

annual report 2009



what a year for innovation



"The Archives of Ontario employees more than met the challenges of our 2009 move with enthusiasm and expertise. I could not be prouder of our staff. Our successful move planning and implementation are testaments to their dedication. Employees balanced move-related activities with other important operational projects while remaining committed to delivering exceptional services to our valued customers."

Miriam McTiernan, Archivist of Ontario

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about the cover

STORY OF THE MONTAGE WALL

For the wraparound cover of this publication, the Archives repurposed the design for the historical timeline montage featured on the rotunda wall of the new Reading Room. Produced by Toronto-based PS Design, the visually arresting display is almost 30 feet long and highlights reproductions of approximately 375 documentary records. Representing only a fraction of the rich information legacy held by the Archives of Ontario and spanning three centuries, the montage wall makes a stunning first impression. It inspires visitors to explore the vast selection of records and resources that are available for discovery.

message from...



Miriam McTiernan

ARCHIVIST OF ONTARIO

In April 2009, the Archives of Ontario, the largest provincial archives in Canada, moved from its downtown Toronto location to a new purpose-built facility at York University's Keele campus. With considerably increased space and improved facilities, the Archives now has a much larger reading room, an exhibit gallery, and a classroom space that facilitates a variety of educational initiatives. In September 2009, the Archives opened its first gallery exhibit—"Ontario—On the Map". The exhibit showcased original maps from the Archives' collection, starting from the 17th century.

The Archives of Ontario has been collecting, preserving, and providing access to the province's history since 1903. As the guardian of Ontario's documentary memory, the Archives is constantly striving to bring the past alive by promoting excellence in recordkeeping and custodial practices. As part of the Ontario Public Service and the Ministry of Government Services, we share in a wider mission to exercise responsible stewardship of public resources and information.

Our customers, our collections, and our ministry's strong commitment to the modernization of government operations were the driving forces behind our move to our new home. For the first time in our 107-year history, the Archives has a state-of-the-art building, equipped to properly protect and showcase our incredible holdings for the benefit of our diverse customer groups. The building's many innovations, coupled with move-planning processes that were developed to capitalize on creativity and expertise within the organization, produced a series of transition success stories. In the pages that follow, we will be sharing these stories.

The Archives of Ontario is one of the first archives in Canada to make our "born-digital" archival records available to researchers on the web. It is a true milestone as, for the first time, we are now able to provide "anywhere, anytime" access to our archival electronic holdings.

Our move to a purpose-built home allows us to preserve, promote, and showcase our collections like never before. Hard work and ingenuity got us to where we are, and we will continue to drive innovation as we deliver enhanced services to our customers. In our new facility, we are renewed, modernized, and ready to face the future.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Miriam McTiernan".

Archivist of Ontario

vision and mission

For both the provincial government and the public, the Archives provides research access to records of enduring value to Ontario.

Archival holdings include Ontario government records; genealogical records; photographs; architectural drawings; film, video, and sound recordings; the Government of Ontario Art Collection; private historical manuscripts and papers; maps, charts, architectural plans, drawings, and prints; newspapers; and an extensive library of publications with a strong emphasis on the social and political history of Ontario.

vision

To be recognized as a model of what modern archives should be:

- The reliable, trusted, authoritative guardian of Ontario's documentary memory
- A leader in customer service, dedicated to identifying and responding to the evolving needs of our customers
- A dynamic organization with creative and innovative programming that is relevant and responsive to a broad and diverse range of customers
- A key partner in the education of Ontarians
- A leader in promoting and facilitating effective and efficient recordkeeping for the government on behalf of the people of Ontario
- A modern working archives whose staff maintains the highest levels of professionalism through ongoing capacity development and robust work practices

mission

As the guardian of Ontario's documentary memory, the Archives of Ontario provides innovative leadership to collect, manage, and preserve the records of the province and to promote and facilitate their use by present and future generations.



a new home for the Archives of Ontario

From Out-of-Date to State-of-the-Art

The building at 77 Grenville Street in downtown Toronto had housed the Archives of Ontario for well over 30 years, but it had become simply inadequate. The physical building was outdated, and the collection had outgrown the space capacity. This had become a major concern. The aging building defied efforts to bring it into the electronic era, fire protection was not up to archival standards, and structural issues emerged as the collections continued to grow in volume and weight. Moreover, after 37 years of storage, mould was found to be accumulating in ductwork—a serious threat to a collection valued at around \$400 million. In 2006, a consultant's report confirmed that inadequate housing was causing a decline of \$36,000 a day in the collection's value.

A call for proposals to build and to lease back a property on a 25-year term was issued on behalf of the Archives. The winning proposal came from York University. York is Canada's third-largest university, with 60,000 students and a faculty of 5,000. The proposal was for a central customer service centre to accommodate the most heavily used and valuable records (worth \$250 million) and over 100 employees. A 35-year lease for the building was then agreed upon, and the new purpose-built facility at 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd was ready for occupancy by March 2009.

The entire building was constructed to standards acceptable for a Silver LEED™ performance rating (the most recognized green building rating system in North America). During construction, green measures were implemented whenever possible, with a view to making sustainable choices as individuals, as a business, and as an organization. In addition to the sustainable, energy-efficient nature of the building itself, the environmental approach extended to the executive office furnishings for the new facility. "We worked very closely with our colleagues in the Surplus Assets and Distribution unit of Ontario Shared Services to put a reuse, renew, and recycle policy into effect," said Miriam McTiernan. "All of the executive offices contain refurbished furniture. We also put several antique pieces in our Reading Room, which lends an appropriate sense of history to the space."

Self-contained and centrally located on campus, the new home of the Archives of Ontario occupies the first three floors of a complex that also houses a York University research tower.

The new building is fully accessible and has increased space for customer service in the Reading Room. Outreach initiatives have also made the Archives more accessible to the public.

The following are some of the features of the new building:

- Double the public reference space for viewing records, including film and audio recordings
- Temperature-controlled storage vaults and other environmental measures that provide increased protection for the collections
- Fully implemented security features, including controlled access and Closed Circuit Television monitoring of the facility
- New space for exhibiting some of the Archives' most valuable collections and making them accessible to wider audiences, such as school groups and the York University community
- A new classroom for education and outreach events



The entrance hall under construction.



The entrance hall completed.

The new facility affords better access and increased learning potential for all Ontarians.

Customers have more opportunity to engage with and access the collections than ever before. With high-resolution screens, the new digital microfilm readers enable customers to have a clearer view of the extensive microfilm collection. Since the new microfilm machines convert to digital output, the images can be manipulated to suit the researchers' printout needs.

Moving the Archives

Careful Planning for a Successful Move

Moving an archives is a uniquely complex undertaking. Planning for the move began in 2007—a full two years in advance.

An organizing committee consisting of representatives from senior management and key staff from across the organization oversaw move-related activities. Their mandate was to plan and coordinate preparations for moving staff, assets, and a large and precious collection of archival materials. Recognizing the opportunities for innovation presented by this ambitious project, the committee set out to modernize business processes and to make the most of the creativity present within the organization.

As an integrated planning group, the committee embarked on rigorous, two-tiered project management. The first tier tracked the progress of tasks week by week. The second tier monitored the results of staff brainstorming sessions aimed at determining move logistics and developing policies and procedures for the new facility. These components ran concurrently and made for effective move-planning, and the combination of analytical and creative approaches paved the way for productive and efficient work strategies.

Employees were highly engaged throughout the move process and they participated in decisions that would affect their day-to-day activities. Customers and stakeholders were kept informed about progress through quarterly newsletters, website updates, and a webcam broadcast of the construction site that could be seen in the lobby at the old building.

Thanks to the efforts of the organizing committee, new programs and policies were already in place when staff arrived at the facility. They were ready to give customers optimal service right away. Also, sound planning ensured that there was minimal disruption for customers during the move. The Archives was closed for a mere four days during the transition period. The new facility opened its doors to the public on April 2, 2009.



One of the new vaults, from empty.....



.... to full after the move.

Team collaboration, hard work, and determination from all department units helped to make a successful move. Staff moved to the new facility first, and this was done over a single weekend. The move of the collection took place over the next two months, while a skeleton staff remained at the old building in order to provide access to the records that were still located there.

Teamwork on Special Projects

One of the first move projects was to organize all Archives of Ontario records and prepare the semi-active paper records for storage at the Information Storage and Retrieval Record Centre. The project started about two years in advance of the actual move and was a joint effort of the Recordkeeping Support Unit and Collections Development and Management Unit. The Recordkeeping Support Unit was responsible for creating a function-based file plan and for updating the record series for the entire Archives. The work involved interviewing all program areas of the Archives of Ontario. Collections Development and Management Unit appraised all of the record series and obtained approval of the appraisals from the Archivist of Ontario.

The final part of the project was orchestrated by the Recordkeeping Support Unit and the Information and Storage Retrieval Centre. The Recordkeeping Support Unit trained staff in program areas on preparing their transfer lists and arranged with the Information and Storage Retrieval Centre for the pick-up of all the boxed semi-active records. The Information and Storage Retrieval Centre staff moved over 570 boxes from the Archives of Ontario to the Record Centre within a week. The project was completed, on schedule, by March 31, 2009.

In preparation for the move, the Collections Development and Management unit successfully completed several major projects, including gaining total physical control of the on-site holdings, re-housing records, and monitoring the safe move of the collections. Nearly 50,000 boxes, volumes, and folders of archival records, as well as 70,000 Library titles, were moved from the old building to the new facility. In addition, over 60,000 containers and items—the bulk of the Archives' motion picture film, video, and sound and microfilm collections—were moved to offsite cool and cold storage facilities in Bolton, Ontario. Together with a large part of the Archives' photographic holdings, these special media are now stored in facilities that will better ensure their long-term preservation.



Preservation Services staff played a vital role in the move to the new facility. It was by far the main focus of their time and energies over the past year. The entire collection had to be physically checked before moving, and it had to arrive in the same condition as when it left. With careful planning and adept moving processes, they met the challenge admirably.

Packing and preparing records for the move at the old Archives building.

Although preparations started years before, issues related to the larger and more sensitive collections were resolved in the final months prior to the move. An example of a collection specifically targeted for this task is the glass plate negative collection, which comprised over 800 containers. Another example is the bound volume collection.

Over 30,000 volumes were individually checked for their transport stability and 8,000 of the most fragile volumes were selected to be re-housed in custom containers. Approaching the move deadline, staff members from all units were pulled in to help Preservation Services staff with the monumental task of completing the re-housing and bar-coding the new containers. Thanks to careful staff and movers, no pieces that were transported were damaged. One of the biggest challenges for them was moving the Thompson Map!

Moving the Thompson Map

This original map of the North-West Territory (1814) by David Thompson was on display at the old building for at least 25 years. The 195-year-old map measures approximately 2 x 3 metres. It had to be transported on a stretcher, and a special tray and crate were constructed to move it.

The map was actually the first object to arrive at the new facility—weeks before the staff or the collection began the move.

The map is now in permanent vault storage. A reproduction, the same size as the original, is on display in the Reading Room.

Installing the 195-year-old Thompson Map in its permanent home in the vaults at the new facility.



Government of Ontario Art Collection

In June 2009, the entire contents of the former art collection storage facility were relocated to one of the purpose-built vaults in the Archives' new public service facility. Taking place over six days, the move included over 100 maquettes that were custom boxed and crated, close to 400 paintings and works on paper, and textiles and furniture. Most challenging, and requiring particular care, were the oversized paintings (some more than 10 feet long).

Lillian Michiko Blakey, OSA, *Morning Prayer*, 2004.
Acrylic on board, 45.7 x 61.0 cm
Archives of Ontario,
Government of Ontario Art Collection
100344, Toronto. Donated by the artist in 2005.



Vault Storage

Since it adheres to international archival standards, the new facility offers superior protection for onsite records. Thirteen cutting-edge storage vaults comprise the facility's core, enabling the outer portions of the building to act as energy-efficient temperature controls. Each vault has stringent light and climate requirements. Extremely precise sensing systems detect even the minutest changes in environmental conditions, greatly reducing any potential risk to the collections.

"The vaults' controls move beyond the traditional benchmarks for measurement," said Angela Forest, Assistant Deputy Minister of Archives Modernization. "Sampling happens on a continuous basis, with gaseous contaminants and particulate contamination being measured in parts per billion. The Archives of Ontario is at the forefront of preservation standards."



All of the climate-controlled vaults have specialized shelving to maximize their storage capacity and enable long-term preservation.

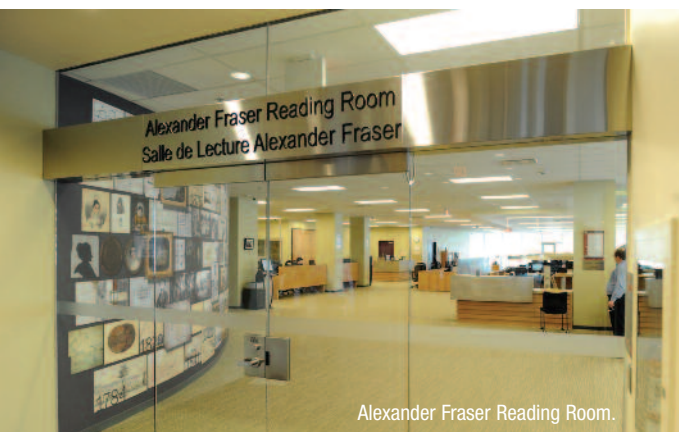


The new art collection storage vault features rolling art racks for ease of access.

Significant Rooms Commemorate Past Provincial Archivists

As a tribute to their service to the province, the most significant rooms in the new home of the Archives of Ontario are named in honour of some of the provincial archivists of the past 106 years.

The **Alexander Fraser Reading Room** on the main floor is named after Ontario's first Provincial Archivist. Appointed in 1903, Fraser set about collecting documents that recorded the province's history, including municipal papers and the records of the United Empire Loyalists of the 18th century.



Alexander Fraser Reading Room.



Alexander Fraser Reading Room.



Alexander Fraser Reading Room.

The **Helen McClung Exhibit Area**

is named for the first woman in Ontario who, upon her appointment as acting Archivist of Ontario, achieved deputy minister status. She served from 1939 to 1950. McClung enjoyed connecting students to historical documents, and in 1947, she initiated an innovative travelling exhibit that toured schools in the province.



Helen McClung Exhibit Area.

The **George Spragge Classroom**

commemorates the Provincial Archivist who served from 1950 to 1963. Spragge's vision of province-wide records management and document conservation programs benefited both research and scholarship related to the history of Ontario.



George Spragge Classroom.

The **Donald McQuat Client Lounge**

was named for the Archivist of Ontario who served from 1963 to 1978. The Archives developed significantly over those fifteen years. Most notable among McQuat's accomplishments was the establishment of a Records Management Branch.



Donald McQuat Client Lounge.

The **William Ormsby Boardroom**

on the third floor was named for the Archivist of Ontario who was appointed in 1978 and served until 1986. Under his leadership, the Archives of Ontario increased its holdings and expanded its programs. Of particular significance was the acquisition of the prized Horwood Collection of architectural drawings.



William Ormsby Boardroom.

The **J.J. Talman Library Vault**

on the third floor was named for the acting Archivist of Ontario (and legislative librarian) appointed in 1935. He served until 1939. Largely owing to Talman's tenacity, the Archives of Ontario survived a time when its future existence was in doubt.

a year in review: progress on strategic objectives



Alexander Fraser Reading Room.

The Archives of Ontario made significant progress on its strategic objectives in the last fiscal year. These strategic objectives related to three priority areas:

- Innovation in Bringing Our Past Alive
- Leadership in Promoting Excellence in Government Recordkeeping
- Excellence in Custodial Strategies and Practices

Innovation in Bringing Our Past Alive

Continue to develop and implement innovative strategies and customer service initiatives to make our records accessible to an ever-expanding audience.

Promote and expand awareness and relevance of the Archives to diverse audiences.

Over the past year, the Archives of Ontario continued to develop and implement innovative strategies and customer service initiatives to make records accessible to an ever-expanding audience. Through a variety of projects and changes, the Archives has successfully promoted and expanded awareness of the Archives and its relevance to diverse audiences.



One of two new kiosks housing the Virtual Reading Room.

Customer Service

The Archives is dedicated to offering an extremely high level of service to members of the public who come to use resources on site.

The public can access material, in all of the formats held at the Archives, in the Alexander Fraser Reading Room. The Reading Room features two audio/visual rooms, 12 computer stations with Internet access, 93 microfilm readers (most using digital) and WiFi capability. The Reading Room also features two kiosks that house the Virtual Reading Room. This is an electronic finding aid for records and it replaces the paper finding aids used in the old building.

The public can enjoy the specially designed montage wall and a reproduction of the Thompson Map in the Reading Room, as well as reprints of the Niagara Falls panoramas (c. 1911) that were unexpectedly discovered in the attic of the Ontario Legislature during its last major renovation.

In order to improve customer service, a new Integrated Voice Recognition System was introduced. The system fields all incoming calls and directs them to the appropriate department, thus ensuring that every call is answered in a timely fashion. In addition, an improved Customer Service System was established to streamline staff responses to customer requests. The public can also email or fax the Archives to access its references services.

Customer Use of Reference Services

For the Year Ended March 31, 2010

9,871	5,317	14,150	24,691
Correspondence received	On-site visits	Telephone calls fielded	Items retrieved

Under the auspices of the Interlibrary Loan Program (ILL), the Archives of Ontario shares microfilmed collections with lending institutions around the world. Nearly one-third (29%) of all ILL inquiries originate outside Ontario.

This year, the Archives' implemented a new touch-screen welcome kiosk in the reception area. The kiosk features a message from the Archivist of Ontario, answers to frequently asked questions, a floor plan of the building, and other orientation information for new visitors to the Archives.



The Archives of Ontario first went online in 1996 with a rudimentary website containing a handful of pages. Since then, the site has grown to include nearly 60 online exhibits, more than 50 curriculum-based online lesson plans, a comprehensive Microfilm Interloan catalogue, numerous databases containing information on many thousands of records, and countless guides and pathfinders to assist researchers in their work. The site has also become the primary way for researchers across Ontario and around the world to interact with the Archives. It is a front door, window display, and remote research facility for researchers who are unable to visit in person.

In 2009, the site underwent a complete redesign. The redesign incorporated the change to a new technology that enables the individual pages to be generated dynamically. To a visitor, it means the site is cleaner, more modern-looking, and easier to navigate. Behind the scenes, it means that the site is easier to maintain and update.

The bilingual site also underwent an accessibility audit to ensure that it is compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and that it continues to be easily accessible to those visitors who require assistive technologies to use the Internet.

Generation Two of the website redesign is under way. When it is implemented, it will offer more refinements and enhanced access to information online.

Electronic Records Online (ERO)

The new Archives and Recordkeeping Act, 2006, implemented in 2007, fully recognizes the importance of digital records and the need to keep and preserve them in usable form for future generations. The Archives of Ontario is the first archives in Canada to make “born-digital” archival records available to researchers on the web.

On a new webpage (<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/collections/electronic-records.aspx>), the public can check out the Electronic Records Online (ERO) section, found under Start Your Research. The section includes a brief guide to using ERO, links to a description of the record in the Archives Descriptive Database, additional contextual and technical information, and access to the record itself.

Currently, ERO includes the website of the Ipperwash Inquiry—the Archives’ first archival record to be placed online. ERO builds on the work done previously to make electronic records available in the Reading Room, the culmination of a pilot project, completed this year, to process the archival electronic records of the Ipperwash Inquiry. This involved undertaking all aspects of archival work, such as arrangement and description, making restricted records available to the Information & Privacy Unit staff, and proposing numerous recommendations to further integrate the management of archival electronic records into the operational environment. In future, the Archives looks forward to adding more archival electronic records as it implements a number of enhancements to the ERO site.

Digitization

In November 2008, the Archives of Ontario launched Digitization Strategy 2008–2010. The Strategy addressed the need to digitize historical documents and make them available to the public on line.



New photography studio.

The Archives was successful in securing a grant from the Ideas and Innovation Fund to conduct pilot digitization projects, focus groups, and a global research study on digitization. Using an innovative technology, samples of Ontario maps, patent plans, architectural drawings, tourism videos, and textual records and books were digitized through the pilot projects. These digitized records were then presented to focus groups to determine the feasibility of a new, high-impact, high-quality service that would allow customers to have online access to high-use digitized records for a fee. A provincial and global scan provided an in-depth understanding of current markets and determined best practices related to digitization. Another ongoing digitization pilot project under way is the digitization of more than 4000 patent plans.

New Technologies: Social Media

The Archives of Ontario has strategically employed social media in order to reach new and diverse audiences. The Archives’ YouTube channel (www.youtube.ca/archivesofontario) features some gems from the Archives’ sound and moving image collections. As well, a brand new five-part miniseries tells the story of the move and features staff as they worked to transfer the Archives from the old building to the new facility.

Soon, online audiences will be able to follow the Archives on Twitter ([@archivesofontario](https://twitter.com/archivesofontario)) to be kept informed about Archives news and developments.

Outreach

The Archives of Ontario connects with new audiences and works to increase the profile of the Archives of Ontario. The Archives is promoted through a variety of innovative and engaging methods: educational programming, tours, exhibitions (onsite, online and travelling), events, speaking engagements and strategic partnerships with government, the cultural community, and other bodies.

Educational Programming

The Archives of Ontario offers both online and onsite educational programming in the new George Spragge classroom. Ontario students have the opportunity to use original records held at the Archives to complement their studies. Teachers have online access to over 50 curriculum-linked instant lesson plans that can be used directly in the classroom. Tailored for students from grades 3 to 12, the online lesson plans cover a variety of subject areas, including geography, English, language arts, dramatic arts, and history.

In 2009, the Archives of Ontario developed distinct, curriculum-linked programmes to be delivered in the new classroom. Emphasizing the use of original documents and closely aligned to the Ontario curriculum, teachers can now book to attend workshops such as:

- Introduction to Primary Sources: Grades 9 –12 History
- Archives and Local History: Grade 12 Interdisciplinary Studies

Also in 2009, the Archives conducted research with teachers around the province to understand teachers' needs and expectations of future educational programming at the new facility.



Future Archivists and Decision-Makers

Grade 10 students of the Durham District School Board recently had the opportunity to become archivists for the afternoon. Led by Archives staff, students reviewed original documents relating to the history of the province. Using a collecting policy, they analyzed, debated, and decided which records should be part of the province's historical record and which should not. Students gained insight into the work of the Archives in preserving the province's documentary heritage and the challenges of making decisions with far-reaching consequences for future historians.

The students said that they loved the opportunity to handle real original documents and to be the decision-makers.

Archives of Ontario Tours



The Archives of Ontario provides public tours of its facilities. Tours offer introductions to the public spaces, including the Reading Room, as well as a rare opportunity to admire some of the treasures housed in the collections.

In the past year, about 440 people participated in a total of 38 tours.

Exhibits at the Archives of Ontario

The Archives of Ontario highlights its precious collections through online exhibits, travelling exhibits, and static exhibits in the Exhibit Gallery.

Online exhibits can also be accessed from the Archives of Ontario website (ontario.ca/archives). Exhibits are arranged thematically, and can be reached through the browsing buttons on the site or by following the links on the drop-down menu.

Travelling Exhibits

The Archives of Ontario maintains an exciting travelling exhibits loan program that showcases the Archives' holdings in a variety of subject-based exhibits. These exhibits are available free of charge to any institution that wishes to borrow them. The exhibits enable thousands of people from around the province to view selections from the Archives' holdings in an informative and accessible format.

There are currently 12 exhibits circulating among heritage, cultural, and educational institutions throughout Ontario. Five new county museums have been added to the audience for the Archives travelling exhibits this past year.



War of 1812 Travelling Exhibit.

Photo courtesy of The Eva Brook Donly Museum & Archives, Norfolk County, Simcoe, Ontario.



The "Ontario-On The Map" exhibit.



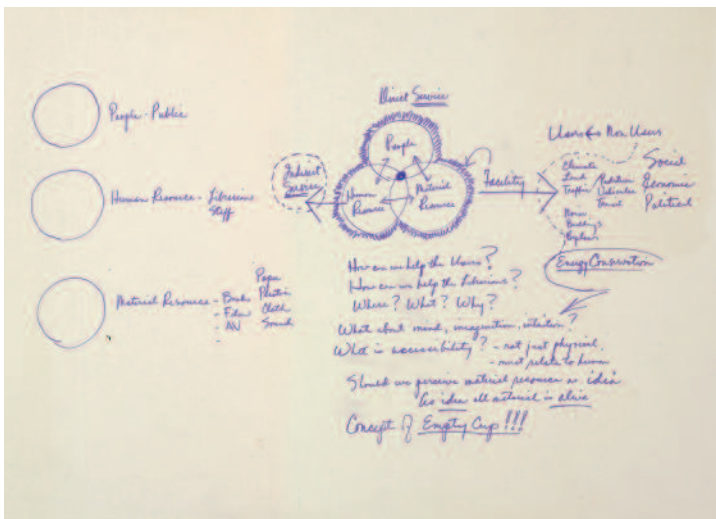
Hon. Harinder Takhar, Minister of Government Services, with Miriam McTiernan, Archivist of Ontario.

Exhibit Gallery

The move to a purpose-built home has allowed the staff to preserve, promote, and showcase Archives collections like never before. The Helen McClung Exhibit Area has carefully controlled temperature, light, and humidity levels which allows members of the public to view exhibits that incorporate the display of original records. The installation of custom-made steel and glass vertical and horizontal display cases ensures that the collections are maintained in dust-proof and airtight conditions, protected from UV light.

For the first gallery exhibition, the Archives showcased original records from its collection through the "Ontario-On the Map" exhibit. These maps, starting from the 17th century, represent our understanding of the changes to the physical and cultural landscape in Ontario over the centuries. The exhibit opened in September 2009 and included 46 maps. Visitors, including academic and professional associations and the broader public, have found this exhibit of great historic and geographic interest.

The next exhibit, "Architectural Dialogues: Moriyma & Teshima", opening in May 2010, will be a curated exhibit of original materials from the Archives' Moriyma & Teshima Architects collection.



Metro Toronto Reference Library-[Concept of empty cup sketch],[ca. 1977]
Metro Toronto Reference Library by Moriyma & Teshima Architects and Planners/Archives of Ontario
F2187-1-4820,10030617
Architectural drawing, ink on paper.



Metro Toronto Library - [Front entrance], 1973
Metro Toronto Reference Library by Moriyma and Teshima Architects and Planners / Archives of Ontario
F 2187-1-20, 10040880
Photograph, colour.

Events

The Archives held a number of events in the George Spragge Classroom and Helen McClung Exhibit Area this year, and hundreds of people attended. These events brought to life the collections held at the Archives. Events included book signings, film viewings, exhibition previews, and the landmark official opening of the facility.



Official opening of the new building on June 15, 2009.

- Archives Association of Ontario's reception in June 2009
- The Official Opening of the new building, with over 100 guests, including Hon. Ted McMeekin, former Minister of Government Services; Shelly Jamieson, Secretary of the Cabinet; Dr. Mamdouh Shoukri, York University President; and Ron McKerlie, Deputy Minister of Government Services
- An illustrated lecture by author Barbara Williams, author of *The Journals, Letters, and Art of Anne Langton* featured Archives collections
- A screening of filmmaker George Sibley's documentary, *Shadows of David Thompson*, which featured Archives collections
- The launch of the first gallery exhibition, *Ontario—On the Map*, with the new Minister of Government Services Minister, Hon. Harinder Takhar
- A donor appreciation event for private donors who have contributed their records to the Archives of Ontario
- An Association of Ontario Land Surveyors event, featuring the launch of Jean Murray Cole's book, *Sir Sanford Fleming: His Early Diaries, 1845–1853*
- A visit and presentation on Library and Archives Canada's "Vision for Modernization" from Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Dr. Daniel Caron

Speaking Engagements

The Archives of Ontario maintains an active Speakers Bureau, and this service continues to be one of the most popular aspects of the Archives Outreach program. This past year, the Archives made 15 presentations to a total of more than 740 people throughout the province. The varied audiences have included chapters of the Ontario Genealogical Society, government bodies, and groups with specific interests.



A presentation by Dr. Daniel Caron, Librarian and Archivist of Canada, on Library and Archives Canada's "Vision for Modernization" in January 2010.

Leadership in Promoting Excellence in Government Recordkeeping

*Provide leadership to strengthen accountability and transparency in government through implementation of the **Archives and Recordkeeping Act, 2006**.*

Work with our partners to provide direction and advice on the management of electronic records within government and develop strategies to improve our capability to preserve digital records and make them accessible to our customers.

Recordkeeping: Managing Public Records for the Present and the Future

The Recordkeeping Support Unit (RSU) was established in 2007 to help Ontario government ministries and designated provincial agencies meet their responsibilities under the *Archives and Recordkeeping Act, 2006*. In an effort to foster government accountability and transparency and to promote excellence in government recordkeeping practices, RSU has developed and released supporting tools and guides. It also provides advice and guidance to ministries and agencies. RSU supports ministries and agencies in their records scheduling activities and manages the Series Management System database, which contains over 14,000 Archivist-approved record retention schedules. These schedules are available on line to all Ontario government staff involved in recordkeeping.

Over this past year, RSU focused on enhancing training and education materials. It was the first unit at the Archives of Ontario to use the new state-of-the-art classroom in the Archives' new facility. In May 2009, RSU offered a recordkeeping workshop attended by 26 ministry staff (the old building could accommodate a maximum of 15 participants). The workshop was an all-day training exercise for ministry records management coordinators on the interpretation of the Government of Ontario Records Schedule Requirements. RSU also delivered generic recordkeeping training to Ontario government employees (through the government's Center for Leadership) and a "Records Schedules and Databases" workshop for a broader public sector audience. It also released Guidelines regarding the transfer of electronic records to the Archives, which guide Ontario government ministries and agencies in transferring electronic records from their operational networks and workstations to the Archives of Ontario in accordance with an approved records series.



Recordkeeping Support Unit's e-learning website.

Recognizing the need for more hands-on and interactive training, RSU created an e-learning website based on the existing guide, *Implementing Records Schedules for Paper Records*. The site uses interactive media in a module-based tool that takes into account the different styles in which people learn. It is designed to guide government staff through the processes and documentation required to box and send paper records to offsite storage.

The Archivist of Ontario continued as the executive sponsor of the Records and Information Management Community of Practice this year. This forum for ministry and agency staff helps them to work collectively, share expertise, and discuss various aspects of recordkeeping, including the implementation of recordkeeping initiatives across government.

Recordkeeping Supports to Ministries and Agencies

Statistics for the Year Ended March 31, 2010

1,662 Government common series reviewed for Archivist approval and adopted	750 New, revised, obsolete, and superseded records series reviewed for Archivist approval and approved	386 Responses to recordkeeping inquiries from Ministries, provincial agencies, and other sources
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Information, Storage and Retrieval

The Information Storage and Retrieval Record Centre (IS&R) has been the Ontario government’s official record centre since 1968. In April 2007, responsibility for the IS&R was transferred from Ontario Shared Services to the Archives of Ontario. IS&R is responsible for storing ministry and agency paper records that are deemed semi-active and require off-site storage in secure, climate-controlled facilities. This frees up storage space at ministry locations and allows for more cost-effective use of ministry office space.

For the storage of semi-active records, IS&R currently has two government-owned warehouse facilities and one facility under contract with a private sector owner. Semi-active records remain the property of the originating ministry or provincial agency, and IS&R provides retrieval and re-filing services upon request. Approximately 40% of records are currently stored at the two government-owned warehouses and close to 60% are stored at the private-sector warehouse. Close to one million cubic feet of records are stored at the three warehouses. Approximately 22,000 cubic feet of records are destroyed annually.



Under the leadership of the Archives of Ontario, IS&R enforces the disposition of all off-site records according to a retention schedule. All records transferred to IS&R must be accompanied by a retention schedule authorized by the Archivist of Ontario. Schedules determine the length of time the records are to be stored (on site and off site in IS&R) and whether they should be destroyed or transferred to the Archives of Ontario facility for permanent preservation. Once transferred to the Archives facility, the records are owned by the Archives and are no longer retrievable through IS&R.

Preserving Digital Records and Making Them Accessible: RADR

To respond to the challenge of long-term digital preservation, the Archives of Ontario began developing RADR—the Repository for Archival Digital Records. The goal of RADR is to ensure that archival digital records in Archives collections are accessible, independent of the use of any specific hardware or software, for as long as required, while protecting the authenticity and reliability of these records.

By closely adhering to international standards (such as ISO's Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System) from the very early stage of RADR planning, development, and implementation, the Archives is working to prepare RADR to be certified as a “Trusted Digital Repository” once an international certification process has been finalized.

Major RADR-related activities this year included the analysis of functional requirements; the release of a Request for Information to assist with market research for potential vendor solutions; the completion of a full business case; passage through early gates of the OPS IT Gating process; and the preparation of a funding submission as part of the Ontario Government's Results-based Planning program.

Excellence in Custodial Strategies and Practices

Continue to develop our collections to include records that reflect the full diversity of Ontario and its people.

Continue to strengthen the physical and intellectual control of our records while preparing our collections for the move to our new facility.

Archives of Ontario's Diversity Initiative

In 2009, Miriam McTiernan, the Archivist of Ontario, was appointed Assistant Deputy Minister, Diversity Change Agent on behalf of the Office of the Corporate Chief Information Officer and Government Service Delivery Cluster (OCCIO/GSDC). In this role, she oversees the implementation of diversity-related initiatives in the OCCIO-GSDC business area in support of the shared priority of the Ontario Public Service and the Ministry to create an inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible organization that delivers excellent public service. Supporting the Archivist in these diversity initiatives are volunteer Workplace Diversity Change Agents from the various offices of OCCIO-GSDC.



Archives of Ontario Staff at a Diversity event (Purim Celebration) to raise funds for charity.

In November 2009, the Archives held its first Ontario Public Service Diversity and Inclusion Learning Forum. The forum was led by Noëlle Richardson, Chief Diversity Officer for the Ontario Government, and Shamira Madhany, Assistant Deputy Minister of Diversity Office.

Reflecting its diverse workforce, the Archives formed a diversity committee. The committee offers a variety of activities, as well as an e-learning course, to help staff understand how embracing diversity and inclusion is a way to improve public services and make the Archives a better place to work.



Developing the Collections

As just a glimpse into activities focusing on developing the Archives' collections, archivists researched maps drawn by Elizabeth Simcoe, re-housed counterfeit money in court files, and described photographs of the 1898 Beaverton burlesque hockey team.

A new challenge in 2009 was the re-housing, bar-coding, arranging, and description of one million aerial photographs of Ontario, recently acquired from the MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES. Collectively, these images show changes in Ontario's landscape from the 1940s to the 1990s.

Ministry of Natural Resources, Anderdon Twp, Essex County, Ontario (Near Amherstburg), 1978. Aerial photographic print, Roll 228, image 11, line 4211RG 1-429-7. Forest resource inventory (Ministry of Natural Resources), Archives of Ontario, Toronto.

Strengthening the Physical and Intellectual Control of Records

Focus on Processing Archival Records

The Archives of Ontario has continued to focus on processing archival records as they are acquired, as well as devoting resources to its description backlog. The Collections Development and Management team processed over 13,000 containers of Government of Ontario records this past year, acquired as part of the annual intake of archival records from government ministries and agencies. In addition, over 40 newly acquired private collections were re-housed, bar-coded, arranged, and described.

Upgrading Finding Aids

The Archives upgraded several old paper finding aids into searchable electronic descriptions. The records of John Graves and Elizabeth Simcoe and those of historian and journalist Alexander Fraser, the first Archivist of Ontario, are among the more prominent promotions.

As a result of the upgrade, over 40,000 new descriptions of government and private records were made available in the online Archives Descriptive Database (ADD). Researchers around the world can search for information about the Archives collections using the ADD, a keyword-searchable online tool. The database currently includes descriptions of over 1800 fonds or collections created by private individuals and corporations, and over 6900 records series created by the Government of Ontario. Associated with these are more than 900,000 searchable listings, not just of paper files, but also of photographs, maps, architectural drawings, films, sound recordings, artifacts, and electronic records.

Biographical or historical information is available for over 5,000 people and organizations responsible for creating the collections.





New Preservation Services Lab.

Enhanced Preservation Services

Preservation Services includes the new Preservation Services Lab and the reprographics areas. The reprographics areas include a Microfilm Lab, Photography Studio, Digital Imaging Studio and a Reprographics area.

Now that the Archives is in its new location, staff work is benefiting from the new lab facility solely dedicated to the physical care of the collection. This space, approximately three times the size of the former lab, is equipped with many state-of-the-art features, including a cork and rubber floor designed for lab technicians who are required to stand for extended periods in the course of their work.

There are several oversized work surfaces, surrounded by two walls of large windows with remote-controlled blinds. Several new pieces of equipment have been added to complete the space, including a new bio-safety cabinet and fume hood and four extractor-arm ventilation systems.



New Preservation Services Lab.

Finance and Administration

This past year, the Finance and Administration Unit provided leadership in strengthening accountability and transparency in financial management. The unit coordinated and provided financial planning, evaluation, and advice to support the Archives of Ontario in its programs and activities. It also fulfilled our corporate reporting requirements.

The Finance and Administration unit represented the Archives on internal Ontario Public Service/Ministry of Government Services committees, such as the Ministry of Government Services Performance Measures Steering Committee and the Accessibility Plan Working Group.

Information and Privacy (IPU)

In support of the Archives' strategic goals of facilitating access to the collections and fostering government accountability and transparency while protecting personal privacy, the Information and Privacy Unit (IPU) responds to inquiries regarding access to records covered by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.



In 2009, IPU processed 270 requests from the public. Of these, 237 were completed within the legislated timeframe of 30 days (88% compliance). The majority of requests received came from clients seeking access to psychiatric records, primarily for genealogical research purposes.

Other records frequently requested included court records, correctional records, and coroner's files. In addition, 295 consultations were received from various ministry clients who sought access to archived materials subject to access and privacy legislation.

The move to the new facility also enabled the IPU to expand the range of customers it serves. In addition to receiving requests from the business community, legal professionals, and the broader public, IPU staff has been able to assist academic researchers and university students with their research. The new facility is also equipped with several consultation rooms, which allows IPU staff to conduct interviews with clients in a private and confidential manner.

Over the coming years, the IPU will continue to be committed to providing access to information while protecting personal information in accordance with best customer-service practices.

donors

Donations to the Archives

A new donor kiosk installed in the Archives lobby this year celebrates the many generous donations to the Archives by private individuals and groups. It contains information about the donors and an introduction to the materials that have been made permanently available to all Ontarians.



Mary Anne Ludlam, Ontario Society of Artists (OSA), uses the new donor kiosk.

Many of the records held by the Archives of Ontario have come from private donors. Significant donations were made by Allan Harding Mackay in 2008 and Claire Prieto in 2009. Allan Harding Mackay's donation consists of records that document his artistic process in conceptualizing and designing the Veterans' Memorial—the only major structure that the Legislative Assembly has permitted on the grounds of Queen's Park in almost 70 years. Its importance to Ontario as a public memorial of Canada's military and peacekeeping history is self-evident.

Claire Prieto's donation consists of films and related records that she created with Roger McTair. Her donation captures some of the earliest work of Ontario's Black filmmakers and is unlike any other record in the Archives' holdings. Titles include *Some Black Women* (1977); *It's Not An Illness* (1979); *Different Timbres* (1980); *Home to Buxton* (1986); and *Jennifer Hodge: The Glory & The Pain* (1992).

The Archives of Ontario would like to thank all donors, listed below, who donated archival records to its collection over the past two years:

Hon. Allan McNiece Austin
Corinne Bennett
Board of Examiners in Sex Therapy
and Counselling in Ontario
Allison Boyd
Caledon Mountain Trout Club
Canadian National Exhibition Archives
CARFAC (Canadian Artists' Representation
le Front des artistes canadiens) Ontario
Demetra Christakos
Rebecca Cowan
Cynthia Crysler and Alexandra Crysler Wiggins
Jennifer Donnelly
Easter Seals Society
Donald Eldon
ENVision – The Hough Group
Peter Favot
Jane L. Fletcher
Sarah Harvey
James R. Horwood
Kathleen Imrie
Elizabeth Jones

Oksana Kuryliw
Allan Harding Mackay
James Malecki
Sheila McCook
Lorne McIntosh
Mrs. Ann E. McJanet
Mono Lino Inc
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
Ontario Music Educators' Association
Ontario Press Council
Osgoode Society
Claire Prieto
Bernard Rasch
Lauren McKinley Renzetti
Shea Richardsen
Peter Ridout
John H. Robson
RSM Richter Inc.
Kathleen Thompson
Toronto and North York Hunt Club
Toronto Film and Video Club
Donna Woods

thank you

Donations to the Art Collection of Ontario

The Archives of Ontario would also like to thank the following individuals who have donated artworks to the Government of Ontario Art Collection over the past two years:

Janet Basmadjian
Evelyn Bayefsky
Steven Blevins and Sonja Morawetz
Jane Stanley

archives in the community

Students

Through the Ontario Public Service Summer Experience 2009 program, the Archives of Ontario provided 12 high school students with hands-on work experience and on-the-job training to develop skills in their field of interest.

Raising Money for Charity

During good times and bad, the Archives of Ontario has continued to make it a priority to give generously to charities that help Ontarians. The Archives' new facility was used extensively to plan new events that raised money for the charities it supports—the Federated Health Campaign and the United Way.



Archives of Ontario staff fundraising at a United Way book sale in May 2009.

Federated Health Campaign

Through canvassing, and events such as a bake sale and a lunchtime quiz, the Archives raised \$6,428.20 in this very successful campaign—beating its goal by over \$400!

United Way

Archives staff again rose to the fundraising challenge. Their efforts, which included a fall pumpkin-carving contest, book sale, and a CN Tower climb, raised \$8,813.00.

Awards

In June 2009, the Archives of Ontario was honoured with the Archives of Ontario Association's Institutional Award. This award is given only to "an Archival Institution that has contributed significantly to the advancement of the archival field or community, or has demonstrated a significant level of innovation and imagination in the establishment of outstanding or model programmes."

2010 the year ahead

The institutional innovations of this past year could not have been achieved without inspired teamwork and collaboration from all Archives of Ontario staff. With continued imagination and progressive innovation in archival science, the Archives of Ontario will continue to strengthen the physical and intellectual control of its records.

The Archives of Ontario will also continue to:

- Work with its partners to facilitate the management, preservation, and accessibility of electronic records
- Develop its collections to include records that reflect the full diversity of Ontario and its people
- Develop unique and engaging programs tailored to the new facility's educational and exhibit spaces, and reinforce its dedication to offering superior services to its varied clients
- Promote excellence in recordkeeping across government through enhanced training supports and outreach

*I encourage all Ontarians to visit and use **your** provincial Archives. We need to have a sense of our past in order to have an appreciation of our present as well as our future.*

The Archives of Ontario provides a window to the past for Ontarians, connecting us with our ancestors, our communities and our government. While memories can fade, the records held by the Archives are true testaments to our society's actions, beliefs and principles.

Miriam McTiernan, Archivist of Ontario



THE THRILL
OF DISCOVERY

Environmental information

This Annual Report is printed on Canadian made Rolland Enviro100 paper manufactured from 100 per cent post-consumer waste fibre, is Process Chlorine Free (PCF) and used BioGas in its production (an alternative “green energy” source produced from decomposing waste collected from landfill sites) to reduce greenhouse emissions and the depletion of the ozone layer.

Rolland Enviro100 saves the harvesting of mature trees, reduces solid waste that would have gone into landfill sites, uses 80 per cent less water than conventional paper manufacturing and helps reduce air and water pollution.

