



TRENT UNIVERSITY

ARCHIVES NEWS

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In this issue:

This issue of *Archives News* highlights key holdings in the Archives and Special Collections which pertain to Canada. Given the upcoming international conference on Canadian Studies to be held at Trent in May, and the fact that our holdings invariably pertain to our nation, this is a timely focus for our newsletter. Details about the conference, intriguingly titled *Contesting Canada's Future*, are available at the following link:

<http://www.trentu.ca/canadaconference2015/>

We are very pleased to be a host site of Doors Open Peterborough this year. The entire Doors Open event will be held at Trent University. Details are available on page 3.

Our Trent Treasures column discusses the effects of the Great Depression in Canada and highlights items from our Special Collections which pertain to The League for Social Reconstruction, a left-wing organization concerned with the social injustices of the Depression era.

Notice: If you wish to be removed from the Archives News mailing list, please send an email message with "Unsubscribe Newsletter" in the subject line to archives@trentu.ca.

Canadian Studies: a key moment of enquiry



We are excited to be registered for the upcoming International Canadian Studies Conference, *Contesting Canada's Future*, to be held at Trent University, May 21-23. While keeping an eye on the future, the Conference will examine the role that Trent has played in shaping the study of Canada throughout the world. Canada is well represented in the holdings of Trent University Archives. We hold a broad range of interdisciplinary materials while also preserving historically significant materials pertaining to Peterborough and the surrounding areas. On many levels, the documents reveal "contested" visions of what Canada means; included are minute books of the Iron Moulders' Union Local 191, pamphlets of We-Peterborough (the local branch of the Alliance for Non-Violent Action), Tea Meeting advertisements of the Sons of Temperance and the private letters of individuals where more subtly expressed divergences connected to class, race and gender are found. *Contesting Canada's Future* is an event which promises to illuminate our past and introduce new possibilities for the study of Canada in the future.



The Sons of Temperance movement gained momentum in Canada during the 1850s. Having originated a decade earlier in the U.S., this movement, which was sometimes met with violent opposition, sought to impose an alcohol-free society. This 1858 poster advertises a Temperance tea meeting in Warsaw, Ontario and reveals that the movement had found support in our local area. Whatever the changing emphases through time on particular issues, this poster is a good reminder that nations are the evolving products of contestation.

Visit Our Web Site:

<http://www.trentu.ca/library/archives>.



Check our Facebook page regularly for news and updates.



“A Few Acres of Snow”

While Voltaire is said to have dismissed Canada as “a few acres of snow”, the impetus of Canada’s centennial in 1967 prompted Canadians to start to think more seriously about themselves and their country.

I came to Trent University just about the time the Canadian Studies Department was getting underway.

It was a small and very interdisciplinary department. And not long after, in 1975, the first two volumes of To Know Ourselves: the Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies, authored by Professor Tom Symons, came out, thus reinforcing the idea that the study of Canada was of critical importance.

The Archives was in some sense ahead of the game with regard to Canadian resources. The first fonds processed was the Helen Marryat fonds ([69-001](#)) in 1969 and out of this evolved one of our earliest online exhibits, [Nursing Sister Helen L. Fowlds, A Canadian Nurse in World War I](#).

Our mandate is to not only collect regional materials but also to support the teaching and research done at Trent. As a consequence, the majority of our holdings relate to Canada in some way. But beyond that, we have resources from organizations whose specific emphasis is Canada. For example, Trent University Archives holds records from the Commission on Canadian Studies, the Association for Canadian Studies, Canadian Forum, the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada and its successor the Canadian Association in Support of Native Peoples, the Journal of Canadian Studies, and the Canadian Association on Gerontology. On the provincial level, we are the depository for the Ontario Camping (Camps) Association. For each of these organizations we have a number of fonds covering many years of acquisitions. Take a look at our [finding aid index](#) and you will see that our strength definitely lies in “Canadiana”.

A striking feature of our Northway Reading Room in the Archives are the Trent post-graduate theses lining our walls. Whether they are related to the sciences, the social sciences, or the humanities, a significant number of these relate to Canadians or Canada. In fact, our first Trent Ph.D. thesis, “Water chemistry and phytoplankton recovery of metal contaminated and acidified lakes in the Sudbury region, Canada” by David Woodfine (1998), relates to Canada.

Our various “Special Collections” of books are dominated by works by Canadians or about Canada. In fact, the “Trent Collection” – which consists of publications related to our region as well as faculty publications – is our fastest growing collection. We have a number of personal collections: the A.J.M. Smith Collection, the Floyd Chalmers Collection, the Robert Hunter Collection, the Ernest Thompson Seton Collection, the Eugene Forsey Collection, and the Margaret Laurence Collection. All of these collections were built by Canadians and generally the majority of the books are Canadian works.

Trent’s founding President, Professor Tom Symons, has been most generous in donating his personal papers to Trent University Archives. A quick review of the various finding aids amply demonstrates his wide range of interests, especially when it comes to anything related to Canada!

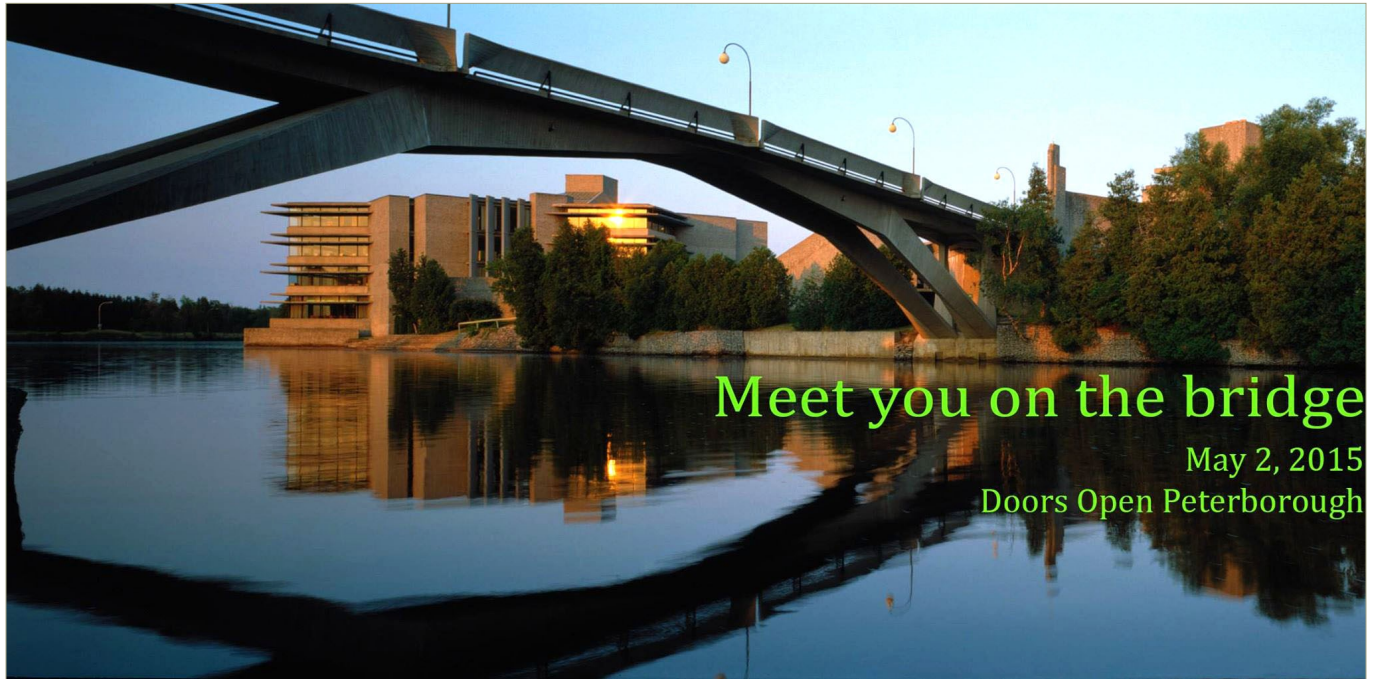
We also are privileged to house the records of the Commission on Canadian Studies, also donated to the Archives by Professor Symons. Taken together, they show the breadth of research and the huge amount of work that went into the production of To Know Ourselves. Unquestionably, it is a landmark document.

This year Trent University is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and coincidentally, it has been 40 years since the publication of the first volumes of To Know Ourselves. A conference called [Contesting Canada’s Future](#) will be held here at Trent from May 21st to 23rd and all aspects of “Canadian Studies” will be examined. I look forward to attending the conference.

Janice Millard
Curator, Archives,
Special Collections, Rare Books and Gifts



Doors Open Peterborough 2015



Trent University Archives a host site for Doors Open Peterborough this year

Doors Open Peterborough has partnered with Trent University this year to celebrate the University's 50th anniversary. The event will be held entirely at Trent on May 1st and 2nd. The University will be a hive of activity as visitors explore the rich legacy of built, cultural, and natural heritage for which Trent is known. Be sure to make the Archives one of your stops! Located in Bata Library on the Symons Campus, we are pleased to be a host site for this event on May 2nd (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) and welcome you to tour our facility and see our displays of historical documents pertaining to Trent and the Peterborough community. For more information about the Doors Open event, see the Doors Open Peterborough web site located at the following link: www.doorsopenpeterborough.ca.

Trent's Indigenous Art to be showcased at Doors Open Peterborough

Guided tours showcasing Trent's Indigenous art are a feature of this year's Doors Open Peterborough event. Visitors have a unique opportunity to experience the many Indigenous works through tours conducted by exhibit curator and Trent alumnus Jon Lockyer, Director of Artspace. The 60-minute tours begin at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on the Symons Campus, starting in Bata Library with prints of five works by noted artist Norval Morrisseau and concluding across the Otonabee River in the First Peoples House of Learning. Titled "On the Shores of Odoonabii-ziibi: Anishinaabe Art from the Trent University Art Collection", this exhibit highlights more than 20 artworks representing 50 years of contemporary Anishinaabe artistic traditions.



Hanging in Bata Library are five prints of works created by Norval Morrisseau (pictured above). These works, to be featured in the upcoming Doors Open Peterborough event, were donated to Trent University by Elizabeth and Hugh Anson-Cartwright in 2010. Part of a set which includes a limited-edition published work, *The Art of Norval Morrisseau* by Lister Sinclair and Jack Pollock (Methuen, 1979), this donation was made upon the retirement of Bernadine Dodge, University Archivist Emeritus, in appreciation "for her Distinguished Service as University Archivist, 1983-2009."

"Contesting Canada" During the Great Depression

In the 1930s, labour unrest was constant as people struggled with job loss, exploitative employers, and the rigidity of Canadian federalism which limited the ability of the government to respond adequately to the intractable economic crisis. Violent, repressive episodes throughout the decade vividly and tragically exemplify the contestation for a Canadian vision of democracy and equality that might be achieved through unionization, nationalization, and co-operative farm agencies: the Estevan Riot of 1931, the Christie Pits Riot of 1933, the Vancouver Ballantyne Pier Riot of 1935, the On-To-Ottawa March also in 1935, and the Vancouver Bloody Sunday Riot of 1938.

With the memory of the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 not too far away, labour unrest in Saskatchewan left three miners dead in 1931. Dire economic conditions and fierce competition for scarce jobs meant class struggle was often tinged with racism and religious intolerance, very explicitly in the anti-Semitic Christie Pits Riot, Toronto 1933. Dockworkers on the West coast staged a strike in 1935. Marching peacefully, they were attacked with clubs and tear gas. That same year, the squalid conditions in government-sponsored relief work camps were at issue. The trade union arm of the Communist Party of Canada (the Workers' Unity League) co-sponsored the "Relief Camp Workers' Union" which sought to unite workers and improve conditions in the camps. In 1935, sympathizers from all across the Western provinces marched towards union headquarters in Vancouver but then, encouraged by public support, decided that a march to Ottawa would be more effective. The On-To-Ottawa march ended in Regina with a riot that saw two people killed. More violence followed in 1938 as Vancouver relief camps were in an even more deplorable condition after government funding for the maintenance of the camps was slashed.

At the same time as labourers and farmers were struggling for decent wages, improved living conditions and fair markets, radical intellectuals and reformers were working toward political solutions to a patently unjust society. The League for Social Reconstruction published their "Regina Manifesto" in 1932. Trent University Special Collections holds a number of publications of the L.S.R. whose members explored and advanced themes of socialism, trade unionism, agrarianism, and fair labour practices. Authors include Frank Underhill, F.R. Scott, William Irvine, and J.S. Woodsworth. One very special item is the League for Social Reconstruction, Pamphlet No.1, by Eugene Forsey, *Dividends and the Depression* (Toronto: T. Nelson, 1934).

See also:

Waiser, Bill. *All Hell Can't Stop Us: The On-To-Ottawa Trek and Regina Riot* (Calgary: Fifth House Press, 2003)

http://esask.uregina.ca/entry/estevan_coal_strike.html

<http://www.christiepts.ca/history/riot.asp>

<http://ilwu.ca/ballantyne-pier/>

<http://www.ontoottawa.ca/home.html>

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/on-to-ottawa-trek/>

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/bloody-sunday/>

<http://www.canadahistory.com/sections/documents/news/1932socialreform.htm>

The League for Social Reconstruction

The L.S.R. has as its object the promotion of research, the education of public opinion, and the development of political organizations seeking the establishment of a planned and socialized economy in Canada. It is not affiliated with any political movement, but through publications, research, meetings and the association of its members with farmer, labour, or other sympathetic groups, it fosters a public opinion in support of the social objectives of the League.

The League was organized in 1931. It has provided memoranda to sympathetic members of parliament, has made representations to parliamentary committees and Royal Commissions, has conducted study courses, and has organized speaker's itineraries and radio broadcasts.

There are branches of the League in Montreal, Toronto, London, Hamilton, Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria and other Canadian cities. The membership consists of full members, subscribing to the League's programme, and associate members, expressing sympathy with it.

The L.S.R. is financed by membership fees and contributions. The fee for membership-at-large is two dollars a year. Applications for membership and contributions to the League's work are invited, and further information may be obtained from the Acting Secretary, Graham Spry, 97 George St., Toronto 2.



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A page from Eugene Forsey's *Dividends and the Depression*

All our newsletters are online:

www.trentu.ca/library/archives/newsletterindex.htm

Newsletter Editor: Jodi Aoki, M.A.

Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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