

FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING

ACQUISITIONS

Three senior Association members gave presentations on policy and procedure.

Isabel Rose described methods found to be successful at the **Metro Toronto Library**. Their collection includes 60,000 volumes, 180 periodical titles, and 15,000 discs, including CD's, now the format of choice. It resembles an academic library, including popular and folk materials only for reference.

She first noted the necessity of a written selection policy, for guiding acquisitions, and for public relations. And cost is now a major factor, resulting in additions and replacements in Kalmus and Dover editions, rather than Wiener Urtext for example, and individual pieces and spiral bindings being avoided in favour respectively of collections, or even gaps in holdings, because of binding cost considerations.

Each librarian at MTL selects in areas, e.g. strings, brass, or vocal, using publishers' announcements and current journals (Instrumentalist bibliographies are helpful, Notes is the last resort). Harrassowitz lists are "unbeatable", but they mark catalogues, finding the blanket order plan too esoteric. She rated European American and Blackwells in descending order of usefulness. Pop folios are noted in the Gordon V. Thompson monthly bulletin.

They maintain extensive publishers' catalogue files, for retrospective and replacement buying, although antiquarian purchases are limited to Canadiana, acquired through dealers' lists, and used book store searches. Coutts is being tested as a supplier of current Canadiana.

Although MTL has retreated from certain areas of pop music collecting (printed jazz, fake books, current sheet music), she would advise a standing order with a local outlet as the best method for anyone interested in acquiring pop consistently.

MTL has a manual order procedure at the moment -- computer testing is underway. Jerry Parker (UQAM) and June Jones (Brandon) commented on the usefulness of order automation, as the status of requested items can always be readily known, and duplication avoided. Various locally-developed and network programs were described by other members of the audience.

Cheryl Osborne (Vancouver Public Library) discussed approaches to record buying, based on a prepared list of sources of identification and verification, directories of record companies, and general and selected specialized distributors and shops. (For a free copy, write to the Newsletter/Nouvelles) She pointed out that the standard library journals used by general librarians cover classical, jazz and folk music materials only slightly, and that music journals and trade publications must be consulted for reviews and information.

While correct bibliographic identification and local verification is always necessary, methods of acquisition will vary according to the combination of collection requirements and restrictions, and the available human resources of experience and skill in each particular situation. For some this will mean using high-service -- and high-cost -- agents, for others a semi-annual buying trip to a discount outlet.

Blanket order or dealer approval plans in recordings are rare; some record companies and distributors will honour standing orders (others don't care to deal with libraries); single orders must be grouped and sent to appropriate agents; membership in a society may be required to receive some special releases.

In the general discussion following, further examples were offered of the choices that must be made continually: wholesalers provide the best discounts, but require minimum orders, and won't handle special orders; large shops (the reputations of several Canadian ones were debated) offer better service but small discounts...

Sister Louise Smith from the **University of Western Ontario** based her talk on a list of "Dealers and jobbers for music materials". (Again, for a copy, write to this Newsletter/Nouvelles) She purchases both scores and recordings through approval plans, with Harrassowitz for most European material, and with local agents, where personal service justifies a slightly higher cost, for other requirements.

Finally, those present traded experiences good and bad in buying music, and further names of specialized dealers. Obviously the question is one that because of changing situations, whether in the library or in the music and record shop, regularly needs rethinking and renewed discussion.