



LibraryCo e-Newsletter

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Inside this Issue

- ❖ SPOTLIGHT ON ...Brant Law Association Celebrates 160th Anniversary
- ❖ Toolkit of Legal Resources in 2014
- ❖ LibraryCo 2014 Budget
- ❖ Law Society of Upper Canada CPD
- ❖ Board General Manager's Travels
- ❖ Roving Law Librarian - A Report from Marilyn Elkin

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . Brant Law Association Celebrates 160th



This month the Brant Law Association celebrates its 160th anniversary. It was established on November 30, 1853, making it the oldest law association in Ontario.

Brant kindly provided LibraryCo with background information about the association which we have used for this month's Spotlight column.

The Brant County Law Library Association was established on November 30, 1853. The original stockholders met on December 10, 1853 to adopt the association bylaws, one of which stipulated the duties of the librarian. Likely the early librarians were members of the association, and they would not have had any formal library training.

George C. Keachie was appointed in 1854 as Brant's first librarian. He set up a library with carpet, chairs, oil cloth, wood box and blinds at a cost of \$42.00 using money donated by association members. The first consignment of law books, 68 in total, arrived from England at a cost of 100 pounds sterling. The money was raised by the original stockholders of the association. By 1879 the collection numbered over 700 volumes and was insured for \$1,500.

The advent of Law Society funding brought the library inspector, which in turn led to the appointment of a permanent librarian. Miss Florence Biscoe, the daughter of one of the early members of the association, was hired on October 19, 1900 at a salary of \$3.00 per week. Miss Biscoe was often commended for her dedicated service, but by the late 1920s the association was experiencing financial difficulties and the executive was forced to decline her request for a salary increase. Miss Biscoe eventually retired after 45 years of service.

Space for the association was an ongoing issue and eventually resulted in litigation when the association, in 1922, issued a writ against the County of Brant to compel the county to provide suitable library accommodation. The court ruled in favour of the association, noting that the library was "in an extremely inconvenient and inaccessible place" and that "necessary and proper accommodation had not been provided by the defendant corporation . . . and also that necessary and proper light, either natural or artificial, had not been provided." The court also noted that the library was used by judges as well as lawyers. Rose, J. commented "[i]t is unthinkable that a Judge should be compelled to leave the bench and pass through a crowded court-room in order to reach the library, whether or not the alleyway through which he must pass is crowded. The loss of dignity which would be sustained by a judge would prevent him from taking that action; whereas, if the library were situated more conveniently to the Bench, the Judge might save many hundreds of dollars to the county by being able easily to look up a reference in a library convenient to his use." As a result of this decision the library was relocated to the second floor of the courthouse. (*Brant County Law Library Association v. County of Brant*, (1922) 36 O.W.N. 167)

Judy Giordano has been the library technician at the Brant Law Association since May 1994, and is only the third person to staff the law library in 160 years. The library is now located on the third floor in four rooms, with space for computers, the print collection, study tables and the library office.

The courthouse was built in the Greek Revival style between 1852-53 for the then Provisional County of Brant. John Turner, the architect, was an important local figure who designed many buildings in the area as well as the Elgin County courthouse in St. Thomas. The



courthouse has been renovated and expanded over the years, with the most important changes being made in 1861, 1886-1887 and 1909. In 2003, the government began an ambitious and extensive restoration and renovation of the building. There is an interesting YouTube video about the 2003-2005 renovations that is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBbuo8BGAo4>

Brant County courthouse is a beautiful old building, with cherry floorboards, old brass light fixtures, oak paneling in the old courtrooms, mosaic tiling and a decorated tin ceiling. The main courtroom has several paintings from the 19th century of former judges. It is well worth a visit if you are in the area.

Toolkit of Legal Resources in 2014

Last month's e-newsletter focused on the Toolkit of Legal Resources and the Desktop Delivery Initiative. Please remember that you may access the Toolkit in all 48 county and district law libraries. Desktop delivery is available to lawyers who practice in the 28 local associations as well as Algoma, Kenora and Thunder Bay.

Lawyers who practice in one of the associations that are included in the Desktop Delivery Initiative should request a password by e-mailing libcosupport@lsuc.on.ca and include their name, date of birth, Law Society of Upper Canada member number and e-mail address. Christopher Stephenson, Library Systems Administrator at the Great Library, will create new accounts and e-mail the password information directly to the lawyer, often the same day.

Lawyers with passwords should go to www.libraryco.ca and click on the Toolkit icon. They will be taken to the Toolkit page where they will click on the icon and be prompted to enter their user name and password. At this point they will be at the search page and ready to begin their research.

Both the Toolkit of Legal Resources and the Desktop Delivery Initiative are provided to all lawyers in Ontario without charge, with generous funding from the Law Foundation of Ontario. Please do not hesitate to contact LibraryCo for further information.

LibraryCo 2014 Budget

LibraryCo's 2014 budget was approved by the Law Society's Audit & Finance Committee on November 6. It now proceeds to Convocation for final approval which is expected to happen this month.

Law Society of Upper Canada CPD

For Your Information...

Contingency Planning on video replay!

The "Contingency Planning" program, held on October 28, 2013, was a special free program provided by the Law Society. This program is available for video replay directly through the links below. (These links can also be sent to your attendees.)

<http://www.lsuc.on.ca/ContingencyPlanningLawyers/>
<http://ecom.lsuc.on.ca/contingencyplanning2013>

Registration will not be tracked. However your attendees can still log their hours in the Portal by searching for the live program date, clicking on the program and entering their viewing information.

Video Replay programs now Available!

[14th Annual Employment Law Summit](#)

[Civil Litigators Series: Criminal Law](#)

[Ontario e-Discovery Institute 2013](#)

[16th Annual Estates and Trusts Summit](#) – **Coming Soon!**

[The Six-Minute Real Estate Lawyer 2013](#) – **Coming Soon!**

[Safeguarding Real Estate Transactions 2013](#) – **Coming Soon!**

For a listing of upcoming programs, descriptions and accreditation, please visit our [website](#).

View our entire legal education resources library at <http://ecom.lsuc.on.ca/resources>

Board General Manager's Travels

The Hastings Law Association moved into the new Quinte Consolidated Courthouse in August, and I had the opportunity to visit at the end of October when the association held an open house. While the space is not large, it is sufficient to house the current print collection and the library computers. There is also work space for lawyers and a nice office for the library assistant, Judith Dale. The library is adjacent to the lawyers' lounge, robbing rooms and a small kitchen. I would like to thank Pieter Kort, president, John Bonn, treasurer and Judith Dale for inviting me to the open house.

Roving Law Librarian - A Report from Marilyn Elkin

This month I returned to the Peterborough Law Association library to work with Allison Killins on shelf reading and weeding the balance of the relocated collection. The new library configuration looks terrific. It has opened up the space, making it more inviting and situating Allison and the service desk as the focus of the



room. The library no longer looks crammed with shelving and case law, but highlights electronic services and contact with Allison.

Each month in this newsletter, I outline my visits to libraries and the activities undertaken while there. I do this to try to give you a picture of what the particular library is like and hope the brief outline of activities may encourage you to begin a similar project, may answer a particular question that you may have, or may remind you of the scope of the services that I offer as Roving Law Librarian.

Some visits are requested by the president or library chair of the law association to orient and train new staff. Some are requested by the library staff, to discuss ideas for a new project or to implement changes in the library space or operations. And occasionally visits are initiated by me, perhaps if a library has not been visited in some time or is undergoing change of some sort. No visits are made unannounced or against the wishes of the staff. Visits are not spying missions. And no visit request is ever denied. Setting a mutually convenient time is all that is required.

Sometimes, I am contacted by email or telephone to ask my opinion on a particular matter that would not require a visit. This might range from modifications to an established shelving order to the method for calculating required floor space for a library renovation.

Whichever the method of assistance, the RLL position is there to help you in all aspects of your library. You can reach me at melkin@lsuc.on.ca or 1-800-668-7380 ext. 2433.

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Call For Submissions

Have you improved a process in your library or embraced new technology to improve your work? Have you found a new and better way to provide value-added service? We would love to hear from you!

Send your submissions to Beth Weisz at
beweisz@libraryco.ca

