

Brief on

Nova Scotia's  
Heritage Challenges:  
The Archives' Perspective

submitted to the Task Force on Heritage Strategy  
by the Council of Nova Scotia Archives  
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in response to the provincial call for public input into  
the new strategy for the heritage sector

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## 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this brief is to present to the Heritage Strategy Task Force a view of the heritage sector from the perspective of Nova Scotia's archival community and to share archivists' vision for the future of heritage in Nova Scotia. The scope of the brief is the stewardship of our documentary heritage—the written records that form the basis of our collective memory and bring us closest to the lives and experiences of our predecessors.

It begins by defining what archives are, their functions and services and the role of the Council of Nova Scotia Archives (CNSA) in the provincial archival community. It then presents the CNSA's vision for heritage in general and archives in particular, discusses the major challenges facing archives in the province and ends with the CNSA's hopes for the future of heritage.

The views expressed here are a reflection of the thoughts and opinions of the CNSA's Board of Directors with input from the membership and the CNSA's archivist advisor.

## 2.0 What are Archives?

The basic function of any archives is to serve as a reliable memory bank that individuals and groups can tap into when they need it. Individuals need a reliable memory bank in order to discover their roots, to learn about and make connections to their community or to spark new creative endeavours. A business or organization needs its memory of the past to ensure accountability to its shareholders or members, to plan for the future, to celebrate achievements, and to create a unique community identity. Without a reliable record of the past, organizations are like people suffering from Alzheimer's: they are handicapped and unable to function to their full capacity.

Archives are most often part of a larger institution and are charged with the responsibility for identifying their institution's records of continuing value, preserving those records and making them accessible to the employees of that institution when needed. Many institutional archives also make their records available to the general public. Archives are found in universities, governments, religious bodies, corporations, hospitals, school boards, museums, and community groups.

Each archives has a unique collection of records. However, they all contain non-current records in similar formats: photographs, audio and video tape, electronic

files, microfilm, architectural plans, maps, correspondence, minutes and other text documents. Together, these records document the activities, decisions and accomplishments of their sponsoring organizations and of the people who contributed to them.

## 3.0 Who uses Archives?

### 3.1 The Sponsoring Institution

Organizations create records in the process of fulfilling their mandates and performing their functions. These records are a rich source of information. Businesses have begun to recognize the information they create are valuable assets and have implemented records management policies to manage these records. Archives play a key role in this management, preserving and making accessible those records deemed to have continuing value to the organization. Organizations use their archives to plan for the future, celebrate achievements, and defend their legal rights.

### 3.2 Journalists, Film- and Movie-makers

Journalists in print, radio and television use archives as reliable sources of information to provide context to news stories, create new documentaries both scientific and historical, and docudramas like *Shattered City: the Halifax Explosion* which aired on CBC-TV in 2003 and attracted 1.5 million viewers.<sup>1</sup>

Many CBC-Radio listeners recognize Bruce Nunn, a.k.a. Mr. Nova Scotia Know-it-all. He makes extensive use of archives across the province to find story ideas, investigate leads and confirm facts.

Nova Scotia has become a popular location for movie-makers in the last several years. Here, too, archives have played a supportive role in providing information on costumes, building styles, transportation vehicles, and other props to enhance a film's setting and realism as was the case, for example, in the making of *The Scarlet Letter* (1994) filmed in Shelburne, Nova Scotia.

### 3.3 Urban Planners

Towns and cities change over time: populations shift, industries come and go, and buildings are replaced or renovated to meet the current needs of a community. Those responsible for managing these changes need to have access to the records of past land use in their jurisdictions in order to make good

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of thanks to CNSA from Harold Redekopp, Executive Vice President, CBC TV, Oct 30, 2003.

decisions about future land use. For example, if a parcel of land was formerly used by an industry that produced toxic waste, specific actions would be required before the land could be safely used for housing.

Renovation projects also benefit from information stored in archives. Architectural plans and drawings provide builders with original specifications for plumbing, wiring and layout. Records can also document previous alterations or upgrades, and list materials used. Having access to a memory bank of this type before work begins can save time and money for both business and private owners.

### 3.4 Marketers/Sales People

The buzz word among marketers these days is 'branding.' The key to success, they say, is to create a unique brand that sets you apart from the rest. Archives can help businesses, groups, communities and individuals define their uniqueness by spotlighting their past, their heritage assets. Mahone Bay is a good example of a community whose brand is the image of their heritage churches along the waterfront, a unique image that identifies Mahone Bay as an inviting place to live or visit.<sup>2</sup>

Another strategy in marketing is to hold special events to celebrate achievements or mark special anniversaries which attract media attention and visitors. Archives play a central role here, providing the facts and visual props for the promotion of the event and the celebration itself. A recent example is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Canso Causeway, celebrated on August 6, 2005. Photographs of its construction and opening ceremony, and information about the workers and the company were supplied by the Port Hastings Heritage Society and added greatly to the meaning of the celebration. Archives also help Nova Scotia participate in international anniversaries and commemorations such as the United Nation's Year of the Veteran.

### 3.5 Publishing Industry

Publishers of books, magazines, websites, databases and virtual exhibits all benefit from the images and information stored in archives. From academic research to historical romances, authors and publishers use archives to enhance their products. Some examples include the historical images series of books from Nimbus Publishing, the Historic Places Initiative database of heritage properties, and the *Tall Ships of Atlantic Canada* online exhibit and teaching tool for grades 4 to 10 on the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia website.

Some archives also serve as repositories for the literary heritage of the province, ensuring that the province's writers, literary groups and publishers are

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<sup>2</sup> Mahone Bay Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.mahonebay.com/> (accessed December 5, 2005)

documented and preserved for future generations. Nova Scotia writers like Thomas Head Raddall and Frank Parker Day, both of whose literary collections are housed at the Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections continue to be read worldwide and provide every reader with a historical window on the province. Frank Parker Day's *Rockbound* was selected earlier this year as the CBC's *Canada Reads* selection for 2005 resulting in national exposure for the province and a resurgence of interest not only in that book but in his entire life's work, which is documented in his archive. Many of Thomas Raddall's works continue to remain in print through license agreements between the University Archives and a number of Canadian publishers, with one book *The Nymph and the Lamp* being also considered for adaptation as a motion picture.

### 3.6 Archaeologists

In Nova Scotia, archaeologists have excavated and studied artifacts recovered from underwater shipwrecks near our coast, First Nations sites such as Bear River in Digby County and early European settlements. Archives support the work of archaeologists by providing the background information they need for determining which areas are candidates for exploration and for understanding and interpreting the artifacts they find.

A current example of archaeologists using archives is a research project being undertaken by the Nova Scotia Museum to excavate an early settlement of Gaelic-speaking Scottish immigrants in the Mabou area of Cape Breton Island. They have begun their work by doing research at the archives of the Nova Scotia Highland Village Museum in Iona, examining historical census information, listening to recorded interviews, reading genealogies and local histories of the area and pouring over land grants, property deeds, family trees and older maps. Archaeologists know that the written evidence left by a people provide the clues needed to understand the physical evidence.

### 3.7 Genealogists

A growing number of visitors to Nova Scotia are coming to do research on their family roots or to see the family home or gravesite. According to statistics gathered by the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, 16% of vacationers from June to November 2000 chose Nova Scotia as a destination in order to research their family tree.<sup>3</sup> An additional 5% of vacationers reported it as a secondary reason for visiting here.<sup>4</sup> The records kept in Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management as well as in church and local archives play a key role in attracting these visitors.

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<sup>3</sup> 2000 Nova Scotia Visitor Exit Survey, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, 2000, table 11a.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., table 11b.

Genealogy has become a very popular hobby across North America. There are no readily available statistics for Canada but according to a Maritz Marketing Research poll in 2000, 60% of Americans said they were at least 'somewhat interested' in tracing their family history. 37% of those polled stated they had traveled to their ancestral hometown or country. The same poll done in 1995 found 45% of Americans 'somewhat involved' with genealogy.<sup>5</sup> Given these trends, workers in the heritage industry expect the numbers of people interested in their family history to rise in the future.

This demand for genealogical information has encouraged many Nova Scotians skilled in research to become entrepreneurs, offering their research services for a fee. The success of their small businesses depends on the records that have been acquired, preserved and made accessible by archives.

### 3.8 Built Heritage

Visitors are also drawn to Nova Scotia because of its built heritage. Archives play an important role here, too, collecting and preserving records that tell us when the buildings were built, by whom, how the buildings looked in the past, who their previous owners were, and any significant events which took place inside. Having this information allows owners and communities to set priorities for spending limited resources and ensures the right buildings are preserved.

The economic importance of preserving heritage buildings is well proven. Just a few examples of communities who have benefited financially by preserving their heritage buildings include Annapolis Royal (named the world's most livable small community in 2004), Lunenburg (a world heritage site) and the Historic Properties waterfront area of Halifax.

### 3.9 Museums

While in Nova Scotia, many visitors stop in to see museum displays.<sup>6</sup> Archives are at work here as well, adding value to museum collections by helping curators interpret the purpose of objects in their collections, provide evidence of their authenticity, provide additional facts and stories on their manufacture and use, and enhance the information accompanying displays of artifacts. Archives often provide reproductions of materials from their holdings for inclusion in these museum displays as well.

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<sup>5</sup> MaritzPoll, "Sixty Percent of Americans Intrigued by Their Family Roots", MaritzResearch, <http://www.maritzresearch.com/release.asp?rc=195&p=2&T=P> (accessed August 22, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> 36% of visitors in 2004 said they visited a museum while here, according to the *2004 Nova Scotia Visitor Exit Survey Final Report*, Halifax, NS: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, 2005, p. 24.



### 3.10 Educators, Students and Life-Long Learners

Archives continue to be a resource for educators in the province not only to provide content for social, political and business history, but also to encourage critical thinking about sources of information and their trustworthiness. Web based archival products such as virtual exhibits, searchable databases and thematic resource guides can link to and support primary and secondary school curriculum. Visiting the local community archives can connect students to their home town in new ways while providing an inexpensive field trip to enrich the school's program and the students' learning experience.

Archives also support life long learners, university students and faculty in their research projects, such as social scientists using court documents to study delinquent behavior patterns, meteorologists using 19<sup>th</sup> century diaries to study climate change, or architect students using architectural drawings to study examples of classic building styles.

### 3.11 Immigrants and Multiculturalism

Nova Scotia is considering how to attract immigrants and keep them in the province. Archives can play a role here, providing orientation to new Canadians on the history and traditions of our communities and by preserving and providing access to the records of ethno-cultural groups in Nova Scotia.

### 3.12 Heritage and Cultural Tourism

Tourism is an important and growing contributor to the economy of Nova Scotia and heritage and culture are featured attractions in that sector.<sup>7</sup> *The Doers and Dreamers Guide 2005* published by the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage lists 376 attractions for the province, 252 of which (67%) are museums, archives, interpretive centers, genealogy centers or historic sites. All these organizations use our documentary heritage—i.e., the information, stories and photographs kept in archives—to maintain, re-create, develop and promote their heritage products and services.

Archives also play a role in attracting genealogy researchers. Researching ones family history can begin with web-based sources but completing the research usually requires access to records not found on the web, records such as diaries and correspondence. These records are unique, are found only in Nova Scotia, and only in one community's archives or genealogy centre. This unique character of archival collections means researchers with roots in Nova Scotia **must** come

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<sup>7</sup> In 2004 tourism was a \$1.31 billion industry for Nova Scotia according to the *2004 Tourism Industry Facts Brochure*, Tourism, Culture and Heritage website <http://www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/pubs/insights/AbsPage.aspx?siteid=1&lang=1&id=6>. Accessed December 13, 2005.

here. They cannot get this information from an archives in Ottawa or in Prince Edward Island.

## 4.0 How are Archives Funded?

Most archives in Nova Scotia are funded by their sponsoring institution or community. Levels of support vary from institution to institution, but generally the amounts are inadequate and are often prone to cutbacks. Out of necessity, archives supplement this support with donations, user fees, and federal granting programs. From 1985 to 2001, archives in Nova Scotia received \$1,731,622 from Library and Archives Canada through the Canadian Council of Archives.<sup>8</sup> This funding was more than matched by each archival repository that received a grant through their own direct and in kind contributions. These funds have supported archival development in Nova Scotia through arrangement and description projects, preservation projects, professional development and training initiatives, networking and digitization projects, and the archives advisor program. Currently, there is no provincially based funding program specifically designated for Nova Scotia's archival community.

## 5.0 What is the CNSA?

The Council of Nova Scotia Archives is a grass-roots association of archives in the province. Founded in 1983 as a network of support for its 25 members, the Council today represents 136 archives, museums, genealogy centers, historical societies, and individuals. The majority of our members (94) are small to medium-size heritage institutions whose workers are educating themselves in order to manage the archival records in their care. The remaining 42 are dedicated archives of which approximately 12 employ professional archivists. Other archive employees have related degrees in information management and/or have taken training from the CNSA to improve their archival knowledge.

The Council is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors and five Committees: Education & Professional Development, Preservation, ArchWay, Grants and Awards. One professional archivist is employed on contract basis to provide educational programs and advisory services to members and potential members. Funding for the Council's work comes from:

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<sup>8</sup> *Canadian Council of Archives: Retrospective 1985-1995* (Ottawa, ON: CCA, c1995). p.23-33 and CNSA internal Grants Committee files 1996-2001.

- membership and events registration fees (\$14,371 in 2004/05 or 17%)
- an annual operating grant from Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (\$16,400 in 2004/05 or 18%)
- project-specific grants from Library and Archives Canada and Canadian Council of Archives (\$56,475 in 2004/05 or 65%).<sup>9</sup>

There was some concern among Board members in 2003-04 that we would lose some members when cutbacks in federal funding forced the Council to move to a sliding scale fee structure based on operating budgets. Fortunately, this did not happen and membership numbers have remained steady, showing strong support for CNSA services.

Members have also shown their ability to cooperate with each other for the benefit of all archives. Association-wide projects like the ArchWay database of archival descriptions, which is contributed to by more than 50 members, and the community's Cold Storage Vault for colour film were made possible by the active participation and resource sharing of members.

The CNSA is also a member of the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) which coordinates the ongoing development of the Canadian archival system. The CCA includes the 13 provincial and territorial archival councils in Canada, the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA), and the Association des archivistes du Québec (AAQ).

## 6.0 What is the CNSA's Role?

Like most discipline-specific associations, the Council of Nova Scotia Archives provides its members with networking opportunities, professional development and training, advisory services and the ability to participate in joint projects that benefit the whole community.

Specific services include:

- advisory service from professional archivist
- annual conference
- a 6-course educational program leading to a certificate recognized by CNSA member institutions
- continuing education opportunities on special topics
- ArchWay, a web based database of archival descriptions from 50+ archives
- funding for preservation activities
- free storage space in the Cold Storage Vault for colour film (New)

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<sup>9</sup> Council of Nova Scotia Archives, *Year-End Report 2004-05* presented at Annual General Meeting April 29, 2005.

- networking via website and electronic listserv
- lending library and preservation equipment loans
- a collective voice and advocate for member archives at the local, provincial, and national level

It is in the Council's role as advocate for the archival community which prompts our presentation to this Task Force.

## 7.0 What is the CNSA's Vision for Heritage in Nova Scotia?

### 7.1 Greater Stewardship of Our Documentary Heritage

In order to provide accountability to Nova Scotians, the CNSA sees a need for greater responsibility at all levels of government, but especially within the municipalities, for managing, preserving and making accessible their records of continuing informational and historical value.

In September 2005 the largest municipality in the province, Halifax Regional Municipality, announced it was formally establishing an archives. This was welcome news to the archival community, but there is still concern about the other fifty-four local governments or municipalities that lack any archival programs. With the exception of Argyle Township, which has an established archival program (see appendix), most municipalities do not make their non-current records accessible, nor do they have a person designated as responsible for identifying records of continuing value. How will these communities thrive with no memory? The lack of information about the decisions and activities of previous administrations limits their ability to account for their actions to their constituents and will jeopardize their ability to make good decisions for the future.

Given the lack of official municipal archives, individuals in many communities have recognized the importance of these records and have organized themselves in order to collect and preserve them for their community. Many of these collections are being housed in the local community museum. However, without official agreements or procedures for triggering physical transfers in a systematic way, community museums and archives find themselves scrambling at the last minute to prevent large deposits of records from going to the dump (such as the case in Yarmouth in 2003 for the Town's records from 1890 to the 1980s) or they receive only bits and pieces of the whole (such as the small collection of records from Annapolis from 1935-1951 at the Admiral Digby Museum and Archives.) The CNSA has supported the efforts of these community groups with workshops and advice. But local communities are struggling to maintain their historical societies, archives, museums, and we fear more gaps in our recorded history will be opening if things remain the same.

## 7.2 Greater Public Awareness

In order to prevent drastic losses of information, the CNSA sees a greater need for awareness among citizens, businesses, non-profit organizations and community groups of the long-term value and importance of their records to the wider community. We need to let them know the multiple uses that records have and how the information contained in these records is a valuable asset for their businesses and community. We also need to dispel the notion that archives are just for tourists by promoting our services as an information resource.

Many businesses in Nova Scotia are long-lived and have grown with their communities; others have actively supported community projects and goals. The non-current records in their possession not only provide information about their business practices, but also about their communities, individuals and families. These records have value to the wider community as well. Business owners, non-profits and community group leaders need to be aware of this value before the records are destroyed or lost.

Currently, Nova Scotians do not use their local archives in large numbers. A survey done this year in the process of developing a central website for all heritage-related organizations found that less than 20% of the users of these facilities indicated that they were from the municipality in which the heritage facility was located. Why is this? The researchers believe this is due in part to the fact that many of these facilities are only open in the summer. As a result, citizens are often not aware of the variety and richness of the heritage resources held in their own locale. They do not have an opportunity to use the archives and, thus, do not understand the value of preserving their own non-current records.

Promotion of the importance of records to our society and of heritage in general could take the form of a directed public awareness campaign aimed at the general public. Such a campaign could include the creation of a new heritage magazine or the commissioning of heritage articles in partnership with an existing magazine such as *Saltscape*. A heritage conference for users of archives is another means of raising public awareness. The Canadian Council of Archives sponsored one such conference, the first of its kind, in June 2005 called "Archives and You! Everything You Wanted to Know About Archives But Were Afraid to Ask." It attracted 112 people mostly from the Ottawa area.

One of the most effective methods is to reach people at an early age, while they are still in school. Getting children interested in heritage and educating them about the role records play in our society is the best way of raising the awareness of younger generations and preparing them for the information economy. For example, the Minnesota History Center has created a student-focused educational programme for heritage which thousands of students from elementary schools in Minnesota attend annually.

### 7.3 Greater Education about Nova Scotia's Heritage

Part of the work of archives is to make records accessible to people and thereby increase the relevance of archives to Nova Scotians. The CNSA sees an opportunity for archives to improve public accessibility through closer collaboration with school boards, individual schools and teachers. This collaboration could take the form of class visits to local archives, presentations about local history to a particular class or grade level, or provision of primary source heritage material to enrich the content of existing curriculum. In Manitoba the Association for Manitoba Archives developed a curriculum package using archival material on the Depression in Manitoba to support the Grade 11 history curriculum. This package was provided to every school in the province free of charge.

Another opportunity and growth area for archives is the Internet. It is a great tool for providing immediate access to records and information contained in archives.

As mentioned previously, teaching new Canadians about our province's history could also be one method for educating them about their newly adopted home and introducing them to members of their new community.

### 7.4 Greater Communication among Heritage Organizations

The CNSA recognizes that we share many common activities and concerns with other heritage organizations in the province such as the Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage, the Genealogy Association of Nova Scotia, the Heritage Trust, the provincial library system and the provincial and local historical societies.

We see a need for improved communication amongst these organizations to foster collaboration, to better coordinate our activities and workshops, and to improve our ability to share ideas and resources. In essence the heritage community needs leadership and a method for developing the leadership skills of the current workforce. The formation of a Provincial Heritage Council that represents all the components of the sector might be one way to achieve this.

### 7.5 Greater Collaboration with Tourism Industry

"Don't Forget Your Passport", a television show about travel, filmed an episode featuring Nova Scotia in 2003 for the Outdoor Life Network. The host of the show, Saskia Van der Spuy summed up her trip with the words "Come to Nova Scotia for heritage, the arts and culture."<sup>10</sup> Obviously heritage plays a significant role in tourism. Archives provide the content or the raw material for the heritage

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<sup>10</sup> *Don't Forget Your Passport* television show, Outdoor Life Network, c2003, aired on Wednesday, December 7, 2005.

products and services which are promoted by the tourism industry to attract visitors: genealogy research, museums, provincial and municipal heritage sites and heritage buildings turned into accommodations.

The CNSA sees potential for further collaboration. For example, the development of specifically designed package tours for the genealogy researcher with suitable links to NovaScotia.com could highlight little-known heritage resources.

Genealogy researchers are a category of travelers who come with a purpose, stay several nights in small communities, and are not concerned with the weather. By serving these researchers well and developing this niche market, archives can contribute to the Department's goal of extending the tourist season and doubling the number of visitors to our province by 2012.

## 8.0 Our Funding Challenges

### 8.1 Inadequate Operational Funds from Sponsoring Institution

As administrative units located primarily within larger institutions, archives are funded mainly by their sponsoring organization. The levels of support vary from institution to institution, but generally the amounts are inadequate. Many archives in Nova Scotia operate with only one part-time staff person. An archives with one full-time staff person is considered to be doing well, regardless of the person's level of expertise. In addition to salaries, other operating expenses include storage facilities, equipment to view and access collections, preservation supplies, publicity and communication, reference services, and technical support.

### 8.2 Funding for Professional Development is Inadequate to Meet the Need

Archivists are dealing with increasingly complex issues in their work. Access, protection of privacy, and copyright legislation along with the challenges of preserving a myriad of technology-dependent records make continuing education and professional development critically important in order to maintain a knowledgeable workforce. Many employers are not willing or able to support participation in national conferences or training activities for their archivists, leaving the employee to pay for travel expenses and registration fees, which many do despite their low salaries. Local opportunities for learning are less expensive but still require some funding and a leave of absence from regular duties in order to attend. Covering these expenses and absences poses a challenge for archives and their employees.

## 8.3 No Archival Focus in Government Investment Programs

To supplement operational funds, archives have looked for alternate sources of funding. Because most archives serve the public as well as their sponsoring institution, applying for public funds through government investment programs has become a regular business activity in many archives. The challenge is trying to find a program which includes archives *and* meets their needs. In addition to the annual operating assistance grant from NSARM, the only provincial grant which currently includes archives is the Strategic Development Initiative (SDI grant). Some of our members have used this program successfully, but the focus is on innovative new projects that must be completed within one fiscal year. It does not provide funding for core archival activities which is where most archives desperately need assistance.

The Community Museums Assistance Program (CMAP) funds operating expenses but is specifically designed for museums or archives within a museum. Currently, there is no solely archives-focused program supported by the province. While NSARM collaborates with and contributes what it can to the CNSA, it lacks the resources to fulfill its statutory mandate to “encourage and assist archival activities and the archival community.”<sup>11</sup>

The Nova Scotia provincial government has also not lived up to the commitment it made when the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Heritage met in 1985 to establish the Canadian Council of Archives. At that meeting the ministers agreed that whatever federal funding was provided to the Canadian archival community it would be matched dollar for dollar at the provincial or territorial level. To date, Nova Scotia archives have not received provincial funding anywhere near the \$1.7 million dollars that has been provided in federal funding.

## 9.0 Our Technology Challenges

Creating technology-dependent records has become the norm in our society. Videos, digital images, websites, databases, and email communication are in common use. These technologies hold much promise for revolutionizing the way archives deliver services. We have already begun to produce online exhibits and searchable databases of information. A search of Archives Canada website reveals 30 such exhibits from Nova Scotia including *James Harding: Master Shipbuilder* by Shelburne County Genealogy Society, *Nursing History Digitization Project* by Mount Saint Vincent University Archives, and the *Mi'kmaq Holdings Resource Guide* by NSARM.<sup>12</sup> Other examples include *Anna Swan: Nova Scotia's Remarkable Giantess* by the North Shore Archives in Tatamagouche in

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<sup>11</sup> *Public Archives Act*, 57<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Nova Scotia, 1<sup>st</sup> sess., 1998, section 5(d).

<sup>12</sup> *Archives Canada*, Library and Archives Canada, <http://www.archivescanada.ca> (accessed December 10, 2005).



partnership with SchoolNet Digital Collections Program of Industry Canada,<sup>13</sup> *The Future of Our Past* highlighting the founders of some Nova Scotia archives on the CNSA website,<sup>14</sup> and the Sydney Steel Plant website.<sup>15</sup>

Technology-dependent records have also posed great challenges for the profession, both for making effective use of technology and for preserving non-textual records. Archives are struggling to preserve and make accessible records of past technologies such as audio cassettes and reel-to-reel as well as a variety of film and video formats. These challenges apply equally now to digital and electronic records.

## 9.1 Hardware and Software Obsolescence

In the 1980s video cassette recorders for home use were introduced to the marketplace and almost immediately there was a competition between beta format and VHS format. Beta was developed first but VHS became more popular with consumers and beta was abandoned by manufacturers. Today, if you have home movies saved on beta tape the only way you can view them is if you also saved the beta machine to play them or if you can find a company who can convert the beta tape to a current storage medium like DVD. This is an excellent illustration of hardware obsolescence. A product is released for sale, loses market share and production ceases. We have seen this happen with digital technology as well where storage mediums like 5 ¼ in. floppy disks can no longer be read by any of the computers on the market today. Soon, we will have the same problem with our 3 ½ in. floppy disks. Providing access to records stored on these obsolete media becomes problematic when the right equipment is not available. Their value is locked up and inaccessible.

The fast pace of change in the information technology industry also affects software programs like Microsoft Word or Corel Word Perfect. Software is always under development, with companies issuing a new version of their product every 6 to 12 months. Often the latest version of the software is incompatible with earlier versions. This means, for example, that records created in Word Perfect 1.0 cannot be read in Word Perfect 6.0. Even more dramatic changes to software have occurred such as the change from DOS-based systems to Windows-based systems. We can expect more changes in the future.

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<sup>13</sup> Harrop, Jeff, Ashley Cunningham, Shawn Wilson, *Anna Swan: Nova Scotia's Remarkable Giantess*, Canada's Digital Collections, <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/aswan/> (accessed December 10, 2005).

<sup>14</sup> ArchWay Committee, *The Future of Our Past*, Council of Nova Scotia Archives, <http://www.councilofnsarchives.ca/exhibits/ExhibitFut/> (accessed December 10, 2005)

<sup>15</sup> *Sydney Steel Plant Museum Website*, <http://www.sydneysteelmuseum.com/> (accessed December 10, 2005).

A province-wide strategy is required to deal with this issue. This strategy will need to develop a framework for the selection, preservation, re-formatting and future migration of the province's audio-visual and digital heritage.

## 9.2 Lack of Funds for Training and Skill Development

Knowing how to search a database or the Internet is the easy part. Knowing how to build a website, at what resolution to scan a photo, or how to manage 1,000+ digital image files requires more in-depth understanding of the technology. These are non-traditional skills for most archivists in Nova Scotia, and we are struggling to acquire them. Limited funding for additional skills development hampers our efforts to educate ourselves via formal training programs, so we are learning on the job, making mistakes and going back to correct them. This method of learning is inefficient and costly as mistakes that are difficult to recover from are made at the beginning of projects. Furthermore, one-time grant monies used to fund technological projects eventually run out, so on-going maintenance of these projects may be compromised as a result.

To offset our lack of knowledge in this area, the strategy has been to hire on a contract basis people with the technological know-how required to complete a project (build a website or digitize photos). This approach works fine in the short term (i.e. getting the website up and running by the grant deadline), but it does nothing to address the long-term issues of on-going maintenance to hardware and updates to content and software, nor does it help us with technical glitches.

## 9.3 Lack of Strategic Planning for Preservation

With the adoption of electronic methods of communication by government, businesses, organizations and individuals, most modern-day records are created in digital form. This format causes problems for archivists trying to preserve these records for future generations. How do we continue to provide access when the computer and software needed to read the information is not available? How do we ensure that a CD of a family's digital photos stays in good condition? Without planning for these contingencies, migration of this information is costly if not impossible.

These questions are being dealt with by archivists everywhere, not just in Nova Scotia. Planning is needed to address the issues of obsolescence and rapid deterioration. The days of accidental preservation—when photographs or letters can be left in a drawer for 50 years and still be accessible—are coming to a close. What is required now is a more pro-active approach to preservation when electronic records are created. In addition to the development of maintenance schedules to keep up with technological changes to software and hardware, the provision of temperature- and humidity-controlled storage environments to help CDs and DVDs (or whatever storage medium the future brings) stay readable is necessary. All this additional activity requires financial resources more than ever

before. Archives are struggling to cope with these new challenges—in addition to their core functions—with their current staffing levels and skill sets.

## 9.4 Lack of Coordination and Cooperation amongst Archives

One solution being examined is closer partnerships with other archives in the province to pool our equipment, skills and funds so that we can take advantage of the higher visibility and greater public access that technology offers. One example of our efforts so far is an online union catalogue called ArchWay describing records held in archives across the province. This cooperative project was undertaken by CNSA members in order to allow Nova Scotia to contribute to the national database of archival descriptions called Archives Canada. Since 2000, when ArchWay was launched, only 54 member archives out of 105 have been able to contribute to this online database. Some of the barriers preventing members from participating is their low-speed (dial up) access to the Internet, low computer skills levels, and limited budgets.

Another example of collaboration using technology is the Heritage Portal Plan currently being proposed to the heritage community. The Heritage Portal would be the central gateway linking all heritage-related websites in the province. Having a central website will make finding Nova Scotia heritage resources on the Internet easier and faster for the public thereby increasing our collective visibility and increasing our individual website traffic. Links to the appropriate tourist sites such as NovaScotia.com could be included to promote greater collaboration and cooperation with Nova Scotia's tourism industry as well.

## 10.0 Our Workforce Challenges

To effectively preserve and manage information and provide good service to clients, archivists need to possess a variety of skills and knowledge. They must understand the processes which create records, the human interaction with records, the history of recordkeeping practices, legal requirements (copyright and patent protection, financial reporting, freedom of information and protection of privacy laws), and customer service. They must know the preservation requirements for all the record formats in their holdings: photographs, negatives, audiotape, videotape, blueprints, CDs, DVDs, image files, etc. If they work in an archive that specializes in one or more themes, such as aviation or art, the archivist must have at least a basic knowledge of these fields as well. If they are the only paid staff person, they must also have financial and volunteer management skills, website building skills, and marketing skills.

## 10.1 Renewal

Loss of existing expertise to retirement is a growing concern for the archival community in Nova Scotia. As archivists work with collections, they gain knowledge that only comes with years of experience. That knowledge and experience is lost as archivists retire. A national study of the heritage workforce done in 2004 by the 8Rs Research Team out of the University of Alberta found that 16% of employers reported a concern about the experience gap left from retirements.<sup>16</sup> In addition, 30% of employers nationally reported they had difficulty internally replacing the skills and knowledge of retiring senior archivists from their organization and 28% had difficulty internally replacing leadership skills lost to retirement.<sup>17</sup>

In Nova Scotia, it is estimated that 70% to 80% of the archivists working at Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM) could retire by 2012. Will these archivists be replaced? How will this experience gap be filled?

## 10.2 Recruitment

Since 2000, recruitment of new archivists to Nova Scotia has been very slow. Most of the hiring activity has been to replace someone who has left. There are no studies on this for Nova Scotia, but anecdotal evidence suggests our barriers to recruitment are identical to the barriers reported in the Canadian study of heritage workers cited above. The 8Rs Research Team found the following factors were barriers to recruitment for archives across the country:

- budget restraints
- inability to offer permanent work
- inability to offer full-time work
- hiring freeze/limit
- small size of archives
- inadequate pay
- geographical location<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> 8Rs Research Team, *The Future of Heritage Work in Canada: A Joint CCA-CLA-ASTED-CMA Project*, University of Alberta website, <http://www.ls.ualberta.ca/8rs/FutureofHeritageFinalReport.pdf>. Section H, p. 161, figure 3.19. Accessed October 28, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Section B, p. 132.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Section A, p. 121.

## 10.3 Volunteers

Many archives find it necessary to supplement paid staff with volunteers while others only exist because of the dedication of volunteers who keep the doors open. A Nova Scotia survey done in 2003 by the Guysborough Historical Society found the majority of heritage organizations rely on volunteers (23 out of 26 or 88%) and of these volunteers 64% contribute 50+ hours/month to the organization.<sup>19</sup> This reliance on volunteer labour is well above the 55% national figure for archives.<sup>20</sup>

Without volunteers many or most of the smaller archives would have to curtail their operations and in a number of cases cease operations. The Nova Scotia survey found heritage organizations employ volunteers in

- administrative tasks 52%
- research assistance 60%
- operational responsibilities 68%
- conduct genealogy research, 72%

The researchers for the survey observed that “Volunteers in heritage organizations carry out tasks and activities that go far beyond the governance roles that volunteers play in most non-profit organizations.”<sup>21</sup>

## 10.4 Students and Contract Workers

Another stop gap measure being employed by many archives is to hire summer students and contract workers through federal and provincial employment programs (for example, Young Canada Works in Heritage Institutions). From the point of view of archives, these employment programs are successful in that they increase work productivity for a few months, they bring in employees with new skill sets and perspectives, and they serve as a recruitment tool for new archivists.

Such programs do, however, have drawbacks. The expertise gained during employment is not retained by the archives resulting in a lack of continuity and the necessity of training new staff each year. Furthermore, the time spent grant-writing, reporting and supervising is time drawn away from the archivists' regular duties. The increasingly demanding accountability requirements of many of these programs is also limiting access to these programs, in some cases actually dissuading the most needy institutions from applying.

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<sup>19</sup> Guysborough Historical Society, *Research and Genealogy Survey*, Council of Nova Scotia Archives, <http://www.councilofnsarchives.ca/resources/tools/htm>. (accessed December 8, 2005) p.7.

<sup>20</sup> Op cit., Introduction p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Guysborough Historical Society, *Research and Genealogy Survey*, p.8.

Many of these granting programs also fall short administratively because of the timing of the approval process and the release of promised funds. Most university students (the preferred workforce of most archives) look for work in April or May but archives are unable to advertise their positions until they receive word on the status of their application, which usually isn't confirmed until late May or June. This frequently results in the archives not being able to hire the best students available. Because most archives operate on very tight budgets, they also cannot absorb payroll costs if there is a delay in receiving the promised funds, resulting in missed opportunities or the organization incurring debt and additional costs.

## 10.5 Compensation

Low funding levels have had a negative impact on remuneration packages for professional archivists, making it difficult for archives to compete with other jurisdictions for quality applicants.

Again, there are no Nova Scotia studies of compensation levels for archivists. Looking at the national situation, the 8Rs Research Team found conflicting responses: 38% of archives reported competitive salary levels while 32% reported that they were not competitive. These mixed findings suggest a salary polarization in the archives sector where some archives are able to offer competitive salary rates while others are offering below standard professional rates.<sup>22</sup> Current anecdotal evidence indicates this is the situation in Nova Scotia.

## 10.6 Continuing Education

The profession of archivist is changing. There are new approaches to providing services, new technologies to learn, new storage media, and new legislation concerns such as copyright and privacy protection. In order to maintain their expertise and perform their duties competently, archivists need continuing education to update their knowledge and stay current. Providing opportunities for skills development will allow archives to take advantage of the opportunities technology presents to better market their services and to respond efficiently when their marketing efforts result in increased client expectations and demands. A well-trained staff with the requisite skills qualifies as intellectual capital and as such may be the most valuable asset of any archives.

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<sup>22</sup> 8Rs Research Team, *The Future of Heritage Work in Canada: A Joint CCA-CLA-ASTED-CMA Project* (Calgary, AB: University of Alberta, 2004) Section F, p. 150.

## 11.0 Our Facilities Challenges

### 11.1 Growth of Collections

Unlike libraries that periodically purge their collections of out-of-date materials and duplicates, archival collections are rarely de-accessioned and removed from an archives' holdings. So our collections are continuously expanding as new collections are donated or deposited. Installation of high density mobile shelving and preservation quality microfilming are proven means to maximize the use of available space but they are expensive to undertake. Archives are struggling with a growing volume of records that is outstripping their existing capacity for quality archival storage.

Once an archival collection is acquired the work has only begun. The collection must be assessed to determine what is to be kept and what can be discarded and then the records must be arranged, described and preserved before they can be made available for research use. This work is complex, time consuming and costly. Archives call their unprocessed collections their backlog and every one of Nova Scotia's archives has some backlog of unprocessed material.

In his 2004 business plan and budget submission to the University, the Dalhousie University Archivist outlined the size of the backlog problem at the Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections (DUASC). It is included in this submission to illustrate the potential size of the problem that exists within Nova Scotia's archival community.

#### **Estimated Backlog of DUASC Archival Holdings – December 2003**

University records – 644 metres – reduced to 483 metres after appraisal

Manuscripts – 1,596 metres - reduced to 798 metres after appraisal

Photographs – 100,000 items - reduced to 60,000 items after appraisal

Videotape – 2,000 hours

Audiotape – 4,000 hours

Plans, maps & drawings – 50,000 - reduced to 30,000 items after appraisal

Using the ***Canadian Council of Archives' Time Guidelines for Archival Processing*** as a guide, the intellectual control process for the entire backlog would take the following:

University records – 1,625 days or 3.4 days per metre

Manuscripts – 3,292 days or 4.1 days per metre

Photographs – 1,500 days or 40 items per day

Videotape – 1,143 days or 1.75 hours per day

Audiotape – 2,286 days or 1.75 hours per day

Plans, maps & drawings – 5,600 days or 5.6 items per day

**Total Time Required: 15,446 days or 64.3 years (based on 240 working days per year)**

**Total Cost (based on contractor being paid \$109.20 per day X 240 days per year X 64.3 years) = \$1,686,703.20**

## 11.2 Reappraisal Work is Only a Partial Solution

The primary goal of Nova Scotia's archival community is to preserve as complete a picture of Nova Scotian life as possible. Recognizing that no one institution can do this alone, archives in Nova Scotia have adopted a Cooperative Acquisition Strategy.<sup>23</sup> Approved unanimously at the CNSA Annual General Meeting of May 2001, the purpose of this Strategy is to coordinate the collecting efforts of all of the province's archives to ensure all communities and regions as well as the province are represented in the documentary evidence being preserved. By cooperating together, archives in the province avoid competition, reduce duplication of effort and maximize the impact of their limited resources.

This Cooperative Acquisition Strategy is a good beginning, and members have used it to transfer collections from the acquiring archives to a more suitable repositories, usually an archives located geographically closer to where the records were originally created. While this practice has been useful in rationalizing archival holdings it has not really addressed the continuing shortage of archival quality storage space that is endemic in most archives throughout the province.

## 11.3 Need for Specialized Storage for Audio-visual and E-records

Nova Scotia's rapidly changing climate pose some specific challenges for the safe storage of archival records. These changes often cause temperature and humidity levels to fluctuate, sometimes dramatically and within hours. This causes considerable stress to archival records in all formats (paper, audio/videotape, CDs, discs, photographs, etc.) as they shrink or expand with the changes, especially in humidity. The movement is small, but repeated several times per year for decades and the damage accumulates over time with records being irrevocably damaged or lost.. The strategy employed to combat this natural

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<sup>23</sup> CNSA and NSARM, "Cooperative Acquisition Strategy", Council of Nova Scotia Archives, [http://www.councilofnsarchives.ca/about/policy\\_strategy.htm](http://www.councilofnsarchives.ca/about/policy_strategy.htm) (accessed December 8, 2005)



process is to store records in all formats in temperature and humidity controlled storage rooms in order to maintain constant levels or at least minimize the fluctuations.

The concern is that not all archives in the province have environmentally controlled storage facilities. An informal survey done by CNSA in November 2003 found that of the 22 members who responded, 64% do not have control over humidity levels and 36% do not have control over temperature in their storage areas.<sup>24</sup> So even when records have been identified as important and have been acquired by an archives for safekeeping, they are still at risk from environmental factors in the majority of cases.

Virtual storage capacity is a new concern that archives must be prepared for. Donations of large electronic files will be coming to archives within the next 5 years, and in order to preserve and provide access to them, archives will need large amounts of computer storage space.. For most archives in Nova Scotia at the present time, this type of storage capacity is very limited. A possible strategy to address these storage challenges is to combine resources and share storage capacity.

This cooperative approach has proven successful in the past with the development of the archival community's Cold Storage Vault for archival colour motion picture film, colour slides and negatives. Unlike black and white film, colour film is prone to fading shortly after creation and requires cold storage for its long-term preservation. When an opportunity arose to acquire a used cold vault, a consortium of archives was formed to bring the vault to Nova Scotia and set it up as a joint storage facility. While the vault was initially installed at the Nova Scotia Community College main campus in Halifax, the demolition of this facility to make way for the new consolidated high school has resulted in a new Cold Vault being constructed in the basement of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia building. The new vault will be ready to receive and store material in December 2005.

## 11.4 Need for Greater Cooperation among Archives

With the success of the Cold Vault, ArchWay and the Cooperative Acquisition Strategy, the CNSA sees great potential for future cooperation among archives and other heritage organizations in the province to share common facilities, common collections and develop consistent standards for service. The heritage community can look to the libraries model in which the same automated library system is shared by a number of university library systems within the region and where responsibility for preserving electronic titles is divided amongst many libraries with the understanding that one library's clients can access that title at

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<sup>24</sup> From internal document "Preservation Survey Nov 2003" in Education & Outreach Archivist's files, Council of Nova Scotia Archives.

the other library. The same could be done for heritage collections where duplication is evident. For instance, in the preservation of collections of household furniture or farming equipment, a number of similar items could be maintained in one central storage area which could then deliver the item on demand when needed for exhibition purposes. This could significantly reduce the obvious duplication that exists from one heritage institution to the next and provide additional storage for new and truly unique items.

Archives and museums also need to agree on a consistent schedule of fees for similar services. For example the Research and Genealogy Survey done by Guysborough Historical Society in 2003 found some institutions charging \$5 per hour for research while others charged \$20 per hour, 27% of institutions charged by request and 36% didn't charge anything but requested a donation. An agreed upon schedule of fees would ensure that all users of our heritage resources were being treated fairly and would alleviate any concerns that a user might have that they had been unfairly treated during their research visit.

## 12.0 Our Preservation Challenges: Documenting the Province

Archivists work to collect and preserve the records of individuals or groups in order to preserve the evidence of their decisions, activities and events (TV police detectives refer to it as “the paper trail”).

Because these records are unique (i.e. no other copies exist), there is no second chance to acquire this material. Once the records are damaged or lost, they are gone. This places a certain urgency on the work of identifying important groups of records and taking steps to house them in archives for safekeeping.

### 12.1 Ensure All Aspects of Society are Represented

Archives work to ensure all aspects of society, not just governments, are represented in the documentary evidence of our society. In Nova Scotia, archivists have begun to make this work more systematically by developing and adopting the Cooperative Acquisition Strategy to coordinate our collection activities. Despite these efforts there remains a growing concern that gaps still exist in our archival coverage of Nova Scotia. Some communities and industries are under-represented in our archival holdings, including:

- agriculture
- mining and heavy industry
- municipal governments

- ethno-cultural groups: Greeks, Italians, Poles, First Nations, Lebanese, etc.
- health care

## 12.2 Who will be Responsible?

One explanation for the gaps in coverage is that no organization or community has come forward to assume responsibility for the records being created. Since there is no mechanism in place for assigning responsibility and resources are scarce, the records are neglected, lost, destroyed or stored in poor and inaccessible facilities.

The Cooperative Acquisition Strategy has tried to address this problem but it currently only outlines broad categories and general directions for acquisition. Its effectiveness could be improved with more precise identification of the gaps and assigning responsibility for filling these gaps to particular repositories. However, many archives are unable to take on new collection areas and this is a stumbling block to our ability to ensure all aspects of our society are represented in our archival holdings.

## 13.0 Our Client Service Challenges

Archives in Nova Scotia have a reputation for providing reliable, courteous and thorough reference service to their clients. Archives are using technology and cooperation to bring their services to a larger and more diverse audience via the Internet but so much more is waiting to be done.

In some ways Archives are victims of their own success. For many institutions, archival work is driven by client requests. The majority of an archivist's time is spent searching their collections for information to answer a client's question. Very little time is left for organizing and creating finding aids for the records; two activities that would decrease search time and allow users to be more self-sufficient when undertaking research in an archives.. Because these activities are neglected, more time is required to find information. Archivists are caught in an endless loop where the demand to provide information takes most of their attention, while developing the tools necessary to meet the demand efficiently is neglected.

For example, one tool that member archives of the CNSA have developed is ArchWay, an online database describing the archival records, their creators and in which archives these records can be found. Since 2000 when ArchWay was launched, only 54 member archives out of 105 have been able to contribute. This provincial database feeds into a similar national database called Archives Canada. One would expect with Nova Scotia being one of the oldest provinces in

Canada, we would have a larger number of records in this national database compared with younger provinces. Unfortunately, this is not the case: only 2.7% (1,421) of the 53,188 entries in the Archives Canada database are from Nova Scotia repositories. Compare this with Manitoba archives who have contributed 4.9% (2,603), and British Columbia's 18.9% (10,039) of the entries respectively.<sup>25</sup>

### 13.1 Instant and Authoritative Response

In the electronic environment, people have come to expect quick almost instantaneous responses to their queries and commands. A wait time of 10 seconds is considered slow. Clients also expect to receive the right answer to their question. This level of trust is a valuable asset for archives, one that archives do not wish to jeopardize. When archives are unable to meet their users expectations, they lose credibility, support and new, younger audiences.

### 13.2 Research Work Done for Clients

With the popularity of email communication, archives are also receiving more requests than ever before using this technology. Many of these e-mail requests come from outside the province. These users have an expectation of immediate responses to their queries and have very little understanding that getting them the information they are seeking can take hours of research time by archives staff.

Charging fees for this research service remains controversial in the archival community. It is seen by some to be creating a barrier to access based on economic status, which goes against the professional ethics of archivists which emphasize providing equal access for all. While others feel that it is a necessary revenue source that the archives must tap into in order to remain a viable institution. Many archives are reluctant to impose fees for fear of alienating their clients, while others feel that it is the only way that their users will understand that they are being provided with an important and value-added commodity. As a result there is a wide discrepancy in the amounts being charged for reproduction and research services within the community. Research fees range from \$5 to \$20 per hour with some archives asking for just a donation. Clients are understandably confused. The archival community needs to reach some form of consensus on this issue and ensure that archival users are well informed as to the rationale for the decisions that have been reached.

### 13.3 Choice of Formats

Archival clients are also becoming more sophisticated in their requests to archives. Rather than take notes by hand, they seek copies of whatever records

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<sup>25</sup> from internal document circulated by Canadian Council of Archives to its board members, August 2005.

they have seen and often request delivery in electronic format. Photographs are good examples of this. Clients may request a digital copy, a print or a negative. Archives are not always equipped to fulfill these requests. Again, we are failing to meet expectations.

## 13.4 Direct Access to Content via the Web

Nova Scotia is recognized as a leader in the archival field for the number of digital archival collections that have been created and that are available online. This success raises expectations to do more. Many clients, especially genealogy researchers, are looking for specific details such as names, birth dates and death dates for their ancestors. This information is contained in archives in paper formats scattered throughout the collections. The demand is to provide these details via the Internet in large searchable databases.

For those who are not familiar with creating content for the Web, this expectation appears easy to meet. But there are legal issues which must be addressed before any information can be published. Copyright law in Canada views content on the Web as a form of publishing and therefore, copyright ownership and performance rights must be ascertained. There is also the issue of privacy protection and identity theft for which new legislation has been passed and archivists must learn and apply. Most archives in Nova Scotia do not have the resources to manage all these complex issues surrounding the safe publication of archival information online.

## 14.0 Our Hopes for the Future

The CNSA hopes this process of consultation and strategic planning will result in:

### 14.1 A Stronger Provincial Network of Archival Repositories

- Designated repositories for municipal records
- Strong recruitment and renewal efforts by every archives to hire professionally trained staff as replacements for retiring staff and also in newly created positions to ensure a strong and vibrant archival community for the future.
- Provincial legislation to ensure publicly-funded organizations commit to the proper management and preservation of their records, eg: universities, municipalities, hospitals and school boards. Legislation such as this in Quebec has made it Canada's strongest archival community.
- A needs assessment of all archives in the province to identify critical needs and strategies to deal with them

## 14.2 Greater Support to Meet the Challenges of Information Technologies

- Preservation of audio-visual and electronic records
- Provide greater public access to records via the Internet
- Develop technical and preservation skills among archivists and heritage workers
- Coordinated approach to the management of the province's digital heritage

## 14.3 Capacity Building and Sustainability

- Stable, multi-year operational funding for archives tied to inflationary pressures
- Provincial investment program(s) designed to enable Nova Scotia's archives to meet current and future public needs and expectations
- Renewal of the provincial heritage workforce
- Continuing education and skills development programs and opportunities for all heritage workers
- Collaborative/cooperative ventures between archival repositories and between archives and other heritage organizations to maximize resources and results and to help reduce costs
- Coordinated strategic approach to upgrading existing facilities to preserve Nova Scotia's heritage
- Increasing funding for NSARM to assist CNSA and its institutional members (to at least match federal funding levels coming from the LAC through the CCA thereby living up to the commitment that was made by the province to the archival community when the CCA was first established)

## 14.4 Greater Public Awareness

Promoting the value and relevance of archives to Nova Scotians by:

- Creating archival products and services to inform and educate Nova Scotians about their history
- Fostering pride of place through the highlighting of prominent Nova Scotians, their achievements and the events that have shaped the province
- Supporting the genealogy tourism niche market
- Advancing research & knowledge of all aspects of Nova Scotia history and development
- Promoting greater public accountability through the effective management of government and public body records

- Protecting the rights and freedoms of Nova Scotians through the preservation and effective management of the province's documentary heritage
- Contributing to the economic growth of the tourism, heritage and culture sectors in Nova Scotia
- Documenting the multicultural fabric of society and contributions of ethno-cultural groups in the province
- Contributing to quality of life by ensuring that the documentary heritage of the province is preserved and accessible to those who need it
- Supporting life long learning through the promotion of archival research as a meaningful and fulfilling experience

### 14.5 A New Heritage Partnership

- A new Heritage Council representing all the heritage disciplines which can speak for the heritage sector directly with the provincial government to establish a new agenda for heritage in the province
- The re-development and renewal of heritage funding that supports both necessary core heritage activities and new innovative approaches
- The development of strategic partnerships with other sectors of Nova Scotia society to maximize the visibility of heritage and promote it as an economic force within the province
- Development of strategic approaches for more effective communication within the heritage sector in order to foster greater cooperation and share information more effectively.

## 15.0 Conclusion

Archives have an enormous amount to contribute to the future success of the heritage sector. Archives provide the raw material, the documentary evidence on which many heritage products and services are based and from which many cultural and artistic creations flow. The Council of Nova Scotia Archives and its member archives continue to serve Nova Scotians, preserving their memories of significant events and activities by acquiring, preserving and making accessible these records of continuing value for current and future generations. This raw material will be the fuel for the emerging information economy.

Archives are excited about the new possibilities available through technology and the challenges that we will face in preserving and making accessible archival materials created with these new technologies. We are eager to improve and enhance our reference services to the public and develop new audiences.

We have shown our ability to work together as a community but in order to move forward, we need to develop new tools and new skills and we need leadership with a vision that encompasses all aspects of heritage.

This Task Force has the unique opportunity to shape the future direction of heritage in the province. The recommendations that come out of the Task Force's report need to be as inclusive as possible, representing not only the major institutions and heritage organizations but the smaller, more focused groups as well. It is a daunting challenge, as the heritage community is as diverse a group of organizations and interests as one can imagine. Yet we all share one fundamental belief, that the heritage of this province is an important and valuable asset which needs the care and support of both the government and all Nova Scotians.

The Council of Nova Scotia Archives has over the past 22 years played a major role in the heritage and information management communities, advocating for the more effective management of records throughout government and public bodies, assisting organizations with the development of their archival programs, providing advice and educational opportunities to those seeking more information and knowledge about archival issues and representing and advocating for our individual and institutional members. We see the development of a new heritage strategy for Nova Scotia as a positive step towards helping us and the rest of the heritage community work more effectively together. Our role will not diminish within our community with the Task Force's report but it will hopefully be positively reflected in the Task Force's recommendations encouraging and supporting us to increase our efforts in preserving and making accessible Nova Scotia's documentary heritage.



## List of Appendices

- Appendix A      The Archival Program in the Municipality of Argyle
- Appendix B      Archives-Related Websites
- Appendix C      CNSA Cooperative Acquisition Strategy
- Appendix D      CNSA Financial Year End Report 2004-05
- Appendix E      CNSA List of Current Members