

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SYNOD ARCHIVIST TO GENERAL SYNOD 2019

General Synod Archivist

Highlights

- Pre-Confederation Display for the 150th anniversary of Canada
- Ecumenical Coalitions Archives Project involving KAIROS, United Church Archives, and General Synod Archives. Ven. Jim Boyles processing and describing for ACC and UCC. November 2017
- Visitors from the Inuvialuit Corporation and Inuvialuit Cultural Centre to review our records for cultural and language materials, photographs, and personal family genealogy for families of Shingle Point students. We copied Shingle Point staff journals, correspondence with students, language lists, photographs, and a census (1926-1928). March 2018
- Nancy followed up with a visit to Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, and Aklavik for a commemoration of Shingle Point Residential School; to deliver a 100th birthday certificate to the last surviving student of Shingle Point, Persis Gruben; and to meet Thomas Umaok's son and give him copies of his father's diaries (1933-1939). He said he would attempt to translate them. April 2018.
- Larry Beardy family came to the archives to do family research and found many relatives to piece together their family history. July 2018
- Continued to add to the Indigenous Clergy list and binder with photos
- Nancy was honoured with an invitation to the Sacred Circle 2018. She took a display and Indigenous Clergy binder and demonstrated the Archives Online databases. Nancy was presented with a Friendship Blanket by the Beardy family for all the support she has extended to their family and other indigenous peoples while she was General Synod Archivist. August 2018
- Because of the material we shared with the Inuvialuit Corporation and Inuvialuit Cultural Centre the General Synod Archives was presented with an award for the repatriation of language and cultural materials by the ITK (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami), August 14, 2018. The ITK flew Nancy to Inuvik for the awards ceremony. This was well covered in the media and Nancy became a 'media darling' for a while and gave a few interviews to the press. It was quite fitting for Nancy to be able to talk about her work and her passion before retiring.
- Nancy Hurn retired September 1, 2018
- Staff from the Inuvialuit Corporation and Inuvialuit Cultural Centre returned in November 2018 to review records they did not get to in March, to look for information about TB and to make copies of parish registers for Aklavik and Inuvik area. A repatriation agreement was written and signed by all parties to protect the privacy of individuals.
- February 2019 Laurel Parson was appointed General Synod Archivist by the General Secretary and Primate, with ratification from the Council of General Synod March 2019.

Records Descriptions and Acquisitions

The number of visitors to the Archives can vary wildly (2016-29, 2017-84, 2018-72), but reference queries by phone and especially email come in on a daily basis. Since receiving the Diocese of Keewatin records genealogy requests have gone up exponentially, still we managed to get quite a few records described. This included the Primate's Office, Metropolitan Council of Cuba, Canadian Mothers' Union, Director of Partnerships and Finance Committee and Planned Giving records.

External Acquisitions of Note

Herbert Girling - Copper Eskimo and English Dictionary and supplemental aids, 1916

Pakistan Project - Trunk full of Project Records, photos, samples of embroidery, 1948-1993

Juan Ramón de la Paz Cerezo collection - Archival material re: the Episcopal Church in Cuba, 1980-2018
Ecumenical Coalition records

Jean Koning collection – Records documenting her involvement with social justice work

Canadian Mothers' Union collection - Records of Canadian Mothers' Union, 1998-2016

Diocese of Keewatin Archives

- Prepared property records for churches transferred to the Diocese of Rupert's Land from the Diocese of Keewatin. These records were copied, archival list prepared, and sent in April 2017.
- Prepared notarized property records for Fort Alexander, 2018
- Described 19 parishes with Administrative Histories and some of the diocesan property records

Diocese of the Arctic Archives

- Received 20 new small accessions related to the Diocese of the Arctic
- Re-described some old records so they'd be more useful and added Inuit place names

General Synod Archives Databases Online

In October 2016 a meeting with Michael Thompson about updating the software and hardware for our InMagic/DBTextworks databases resulted in permission to upgrade and hire ANDORNOT to design and engineer a search engine for our library and archival databases. Only catch was the money had to be spent in the 2016 fiscal year. Fortunately ANDORNOT had staff available to work on this for us. The server and the software were upgraded and databases migrated to the new system by mid-December. Meanwhile, I was preparing the databases to go up online. The development of the search engine and first installation of records was accomplished by February. After a round of review and corrections we launched the site in March 2017 with five databases: Fonds level descriptions, File level descriptions, Photographs, Official Statements and Journal Articles. This was done so efficiently we still had time available in the budget approved, so we added the Library catalogue, Archival Books, Microforms, and Periodicals. We have been very pleased with the results and the ability to share photos and information more easily.

Truth and Reconciliation

Decolonizing Our Descriptions – repatriation of cultural and language materials, re-describing our records in a more sensitive manner, adding indigenous place names

Volunteers / Co-op Student / Summer Student

The General Synod Archives was blessed with an abundance of extra help in 2016-2019

- The Ven. Jim Boyles continues to work with us two mornings a week and has been working on the Ecumenical Coalitions. His former experience as Ecumenical Officer helps tremendously.
- We have a volunteer entering the old catalogue cards for our Archival Library collection into the database. She is very interested in Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation, so we started her with the Indigenous materials.
- We had a high school co-op student 2-3 mornings a week Oct. 2017-June 2018. He scanned and described Keewatin photos – 1245 photos scanned, 558 described
- We had summer students, 2016-2018 who assisted in scanning and describing photos, assisting with other archival projects and displays. One student even made many Suicide Prevention pins for Nancy's trip to the Sacred Circle and our display at the CLAY conference 2018.

Anglican Diocesan Archivists

- The Anglican Diocesan Archivists met in Toronto in November 2016, hosted by the Diocese of Toronto Archives. They were joined by Stephanie Taylor, Information and Knowledge Manager, Anglican Communion and Mark J. Duffy, Canonical Archivist and Director of Archives both of whom spoke at a banquet Friday night. Topics included digitization of records, parish record keeping, succession planning, and Canada 150 projects.
- The Anglican Diocesan Archivists met in London, Ontario in October 2018, hosted by the Diocese of Huron Archives. Topics included third party copying of parish registers, digitization projects, diocesan boundaries, decolonizing archival descriptions, and the closure of parishes.

Canadian Church Historical Society

- The General Synod Archives has been associated with the Canadian Church Historical Society (CCHS) since 1955 when the first General Synod Archivist was hired. The CCHS usually meets in conjunction with the meeting of the Anglican Diocesan Archivists and hosts the opening banquet and holds its General Meeting.
- The CCHS continues to publish a highly regarded Journal, but has reduced publication to once a year.
- The CCHS put forward a proposal in May 2017 to host the Tri-History Conference in June 2019. The proposal was accepted and the executive of the CCHS has been involved with the planning of the conference which will bring the Episcopal Church historians and archivists to Toronto.

As the new General Synod Archivist, I look forward to continue working with the General Synod, the Diocese of the Arctic, and the Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh in preserving and providing access to their records past, present and future.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurel Parson, Archivist
General Synod Archives, March 2019

