

RECENT ACTIVITIES AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA
Printed Collection, Music Division

-Marlene Wehrle

Renovated reference room and staff offices

In the early months of 1993 there was a major renovation of the fourth floor to allow the Music Division, Children's Literature Service, and the Rare Books and Literary Manuscripts Division to share one reference room, rather than the three individual areas which we had previously maintained. As a result we have a shared public service point and an enlarged reading room where the reference collections of the three divisions have been integrated, and generous work space is available for researchers. Yes, we still have our floor-to-ceiling windows with a view of the Ottawa River and Gatineau Hills. The big benefit to our staff is the shared reference desk duty. The two larger divisions each provide desk service for two days of the week, with the Children's Literature staff on duty for the fifth day. The person at the desk uses a pager system to summon help when assistance is required from one of the other collection areas. There have been the inevitable problems to resolve, but on the whole it has proven to be a liberating experience for all concerned. And it was not only the reference room that was improved. The project also renovated the staff office areas, so we now have larger, more functional workspaces that are even colourcoordinated! You must come and visit us when you're in town for IAML in July.

Recent acquisitions

Reference tools

We have acquired CPM Plus, the CD-ROM version of The Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library, which offers information on publications received up to 1990. We also have the microfiche edition of the music catalogue of the Bibliothèque nationale de France. These were big-ticket purchases that may not be within the budgets of many libraries. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you think they might contain information that you need, and we will be glad to do a search on your behalf.

Canadian sheet music

In early 1993 we were pleased to acquire the sheet music collection of the late Christine Duff, Toronto antiquarian book dealer and collector. There are about 2800 pieces of sheet music and over 200 other items, from song books to concert programs. Of special interest to us are the pre-Confederation

imprints and other rarities which we had been seeking for many years. It has not been catalogued yet, but we have prepared a finding list on Microsoft Word which allows keyword searching.

We have also acquired a database listing Canadian sheet music published between 1895 and 1926, copies of which are at the British Library and the Library of Congress. This was a project of Prof. Patrick O'Neill of Mount St. Vincent University, a by-product of his research that produced A Checklist of Canadian Copyright Deposits in the British Museum, 1895-1923 (Halifax: School of Library and Information Studies, Dalhousie University, c1989). For ease of searching, we have converted the file to In-magic. Our long-term plan is to convert our data sheets (in the Union Catalogue of Canadian Sheet Music, pre-1950) to Inmagic, to be merged with this file.

Projects

Shelf-reading project

For the first time in 22 years the monograph collection of the Music Division was shelf-read in the summer of 1992. We were fortunate to have two diligent, sharp-eyed and conscientious Library Science students: Denise Prince, who was then studying at the Université de Montréal, and Mike Culhane from the University of Western Ontario. Despite their multiple duties and the lost and misfiled books, they miraculously maintained their good humour to the end. Not only did they count the books, ensure that they were in proper shelf order and leave flags to indicate missing items, they identified copies of Canadiana for the Preservation Collection and flagged foreign duplicates and books in need of repair. They also alerted us to Canadiana for which the Library has only one copy, and the resulting desiderata list has been forwarded to acquisitions staff.

Canadian Music Periodical Index

In December 1992 we closed our manual periodical index, and since January 1993 we have been using an Inmagic database. We presently have part-time staff inputting information from the manual file. This is a big project and may not be completed for some time, but the file should be available in the future on the National Library's new system, AMICUS. We will keep you informed of further developments.