both our religious communities and the secular society in which we live.

The CAG annual meeting provides wonderful opportunities to interact with dedicated, energetic and enthusiastic Catholic Archivists. What a treat!! See you next year in Edmonton!

Not in Our Mandate - Éloi DeGrâce (*Archdiocese of Edmonton Archives*)

Like many archivists, I have found among our collections published documents or artefacts that are not part of our Archdiocesan Archives mandate. Some of these documents came to our archives recently “by accident” as they were found in boxes of “stuff” donated to us.

While the documents were obviously of no value to us or supposedly to others, I had no hesitation in discarding them. There were some exceptions, however, as it turned out that some printed documents and artefacts, of no use to our researchers, had potential historical value and could find a home in other archives and museums.

I contacted the Archivist in charge of the reference library at the City of Edmonton Archives to enquire if she would take publications that I would have to discard. I learned that the City Archives willingly accepts two copies of any publication related to the city of Edmonton. Over the last fifteen months, I sent her duplicates of parish histories and other publications related to the activities of Catholic institutions in Edmonton. As a result, researchers have more documentation available on the presence and work of the

Catholic Church in Edmonton. Thanks to our cooperation, 65 new titles were added to the City Archives library.

When the staff of the Parish of Edson worked on their Parish archives project, they sent us a box of books and booklets. In it, there was also a chalice donated to Father Gunnip, CSsR, for his silver anniversary of priesthood in 1966. Fr. Jim Mason, Archivist for the Redemptorist Fathers, was contacted, with the result that parish annals written by the Redemptorists, two rare books, brochures, and the chalice now form part of the Redemptorist archives in Toronto. Fr. Mason wrote that the materials were a great addition to the Redemptorists Archives, adding that a small prayer book was a “real find” and one brochure “a gem.”

An album of photos taken by Redemptorists in 1938 during the First Canadian National Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City found a home in their archives in Quebec City. Now, almost fifty years later, Redemptorists are preparing for the 2008 International Eucharistic Congress and they are going to display some of those black and white pictures taken in 1938.

Also, a book published by the Franciscans of Trois-Rivières (Québec) in 1930 found its way back to Quebec. It now sits in the Franciscan Archives Library next to the only other known copy of that publication. Their Archivist wrote that it was “a blessing to have another copy” of the book. Directories of the Franciscans in Edmonton were sent to the Franciscan Archives of Edmonton.

From the parish of Provost, we received a small box containing the fonds of the Catholic Women’s League Parish Council of Compeer. The little mission of Compeer has been closed for many years now. The correspondence, minutes and finance records cover the period of activities of the council, from 1950 to 1968. These documents were transferred to the Provincial Archives of Alberta and added to the already extensive collection of fonds acquired from various religious institutions.

In the spring of 2007, boxes of “old” vestments were brought in the Archdiocesan Archives. Among the vestments were three banners of the Blue Army. Of course, they could not be kept in our artefacts collection, therefore, I contacted “Le Musée des Religions du Monde (Museum of World Religions)” in Nicolet (Québec) asking the museum technician if she would be interested in acquiring them. She was more than happy to get the three banners that were in excellent condition despite being almost 40 years old. (Below is a photo of one of the banners)



Naturally, in attempting to find a home for all those articles, I invested a little of my time, but it was not wasted time by any means. Had I not done so, documents and artefacts useful to other institutions and researchers might have been lost forever.

Photographs Wanted – Jo-Anne Allison (*Diocese of Prince George*)

Pam, our website designer, suggested including some photos of books, objects, manuscripts, etc... to enhance our website. Please email your photos to Jo-Anne at archives@pgdiocese.bc.ca if you have any you would like to share. Thanks!

Canadian Does Hungarian Translations – Ajantha Dias (*S.S.S. Archives*)



The photo shows a valuable exclusive collection in the Sisters of Social Service Archives entitled “Sister Gabriella Translation Volumes” which form part of the Sister Gabrielle Petoniak Fonds. These English translations of Hungarian records are the fruits of Sr. Gabriella’s silent ministry. The collection grows by ten pages or more daily and can be estimated to grow from the present 21 volumes to 25 volumes with the blessings of God.

The Sisters of Social Service, founded by Hungarian Sisters in Budapest in 1923, established their first house in North America after their arrival in Stockholm Saskatchewan, on Christmas Eve 1923. Up to the 1960's their communication was mainly in Hungarian and bulks of Hungarian documents were produced.

From time to time, the need for Hungarian translations was recognised and appeals were made to members to do the translating. Among the volunteers at different times were: Sisters Bernarda, Blanda, Rhoda and Sylvia, all of whom were of Hungarian descent and who spoke the language. Sister Gabriella also volunteered although she did not know the language, but picked up some knowledge of it over the years in the SSS Community. Her work proved how the Way follows the Will. Without the translations, the documents could only be arranged chronologically under the headings of correspondence or reports. The translations bridged the SSS Hungarian heritage for researchers and for newer generations of Community members themselves, and revealed historical information hidden for years behind the language barrier. Sister called her entry into archives work "My Lure into the Wilderness Project".

When attempts to find translators failed and the person hired in 2005 worked only a few days, Sister Gabriella applied herself with greater diligence to the work of translating faded, hand-written or typed old Hungarian records as accurately as she could. Her work was appreciated throughout the SSS Federation, especially in her work of completing Sister Jean-Marie Renfro's book, "The Federation of Sisters of Social Service", after Sister Jean-Marie's death. Her translation of Sister Sara Salkahazi's novena prayer at the time of Sister Sara's beatification in September 2006, was also appreciated throughout the Federation.



Because she knew so many of the persons and events in the history of the SSS in Canada, Sister Gabriella was able to recognize the authorship of most records by their style, handwriting, or typewriter used, even when unsigned and sometimes undated. Because Sister is blessed with a good memory and good eyesight, her work in the archives continues. Let us pray to the Lord to give her a very long life so she can finish translating the last of the Hungarian documents in the SSS Canadian Archives.

Open Letter to All CAG Members - Brother Walter Farrell, FSC

First, let me say thank you to all of you for your concern and good wishes upon my illness. I appreciated very much your signed card of well wishes which I received after the Montreal Conference in September.

As for the illness, I went to the hospital for minor surgery (prostate) which was quite successful. However, two days after I got home on August the 8th, I had to go to the emergency department of the Scarborough Hospital. They treated me to discover the problem but sent me home without knowing what the problem was. A couple of days later, I was back in the same emergency department. This time, they kept me overnight

and then sent me home only to be sent back to the emergency department again. Finally they discovered the reason for all of this. I was diagnosed with a hospital virus called “C-difficile’ plus a couple of other infections, all of which were contracted at the hospital. I was put into isolation for more than two weeks since that virus is contagious and also, often fatal!

On the third day in isolation, I was very short of breath and my breathing had slowed quite a bit; I felt like a wet rag – unable to do the simplest things like raise my arm or sit up in bed. That morning three specialists visited me and were not sure if I would survive the night. Although they did not tell me their fears, I felt that that night might be my last on this earth. I knew there was nothing I could do to change things. If God wanted to take me away then that was OK, because I felt so very miserable that it would be a relief. However, if He decided otherwise, that would be OK also.

I eventually fell asleep, but not for long. I woke up at about 3 am and just then, I knew that I would improve and get better. It has been a very slow process, and even now near the end of October, **(when this letter was written)* I am not fully recovered. The main problem now is that one of my legs is so weak I can’t put my full weight on it and I use a walker to get around. I have a few more doctors’ appointments and plenty of pills to take, but I am slowly getting there.

I hope to be with you all in Edmonton in September 2008!

Thanks again to all of you.

**editor’s comment*

Don’t forget!

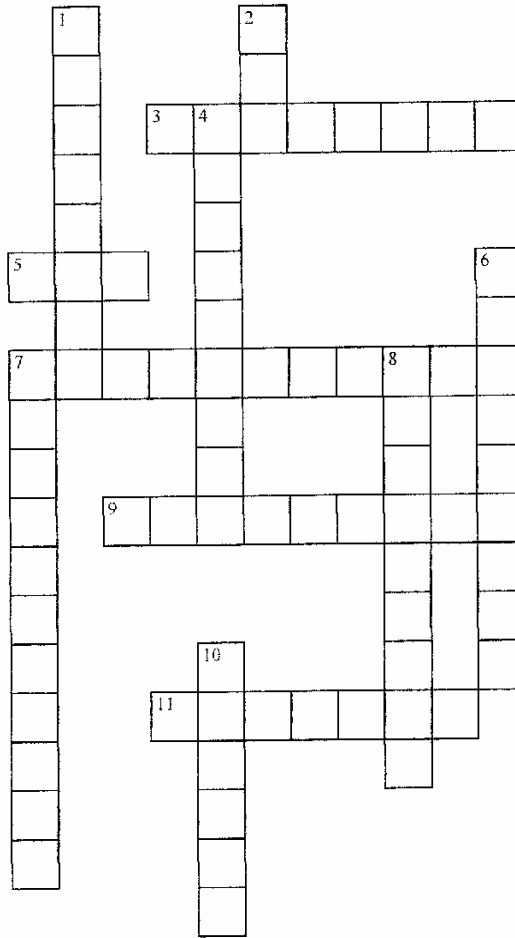


January 2008 - Membership Renewals due to Linda Wicks

January 15, 2008 - Deadline for submissions to the February newsletter

September 2008 - CAG Conference, Edmonton Alberta

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU READ?



ACROSS

3. Venue for 2008 CAG Conference
5. Catholic Archivist Group for short
7. Éloi DeGrâce
9. Bro. Walter Farrell
11. Membership renewals due

DOWN

1. A CAG Committee
2. Annual General Meeting for short
4. Award bestowed upon the RHSJ Community
6. SSS documents were translated from -
7. Name of CAG Newsletter
8. Linda Wicks
10. Photo of item from "Not in our Mandate"

Under New Management – Laurette Couture, cssf (Diocese of St. Paul, AB)

With this edition, the Outreach Committee assumes editorship of the CAG newsletter in fulfillment of our mandate, namely to “be of assistance to the CAG Executive for internal and external communications.” Our heartfelt thanks to Sister Gayle Desarmia, sp, who has so generously and expertly published the newsletter to date.

The newsletter is published three times a year: November, February and May. Deadlines for submissions to the newsletter are October 15, January 15, and April 15, respectively.

Email your news items, articles and photographs to Sister Laurette Couture, cssf at either lcouture@mcsnet.ca or couture1939@hotmail.com . All submissions will be subject to editing, however final approval from the author will be obtained where possible.

Catholic Archivist Group Executive – Contact Information

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Solution to CAG Crossword

