

Archives Report 2009 – 2010

The diocesan archivists of the four ecclesiastical provinces (Canada, Rupert's Land, Ontario and Province of British Columbia and the Yukon) met in Montreal at Cathedral Place on the 23rd and 24th (Friday and Saturday) of October 2009. The intention this year had been for a national meeting in June in Kelowna, B.C. just prior to the "Images of Incarnation Conference"; however, the conference was cancelled and the Bishop of Montreal, the Rt. Rev. Barry B. Clarke, agreed to have the Diocese of Montreal host the meeting for instead. In attendance were: Melanie Wallace, Diocese of New Westminster and Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and the Yukon; Richard Virr (Province of Canada) and Barbara McPherson, Diocese of Montreal; Mary-Anne Nicholls, Diocese of Toronto; Lorraine Slopek, Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI; Jim Sweeny, Diocese of Quebec; Nancy Hurn, General Synod Archives; Anne Morton, Diocese of Rupert's Land; Kathryn Ivany, Diocese of Athabasca and Diocese of Edmonton; Lisa Russell, Diocese of Ontario; Archdeacon James Broadfoot, Diocese of Huron; Bernice Pilling, Diocese of Calgary; Jacquie Nevins, Diocese of BC; and Jenny Seaman, Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

As usual, the two days were very full. In fact, the meeting began on the Thursday afternoon with a session on Residential School Records particularly important for dioceses that hold such records in the archives. Much of the Friday was given to the exchange of updates on the activities of the various dioceses; this is always a very lively occasion for the exchange of information, successes and disasters. We were fortunate that Bishop Clarke could join us for some time in these discussions. In the afternoon we moved to Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University, to continue the meeting. In the late afternoon we had a tour of the McGill Library's digital technologies programme and the Kirtas book copier.

The evening was given over to a wine and cheese reception provided by Bishop Clarke and the annual meeting of the Canadian Church Historical Society. The guest speaker was Walter Van Ast who spoke about his research on Bishop I.O. Stringer (the Bishop who ate his boots).

Saturday, again at Cathedral Place, was devoted to a variety of topics including: Parish Property Records – Report on Litigation and Legal Research; Parish Registers – Use and Reproduction; Residential School Settlement Agreement – Waiver of Implied Undertaking; and Fund Raising in Archives. Saturday evening was spent convivially in one of Montreal's long established French restaurants.

The chance to meet and share concerns and ideas proved to be most beneficial as usual. The archivists from the dioceses in Canada, in particular, greatly appreciate the continued financial support of the Province of Canada in making their attendance at these meetings possible.

Dr. Richard Virr
Archivist
Ecclesiastical province of Canada