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**CONCEIVING LOCAL ARCHIVAL INSTITUTIONS:
A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHIVAL PROGRAMS
IN RICHMOND AND DELTA, BRITISH COLUMBIA.**

by

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Abstract

This essay tries to determine how two municipal archival programs develop from their origins as collections of historical documents in museums, and whether they fit into the larger pattern of archival development found in Canadian federal and provincial public archives, which is identified as "total archives". To provide some context for the two case studies, the essay first examines the main features of the Canadian tradition of "total archives" and tries to locate Canadian archives in the context of the worldwide evolution of modern archival institutions. The essay then explores the development of municipal archival programs in Delta and Richmond, British Columbia to reveal how they were conceived, advanced and sustained. The study concludes that local archival programs do fit into the Canadian tradition of "total archives", however, a conceptual framework which includes both the cultural and administrative purposes of archival institutions appears to be lacking. The conclusion summarizes some of the aspects of a conceptual framework including: the nature of archives, the legal status of public records and the need for archival legislation, the administrative role of an archival program, the need for a commitment of adequate resources, and the need for local governments to recognize their duty to preserve and make accessible public records of continuing value.

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Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to construct a conceptual framework for the organization of a municipal archival and records keeping program by examining the development of two local archival institutions and available archival literature. Although the development of archival institutions in Canada can be traced to as early as 1857 with the organization of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, the establishment of public archival institutions has been primarily based on the experience of the Public Archives of Canada, and this development has been summarized in the term "total archives." Wilfred Smith, a former Dominion Archivist, outlines the aspects of total archives to include the following dimensions. First, all sources of archival material within a territorial jurisdiction are examined with the view of acquiring both public and private records. Second, the archival institution preserves all media, including textual, cartographic, photographic, film, sound and machine readable records. In addition, all records originating from the same source are acquired. Third, records reflecting "all subjects of human endeavour should be covered by a repository rather than being assigned to different repositories based on subject."¹ Fourth, the archival institution participates in all stages of the management of the life-cycle of the record, from its creation to its final disposition. Smith also mentions a fifth aspect of total archives which is the development of a network of archival institutions to ensure that all records of historical significance are preserved.² In Smith's analysis, several historical factors influenced the organization of public archival institutions and cultivated the concept of total archives. These include the influence of historians, the desire to disseminate a knowledge of Canadian history, the youth of the government, and the lack of other cultural institutions such as libraries and museums. Although these circumstances vary with time and

place, provincial archival institutions have followed a comparable pattern of development to that of the Public Archives of Canada which, in 1987, was re-named the National Archives of Canada.

Over the past twenty years, however, Canadian archivists have re-evaluated the role of public archival institutions in the light of rapid changes in information technology, the introduction of freedom of information legislation, and the need to develop an integrated global approach towards the management of public archives. It is amid these changes that there has been a burgeoning of municipal archival institutions.

Nevertheless, in spite of these developments and the recognition of "total archives" as a model for public archives in Canada, there is an absence of a standard conceptual framework for the organization of public archival institutions. Nowhere is this more evident than at the municipal government level, the last jurisdiction to organize archival programs. The two case studies in this essay indicate that local archival programs often have their origins as 'ad hoc' collections of documents within local history museums, historical societies or libraries. It is the purpose of this essay to determine whether and how an archival institution grows from such origins. Little has been written, however, about the overall development of local archival institutions in Canada. The few articles that do exist focus on the absence of local archival institutions and on the need for some action to be taken to address the possible loss and destruction of both public and private records in local communities.³ Some other studies reveal the establishment of archival institutions or their records management programs in larger cities, such as Vancouver and Toronto.⁴ These institutions are considered well organized and affluent in comparison to most local archival institutions.

It is clear that the evolution of municipal archival institutions fits into a larger pattern of development of public archives in Canada. Therefore, the first chapter of this study will examine the main features of this development and locate Canadian archives in the larger context of the world wide evolution of modern archival institutions. In examining the evolution of modern public archives, it becomes very clear that Canadian archival institutions were organized to provide a cultural support to the nineteenth century political objective of nation and region building. However, this justification and impetus to establish an archival institution no longer seems to be sufficient as Canada faces the twentieth-first century and its rapidly changing information needs.

Second, this study will examine the origins and the course of development of two local archival programs in Richmond and Delta in British Columbia. Both are suburban municipalities in the Greater Vancouver area, which might be expected to face comparable circumstances, yet each municipality has clearly developed a distinctive path for its archival program. In examining their development, this essay keeps in mind that we know far less about how institutions and programs develop than we do about the theory and practice of archival science. As a group of archivists in the United States observe,

archival writing has concentrated on theory and practice, focusing chiefly on the treatment of materials and making them available to users; we have given less attention to ways to envision, create, advance, protect and sustain an archival program that supports archival functions.⁵

These case studies of the historical development of two archival programs strive to reveal how they were envisioned, created, advanced, and sustained; and they will provide some analysis of the factors which conditioned their development. Furthermore, these studies will demonstrate the necessity for a clear conception of the cultural and administrative purposes of an archival

institution and point out the fundamental requirements to sustain its growth and development.

In light of the study of the development of two archival programs, the final chapter will present a conceptual framework for the organization of municipal archival institutions. This chapter will isolate the important elements of policy and structure which it appears must be constructed into a successful archival program. This framework is not intended to be a prescribed list of standards for the organization of a local archival program, instead, these aspects are raised to promote a better understanding of the function and the needs of an archival institution within a community.

Introduction - Endnotes

1. Wilfred Smith, "'Total Archives': the Canadian Experience," Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique 57, no.2 (1986): 341.
2. Ibid.
3. The following studies focus on the need to preserve local records as sources for historical studies: Peter A. Baskerville and Chad M. Gaffield, "The Vancouver Island Project: Historical Research and Archival Practice," Archivaria 17 (Winter 1983-84): 173-187; David G., Brumberg "Sources and Uses of Local History Material," Bookmark (Winter 1981): 116-132 and; David Gagan, "Rediscovering Local History: The Problems of Archival Resources for the New History," Communique 4, no.1 (1980): 14-15.
4. Robin Kierstead, "J.S. Matthews and an Archives for Vancouver, 1951-72," Archivaria 23 (Winter 1986-87): 86-101; and R. Scott James, "Administration of Municipal Records: The Toronto Experience," Government Publications Review 8A (1981): 321-325.
5. Larry Hackman, James O'Toole, Liisa Fagerland and John Dojka, "Case Studies in Archives Program Development," American Archivist 53 (1990): 549.

Chapter 1

Some Aspects of the Development of Canadian Public Archives

This chapter will focus on several aspects of the pattern of development of Canadian public archival institutions to set some context for the analysis of the two case studies in this essay. Although governments first recognized the need to establish archival institutions in the late nineteenth century, little is known about the overall development of Canadian public archives. Of the literature available, the most complete historical overview is the study conducted by Archer in 1969.¹ More recent studies focus either on the origins and the early years of institutions or on the establishment of specific programs, such as those for records management.² Historical studies about municipal archival institutions are even more limited.³ Nevertheless, these studies reveal some common elements in the development of Canadian public archives.

The modern historical archival institution has its origins in nineteenth century Europe. According to Posner, there were three main currents in archival development since the French Revolution. European governments passed legislation which established national public archival institutions, accepted the responsibility of the state for the preservation of the documentary heritage of the nation, and recognized the citizen's right of access to documents held in public archives. Posner attributes the impetus for these three developments to the forces of nationalism and the rise of the modern nation state. This ideology harnessed the writing of history to the process of creating a common culture among disparate peoples of the states that were then taking shape, and archival institutions were seen as necessary documentary support of this process.

At the same time, historians began to publish documentary sources and to write histories based on a scientific approach, and this became the aim of a movement in historiography. They were inspired by scientific procedures which included the accumulation and substantiation of facts, and the critical analysis of historical documents. This scientific movement in historiography increased the importance of using government records in patriotic national histories. It was also during this period that scholars gradually began to enter archival institutions to replace officials who had been trained in government record keeping. Further, these archivists who were trained in the new scientific methods cultivated links between the writing of history and the preservation of archives. This ideology eventually made its way across the Atlantic to North America.⁴

One characteristic of European national archival institutions which evolved during this period of nation-building and is worth examining in comparison to the Canadian public archives tradition, has been the concentration of archival responsibility in central governments and the efforts to bring public archives under systematic control. According to Posner, "As a rule the framework of archival depositories corresponds to the administrative structure of the country, with provincial or similar archives taking over the records of respective provincial offices."⁵ For example, in Italy, there is the Central State Archives which is responsible for the preservation of the records of the modern Italian state, and there are state archives within the regions. Each of these state archival institutions has a history of its own prior to the unification of Italy between 1859 and 1870.⁶ Another illustration can be found in France with *Les Archives Nationales* as the central archival repository and the *Archives Départementales* responsible for the preservation of records of each administrative section of the state.⁷ Posner

also notes that it was during the early nineteenth century that archivists began to re-establish contacts with departments, to demand the regular transfer of public records, and to provide input in the selection and destruction of government documents.⁸

Furthermore, these efforts to concentrate archival responsibility in central governments were not limited solely to European public records, they also included non-public records.⁹ In each European country, the preservation of private archives exists, whether in the state system of repositories or not. In some countries, the central government has assigned the responsibility for the preservation of private records to museums and libraries, whereas in other countries, the government acknowledges and even lays certain public claim to private records through its archival legislation as part of a nation's documentary heritage. For example, in Italy, the division of Non-state Archives has jurisdiction over 18 archival superintendencies which takes care of all archives owned by public institutions different from the state and by private persons or bodies. Consequently, all records created or received within Italy are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Cultural and Environmental Properties.¹⁰ In other countries, such as the Republic of Ireland, Denmark, and Finland, the national archival institutions have a legislative mandate to acquire both public and private records.¹¹

In Great Britain, however, there is no overall national policy dealing with the preservation of public and private archives. For example, the archival institutions of the central government are responsible for the public records of England, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but the policy regarding the acquisition of private records differs within each archival repository. The Public Record Office has jurisdiction over the records of the central government of the United Kingdom, while the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and the Scottish Record Office

acquire both public and non-public records, as well as local (county) records. In addition, there are departments of the British central government which continue to be exempt from the authority of the Public Record Office, although the latter has statutory responsibility for official records. For example, the records of the British Parliament are preserved by the House of Lords Record Office. Also, the British Library and the India Office Library also hold older records originating from the central government, although they do not actually have any statutory authority to house such public records. The British Library (and before that the British Museum) also acquired private archives of national significance. Finally, other public institutions, such as universities and colleges, continue to acquire the papers of politicians and military officials, for example, Cambridge College houses the papers of Sir Winston Churchill.¹²

Like Great Britain, the pattern of preserving public and non-public archives is also varied in the United States. There are two streams of development and they are frequently designated as the historical manuscript tradition and the public records tradition. Perhaps more than in any other country, publicly supported archival institutions share the responsibility for the preservation of archives with libraries, museums and other institutions, both public and private. Beginning in the late eighteenth century and nineteenth centuries, the first historical societies and libraries received public and private archival documents amassed by private collectors, many of which were often based on subject or themes. In addition, these collectors adopted the belief that the editing and publication of documents was an effective means of preservation. This practice of collecting and publishing documents became known as the historical manuscript tradition, and it dominated the American archival scene well into the twentieth century, and

heavily influenced the development of archival practices.¹³ Indeed, sixty years after the establishment of the first historical society in Massachusetts in 1792, there were over two hundred historical societies which had assumed responsibility for the records of their region in the absence of any state or national archives. Moreover, a few historical societies later were given responsibility public records. For example, the Wisconsin Historical Society established in 1854, became the official repository for state records in 1907.¹⁴

Although American colonists recognized early on that government would keep impartial records which guaranteed their legal rights, and would permit access to them on the behalf of all citizens, the first state archives was not established until 1901 and the National Archives was not organized until 1934.¹⁵ According to Posner, state archives have developed along a number of patterns. In some regions, they have developed as an adjunct of the function of the Secretary of State, some as departments of the state library, some within historical societies, and some as historical commissions or as a department of historical commissions. Thus, in some areas, the state archives is occupied only with the records generated and received by the government, while in other states, it is responsible for both public and private records.¹⁶

Unlike European governments, the American federal government did not readily recognized its duty for the consolidation of responsibility for national records. Although there were repeated efforts by historians to convince the federal government to organize an archival institution, the National Archives was not established until 1934. However, the uniform acquisition and housing of both public and private nationally significant records did not occur with the creation of a national archival institution. Like the Public Record Office of Great Britain, the National Archives is responsible almost exclusively for the preservation of the

records of the central government. Until its organization, the Library of Congress acquired and preserved historical public records, and it has continued to acquire nationally significant private records. In addition, four years after the organization of the National Archives, the first presidential library, a uniquely American institution was established to house the papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt. More of these presidential libraries were subsequently created, and although they are administered by the National Archives and Records Service, each library collects both the published materials and the private and official records of the president, his family, and his contemporaries, as well as artifacts and non-archival materials.¹⁷ Thus, the organization of a federal archives did not result in the uniform preservation of both public and private records of national significance.

By comparison the development of public archival institutions in Canada is remarkably consistent in the preservation of both public and private records. Like many European countries, Canada has had a tradition of preserving both public and private archives in public archival institutions. Indeed, the Canadian tradition can be summed up in the concept of "total archives". According to Smith, a former Dominion Archivist, the "total archives" concept has at least four dimensions. First, all sources of archival material within a territorial jurisdiction are examined with the view to acquiring both public and private records. Second, the repository preserves records of all media including manuscripts, maps, photographs, picture, sound recordings, motion pictures, other audio visual records, and machine readable records. Further, all records originating from the same source should be acquired. Third, records reflecting "all subjects of human endeavour should be covered by a repository rather than being assigned to different repositories based on subject."¹⁸ Fourth, the archives participates in all stages of the

management of the life-cycle of the record, from its creation to its final disposition.¹⁹ According to Cook, there is also a fifth dimension, comprising an archival network of federal, provincial and local government institutions and private programs administered by churches, labour, businesses and universities whose coordinated aim is "to ensure that records of all significant human endeavour are preserved."²⁰

The dimensions of total archives described by Smith are in fact based on an analysis of the historical development of the Public Archives of Canada. In his study, he points out that several circumstances affected the organization of the Public Archives of Canada, such as the influence of historians on the early directions of the Archives, the need to create a Canadian identity by disseminating a knowledge of Canadian history, the youth of the government and its records, the lack of other cultural institutions, such as a libraries or museums, and the need to locate records in the "old countries".²¹ Provincial archival institutions appear to have face similar circumstances, even though many were established much later than the Public Archives of Canada. According to Archer, prior to the end of World War II and the introduction of the science of records management, all Canadian public archival institutions were organized primarily for cultural rather than administrative purposes.²² They did not develop as extensions of government record keeping departments, such as the Office of the Chancery or the Secretary of the State; instead, they were seen as a support for historical research.

The Public Archives of Canada was organized five years after Confederation as a response to the efforts of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec -- an organization which promoted historical research and publications. The Society in its petition brought the relationship between patriotism and national history to the attention of the new Dominion government.

That considering the divers origins, nationalities, religious creeds, and classes of persons represented in Canadian society, the conflicting nature of evidence profered by authors in presenting the most important points and phases of our past local history, as well as the greater need which a rapidly progressive people have to base the lessons derivable from their history upon facts duly authenticated in place of mere hearsay or statements only partially correct, and, in the absence of documentary proof, coloured conformably to the political and religious bias or the special motives which may happen to animate the narrator of alleged facts, the undersigned desire to express their conviction that the best interests of Society in this country would be consulted by establishing a system, with respect to Canadian Archives, correspondent with those which have been adverted to in relation to Great Britain, France and the United States.²³

In 1872, the government responded with the establishment of the Public Archives of Canada with the mandate to acquire historical materials for the writing of histories.

The Federal government continued to promote the relationship between patriotism and national history in several ways at the Public Archives of Canada. For example, in 1907, it appointed the Historical Manuscript Commission. The five member Commission comprised three English-Canadian historians, namely Charles Colby, George M. Wrong and Adam Shortt, and two French-Canadian historians, Abbe August Gosselin and J. Edmond Roy. Their mandate was to advise the Dominion Archivist on acquisitions, and to plan with him a program to publish selected manuscripts.²⁴ Another illustration was the collaboration of Shortt, Chairman of the Board of Historical Publications and Arthur Doughty, the Dominion Archivist in editing and producing a 23 volume series entitled Canada and its Provinces. Although this series was not an official publication of the Public Archives of Canada, its main theme reiterated the development of a Canadian identity through the dissemination of a common history exploiting the holdings of archival institutions.²⁵ Another example of how the federal government viewed the Public Archives as a necessary support for historical writing was the amalgamation of the two posts Keeper of the Records and Dominion Archivist. Although the Federal government

had organized Public Archives to preserve historical records which supported the political objective of nation-building, the establishment of such an institution also encroached on the mandate of the Secretary of State who had responsibility for the administration of government records. With the creation of the Public Archives of Canada there were now two agencies responsible for the preservation of government records until 1903 when the two positions of Archivist and Keeper of the Records were combined into one post. Although the Dominion government in 1903 recognized the record-keeping responsibilities of the Archivist, it continued to view the Public Archives as a cultural rather than an administrative need.²⁶

Other repositories which were established prior to World War I, such as the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and the Provincial Archives of Ontario also had mandates to become "arsenals of history." Hence, both federal and provincial governments saw the establishment of archival programs as facilitating the writing of history to promote the political agenda of nation and region building.²⁷

Furthermore, this belief in archives as cultural resources has contributed to the development of at least three dimensions of total archives: namely, the acquisition of both historical public and non-public records, the documentation of all subjects of human endeavour, and the acquisition of films, sound recording, documentary art, and photographs for their historical significance. It is from these acquisition efforts that the beginnings of the media divisions evolved at the Public Archives of Canada to provide special expertise and to meet preservation requirements in non-textual formats.²⁸

Similarly, provincial archivists acquired all forms of historical documentation for the purpose of inspiring Canadian history. At the Archives of Ontario, for example, Fraser acquired

consolidated publications of government, business and other organizations, as well as souvenirs of World War I including Belgian and American recruiting posters, munitions, weapons and badges.²⁹ In British Columbia, Gosnell advocated the creation of a government department which would house the Province's official records and "the history of its earliest times, subsequent settlement, its progress and development comprising newspaper files, old books, pamphlets and all literature of Provincial interest."³⁰ Again, there existed a cultural motive behind these acquisitions to provide the raw materials necessary to inspire the writing of patriotic histories.

Furthermore, the perception of archives as cultural institutions primarily concerned with historical materials contributed to the acquisition of public records. Although Brymmer, Doughty and Lanctot valued public records, there were several factors which contributed to the lack of a systematic program for acquiring federal records for the Public Archives of Canada. First, Brymmer and Doughty were mainly interested in the historical period prior to Confederation, and they concentrated their efforts in the acquisition of the records of this period. Second, both Brymmer and Doughty spent a great deal of time with the problems related to the administration of the Archives, and gaining control over its holdings. Third, there was no overall government policy or legislation, or bureaucracy dealing with the preservation of public records. Although the Public Archives Act was passed in 1912, the legislation did not ensure the preservation of records in government offices, and it did not ensure systematic disposal of government records by the staff of the Archives. Finally, although the Federal government in 1912 had followed the advice of the Manuscript Historical Commission in appointing a Royal Commission to examine the condition of department records, the recommendations of the

Commission which included the establishment of a public records office were never followed through, because of the outbreak of World War I.³¹ Together, these factors influenced the absence of a systematic program for the acquisition of Federal government records.

At the provincial level similar circumstances affected the views held by provincial archivists about public records. For example, in Nova Scotia, Aikins believed that "public documents of a country are its true history and nothing else."³² In British Columbia, where the practical value of an archival institution had been demonstrated in a dispute between the Provincial and Dominion Governments over an island in Burrard Inlet, the archivists continued to neglect more current public records and focused on the acquisition of pre-Confederation provincial records.³³

It was not until after World War II that the Canadian government began to address the development of a systematic final disposition for its records. The tremendous growth in the bureaucracy of the Federal Government and its records during the second World War contributed to the need to develop more sophisticated schedules for records disposition. Furthermore, archivists were faced with an increasingly difficult task in the appraisal and selection of records, because of their growing volume and complexity. Hence, the development of more sophisticated schedules would in turn yield a more complete historical record of the government's operations and administration. In fact, archivists perceived the process of scheduling as a planned method of acquisition for public records whereby valuable historical records would be extracted for the Archives. Thus, archivists assumed the responsibility to implement records management techniques as a means of achieving archival ends rather than to meet purely administrative needs.³⁴

Again, the Public Archives of Canada played a key role in the administration and preservation of government records by implementing the principles of records management to select historical public records. In 1949, Kaye Lamb, the Dominion Archivist, began the task of blending the cultural and administrative roles of the Public Archives of Canada. He used the pragmatic and economically efficient model of the United States National Archives and the life-cycle concept to convince administrators of the value of retention and final disposition decisions by archivists. He also promoted the idea that the availability of storage space for dormant records would give archivists greater control over the transfer of historical records, and that there should be some review process for the final disposition of records. At the same time, he argued that current and semi-current records would be administered by records managers in the government offices. Consequently, Lamb promoted the construction of the Public Archives Records Centre which was completed in 1956, thus providing storage for records until their final disposition was reviewed by archives staff. Also in 1956, the Public Records Committee was established to review final disposition recommendations from the Archives staff.³⁵ The Committee was disbanded in 1966 with the promulgation of the Public Records Order which abolished the committee and placed the responsibility for coordinating the government records management program with the Dominion Archivist. This responsibility included: records centres, microfilm services, advisory services, staff training, the establishment of record standards, the publication of guides, and the authority to review departmental practices.³⁶

At the same time, many provinces established public archives with the mandates to deliver both cultural and records management programs. During the post war era, Provincial Governments in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, Alberta and New Brunswick

organized public archives with the mandate to deliver both records management and cultural programs to deal with problems which existed in public records, and also as a response to the persistent pleas of historians to preserve historical records and manuscripts. Furthermore, the provinces of British Columbia, Nova Scotia and Quebec also recognized the need to address the problems of public records. Even in these provinces, where public archives had existed since the turn of the century, there was no adequate machinery to deal with the final disposition of public records. The arrival of public records at these archives was often the result of "housecleaning" in government offices rather than the result of a systematic selection by archivists. Again, the provincial archivists turned to the Public Archives of Canada and followed its developments as viable solutions to these problems.³⁷

Although Canadian archivists in general recognized the importance of records management in the administration and the selection of historic public records, the roles of archivists and records managers remained distinct and separate. The latter were concerned primarily with administrative efficiency and the present, while the former were concerned with culture and the past.

Since the late 1970's, some archivists have reflected on this disjunction between active and semi-active records, and on the effect which this separation has had on the quality of the archival record. For example, at the Public Archives of Canada, two archivists conducted a study of federal records management practices and the selection of archival records. This study revealed that the implementation of records management procedures in federal departments was unsatisfactory because of the lack of involvement by archivists in the handling of current and semi-current records. Consequently, many records of long term value were often retained in

government offices while those records with little or no value were transferred to the Public Records Centre for dormant storage. Therefore, the study recommended that federal archivists participate more fully in the development of record schedules, in the implementation of classification systems, and in the identification of archival records in government offices.³⁸

Another illustration of the effect of this separation between archivists and records managers on the quality of the archival record can be found in Canadian archival legislation. According to Bryans, archival legislation written after World War II and prior to the last decade has continued to define archives as institutions primarily concerned with the preservation of historical documents. At the same time, the legislation defines public records as active and semi-active records of government whereas they are appraised as historical or archival records. This disjunction in legislation came about because the intent behind archival legislation was the establishment of archival institutions as historical repositories whereas public records legislation was aimed to legitimize the destruction of public records. Bryans argues moreover that the prevalence of the cultural impetus behind the organization of public archives and the use of nineteenth century definitions of archival institutions and their functions has hindered and obscured the preservation of government records.³⁹

Recently, changes in information technology required that archivists review their role in the management of information holdings. The ability of the computer to manipulate information instantaneously has compressed the life-cycle concept of the record and it has further blurred the once clear distinction between records managers and archivists. The fluidity of electronic data requires scheduling to be a continuous process built into the system itself at the time that the record is created.

Finally, legislation regarding access to information and privacy was introduced in the federal and eight provincial jurisdictions including Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Yukon. In British Columbia, the Provincial government has introduced a bill to enact freedom of information legislation and it will be brought into force October 1993. Access to information legislation has also been introduced in some municipal jurisdictions. In Ontario, the Provincial government has already included local governments in freedom of information legislation.⁴⁰ In British Columbia, the Provincial government is considering similar legislation to be brought into force in 1994.⁴¹ Although the impact of this legislation on public archives has yet to be fully studied, it compels archivists to address the contemporary environment of the record in order to administer the privacy and access regulations in connection with such legislation. Furthermore, the question of access to public records is no longer strictly a function of the archival institutions because both administrators and records managers in government departments must deal with requests for documents in their contemporary environment. Consequently, this legislation further undermines the distinction between public records and archives presented in "old fashioned" archival legislation which was based on nineteenth century views of archival institutions.

Thus, the roles of Canadian archivists and records managers can no longer be easily defined according to either the phases of the life-cycle of the record, or by nineteenth century definitions of archival institutions. In fact, by the 1980's most Canadian archivists had accepted that an integrated global approach to records management and archives be undertaken under which no distinction exists between records managers and archivists -- instead, one policy is developed for the intellectual control of government records and it is coordinated by a single agency.⁴²

Finally, one Canadian archivist has proposed an alternative to the concept of the life cycle of the record -- a continuum to be serviced by "information caretakers".⁴³ These recent ideas challenge the long-standing disjunction between public records and archives, and the division between records managers and archivists in order to achieve both the administrative and cultural goals of a public archives in a twentieth century setting.

Finally, the fifth dimension identified by Cook, and mentioned earlier in this chapter, that total archives include the development of a national archival network of federal, provincial, and municipal archives and, private archives administered by churches, labour, business and other organizations, is an element which has also recently emerged in the Canadian archival landscape. Discussions about this multi-institutional archival system began in 1975 with the publication of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada Report on Canadian studies, commonly known as the Symons report after its author, T.H.B. Symons. The Symons report in its chapter on Canadian archives, recognized two fundamental tasks for archivists. First, the report claims that archivists need to inform scholars of archival sources, their location and potential development. Second, archivists need to develop a national and regional plan to coordinate archival resources, which could be accomplished in universities.⁴⁴

Although archivists were pleased with the recognition of the report that "the future of the quality of Canadian studies is directly linked with the condition and resources of Canadian archives," they criticized the recommendations for several reasons.⁴⁵ First, all of the recommendations of the report dealt with the organization of archival resources for Canadian studies rather than with the administration of archives. Understandably, the report treated archival institutions almost exclusively as cultural resources, because its primary focus was

Canadian studies. Second, the report assumed universities would be able to coordinate a network of archival resources, whereas universities actually had a poor record of administering their own archives. Third, the report did not recognize the important role of public archival institutions in the preservation of regional and national records. In contrast, archivists argued that federal, provincial and municipal governments had a role to play in the financing and coordinating of an archival network.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, the Symons report encouraged archivists to further discuss the issue of a Canadian archival network. In 1978, the Social Sciences Humanities and Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) appointed nine archivists and Chair Ian Wilson as the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives "to examine the field and summarize its present condition and to offer whatever leadership they feel is best advised."⁴⁷ In 1980, the Group published its findings in a report, Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, commonly known as the Wilson report, which was based on information acquired from a survey of 321 institutions from which 185 questionnaires and 73 briefs were received. The Committee found that an archival system was misleading because "it implies a degree of coordination of shared objectives and of structure that is only beginning to emerge among Canadian archives."⁴⁸ Moreover, the Committee found that Canadian archives were in financial doldrums in that over one-half of the archives surveyed had annual budgets of \$20,000 or less, and many lacked basic archival facilities and equipment. Furthermore, the Report revealed that the total annual budgets of Canadian archives, excluding the Public Archives of Canada, which accounted for sixty per cent of the total amount of archival expenditures, amounted to only \$10,861,898.⁴⁹

Based on these findings, the Wilson report made its first six recommendations aimed at the provision of a basic framework for the development of an archival network in Canada to be located in federal and provincial archives. First, all public archives should re-evaluate their programs to achieve a balance between their traditional mandates, and new projects should aim to provide leadership in a cooperative system of archives. Second, each province should form a coordinated network to develop services, facilities and programs which would benefit all archives in that province. Third, the Public Archives of Canada should develop an extension branch to administer consulting services, information services, technical facilities and a grant program for all archives in the country. Fourth, the legislation governing the Public Archives of Canada, which was passed in 1912 to provide a sound legislative framework, should be amended to implement the proposals of the report. Fifth, the Public Archives of Canada should increase its annual budget by \$2.5 million to administer the extension branch and its programs. The sixth recommendation was that a Canadian Association of Archives be formed.⁵⁰ These recommendations were specifically aimed at federal and provincial archives for a number of reasons. The Committee recognized that these well established public archives had been given the responsibility to ensure the preservation of all Canadian historical records, however in fulfilling this task, the archivists of these institutions needed to recognize that this meant more than simply gathering all public and private records of a region into centralized institutions. Therefore, the Committee argued, provincial and federal archivists needed to foster the development of appropriate institutional, corporate and local archives. More importantly, the writers of the report made these first six recommendations with the hope that the more affluent institutions would "champion the cause of the needy", because during the 1960's and 1970's

many of these disadvantaged archives had developed outside cities and away from traditional settings of government and universities. Thus, the Committee recognized that a system of Canadian archives had to draw on the potential of these small, local and institutional archives.⁵¹

These discussions about an archival network reflected the growth in Canadian archives since the turn of the century. The Committee reported that 17 out of 174 archives surveyed had been organized at about that time and that by 1925, some 30 institutions had been established. Between 1950 and 1975, the number of archives increased from 49 to 174.⁵² Although the Wilson Report did not state why so many archives were organized during that period, one might suppose that this level of activity was related to a growth in an awareness of heritage in general, and in historical artifacts and heritage buildings, all of which were spurred on by national and provincial centennials. In British Columbia alone, between 1958 and 1972 there were 66 community museums organized, many of which operated in conjunction with art galleries and archives.⁵³ None of these museum archives were involved in the systematic preservation of local public records, and most were administered and operated by volunteers of historical societies with little or no financial support from their parent organizations.

The establishment of an archival network based in provincial and federal archives, however, required the cooperation of provincial and federal governments. In 1983, the provincial and territorial ministers of culture discussed the question of Canadian archives and they directed the Dominion, Provincial and Territorial Archivists to advise their governments on archival issues, and in 1984, this group produced a report on implementation guidelines for a Canadian archival system which was to be coordinated at the regional level by provincial councils. These provincial councils in turn would be coordinated by a national advisory council -- the Canadian

Council of Archives whose function was to provide the coordination and planning for programs for the most effective use of resources, and to develop programs to reach basic standards. In addition, the Canadian Council of Archives is to ensure the continuing improvement of archivists, institutions and archival activities.⁵⁴

Although the development of the Canadian Council of Archives, and provincial and territorial councils marked the beginnings of a coordinated multi-institutional system of archives in Canada, archivists and archival sponsors continued to establish and operate archival programs in relative isolation, because of the paucity of a common concept of the purpose of a records and archives program. In spite of the identification of the five dimensions of total archives, the re-evaluation of the disjunction which existed between records managers and archivists, and the evolution of a global approach towards the management of information, public archival institutions continue to be developed in the absence of a common conceptual framework. Indeed, the membership guidelines issued by the Canadian Council of Archives are voluntary and consequently, neither archivists nor archival sponsors are obliged to participate in the archival system. In addition, most provinces lack clear legal provisions for the organization of their provincial archives which would have provided some guidelines for the establishment of other public archival institution. According to Bryans, provincial archival legislation generally lacks provisions for defining archival terms, for establishing the scope and authority of an archival program and the organization of the basic elements of an archival and records management program.⁵⁵ The consequence of this paucity of guidelines is the continuing development of public archives in an unsystematic manner.

One area which would benefit from a clearer framework for archival and record keeping programs is municipal government, the last jurisdiction to organize public archives. According to the Wilson report the formation of local archives is as necessary as it is inevitable. It is necessary because provincial and federal archives can no longer acquire all of the records of a region, and it is inevitable because of the general growth in awareness of local history and of heritage in general.⁵⁶ In addition, local archival institutions are one of the fundamental building blocks of a national archival network. However, the organization of such local archival programs continues to be left to chance and circumstance, because of the lack of guidelines for archivists and local governments.

One illustration of the absence of agreed upon standards for local governments can be found in municipal legislation governing municipal records. Under the British North America Act of 1867 and the Constitution Act of 1982, the provincial governments were empowered to delegate powers to local government. According to Bish, the British Columbia government affects local governments in three ways. The province determines the rules under which local governments may be organized, legislates mandatory activities for municipalities as an administrative extension of the province, and authorizes all activities that local government may undertake. Most rules are set forth in the Municipal Act, or other acts administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.⁵⁷

Because provincial governments have "authority" over local government, there exists some confusion over the control of municipal records. Indeed, according to Archer, "there has always been doubt in the minds of archivists and law officers whether municipal records are controlled by municipal legislation or by existing provincial legislation."⁵⁸ Consequently, there are

inconsistencies in how local and provincial governments address municipal records. On one hand, provinces such as Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta permit municipal governments to deposit their records in the provincial archives. On the other hand, provinces such as Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick identify municipal records as belonging to the Province with such records transferred to the provincial archives. In addition, there is no legislation in British Columbia addressing specifically the destruction of municipal records, although the Provincial Archivist may acquire municipal records.⁵⁹ Also in British Columbia, the Municipal Clerk has statutory responsibility for certain records of Council.⁶⁰ Further, in some Canadian municipalities, such as Kingston, Ontario municipal records are deposited in the local university. Because both municipal and archival legislation are unclear and inconsistent about the legal status of municipal records, and because there is an absence of standards for organizing local archives, municipal government records keeping and archival programs are evolving in an unsystematic pattern.

One might speculate whether the continuation of this unsystematic development pattern can be limited in the organization of local archives. Since the public archives tradition in Canada is over 100 years old and Canadian archivists have recognized the total archives concept as "a standard" in the organization of government archives, this unsystematic development of local archives should not have occurred. In fact, local governments and archivists should benefit from the collective experiences of federal and provincial public archival institutions and the Canadian public archives tradition.

The following essays will trace the development of two local archival programs in Richmond and Delta, B.C.. Because local government archives have recently developed in Canada, the

following chapters are case studies. Each study will provide a description of how these programs were established and their development. The two programs are more typical of those described in the Wilson report. They were initially organized in conjunction with museum programs during the early 1960's in response to a general awareness in heritage, historical artifacts and heritage buildings in each respective community. A case study method was the best means to examine in detail and to analyze the establishment of two local archival programs, within the framework of the aspects of total archives.

Chapter 1 - Endnotes

1. John Archer, "A Study of Archival Institutions in Canada," (Ph D. diss., Queen's University, Kingston, 1969).
2. The following studies examine the history of the Public Archives of Canada: Jay Atherton, "Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre, 1897-1956," Archivaria 8 (Summer 1979): 35-60; William G. Ormsby, "The Public Archives of Canada, 1948-1968," Archivaria 15 (Winter 1982-83): 36-57; Ian E. Wilson, "'A Noble Dream': Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," Archivaria 15 (Winter 1982-83): 16-35, and "Shortt and Doughty: the Cultural Rise of the Public Archives of Canada," The Canadian Archivist 2 (1973): 4-25.

The main studies of provincial archives are: Marion Beyea, "Records Management : the New Brunswick Case," Archivaria 8 (Summer 1979): 61-77; Carmen Carroll, "Developing a Historical Laboratory: the Genesis of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia," in The Archival Imagination: Essays in Honour of Hugh Taylor, ed. Barbara L. Craig (Ottawa: Association of Canadian Archivists, 1992), 178-211; Joan Champ, "Arthur Silver Morton and his role in the Founding of the Saskatchewan Archives Board," Archivaria 32 (Summer 1991): 101-113; Barbara Craig, "Records Management in the Ontario Archives, 1950-1976," Archivaria 8 (Summer 1979): 3-34; B.C. Cuthbertson, "Thomas Beamish Aikins: British North America's Pioneer Archivist," Acadiensis 7, no.1 (1977): 86-101; Terry Eastwood, "R.E. Gosnell, E.O.S. Scholefield and the founding of the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, 1894-1919," B.C. Studies 54 (1982): 38-62; C. Bruce Fergusson, "The Public Archives of Nova Scotia," Acadiensis 2, no.1 (1972): 71-81; John P. Greene "The Provincial Archives of Newfoundland," Acadiensis 3, no.1 (1973): 72-78; David W. Leonard "Establishing the Archives of the Northwest Territories: A Regional Case Study in Legality," Archivaria 18 (Summer 1984): 70-83; Donald McLeod, "'Quaint Specimens of the Early Days': Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Record, 1872-1935," Archivaria 22 (Summer 1986): 12-39; and "Our Man in the Maritimes:'Down East' with the Public Archives of Canada, 1872-1930," Archivaria 17 (Summer 1983-84): 86-105; Michael D. Swift, "The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970's: Current Development and Trends," Archivaria 15 (Winter 1982-83): 47-47, and Bernard Weibrenner, "Les Archives provinciales du Quebec et leur relations avec les Archives federales, 1867-1920. Troisieme Partie," Archives 18, no.3 (1983): 3-25.
3. Robin G. Kierstead, "J.S. Matthews and an Archives for Vancouver, 1951-72," Archivaria 23 (Winter 1986-87): 86-101. R. Scott James, " Administration of Municipal Records: the Toronto Experience," Government Publications Review 8A (1981): 321-325.
4. Ernst Posner, "Some Aspects of Archival Development since the French Revolution," in Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice ed. Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1984), 4-9.
5. Ibid., 7.

6. The Central Office for Archival Properties has five divisions: General affairs, Non-state Archives, Archival Technology, Archival Documentation and State Archives. See Luciana Duranti, "Education and the role of the Archivist in Italy," American Archivist 51 (1988): 346.
7. Nancy Bartlett, "Respect des Fonds: The Origins of the Modern Archival Principle of Provenance," Primary Resources and Original Works 1, no.1, 2 (1992): 109-111.
8. Posner, "Some Aspects of Archival Development," 10-11.
9. According to Livelton's analysis of the concept of public records and archival principles, public records are "documents created or received and preserved in the legitimate conduct or governance by the sovereign or its agents." Private records are therefore all non-public records. See Trevor Livelton, "Public Records: a Study in Archival Theory," (Master of Archival Studies Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1991), 93-157.
10. Duranti, "Education and the Archivist in Italy," 346.
11. Ibid.
12. Michael Cook, The Management of Information from Archives (Brookfield, Vermont: Gower Publishing, 1985), 14-26.
13. Richard C. Berner, Archival Theory and Practice in the United States: A Historical Analysis (Seattle: University of London Press, 1983), 11-12. James O'Toole, Understanding Archives and Manuscripts (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 31-32.
14. James G. Brashner and Michael F. Pacifico, "History of Archives Administration," in Managing Archives and Archival Institutions ed. James G. Brashner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 27.
15. James O'Toole, Understanding Archives and Manuscripts (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 31-32.
16. Ernst Posner, American State Archives (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 30.
17. Theodore Schellenberg, Modern Archives. Principles and Techniques (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1956), 7, 17-20.
18. Wilfred Smith, "'Total Archives': the Canadian Experience," Archives et Biblioteque de Belgique 1, no.2 (1986), 341.
19. Ibid.
20. Terry Cook, "The Tyranny of the Medium: A Comment on 'Total Archives'," Archivaria 9 (Winter 1979-80): 141-142.

21. Smith, "'Total Archives'," 324.
22. Archer, "Archival Institutions in Canada," iv.
23. Ian E. Wilson, "'A Noble Dream': The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," Archivaria 15 (Winter 1982-83): 18. Public Archives of Canada, Records of the Public Archives of Canada, RG 37, Vol. 104.
24. Carl Berger, The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English Canadian Historical Writing 1900-1970 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 26-30.
25. Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives, 22.
26. Jay Atherton, "Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre, 1897-1956," Archivaria 8 (Summer 1979): 35-42.
27. Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives : Reports to Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Ottawa: Information Division of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 1980), 19-20.
28. The development of specialized media divisions has received some criticism as a possible threat to the principle of provenance. Cook argues that there is the possibility of the breach of provenance unless great care is taken to retain the intellectual control of the record. See Terry Cook, "The Tyranny of the Medium: A Comment on 'Total Archives'," Archivaria 9 (Winter 1979-80): 141-142.
29. Donald Mcleod, "'Quaint Specimens of the Early Days': Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Record, 1872-1935," Archivaria 22 (Summer 1986): 32-34.
30. Terry Eastwood, "R.E. Gosnell, E.O.S. Scholefield and the Founding of the Provincial Archives of B.C., 1894-1919," B.C. Studies 54 (1982): 41.
31. Atherton, "Public Records Centre," 44-46.
32. C. Bruce Fergusson, "The Public Archives of Nova Scotia," Acadiensis 2, no.1 (1972), 73.
33. Eastwood, "The Founding of the Provincial Archives of B.C.," 60-62.
34. Bryan Corbett and Eldon Frost, "The Acquisition of Federal Government Records: A Report of Records Management and Archival Practice," Archivaria 17 (Winter 1983-84): 201-232.
35. Atherton, "The Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre," 55-58.
36. P.C. 1749, 9 September 1966.
37. Archer, "Archival Institutions in Canada," 154, 362.

38. Corbett and Frost, "The Acquisition of Federal Government Records," 213-215.
39. Victoria Bryans, "Canadian Provincial and Territorial Archival Legislation: A Case of Disjunction between Theory and Law," (Master of Archival Studies Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1989), 46.
40. Federal: Access to Information Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. A-1
- British Columbia: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Bill 50 (not yet proclaimed in force)
- Manitoba: Freedom of Information Act, S.M. 1985-86, c.6
- New Brunswick: Right to Information Act, S.N.B. 1978, c.R-103
- Newfoundland: Freedom of Information Act, S.N. 1981, c.5
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45. Ibid. vol. 2, 69.

46. "Canadian Archives: Reports and Responses. The Symons Report," Archivaria 11 (Winter 1980): 3-11.
47. Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives, 1.
48. Ibid., 29.
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53. Rob Watt, "The Role and Impact of Museums in the Preservation and Interpretation of British Columbia History," Museum Round Up 91 (1984): 6-7.
54. Eastwood, "Attempts at National Planning," 87-89.
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56. Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives, 91.
57. Robert Bish, Local Government in British Columbia (Richmond: Union of British Columbia Municipalities, 1987), 9.
58. Archer, "Archival Institutions in Canada," 440.
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Chapter 2

The Development of a Municipal Archival Program: the Richmond Municipal Archives

Although governments began to recognize the importance of public archives and records management, the cultural aspect of archives continued to prevail as the principal impetus for the establishment of archival institutions at the municipal level. Many institutions or programs at the local level had their origins in museums, libraries and historical societies, often as part of an effort to promote a greater understanding of local histories during provincial and federal centenary celebrations. This was coupled, at about the same time, with an increased interest in preserving the "unique" history and architectural heritage of each community. According to Watt, between 1958 and 1982, many local or community museums were established in conjunction with various centenary celebrations in British Columbia.¹ The first attempts to preserve archives can often be traced to these activities. This phenomenon may also explain the Canada wide spurt of growth in the number of archival institutions described in the Wilson report. One such institution was the Richmond Municipal Archives.²

The Township of the Richmond was incorporated in 1879 and today, its geographical area encompasses two large and fourteen smaller islands located at the mouth of the Fraser River. In 1862, the first non-indigenous settler of the area, Hugh McRoberts, built his home on Sea Island. McRoberts and subsequent settlers found farming to be a viable and profitable business, because of the rich alluvial deposits from the Fraser River. By the turn of the century, fishing and fish canning were established as other principal industries. Agriculture and fishing remained the economic lifeblood of the community until the post World War II period when the construction of better bridges and roadways turned Richmond into a suburb of Vancouver, with

highly developed residential, business, light industrial and high technology areas, as well as the Vancouver International Airport on Sea Island. Agriculture and fishing industries also continue to be profitable businesses. Today, Richmond is the fourth largest municipality in British Columbia with a population of 126,624 in 1991. Although there has been an influx of new citizens to the community, many longtime residents maintain that their community is distinct because of its history, in spite of the proximity of the City of Vancouver across the Fraser River, to the immediate north.³ This underlying view has significantly effected the development of an archival institution and other heritage programs in the community.⁴

In Richmond, the impetus to establish a local archives was closely associated with the centennial of the incorporation of the Municipality of Richmond in 1979, which inspired a celebration of the accomplishments of the community and an acknowledgement of the need to preserve the documentary sources of its history. As early as 1947, some residents of Richmond were aware of the need for a local archival institutions when they recognized that the City of Vancouver Archives would be a temporary repository for a collection belonging to Hugh Boyd, the first Reeve (or mayor) of Richmond. However, no archival development occurred in this fishing and farming community until the 1960's when a group of citizens began to recognize the importance of their municipality's history and heritage in general.⁵ These initiatives marked the beginnings of an organized interest by some citizens in the preservation of the documentary heritage of Richmond.

The first official response to a need to preserve the history of Richmond occurred in 1961 when Richmond Council adopted Bylaw No. 1817, which established the Richmond Historical and Museum Advisory Committee. The ten member historical committee appointed by

Richmond Council included the Reeve (later Mayor) as an ex-officio member. It had the mandate to gather, preserve, and to make available to the public, items of historical value; to advise Council on matters concerning heritage buildings and sites and; to bring to Council's attention anniversaries and pioneers of the community. In addition, the Committee was also responsible for advising Council on "the disposition of municipal records...which are no longer of value in the day-to-day operation of the Municipality, but which may have historical significance."⁶ Hence, Council had appointed a committee that was responsible for preserving both the documentary heritage and material history of the community. The recognition of the historical value of municipal records played a significant role in the development of a local archival institution, because many of the members of this committee, such as Councillors Archibald Blair and Robert McMath, Reeve William Anderson, and Municipal Clerk Ted Youngberg, later brought forward the need to organize a separate municipal archival institution with a role in the preservation of both public and non-public records to the attention of Council at a critical juncture in 1980.⁷

Although appointed by Council, the Historical and Museum Advisory Committee operated like many community historical societies, in that it functioned at arms-length from the Municipal Council. According to Bish, most municipalities in British Columbia assign responsibility for operating the local museum to a historical society or a citizen's committee. In 1985, he found that only nineteen museums were directly administered by municipalities and another nine were operated by municipal staff but subject to the direction of a historical society. In most municipalities, the work is done by volunteers who may be responsible for all matters of heritage, including artifacts, in situ heritage sites, archaeological sites and archival documents.⁸

Like many such bodies, the Richmond Historical and Museum Advisory Committee developed a broad acquisition policy that included as the minutes recorded, "items that were no longer in use from the past."⁹ In addition, it intended to create "an arsenal" of local history which could be used in the writing of community histories to promote the education of the public and the creation of historical displays, and to demonstrate the progressive development of the community. Because the Committee's primary objective was to rescue artifacts and archival documents from the danger of being lost or destroyed, it did not pay a great deal attention to details such as recording the provenance of the historical materials it acquired. In fact, standard documents such as accession forms were not used until the 1970's.¹⁰ Moreover, the Richmond Historical and Museum Advisory Committee made little or no distinction among library, museum and archival materials, because the community had not yet formally organized any distinct institution to accept them. Both the broad acquisitions policy and the lack of documentation were not unusual for a historical organization whose primary concern was to promote interest in and knowledge of the history of their community.

The Committee was also typical of a local historical or museum society in that it produced exhibits and collected materials based on its members' perception of the past. One museum writer, Miller-Marti, argues that many local museums acquire artifacts and manuscript collections based on a myth of the past which legitimizes authority, and provides moral guidance to present society. There is little doubt that local museums play a significant role in the creation and the interpretation of a community's history, which in turn is often affected by exhibit design practices, acquisition methods, audience participation and expectation, and the involvement of the community through volunteers at the institution. Miller-Marti argues that many museum

volunteers romanticize history by glorifying individuals and events rather than by providing an analytical interpretation of past events. Because many local museums often lack resources to employ professionally trained curators, they rely on the labour of volunteers who develop and install exhibits that tend to romanticize the past.¹¹ This concept of the past is visible in the development of the Richmond museum and archival programs. For example, a display prepared in 1967 for an annual local trade fair compared the wonders of modern household appliances with the hardships of the pioneer housewife. Although such displays may be questioned in terms of historical accuracy and interpretation, it is evident that the dedication of the Committee to such concepts played an important role in laying the foundations for a local museum and archives in Richmond.¹²

Another consequence of the enthusiasm for local history was the development of a rather eccentric collection of documents by committee members. Unfortunately, the Committee had no understanding of archives as an inter-related complex of documents whose content and structure needed to be preserved. Consequently, they concentrated their attention on acquiring copies of documents housed in existing repositories, such as the Vancouver Public Library and the City of Vancouver Archives, or held in private hands. This material was then organized in subject files and supplemented by oral histories conducted by committee members.¹³

The question of a permanent facility to store and to exhibit materials soon became important. In 1967, the Municipality of Richmond constructed the Richmond Arts Centre with a museum wing, as part of the community's Canadian centennial celebrations. The Arts Centre was built adjacent to the Richmond Public Library and some sports facilities located in a park in the town centre. The Arts Centre facility housed a museum, an art gallery, studio workshops,

and "some archival storage." All of these functions were administered by one director, an employee of the Municipal Department of Parks and Leisure Services. Although the Municipality was now more actively involved in heritage activities, the Richmond Historical and Museum Advisory Committee members continued to acquire and display pioneer artifacts, and to hold meetings in the new museum facility with the Director of the Arts Centre overseeing their activities.¹⁴

By the 1970's, many residents of Richmond became involved in heritage activities in anticipation of the centennial of the incorporation of the Municipality in 1979. The Richmond Public Library began to develop a bibliography of historical sources on the Municipality. The Steveston Historical Society restored a post office and developed it into a museum. Steveston had developed as a fishing village at the mouth of the south arm of the Fraser River. The discussions of the Historical and Museum Advisory Committee also began to focus on the approaching centennial of the incorporation of Richmond and on the need for an official society to organize the centenary celebrations. It was also at this time that the Richmond Historical and Museum Advisory Committee changed its name to the Richmond Historical Society. The Society had the same mandate, but it could now apply for federal and provincial heritage grants. It also could now join the Richmond Arts Council, an umbrella organization of the Arts Centre.¹⁵ The Society now began to focus on projects such as the restoration of the London family farmhouse, an oral history program based on interviews with Richmond pioneers, the updating of a local history book which had been written in 1927, and the need for an official local historical society. In 1978, the Richmond '79 Centennial Society was established by Council to coordinate municipal centennial celebrations and to publish a local history, Richmond:

Child of the Fraser.¹⁶ Although the Society was established with a municipal by-law, it elected its own directors. This Society too acquired documents while researching the history of the community, and it placed its collections under the care of the Richmond Public Library. Although all of these groups were working towards the preservation of the history of Richmond, each society operated in isolation, often duplicating collections and functions.

In an attempt to retain some form of control and coordination over heritage activities, in 1978, the Arts Centre Director, W.A. Anderson, submitted a report to the Municipal Administrator, Will Preston, requesting that Municipal staff monitor heritage activities and manage the collection of artifacts and private documents being acquired by the various organizations in Richmond. According to his report,

...there should be one official collecting agency or archive, and it should be under municipal control, in either a Municipal facility or one approved by Municipal Council. The staff therein should be Municipal employees.¹⁷

In another report submitted to a manager in the Department of Parks and Leisure Services, Anderson also began to express his concerns over the collections of historical materials in the Library, which were accumulating through the research efforts of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society.

This has blossomed into the collecting of photos, slides, manuscripts and related materials, presentation of material at various functions and to groups, and it would appear that the library would like to become the local archival resource. There has been a certain amount of misrepresentation from specific individuals at the source creating certain doubts and ill will.¹⁸

Anderson advocated that he should be responsible for the coordination of all heritage related activities and the amalgamation of the various collections. Furthermore, he recommended that the Arts Centre become the central agency which would control the funding of community

groups involved in heritage activities, and that it would review grant applications submitted by each group to provincial and federal agencies. His recommendation was never accepted by Council.¹⁹

Meanwhile, in 1978, the Municipality began a feasibility study on enlarging the Arts Centre to meet the growing needs of its patrons and user groups. The outcome was a proposal to build a proper museum to house the collections and provide space for exhibits. Although there were some discussions about the possibility of converting "a heritage building" for the purpose, in the end, the Arts Centre site was expanded, and it continued to house the museum's collections, the art collection, and the historical documentary materials in a small vault.²⁰

With these improvements to the Arts Centre, the Municipality also began to examine the condition of the historical collections which the various bodies had acquired over the past twenty years. The numerous artifacts, photographs and other documents collected with the intention of creating "a storehouse of historical data" were in fact largely unorganized and inaccessible. The rather confused state of the whole encouraged the Municipality to review its existing heritage programs.

In 1981, the Municipality hired John Kyte, the Museum Advisor of the British Columbia Provincial Museum, as a consultant with the mandate to review the state of heritage programs in Richmond. In his report submitted to the Department of Parks and Leisure Services, Kyte stated that the museum and the archives had been "operating as auxiliary arm(s) of the Art Centre for well over a decade, ... forced to maintain a performance level far below that expected by a community institution."²¹ He also noted that heritage activities had no long-term plan. Community heritage groups had overlapping goals, and duplicated activities and services. In

his report, Kyte had two recommendations in regards to archives. First, he argued that the accumulation of photographs and documents housed in the Richmond Library was "an ad hoc collection," the result of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society's publication and activities, and that these should be consolidated with the collections housed in the Arts Centre and placed in the custody of the museum. Second, Kyte recommended that the Municipality hire a person to care for the archival materials. He outlined a reporting structure whereby the archivist would be a part-time employee, not necessarily "fully qualified" under the supervision of the Museum Curator.²² He did not, however, raise the question of the preservation of municipal records.

Because Kyte had failed to identify any role for the archivist in the preservation of historical public records, his proposal did not satisfy all individuals involved in the preservation of archival documents. For instance, the Historical Sub-committee of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society was one group which strongly criticized Kyte's report and its recommendations regarding archives. Indeed, this group had a strong interest in the development of a municipal archival institution, as demonstrated by its proposal to the Municipal Clerk to hire a full-time archivist upon the dissolution of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society in 1980.²³ On February 9, 1982, three members of the Historical Sub-Committee appeared before the Parks & Recreation Commission to present an alternative to Kyte's recommendations. The three were Ted Youngberg, a former member of the Richmond Historical & Museum Advisory Committee and a former Richmond Municipal Clerk, Betty Gatz, a librarian at the Richmond Public Library, and Jean Grover, former Secretary of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society. They maintained that an archives program should be integrated with the administration of the Municipality because a public archival institution should acquire both municipal public

records through a records management program, as well as the private records of a community. In fact, they argued that "when an archives can demonstrate that Municipal records are properly cared for,... the public will entrust their personal records to the archives."²⁴ In addition, they advocated that the position of the archivist be temporarily combined with the position of a records manager and that this records manager/archivist report directly to the municipal clerk. Eventually, they foresaw the need for the position to be divided into two.

The Historical Sub-Committee, however, failed to convince Council of the necessity for a municipal archival institution based on a program of public records management program which would be administratively linked with the municipal clerk and his duties. After assessing the information provided by the Historical Sub-Committee and the report by Kyte, and after consulting the Municipal Clerk Morris, the Richmond Parks and Recreation Commission chose instead to assign responsibility for the archives program to the Department of Parks and Leisure Services along with the museum. It is evident that the Commission viewed archival services as a component of a broader history mandate. The Commission made several other recommendations to Council about a municipal archives program to Council. First, it recommended that the posts of archivist and museum curator be made peer positions, with both reporting to a cultural coordinator in the Parks and Leisure Services Department. Second, the immediate goal of heritage staff should be the development of a Municipal Museum, which would serve as a heritage resource centre. Third, municipal records would remain secure for the next few years if left under the care of the Municipal Clerk Morris. Consequently, the Commission resolved "that a half-time archivist be hired who would work out of the museum area in the Arts Centre, but who would report independently to the Cultural Coordinator of the

Department of Parks and Leisure Services, and that the Commission direct \$10,000 for the salary of a part-time archivist."²⁵ It is evident that the Parks and Recreation Commission and municipal staff considered the function of an archival institution to be similar to a history museum because both institutions were involved in the collection and preservation of history. Moreover, in this context, public records tended to be regarded simply as another source of local history with consideration to continuing administration of government. Thus, it is evident that these first formal efforts to establish a public archival institution in Richmond were based on a cultural impetus rather than on administrative and legal needs. Nevertheless, this commitment and belief in some form of an archival program ensured that a public archival repository would become a civic function rather than a private collection of documents cared for by volunteers.²⁶

In May 1982, Leslie Ross, a librarian and the author of Richmond: Child of the Fraser, was appointed archivist. After examining the state of the collections, she made it her priority -- "to put the archives in order." This included the development of administrative policies, such as a mandate statement, and the creation of accession records for the numerous collections of unorganized materials which had been gathered together with the best of intentions during the past twenty years. These documents included oral history tapes, transcripts, monographs, newspapers, maps and plans, photographs and ephemeral materials. Very few of these items could be considered archives. Together, these materials were housed in an eight feet by fifteen feet vault which served also as the office, the work area for processing collections, and the reference area.²⁷

Although most of the documentary materials were acquired from private sources, there is no doubt that Ross viewed municipal records as a future responsibility. In the same report, she looked forward to a change in the status of the archivist.

Given the strong links with the museum, it does not seem appropriate to suggest an alternative arrangement. However, recognizing the Municipal plans to establish a Records Management position, and potential space changes in the Richmond Arts Centre, it may be wise to consider a future shift in responsibility to the office of the Municipal Clerk.²⁸

By emphasizing the importance of the eventual transfer of the function of the archives to the municipal clerk's office, which has the statutory responsibility to keep certain vital records, Ross repeated the arguments for the necessity of the archivist to be involved in the management of public records.²⁹

However, Ross faced an immediate scarcity of resources. Although Council and the Parks & Recreation Commission had agreed in principle to the development of an archives service, there was inadequate funding to support its basic operations. Because community heritage societies, such as the Richmond Heritage and Museum Advisory Committee and other cultural groups had operated with the labour of volunteers and finances based on donations and grants, Council and the Parks and Recreation Commission assumed that an archival program could also operate in this fashion. Without a commitment of some basic resources, the future development of the Richmond Archives was in jeopardy. Indeed, adequate resources would determine whether an archivist would be retained, whether there would be continuity in the tenure of staff, and the availability of basic supplies and storage materials.

In addition, some monies which the Council had received from the Richmond '79 Centennial Society complicated the financial picture. In 1980, the Society upon its dissolution

had presented \$18,000 to the Municipality with the stipulation that these funds be spent on "special projects" for the Archives, such as the purchase of historical materials or equipment beyond the basic requirements for which the Municipality was responsible.³⁰ However, the staff of the Department of Parks and Leisure Services misunderstood the monies to be a donation which could be spent on the operational needs of the Archives, in lieu of an operating budget from the accounts of the Municipality. Nevertheless, the confusion over the monies was eventually settled at a meeting of Municipal Council six months later, with the funds clearly marked for the purchase of acquisitions and special equipment.³¹

The confusion over the monies and the failure by the Municipality to commit sufficient resources to the organization of an archival program contributed to Ross's resignation. With her departure and the unstable future of the Archives, criticism over the lack of action by the Municipality to lay a firm foundation for a public institution which would preserve both historical public and private records was brought to the attention of Council, again by one member of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society. Grover, the former Secretary of the Society, submitted a letter to Council criticizing the paucity of "heritage planning" in Richmond. She argued that although several historical museums had been established by the Municipality, there was little or no thought towards an overall heritage plan, nor was there any contingency plan for the care of the collections of artifacts, if any of the museums should cease to operate.³² Furthermore, she wrote that there was no repository responsible for the documentary heritage of the community. Grover stated,

So much has gone elsewhere (other city, government, university archives) or has been or is being destroyed daily within the community, without public awareness. Please let's not continue to ignore this basic need for action. I can't believe today's

politicians are so short sighted or, put it on an even more personal basis, would you want your descendants or future historians to judge you by local press records!³³

The issues of the organization of an archival institution, and its situation in the civic administration and heritage planning were once more referred to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to Municipal Council, but little changed. On January 10, 1983, Council confirmed that responsibility for the archives program would remain in the Department of Parks and Leisure Services. However, both the Commission and Council stressed that the present administrative structure of the Richmond Archives in the Department of Parks and Leisure Services was an interim measure until the archival program was "well established". Although there was no criteria for "a well established archives", it is obvious that the Commission and Council could at least see some future change in the situation of the archives.³⁴ The commitment to review the administrative structure of the archives program was significant, because it would later facilitate the transfer of the archival program from the Department of Parks and Leisure Services to the Municipal Clerk's office.

In April, 1983, Elizabeth Eso, a recent graduate of the Master of Archival Studies program at the University of British Columbia, was appointed as the first full-time archivist. She began to organize the backlog of materials and to develop policies and procedures to put the archival program on a solid and proper footing. The workroom and the reference area continued to be the vault until the following year when the Municipality constructed a 400 square feet multi-purpose room to be shared by the programs of the Museum and the Archives.

In 1984, negotiations also began between the Archivist and the Librarian of the Richmond Public Library for the transfer of the historical materials of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society to the Archives, mainly because the Library had neither the staff nor the facilities to maintain

and to provide access to these collections. These materials which included original photographs and private archival documents, had been collected by the Richmond' 79 Centennial Society for their publication, and then housed in the Library. They were gradually transferred to the Archives, and became the core of the archival holdings. This transfer from the Library to the Archives was important for two reasons. First, it would enable the Archivist to identify deficiencies in the holdings, which would later assist in the development of an acquisitions policy. Second, and more important, this consolidation was one of the first steps toward rationalizing responsibility for archives which had been fragmented. In the following years, the Archivist made similar but informal arrangements with the Steveston Historical Society and the Richmond Historical Society regarding the deposit of archival records.

For the next few years, the Archivist began to develop policies and programs for the Richmond Archives. For example, a mandate statement and acquisitions policy were developed which stated that the Archives would be "a heritage resource centre", and it would provide educational programs which would promote the Archives and the history of Richmond.³⁵ Although there was no clarification of the term "heritage resource centre", one might suppose that it meant the acquisition of documents which could be used in historical research.

In addition to the traditional duties and responsibilities of an archivist, as an employee of the Department of Parks and Leisure Services, Eso faced the mandatory task of community programming. This was a requirement of all divisions of this department of the Municipality. Whereas early public programming tended to feature historical publication of one kind or another, the modern equivalent tends to be programs to reach out to the community.³⁶ In Richmond, the Archives was promoted in displays of archival documents and photographs, in

weekly newspaper articles, and in radio and television broadcasts. These outreach programs not only promoted the Richmond Archives as an available service in the community, it also encouraged the organization of a support group called "the Friends of the Richmond Archives", which could galvanize community support for the archives, if needed. According to Eso, the development of outreach programs which supports an archival program enhances the long range goals of any public archival institution, one of which is to continue to function. This can be achieved with the development of promotional activities whereby the archivist can keep budget minded administrators, elected officials, and the local taxpayer aware of the mandate and services of the archives.³⁷

By 1985, the archives program had expanded to a level where the facility at the Arts Centre could no longer accommodate any future growth. Although a multi-purpose room had been constructed for the use of both researchers, and museum and archives staff, this space could no longer accommodate both reference and staff activities. Furthermore, space shortages dictated that the holdings of the archives be housed in two storage locations: namely, the vault in the Arts Centre and in a commercial warehouse which was rented by the Municipality, and shared with the museum. In fact, inadequate facilities and space shortages were faced by all of the programs housed in the Arts Centre, which acted as the headquarters for thirty-one community groups, because public attendance had increased by 76 per cent between 1982 and 1984.³⁸

In 1986, the Department of Parks and Leisure Services commissioned a feasibility study to examine the present and future space needs of groups involved with the Arts Centre complex. Although the main purpose of the study was to examine the space needs of the various groups

using the Arts Centre, it provided an opportunity to address the current administrative situation of the Richmond Archives, as well as its mandate. In studying the archival program, the consultants gathered opinions and advice from members of the archival community in British Columbia and municipal staff. For instance, Leonard Delozier, the Provincial Archives Advisor of British Columbia, proposed that,

A well developed community archives collecting papers seems strongest when the core of the collection consists of permanently valuable records of the Municipality transferred through a well-developed records management program and controlled by a by-law or some authorizing instrument.³⁹

While Delozier pointed out the need for a municipal public archival institution to preserve local records and the importance of having legislation to authorize the transfer of government records to a local archives, the former archivist, Ross, pressed to have the administration of the Richmond Archives placed in the Clerk's department, while maintaining its physical location within the Arts Centre. The submission by Ross pointed out that although there were many mutual benefits in the relationship between the Richmond Museum and the Richmond Archives during their initial stages of development, because both functions are involved in the preservation of the heritage of the community, the location of the administrative responsibility for the Archives and its physical location need not be the same.⁴⁰ The clarification of this factor was especially important if the function of an archives was to be transferred to the Municipal Clerk's office while its physical location remained as a component of the Arts Centre facility and therefore, included in any new facilities built on the Arts Centre site.

In the end, the feasibility study made several recommendations about the role of the Richmond Archives in the preservation of historical government records and the development of an appropriate administrative framework. First, the study recommended transferring the

Archivist from the Department of Parks and Leisure Services to the Municipal Clerk's office. This transfer provided a logical infrastructure for the establishment of a historical public records program in the Archives, because the clerk has the statutory responsibility under the Municipal Act for the preservation and safekeeping of the records of Council and its committees.⁴¹ Second, it proposed the roles of both the Archivist and the Records Manager be defined as peer line positions in the Municipal Clerk's Office, because the former was responsible for the preservation of historically significant public documents, and the latter responsible for current records. Third, it recommended that the physical facilities of the Archives remain in the civic core area, whether in the Arts Centre, the Municipal Hall, or the Public Library. This recommendation provided a precedent to retain the Archives as part of any future expansion of civic cultural facilities. Finally and most important, the study proposed that a chief archivist and an assistant archivist be responsible for the preservation of both public and private records. Thus, the study provided some clear and astute arguments for the transfer of the archival program to the Municipal Clerk's office, and this in turn provided an adequate system to care for public records in all phases of their existence. Consequently, discussions about this transfer began in the summer of 1986.⁴²

While the feasibility study was in process, Municipal Clerk Drennan re-addressed the need for a government records management program. It was not the first time that this question had been examined by the Municipality. In 1979, senior administrative staff had examined the possibility of developing a records management program comprising a file classification system, record scheduling, micrographics, and vital records. Although senior administration had endorsed such a program, no steps were undertaken to implement it.⁴³ The transfer of the

archival function to the Clerk's office provided another opportunity to address the issue of a records management program. In a memo to the Senior Staff Management Committee, Drennan identified the following benefits of a records management program: fewer and better records, faster retrieval of files, retention schedules which would control the accumulation of records in offices, reduced storage and labour costs, systematic disposal of records which would safeguard records to meet legal and fiscal requirements, the development of a uniform filing system, and a coordinated microfilming program. His proposal also called for the establishment of a records management steering committee composed of administrative, financial, legal, archival and data processing staff who would assist in the development of retention and disposition schedules. The Senior Management Committee endorsed the development of the two complementary programs of historical archives and current and semi-current records management both under the administration of the municipal clerk.⁴⁴ The archival program for public records was viewed by the Municipality as a means of preserving and providing better access to government records with historical value, whereas records management was perceived as a means of dealing with records with continuing administrative value.

The transfer of the archives function to the Municipal Clerk's office and the beginnings of a records management program were accomplished by December, 1986. As part of the new organization, there was an increase in the budget of the Archives to accommodate the need for additional staff which had been identified in the feasibility study. In fact, the budget nearly doubled from \$34,395 to \$64,175 in the first year after the transfer. This was a significant change from the early years when the budget could barely sustain a part-time community archives program. It was also significant because most Canadian archival programs do not have

sufficient resources for basic operations.⁴⁵ The transfer of the function of the Archives to the Clerk's office also increased the profile of the Archives within the Municipal Hall. Although the Archives had instituted an outreach program to promote its collections and activities, few municipal staff knew of its programs until the establishment of an office for the Archivist in the Municipal Hall. During the first year in the Clerk's office, inquiries by municipal staff for archival records increased from twenty-four to thirty per cent of the total number of researchers.⁴⁶ Third and most important, the Richmond Archives now had a recognized responsibility for historical civic records. During the first year, the Archives staff accessioned a total of 800 cubic feet of public records which included files from the Clerk's office, Treasury, Personnel, Parks and Leisure Services, as well as minutes of Council and minutes of Council appointed committees dating back to 1880.⁴⁷ These events together marked a watershed in the development of the Archives which can be attributed mainly to the recognition by the Municipality of its duty to develop a systematic means of preserving government records of continuing value.

In early 1987, a temporary assistant archivist was hired to care for the community collections while the Chief Archivist, Eso, took responsibility for municipal records. This position of an assistant archivist was made permanent the following year. Also, in 1987, the Richmond Municipal Archives became a member of the newly created Canadian Council of Archives and its provincial counterpart, the British Columbia Archives Council, and thus became a member of the recently created Canadian network of archival institutions. At the same time, the Municipality began to act on its need for a records management program by filling the position of a records manager. Shortly after the appointment of the Corporate Records Manager

in 1987, a consultant was hired to develop a centralized file system based on a block numeric file classification system.

The problem of proper physical facilities for the Archives was also resolved. In November 1987, a referendum was passed by Richmond residents authorizing Council to borrow funds towards the construction of a new cultural centre and library on the existing site of the two facilities. The new centre would also include space for the Archives. The approval of the \$15 million referendum by the public included provision for approximately 3,200 square feet for the Archives.

With these developments, it became evident that the function of the Archives and its operations needed some authorizing instrument which would sanction the functions of the Archives and its collection. Although this would be ideally accomplished in a bylaw which would state the authority of the Archivist over public and private records, describe the functions of an archives, and provide a mandate in terms of information management, instead on July 25, 1988 Council first approved the following acquisitions policy.⁴⁸

The purpose of the Municipal Archives is to identify, collect and preserve records of archival value to the Corporation of Richmond and the community as a whole, and to make such records available to Municipal officials and the public. The Archives acquires both public and private records by scheduled transfer, gift, bequest, purchase, exchange or any other transaction by which title to the material passes to the Archives with the understanding that ownership is not vested solely in the Municipality but more implicitly, is held in trust for future generations.⁴⁹

The policy also states that "the Archives is the official repository for all inactive public records of permanent administrative, legal, evidentiary, informational and historical value" to the Municipality.⁵⁰ The policy also defines public records by citing the B.C. Interpretation Act, as well as expanding the definition to include records "created or received in pursuance of civic

law or in the transaction of public business by Council or any department, office, committee, board, commission or agency" of Richmond.⁵¹ Finally, it provides the Archivist with some authority over the destruction of public records by requiring departments to request authorization for the destruction of records from their Department Heads, the Clerk, the Records Manager and the Archivist.

These promising developments of 1987 and 1988 gave way to a temporary period of setback when both Eso and the assistant archivist resigned in 1989 to take positions in other archival institutions. The new Chief Archivist, Ken Young, managed the archival program on his own for the next eighteen months.⁵² In October 1990, the Archives facilities had to be housed in a temporary building along with the Library and other groups normally located in the Arts Centre and Library sites, as construction began on a new library and cultural centre building.⁵³

Two years later, the Richmond Municipal Archives and the other functions have moved into their new building, the Richmond Library and Cultural Centre. The archives facility now includes an environmentally controlled storage area, a workroom with conservation equipment, a reference area with display space for archival exhibits and an office for the archivist.

Although the Richmond Municipal Archives has progressed significantly from a collection of historical documents gathered through the efforts of volunteers to a full fledged public archival institution with recognized responsibilities for both government and private records, there remain several unresolved issues in its development. These issues include the lack of coordination or integration of the records management program and the archival program; the perception by the public, municipal staff and elected officials that archival institutions are strictly

for the promotion of culture; and the absence of a single government records policy in the form of a bylaw. Together, these issues hinder the full development of a global program to manage municipal records from their creation to their final disposition.

As pointed out in chapter one, there has been a general trend towards a global approach to archives and records management. It is evident that senior administrators of the Municipality created the two posts of records manager and archivist with the intention that the former be responsible for current records while the latter cares for historical documents. Although this division has also occurred in federal and provincial archival institutions, several archivists have pointed out that such a distinction is no longer adequate in an era of electronic records and access to information and privacy legislation, in which proper control and accessibility of all records at all stages are required. Together, these factors have blurred the once clear boundaries between archivists and records managers.⁵⁴ In addition, studies have demonstrated the negative effect of such a separation on the quality of the archival record.⁵⁵ Finally, it is recognized that "total archives" includes the involvement of the archivist in the management of the record from its creation to its final disposition.⁵⁶ Now that the Richmond Archives is housed in its new quarters, it is the priority of the Chief Archivist to address the question of the relationship between current and semi-current records management and archival preservation.⁵⁷

One illustration of the impact of the separation between the records management and archives program is the absence of schedules for municipal records. Because this function is within the mandate of the Records Manager, the Archivist has no authority to address this problem. Consequently, government records continue to arrive at the Archives as a result of "housecleaning" rather than the systematic application of schedules. But the development and

implementation of records schedules is not the only element absent in the records management program. For example, the implementation and maintenance of a file classification system has been limited to only a handful of departments. Other missing elements include: a vital records program, a training program for records officers in each department, a coordinated micrographics program, and a forms management program. These are all elements which are recognized by both archivists and records managers as aspects of a complete records program. Unfortunately, Richmond is not unique in this regard. According to a study conducted by Billesberger, most municipalities in British Columbia lack a systematic approach to maintaining their information sources.⁵⁸

In the end, the inadequacies of the government record keeping program in Richmond can be explained only as a failure of municipal policy. No longer are facilities, staffing, and resources the principal problems for the Archives. Instead, the failure by the municipal government to recognize the need to develop systematic policies and procedures to administer all facets of the management of government records holds back the complete development of the archival program in Richmond.

Chapter 2 - Endnotes

1. Rob Watt, "The Role and Impact of Museums in the Preservation and Interpretation of British Columbia's History," Museum Round Up 91 (1984): 5-7.
2. Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives: Reports to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Ottawa: Information Division of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 1980), 19-20.
3. Census 91. Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions. Population and Dwelling Counts (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1992).
4. Leslie Ross, Richmond: Child of the Fraser (Richmond: Richmond '79 Centennial Society, 1979), 19-38, 163-187.
5. Richmond Municipal Archives (hereafter RMA), Municipal Clerk's Correspondence Series, Municipal Records Series 3, Letter to the Governor of Northern Ireland from Mary A. Boyd, prepared by J.S. Matthews, 10 June 1947.
6. Richmond Municipal Offices (hereafter RMO), Bylaw 1817, "A Bylaw to establish an Historical and museum Advisory Committee," 17 April 1961.
7. Blair, McMath, Anderson and Youngberg would later serve as members of the Richmond '79 Centennial Society. Youngberg served as Chairman of the '79 Centennial Historical Subcommittee, and Blair, McMath and Anderson were also members of this committee as well. This committee was responsible for gathering documents for the writing of a local history, Richmond : Child of the Fraser, and they would later advocate for the creation of a municipal archives.
8. Robert Bish, Local Government in British Columbia (Richmond, B.C.: Union of British Columbia Municipalities and Victoria School of Administration, 1985), 101-102.
9. RMA, Richmond Historical Museum Advisory Committee (hereafter RHMAC), Manuscript Group 25, Minutes, File 2, 22 March 1967.
10. RMA, RHMAC, Mss. 25, Minutes, File 2, 25 November 1970.
11. Chris Miller-Marti, "Local Museums and the Creation of the Past," Muse (Summer 1987): 37.
12. RMA, RHMAC, Mss. 25, Minutes, File 2, 22 March 1967.
13. RMA, RHMAC, Mss. 25, Minutes, File 2, 26 March 1969, 25 June 1969, 22 April 1970.
14. RMA, RHMAC, Mss. 25, Minutes, File 2, 23 October 1974.

15. In 1975, Council passed another bylaw to create the Richmond Historical Society. The bylaw dissolved the Richmond Historical Museum Advisory Committee. The new Society had the same mandate as the Advisory Committee, but it could now apply for federal and provincial grant monies and join the Richmond Arts Council, the umbrella citizen's organization connected with the Richmond Arts Centre. RMO, Bylaw 3177, "A Bylaw to amend Bylaw 1817," 27 October 1975.
16. RMO, Bylaw 3533, "A Bylaw to establish the Richmond '79 Centennial Society," 12 December 1977.
17. RMO, Department of Parks and Leisure Services, "Leisure Services - Museums and Archives," File M-12, n.d.
18. RMO, Department of Parks and Leisure Services, "Leisure Services - Museums and Archives," File M-12, n.d.
19. RMA, Files of the Archivist, Report by A. Anderson submitted to W. Preston, Administrator, 4 December 1978.
20. RMA, Richmond Arts Council Records, Accession 87-65, Recreational Advisory Committee - Cultural Groups Sub-committee Report, 1973.
21. RMA, Files of the Archivist, "Planning File," Report by John E. Kyte, "Richmond Heritage Resources," 9 November 1981, 2.
22. Ibid., 3.
23. Richmond Municipal Archives, Richmond '79 Centennial Society Fonds, Mss 28, Series 6, File 74, "Municipal Archives Proposal," n.d.
24. RMO, Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes, 9 February 1982.
25. RMO, Department of Parks and Leisure Services, "Leisure Services - Museums and Archives," File M-12, 1978-83.
26. Ibid.
27. RMA, Files of the Archivist, "Planning File," Report by Leslie Ross, submitted to the Manager of Heritage and Cultural Services, 23 June 1982, 1.
28. Ibid., 9.
29. Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, s.244(b). Under the Municipal Act, the Clerk is identified as the officer responsible for the records of Council which includes by-laws and minutes and the records of Council appointed committees.

30. RMO, Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes, 9 September 1982. The \$18,000 had been raised by the Richmond '79 Centennial Society from the sale of the book, Richmond: Child of the Fraser and other Centennial activities.

31. RMO, Richmond Municipal Council Minutes, 10 January 1983.

32. The Municipality of Richmond supported the London Family Farmhouse, the Steveston Museum, the Canadian Museum of Flight, and the B.C. Fisheries Museum by allocating annual grants to each of these institutions. In addition, the Municipality administered and operated the Richmond Museum.

33. RMO, Municipal Clerk's Department, File 4743, "Archives," Letter to Council from Jean Grover, 13 December 1982.

34. RMO, Richmond Municipal Council Minutes, 10 January 1983.

35. RMA, Files of the Archivist, Policies and Procedure Manual, c. 1985.

36. Carl Berger, The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English Canadian Historical Writing 1900-1970 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 26-30. Laura M. Coles, "The Decline of Documentary Publishing: The Role of English Canadian Archives and Historical Societies in Documentary Publishing," Archivaria 23 (Winter 1986-87): 69-85.

37. Elizabeth Eso, "Promotion and Outreach in a Community Archives," (Vancouver: Association of British Columbia Archivists, 1988), 4-5.

The Friends of the Richmond Archives Society was created in 1986 and its founding members were Gatz, Grover and Youngberg. In 1989, the Friends of the Archives completed their first project, a supplement to Richmond: Child of the Fraser, which updated a history of Richmond between 1979 and 1989. The Friends also represented the Archives in the development of the new Art Centre and Library facility.

38. RMA, Cornerstone Planning Ltd., Richmond Cultural Centre, Planning and Feasibility Study, 1986.

39. RMA, Files of the Archivist, "Planning File," Report by Leonard C. Delozier, "Richmond Archives: Report and Future," 12 March 1986.

40. RMA, Files of the Archivist, "Planning File," Report by Leslie Ross submitted to Cornerstone Consultants Ltd., "Report on Archives," 18 April 1966, 2.

41. Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, 244b and 244c

42. RMA, Cornerstone Planning Ltd., Richmond Cultural Centre, Planning and Feasibility Study, 1986.

43. RMO, Municipal Clerk's Department Files, CAO - Records Storage System," File NO. 4930-3, Memo to Department Heads from Municipal Administrator, W. Establishment, 28 August 1979. RMO, Clerk's Department, Richmond Municipal Council Minutes, 9 October 1979.
44. RMO, Clerk's Department Files, "CAO - Records Storage System," File No, 4430-03, Memo to Senior Management Committee from Rod Drennan, Municipal Clerk, 25 August 1986.
45. According to the report of the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, approximately one half of the archival institutions surveyed had budgets less than \$20,000. These are archives with less than 150 square feet of public reference area, a part-time archivist and 500 shelf feet or less of storage. The report also states that the total budget for all archives in Canada, less the Public Archives of Canada totals only \$10,861.898. This figure is less than the acquisitions budget of several Canadian university libraries. Canadian Archives, 39.
46. RMA, Files of the Archivist, Annual Report of the Richmond Municipal Archives, 1987, 3.
47. Ibid.
48. RMO, Richmond Municipal Council Minutes, Resolution 1015, 25 July 1988.
49. RMA, Richmond Municipal Archives Collection policy, 25 July 1988.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. RMA, Files of the Archivist, Annual Report of the Richmond Archives, 1989.
53. RMO, Richmond Municipal Council Minutes, 22 October 1990.
54. Jay Atherton, "'From a Lifecycle to a Continuum': Some Thoughts on the Records Management Relationship," Archivaria 26 (Winter 1985-86), 43-51.
55. Bryan Corbett and Eldon Frost, "The Acquisition of Federal Government Records: A Report of Records Management and Archival Practice," Archivaria 17 (Winter 1983-84), 201-232.
56. Wilfred Smith, "'Total Archives': the Canadian Experience," Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique 58, no.2 (1986): 324.
57. Discussion with Ken Young, Archivist, 13 April 1993.
58. Valerie Billesberger, "Municipal Record Keeping in British Columbia: An Exploratory Survey," (Master of Archival Studies Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1990), 83-85.

Chapter 3

'A Museum/Archives': The Delta Museum and Archives Experience

Like the Richmond experience, the Delta archives program began in a museum setting as part of a municipal centennial celebration. Unlike Richmond, the archival program has remained part of the local museum and its activities closely linked in the preservation of historical materials and the promotion of local history. Notably, Delta has failed to accomplish even the kind of strides that Richmond has made towards a program for the systematic archival treatment of public records. On the surface, it is difficult to see why Richmond has developed a separate program along more or less the lines of senior archival institutions in Canada and Delta has not.

The Municipality of Delta which is located south of Richmond, across the south arm of the Fraser River, was incorporated in 1879. As in the case of Richmond, the early economic activities in Delta were closely associated with agriculture and fishing. These were the primary industries of the area until the improvement of transportation links to the City of Vancouver, beginning with the George Massey Tunnel in 1959. These links contributed to Delta becoming a residential, and light industrial suburb of the Greater Vancouver region, as well as continuing to be an agricultural area. In 1992, it was ranked as the sixth largest municipality in British Columbia with a population of 88,978.¹ Like their counterparts in Richmond, many people in Delta have also developed an attachment towards their community's heritage as expressed in the establishment of both museum and archival programs.

The first formal attempt to develop an organization concerned with the preservation of the historical documents occurred in 1961 with the establishment of the Delta Museum Society, which set itself the mandate to preserve the heritage of the community by creating a museum

collection.² Although Delta Council did not recognize the Society, it proceeded to collect historical documents, artifacts, and conducted an oral history program. After an enthusiastic start, however, the Society soon lapsed, for reasons which are unclear.³

A renewed interest in developing a historical society in Delta did not occur until 1967 when members of the community began to consider what should be done to mark the Canadian centennial of Confederation in that year and the centennial celebration of British Columbia joining Canada to be observed in 1971. These centenary celebrations fuelled an enthusiasm and interest in local history and heritage sites in general. However, interest soon fixed on the possibility of converting the former town hall into a historical landmark. In 1912, Delta constructed its first town hall in an area known as Ladner, the former town centre, which is now a historic area with heritage houses and landscapes. The possibility of saving the important heritage site encouraged the Society to reorganize, and the following editorial in the community's newspaper summarized the feelings and intentions of the group:

...there is increasing pressure for space in which to store so many artifacts by historically minded residents. These people would heave a sigh of relief if they could turn over artifacts, photos, furniture, etc., to an organization that would protect and display them. The old Municipal hall deserves a better fate than demolition. Let's make it into a museum.⁴

On March 24, 1969, in response to these statements, the Delta Council approved in principle the creation of a local museum in the former town hall.⁵ The Delta Museum Society was reorganized as the Delta Historical and Museum Society, and its mandate now included the promotion of historical research, the acquisition of artifacts, the promotion and marking of heritage sites, and the publication of historical literature.⁶ The Municipality committed itself to maintain the building and its grounds, and to provide a modest annual grant to the Society to

operate the Museum. Hence, the Society assumed the responsibility for the administration and operation of the local museum, independent of the policies of Council and other Municipal departments.⁷ This relationship between the Municipality and the Delta Historical and Museum Society remains unchanged. It is not an unusual arrangement, for many local museums in British Columbia are administered by similarly constituted societies. In many of these communities, the preservation of historical documents is simply taken to be part of the program of the museums.

In fact, there are over one hundred local museums, many of which are attached to historical sites in British Columbia. Most of these museums are owned and operated by non-profit private societies. Usually, they are managed by a committee of Council or by a board of management which directly oversees the museum's operations.⁸ According to Delozier, the former Provincial Archives Advisor, a great many of these institutions are "museum/archives" and they have developed because no public archives exists in the community.⁹ Furthermore, many of these institutions receive little support from their local governments because they are sometimes viewed as a service which should not be provided by government. According to a study of municipal services by Bish, a professor of public administration at the University of Victoria, "museums do not possess any special characteristics of public goods, external effects, or utilities that would lead logically to governmental provision."¹⁰ In contrast, governments all over the world have recognized that archives are "public goods" which provide proof of the conduct of sovereign affairs and documentation of the rights and privileges of the individual. Because of the legal and administrative value of public records, governments have established public archival institutions to protect and preserve these documents. Therefore, it should be

emphasized that this administrative aspect of the mandate of public archival institutions cannot "logically" be provided by an organization other than by government itself.

Although the value of museum services as public goods may be questioned, it should be noted that both provincial and federal governments have assisted in the development of both public and private museums in all jurisdictions as cultural institutions by providing numerous grants.¹¹ In contrast, although public archival institutions are directly responsible for matters related to the disposition and accessibility of public records, they have received very little in grant assistance from governments for their development.¹²

Of course, Delta's archives began more or less as a program of the museum. From its inception, the members of the private society operating the museum simply assumed that preserving historical documents was part of the mandate of a museum. Since 1967, the Delta Historical and Museum Society with its Board of Trustees has managed and operated the Museum. The Board of Trustees has four members who serve a term of two years as the administrators of the Museum and the Society. According to the constitution of the Society, the duties of the Board included the supervision of workers, the organization of policies and procedures for the operation of the museum, as well as the care and control of all museum properties and records.¹³ Acting as volunteers, the members of the Board established policies which they believed were best for their institution. Indeed, their interest and enthusiasm in collecting artifacts and documents laid the groundwork of a combined museum and archival program.

Like most museums in British Columbia, the Delta Museum relies on volunteers, on federal and provincial grants, an annual operating grant from the municipality, and on other fund-raising

activities to operate the museum. For example, in 1971, the Society expanded the museum facility to include an art gallery for Michael Duncan, who was the curator at the time. Duncan used the space to sell his artwork and a historical publication, Wind and Wild Grass to raise funds for the museum. The monies raised were used by the Society to purchase supplies and "to supplement" Duncan's salary. In 1977, the Delta Council became aware of this additional income, and tried to reduce the museum's annual operating grant of \$16,500 by almost fifty per cent.¹⁴ After negotiations between the Society and the Delta Council, the salary of the museum curator was maintained at its former level, but this incident illustrates how the Council looked upon the museum not as a continuing financial responsibility of the Municipality, but as an adjustable grant depending on the financial situation of the Delta Museum and Historical Society.

These difficulties, however, did not discourage the Society from initiating an archival program in conjunction with the centennial of the municipality. On September 5, 1978, Julian Gardiner, the museum curator of the day, presented to the Delta Centennial Committee, an advisory committee to the Delta Council, a proposal for an archival program which would acquire both municipal and private records having historical worth. His proposal requested a one-time grant of \$34,529 to hire a part-time archivist and a clerical assistant, and to cover the cost of a photocopying machine, archival and office supplies, office furnishings, shelving, and renovations in the annex of the former town hall for temperature and humidity controls for a storage area.¹⁵ Although it made no commitment of continual operating funds, Council approved the request as a municipal centennial project on December 12, 1978.¹⁶ It would simply be left to the Society to carry on the archival program. Acquisitions of historical records

would complement the artifacts housed in the museum, and both the artifacts and the archival documents would be used in the promotion of local history and a sense of community pride.

In February 1979, the Board of Trustees hired its first archivist, Mary Nickel. She reported directly to the curator, who also acted as the chief administrative officer of the Delta Museum and Archives.¹⁷ Both the curator and the archivist were employees of the Delta Museum and Archives Society. Under the supervision of Nickel, several summer students were also hired with a Provincial Youth Employment grant to index copies of microfilm Municipal Council minutes and bylaws, to catalogue books, to conduct historical research, and to acquire private records.¹⁸ At this time, the Society adopted an acquisitions policy for the archival program. The Delta Archives would acquire "historical documents pertaining to Delta and personalities who live(d) within or achieved prominence in Delta."¹⁹ The policy also made reference to textual, cartographic, and pictorial records, sound and moving images, and library materials, which were defined as "reference books, rare books, annotated books, posters and broadsides, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines and computer printouts."²⁰ No mention of government records was made.

However, Gardiner and Nickel realized that one of the most important sources of local history are government records. Shortly after Nickel was hired, the curator and archivist jointly sent a letter to the Municipal Administrator Allen, outlining the role of the Delta Archives as a resource for local history, and emphasizing the historical value of municipal records. Neither Nickel nor Gardiner had any intention of recommending that the Municipality establish a records management program as a systematic means of acquiring government records. Instead, they hoped to acquire some of the older municipal records for the Delta Archives. In the same letter,

they emphasized the need to recognize the Archives as the official repository for both public and private historical records of the Municipality, because such a designation would encourage the public to donate their records to the Delta Archives.²¹ The Municipality responded the following year with a directive to Municipal Clerk Gairns to prepare "a list of documents that would be suitable for storage at the Museum, in consultation with the Archivist, and that the list be approved by Council."²² This directive reflected how the Council viewed the role of the Archives as a storehouse for old historical records. The directive apparently did not move Gairns, for he neither prepared a list nor transferred any records to the Archives, as might be expected of an officer charged by law with the safekeeping of certain municipal records.

Meanwhile, several problems had developed between the staff of the Delta Museum and the Archives, and the Board of Trustees over their respective roles in the administration and operations of the museum and the archives programs. Since the early days, the Board had grown accustomed to having a direct hand in the operations of the museum and archival programs. As salaried staff were hired, they began to request more responsibility over the daily operations of the museum and the archival programs, and this caused some disagreement between the staff and Board members. In a memorandum to Alderman Mosner, Gardiner outlined his frustrations in managing the museum and the archives on a professional basis because of the interference of Board members in daily operations. Furthermore, the Board was unwilling to increase salaries to a level equivalent with those paid by other museums in the region.²³ This kind of conflict is not uncommon where a board assumes executive functions. On one hand, the Board ultimately assumed responsibility for the Delta Museum and Archives, and on the other hand, the staff expected to have latitude to operate the institution without

interference from the Board. In addition, the staff needed resources to support both programs. Consequently, the absence of resources and the lack of autonomy of staff over operational decisions became underlying themes in the development of the Delta Museum and Archives for the next several years.

This divergence of opinion about the role of staff and the role of the board made it difficult to retain qualified staff for any length of time. Shortly after the opening of the Archives in November 1979, Nickel and Gardiner left their respective positions. Nickel's successor lasted only until March 1980. The assistant, Rita Fradley, was later appointed to the post of Archivist. None of the three persons who held the post had any training in the management of an archival institution. Between 1979 and 1984 the Board appointed six different curators.²⁴ It is evident that the number of staff changes and the absence of training or education in archival and museum methods in many of the employees adversely effected the development of the Archives and the Museum, since each new person had a different agenda and set of goals for the institution.

Between May 1980 and June 1982, Fradley continued to focus on documentation projects, such as an oral history program, a series of historical vignettes, and the copying of historical photographs. In pursuing these projects, she neglected the development and implementation of any policies and procedures for the Delta Archives. Further, Fradley did not record any information about the provenance of many accessions. Consequently, when Fradley left, the holdings were in disarray.²⁵

Between July 1982 and September 1984, Linda Johnston served as the Archivist, and she endeavoured to promote the Delta Archives as a resource for the community with outreach programs which included displays on the George Massey Tunnel and May Day celebrations, and

oral histories with Delta pioneers. In addition, Johnston established a school program as part of her outreach activities which included teaching kits about the history of Delta, fishing in the community, and archaeology. In fact, the Delta Archives was becoming a documentation centre by collecting both published and unpublished documents of a non-archival nature about the area.²⁶ However, a conflict arose between the Board and Johnston over the administration of the archival program which led to her dismissal in September 1984.

Shortly afterwards, in November 1984, the Assistant Archivist, Leigh Hussey, was promoted to Archivist. She also had little knowledge of archival management. Indeed, Hussey believed that archival endeavours were an extension of museum activities. In a report submitted to the Board, the newly appointed archivist made her stand clear, "As Archivist, my view has been to develop the Archives as a working department of the Museum rather than to promote an individual identity."²⁷ Hussey believed that the archives program should restrict itself to collecting and preserving historical documents as a support for the interpretation of museum artifacts, that is, as a kind of museum documentation centre, a common view in museum circles. Nonetheless, Hussey's documenting activities ceased in 1985 when the Board appointed her as the Curator of the Delta Museum, a position which she still holds today.²⁸

The question of transferring historical public records arose again in 1986. The new archivist, Paulette Falcon, tried to approach the problem of acquiring public records from the perspective of a records management program with an emphasis on the scheduling of government records. In May 1986, she contacted the Municipal Clerk, Jack Copland, about the deposit of microfilm copies of Council Minutes in the Archives. Although Council had approved the deposit in 1979, the microfilming project had not been carried out.²⁹ This question about

obtaining microfilmed minutes led to a discussion about the need to develop a general policy for the retention and disposition of municipal records which had recently become an issue because of the shortage of office space and records storage in the Municipal Hall. To alleviate the problem of office space, the Municipal Clerk's Office was microfilming its inactive records. On the issue of the larger problem, Copland asked Falcon for advice on the question of the retention and disposition of municipal records.³⁰ On September 6, 1986, Falcon responded with a letter which outlined the requirements of a records management and archival program. She emphasized the need for appropriate resources and staff, and she advised that Council endorse the mandate of the Archives to preserve public records. She also recommended that an inventory of inactive records be conducted to provide some basis for disposition actions.³¹

Falcon's advice failed to move the Municipality for two reasons. First, the Clerk and the Municipality were unwilling to provide any resources for a records management program. But beyond that there was a legal problem. Under the Municipal Act, the clerk is responsible for the safe preservation of minute books and original bylaws as well as the "other records of the business of council and its committees."³² In the early days, the municipal clerk was the principal administrative officer of a municipality. As modern municipal administration has grown, the various departments have tended to care for their own records, but the clerk has maintained the ancient responsibility for the safekeeping of the records of council. In fulfilling this mandate, the municipal clerk may delegate the authority for the safekeeping of these records to another municipal employee, as in the case of Richmond where the archival program is a division of the Clerk's office. It is also conceivable that a municipal council might dispose of certain inactive records of no continuing administrative value to a private institution such as

Delta. A contract would be needed, which outlines that the ownership of the records is retained by the Municipality. However, it is difficult to conceive that such an arrangement could be made for original minutes and bylaws, because they are permanently valuable as the register of rights and duties, regardless of what other values they may have. These circumstances prevent the Delta Museum and Archives from properly acquiring responsibility for the preservation of municipal government records.

In January 1987, Falcon left the Delta Archives to continue her university studies. For the next few years, several archivists administered the Delta Archives, but little changed. The primary emphasis of the archival program in Delta continues to be the acquisition of historical documents of all kinds to support the institution's heritage objectives. Falcon's successor, Andrea Garnier, continued the acquisition of private records, the documentation of the history of Delta canneries and the publication of historical information. She held the post for less than six months.³³ After Garnier left, Jacqueline O'Donnell was appointed as Archivist. Between July 1987 and May 1988, she began a project to automate the description of the holdings of the Archives. In the course of her work, she noted that many of the photographs acquired by the Archives were copyprints. Because previous archivists were primarily interested in the information contained in an image, they saw little or no distinction between copies and originals. Consequently, O'Donnell spent a great deal of time trying to locate originals still in the community.³⁴

Since July 1988 when O'Donnell left to take an archival position in another municipality, Ramona Rose has been the Archivist of Delta. Under Rose, the Archives has remained a non-public agency with no official mandate to collect municipal records. Although the Delta

Archives has acquired some public records, including by-laws, ledgers, photographs and subject files from the period 1900 to 1950, the municipality had microfilmed these documents prior to their donation to the Archives. Their acquisition was the result of "housecleaning" at the Municipal Hall rather than systematic transfers to the Archives.³⁵

In September 1989, a fire broke out in the building adjacent to the Delta Museum and Archives causing extensive damage to some holdings. Although no archival collections were lost, the Archives was closed to the general public until January 1990 and regular public hours did not resume until June 1990.³⁶

Also during 1989, the Delta Museum and Archives Society employed a consultant to conduct a feasibility study and to develop a long-range plan for the operations of both the Museum and the Archives. The report from the consultant surprisingly recommended that the Archives remain an operation of the Museum, and that it become a depository for municipal records including by-laws and minutes, "on the condition that the professional decisions as to what [sic] and how to preserve these records are respected" by the Municipality.³⁷ It is evident that the consultant did not understand what was involved in the preservation of public records, for his report made no reference to the need for proper legal procedures and for the integrated management of records at all stage of their existence.

Several interrelated aspects of the Delta experience suggest that it will be difficult for the numerous archival programs in a museum settings to preserve government records properly today. According to a recent survey conducted by the British Columbia Archives Council, 45 of the 63 archival institutions sampled were administered by a museum, a library or a private historical societies.³⁸ To a large extent, 71 per cent of the sample have similar programs to

the one in Delta whereby archival activity is often equated with other heritage activities such as museums, archaeological sites and the preservation of historical buildings.

There are several aspects of the Delta Archives which probably can be found in other museum operated archival programs. The first noteworthy aspect of the Delta Archives and Museum is the most telling. Most of the material acquired by the Delta Archives is not in fact archival, and represents little more than a collection of documents to support the museum function. Acquiring single documents or copies of them because they assist in the interpretation of museum artifacts is the wrong foundation for any archival program. Furthermore, this process of acquiring materials fails to recognize the importance of the nature of archives as an inter-related complex of documents whose content and structure needs to be preserved to be of value to the creator and other researchers.

Second, serious legal obstacles prevent private institutions such as the Delta Museum from taking on the responsibility to preserve permanently valuable municipal records. As pointed out earlier, it is difficult to conceive that an arrangement could be drawn up between the Delta Council and the Delta Museum and Archives for the care of records such as original minutes and by-laws which have continuing administrative and legal values. Furthermore, the Municipal Act clearly assigns responsibility for these records to one record keeper, the municipal clerk. These circumstances prevent the Archives from properly acquiring the mandate for the preservation of municipal records.

The third aspect is administrative. Modern integrated management of records during the continuum of their existence requires a complex regulatory framework which only the administration generating the records can articulate. Because institutions like the Delta Museum

and Archives are not part of the municipal administration, they are in no position to influence information policies nor can they take part in the systematic management of public records.

In the end, archival programs in museum settings, such as Delta are hindered in their development towards the Canadian model of total archives, because of the absence of both appropriate administrative and legal structures. These archival programs are often established with the intent to create documentation centres which will support the heritage goal of museum programs. Although this objective can provide the impetus to establish an archival program, it does not address the administrative role of a public archives. Together, these factors hinder the organization of record keeping programs for the systematic archival treatment of public records of continuing value in the many communities in British Columbia which have assigned archival responsibility to local museums, libraries and historical societies.

Chapter 3 - Endnotes

1. Census 91. Census Division and Census Subdivisions Population and Dwelling Counts (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1992).
2. Research for this Chapter was conducted in the Delta Archives using the records of the Delta Museum and Archives Society. Although the records of the Society are housed in the Archives, they were not arranged and described.
3. Delta Museum and Archives (hereafter DMA), Delta Museum and Archives Society Records (hereafter DMAS Records), Delta Museum Society Minutes, 3 February 1961, 10 March 1961 and 8 April 1961. Minutes of the Society indicate that it ceased operating shortly after 8 April 1961. The reorganized Society's minutes do not begin again until 4 November 1968.
4. DMA, The Optimist, 24 January 1968.
5. Delta Municipal Offices (hereafter DMO), Municipal Clerk's Department (hereafter Clerk's Dept.) Delta Municipal Council Minutes (hereafter Council Minutes), 24 March 1969.
6. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Administration Records, File 2-8-5, The Delta Historical and Museum Society Constitution, 1969.
7. DMA, DMAS Records, Delta Historical and Museum Society Minutes, 24 February 1969, 31 March 1969.
8. Robert Bish, Local Government in British Columbia (Richmond, B.C.: Union of British Columbia Municipalities, 1987), 101-102.
9. Leonard Delozier, "Archival Cooperation," Museum Round Up 86 (1982): 29.
10. Bish, Local Government, 101.
11. Since 1967, the federal government has provided various programs of assistance to museums through the Canadian Museums Corporation. The British Columbia government has also assisted museums through the Cultural Fund Act, S.B.C. 1967, c.7, which set aside five million dollars. The interest from which is to be used to stimulate cultural development. Since 1975, the interest generated has been augmented with revenue from the B.C. Lottery Fund.
12. In 1986, the Federal government announced an additional seven million dollars in funding to support specific archival projects, such as the arrangement and description of backlogs of records. In April 1990, the British Columbia government announced a commitment of funds towards the establishment of a Community Archival Assistance program. Neither of these programs provide monies for the on-going operations of archival institutions. Both programs are intended to support special projects. In fact, to qualify for these grants, archival institutions must demonstrate that there is a commitment of on-going funding from their parent organization.

13. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Administration Records, File 2-8-5, The Delta Historical and Museum Society Constitution, 1969.
14. DMA, DMAS Records, Executive Board Minutes, 21 September 1977.
15. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Correspondence, Memo to the Administrator from Julian Gardiner, 29 August 1978. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Administration Records, File 2-8-5, Letter to Delta Centennial Committee from Julian Gardiner, 5 September 1978.
16. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Council Minutes, 12 December 1978.
17. The name of the Delta Museum was changed to include the Archives in 1979. There is no record to indicate that an archival institution was officially created. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Correspondence, Memo to the Administrator from Julian Gardiner, 29 August 1978. Delta Optimist, 13 June 1979.
18. DMA, DMAS Records, Delta Historical and Museum Society Minutes, 13 June 1979.
19. DMA, DMAS, Files of the Archivist, Archives Collection Acceptance Policy, 4 July 1980.
20. Ibid.
21. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Administration Records, File 2-8-5, Letter to Administrator M.W.E. Allen from Julian Gardiner, 17 March 1979.
22. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Council Minutes, 15 September 1980.
23. DMO, Clerk's Dept., Administration Records, File 2-8-5, Memo to Alderman Mosner from Julian Gardiner, 14 September 1979.
24. In 1983 alone, the Delta Museum and Historical Society employed five different curators. President's Report on the Year's Events. Annual General Meeting. 12 April 1983.
25. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Progress Reports, 2 July 1982.
26. DMA, DMAS, Files of the Archivist, Archivist's Report, Annual General Meeting, 17 April 1984. DMA, DMAS, Files of the Archivist, Letter to M. Adam, School District 37 (Delta) from M. Rogers, Executive Committee Delta Museum and Archives Society, 24 July 1980.
27. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Progress Reports, 9 April 1985.
28. DMA, DMAS Records, Delta Museum and Archives Society Board Minutes, 13 August 1985.
29. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Correspondence, 22 October 1985.
30. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Progress Reports, 10 June 1986.

31. DMA, DMAS Records, Files of the Archivist, Correspondence, 6 September 1986.
32. Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, ss. 244b and 244c
33. DMA, DMHS, Files of the Archivist, Archives Report, Annual General Meeting, 1987.
34. DMA, DMHS, Files of the Archivist, Archives Report, 1988.
35. DMA, DMHS, Files of the Archivist, 1988 Annual Report, Annual General Meeting, 1989.
36. "Fire Damage at Delta Museum and Archives," Association of British Columbia Archivists Newsletter, 15, 2 (1989), 4.
37. DMA, DMAS Records, Lord Report for the Delta Museum and Archives, 1989, 2-22.
38. British Columbia Archives Council, Needs Assessment Survey Reports, (Vancouver, B.C.: B.C. Archives Council, 1988), 13.

Chapter 4

The Development of Local Archival Repositories in British Columbia -- A Conceptual Framework

Although Canadian archivists have recognized the pattern of "total archives" in the development of public archival institutions at all three levels of government, there continues to be an absence of a commonly accepted conceptual framework for the organization of archival and records programs. Smith's analysis of the aspects of total archives is based on the Canadian federal experience when, during the nineteenth century, the Public Archives of Canada was established with the primary purpose of serving as a repository for historical records which would be used in the writing of nationalistic histories for a nation of diverse religious and ethnic groups.¹ Furthermore, this strong belief in the cultural orientation of archival institutions has persisted well into the current era. Indeed, for most of the post-war period, Canadian archivists continued to see records management programs in government primarily as a means of systematically acquiring historically significant public records, rather than as an integral part of a global scheme of managing government information. Recently, Canadian archivists have adopted a more wholistic approach to the question of managing public records, or indeed the records of any organization.² The sheer volume of records and the need to identify those of enduring value, the advent of electronic records, and a more open environment of access have together pushed archivists to re-assess the conceptual foundations of their practices. It would appear that local archival institutions, such as those in Richmond and Delta, began much as their senior government counterparts did in earlier times. Some of the same misconceptions about archival institutions that plagued their development at senior levels have also stunted the growth

of local archives. These misconceptions explain the difficulties of developing fully-fledged archival programs in Delta and Richmond.

The first misconception is the most fundamental. It is clear that the persons responsible for establishing archival activity in Richmond and Delta did not understand the nature of archives. Concerned citizens and persons appointed to carry out archival duties equated archives with all kinds of historically valuable documents. For example, both the Richmond Museum and Historical Society and the Richmond '79 Centennial Society collected all manner of documents to record the progressive history of their community. Indeed, the latter was responsible for a publication on local history. In Delta, the Historical Society and its employees concentrated on gathering historical materials to complement the interpretation of artifacts in the museum. In fact, the Delta Archives was becoming a documentation centre by collecting both published and unpublished documents of a non-archival nature about the area. In both cases, the acquisition of historical documentation was closely associated with centennial celebrations and with the desire to build a historical sensibility in the community. The members of the historical societies, as well as local government staff and elected officials, viewed archives as being associated with the preservation of history, and therefore saw archives as logically associated with a museum or a library serving that purpose.

However, it is evident that the nature of an archives or an archival fonds is quite distinct from either a book in a library or an artifact in a local history museum. According to Bautier, the archival fonds is an organic creation of documents received or created by an individual, family, business, church or government agency, whereas libraries and museums house an aggregation of autonomous items selected because of their subject matter. Furthermore, library

and museum materials are acquired by purchases and donations. The books in libraries exist to exchange information and knowledge or to express views or feelings for a general cultural purpose. At the same time, a museum houses individual artifacts which are acquired because of their material history value, and each artifact is autonomous of others held in a collection. By contrast, the value of the archival document is determined by its natural accumulation in the course of practical activity as a record of actions and transactions. Bautier compares the inter-relationship of documents within an archival fonds to the progressive layers of a sedimentary rock formation in that each document exists in an interrelated complex arising from the way in which affairs are conducted.³ Therefore, it is the capacity of archives to serve as evidence of affairs which gives them original value to the persons or organizations which generates them, and later to researchers who seek knowledge of the past.⁴

Those individuals interested in the collection of archival documents, however, often failed to appreciate the inter-relationship of archival documents, and this is most noticeable on the area of public records. In both Delta and Richmond, the petitioners of archival programs tended to see the cultural value of archives and not their administrative dimension. At the same time, public officials recognized the value of public records for the conduct of government affairs, but they have had difficulty conceiving methods of preserving the administrative utility of the record while recognizing its value for cultural purposes. For instance, in Delta, municipal records were microfilmed to preserve their administrative information, but government officials failed to recognize the need for the systematic selection and preservation of records with continuing value. Instead, they viewed the Delta Archives as a program which collected historical documents that no longer had administrative value. In Richmond, the situation is not much

different. Although local government officials recognized the archival program as an extension of the record keeping duties of the municipal clerk, they too have continued to view government records as administrative documents and archives as historical documents. This is evident in the absence, in Richmond, of a wholistic approach toward the management of government records.

The second misconception about public archival institutions is the legal status of public records. In English speaking countries, public records are inalienable, in that they cannot be alienated from control of the public authority which generated them -- except by due process. In British Columbia, however, there is no legislation outlining such a process. Under the Municipal Act of British Columbia, the municipal clerk is given statutory responsibility for the safekeeping of certain records of council, but there is no legislation dealing with both record keeping practices and archival programs. For example, although it was the declared policy of the Delta Museum and Archives to accept municipal records, Delta Council has not mandated the institution to preserve them, and probably will not do so as long as it is a private institution. In Richmond, the legal problem of the archival institution being designated as a repository for inactive records has been solved with the archival program becoming a part of the city's administration. Like federal and provincial archival institutions, the Richmond Archives operates from within the office given statutory responsibility for council records -- that of the municipal clerk.

The experience in Richmond, however, highlights another aspect of the legal status of public records, namely, the need for archival legislation. Although Richmond Council adopted a resolution on July 25, 1988, which approved the collections policy for the Archives, no archival or records management by-law has since been written.⁵ In fact, that 1988 council resolution

is comparable to the federal declaration in 1912 which identified the Public Archives of Canada to be a repository for public records of the government of Canada. Like the Public Archives Act, the Richmond resolution created a special agency to care for records, but it did not ensure the preservation of records in the departments of the Municipality and it did not provide for the orderly disposition of records by archives staff. Consequently, these types of declaration by both Richmond and the Federal government are inadequate. Some additional legislation in the form of a bylaw or policy statement is required to establish policies and procedures for the systematic management and disposition of records across all departments before the Archives can act as a repository for all permanently valuable records of the Municipality. Lacking such a single overall policy, the Richmond Municipal Archives is left to develop ad hoc arrangements with various departments.

It is evident that the authorization for an overall records keeping and archival program policy in any jurisdiction requires sanctioning at the highest level of authority, which in this case is the Municipal Council. Such legislation can provide authority for a records keeping program, as well as educate administrators, elected officials and the public. Based on a survey of local government record keeping practices in British Columbia, Billesberger recommends that a policy to standardize record keeping practices be articulated in each municipality in a by-law. This by-law would include a statement about the establishment of a record keeping system as a continuing administrative function of a municipality, a definition of records or information resources to be covered, a statement of goals and objectives, a description of basic components, a description of personnel authorized to organize and maintain information, and finally the option of creating a records management committee.⁶ According to Bryans, policy sanctioned at the

highest level of authority should define the terms of a records program, provide a mandate statement, and detail the records management structure.⁷ Thus, the development of a by-law which provides the statutory authority for the organization of a records and archival program is an important characteristic of a conceptual framework which should not be overlooked, because it articulates the components of a record keeping program and its goals and objectives. More important, it is a statement of Council's endorsement of the implementation and development of such a program.

Compounding the absence of records keeping and archival by-laws in municipalities is the inadequate authority for the creation of such legislation. At the moment, it is unclear whether the Municipal Act gives local governments authority to enact records by-laws. Under the British North America Act of 1867 and the Constitution Act of 1982, the provincial governments were empowered to delegate certain authority to local governments. In British Columbia, the Municipal Act is the primary chapter of legislation which establishes the framework for local self-government, mandates certain functions and provides the authority for the undertaking of other municipal services. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Housing which is the provincial body which generally oversees the activities of local government, supplements the Act through the development and the issuance of ministerial regulations. Currently, however, neither the Municipal Act nor any other provincial acts specifically govern records keeping, although arguably the Act may provide such authority under references to "general good government of the municipality".⁸ Thus, although the Municipal Act does not compel local governments to systematically preserve their documents other than specific records of council such as by-laws, council and committee minutes and other unspecified records, municipalities

have a general authority to develop their own rules to control records disposition.⁹ No doubt some direction from the provincial government, such as exists in Quebec, is possible and could assist local governments, but the municipalities themselves seem to lack the wherewithal to address this problem.¹⁰

The third misconception about archival programs is in connection with their administrative role. Archival institutions, of course, have a cultural role, but in government administration they act as an agent responsible for carrying out the disposition and preservation of valuable public records. The archival institution requires a proper administrative position and a policy framework to carry out these duties. In both Richmond and Delta, the early administrative placement and development of archival programs in heritage and cultural agencies, such as a museum or library, as indicated previously, can be attributed to the "old fashioned" belief that archives are cultural establishments primarily responsible for the "memory-making" of a community. For instance, in Richmond, the initial placement of the archival program in the department of Parks and Leisure Services, an area of the Municipality responsible for sports facilities and cultural activities, at first guaranteed that the archival program of the community would be a government function; however, the inappropriateness of such an arrangement soon became apparent to both the archivists and administrators. The reporting structure was subsequently amended with the transfer of the archival program late in 1986 to the Municipal Clerk's office. In Delta, the organization of an archival program within a museum operated by a private society, is also an unsuitable administrative framework to carry out responsibilities for government records. Furthermore, it is evident that a clear distinction must be made between the museum function and the archival function if the institution is to become an agency of the

municipality. It must be emphasized that the purpose of a museum is strictly cultural in that it does not perform the role of an archival institution in providing administrative services to all municipal agencies in preserving their inactive records.

In fact, it takes a proper administrative setting together with formal procedures for the systematic disposition of public records for an archival program to succeed. According to Jones, one of the most important aspects of a records keeping program is its placement within a government bureaucracy. He argues that such a program must be placed within a government infrastructure to give it sufficient status and authority to effectively implement and maintain a corporate records program.¹¹ Ideally this would be in the municipal clerk's office, which is a department at the centre of the administration of local government. There are two reasons for the development an archives and records program within such an infrastructure. First, the municipal clerk has statutory responsibility for certain records of Council, although further clarification is needed on exactly which records the Municipal Act or its regulations are referring to. Nevertheless, the organization of a records keeping program within the municipal clerk's office is a logical extension of the statutory competence of the clerk. Second, the municipal clerk is at the centre of government administration and has sufficient status to direct a records keeping and archival program. According to Crawford,

The task of coordination and overall direction is, to a degree exercised by the clerk of council, because not being the head of the service departments, he is in a somewhat impartial position and because he has continuous contact and access to Council.¹²

Along with the proper administrative setting, an archival program requires procedures for the systematic disposition of public records, however, this is often hindered by the separation between active and semi-active records and archives. Recently, archivists have adopted an

integrated approach in the management of government information, whereby a single agency is responsible for public records, because there is no distinction between active and semi-active records and those held in an archives -- they are one and the same. According to one archivist, public records are "documents created or received and preserved in the legitimate conduct of the sovereign or its agents."¹³ Therefore, it is logical that one government agency be responsible for the management of public records from their creation to their final disposition.

The need for the consolidation of the legal authority for public records under a single agency was apparent in the case of the Richmond Municipal Archives. Although the transfer of the function of the archives from the Department of Parks and Leisure Service to the Municipal Clerk's office was a response to a need to preserve historical government records, the division of record keeping responsibilities according to "old fashioned" concepts of archives and public records has affected the systematic selection and preservation of municipal records of enduring value. Indeed, such records continue to arrive at the Richmond Archives as a result of "housecleaning" rather than a systematic application of disposition by the Archivist. Exacerbating the inefficient management of semi-active and inactive records is the lack of other standard elements of a records program, such as a comprehensive file classification scheme, records standards, micrographics, vital records management, the authority to review departmental record keeping practices, advisory services, and the training of records officers in other municipal departments. All of these elements have been recognized by the Archivist in Richmond as standard record-keeping practices, but they are not within his mandate. Consequently, the public records of the Municipality continue to be ineffectively administered

because of the lack of procedures for their disposition and the absence of other standard record keeping practices.

Another misconception about archival programs in general is the lack of adequate and specific financial and personnel resources to fulfil their mandate. The difference in financial commitment towards a local archival program was significant between the Delta Museum and Archives and the Richmond Municipal Archives. For example, in 1986, the archivist in Richmond received an annual salary of \$33,285, while the archivist and the assistant archivist in Delta together received a total annual salary of only \$23,662.¹⁴ One might speculate whether this difference in funding contributed to the ability of the Delta Archives to retain qualified staff, since each archivist had a well-intentioned agenda which was often based neither on sound archival nor on practical management principles. For instance, in 1983, in spite of limited resources, the Delta Archives purchased a large format camera to produce "archival quality" copy-prints. Three years later the camera was put up for sale because it was seldom used by staff.¹⁵

Further complicating this lack of resources is the absence of fiscal autonomy. In Delta, the archives budget was a sub-component of the Museum budget, whereas in Richmond the budget of the archival program was separate from that of the museum even when it was part of the Department of Parks and Leisure Services. However, this fiscal characteristic is not limited to the Delta Archives. According to a survey conducted by the (then) British Columbia Archives Council, the lack of fiscal autonomy and staff solely devoted to archival activities is a common problem of smaller archives in a museum, library or historical society. In fact, the report described many of these types of local archival institutions as operating on "an ad hoc basis".¹⁶

According to Jones, a prerequisite for an archival program is a commitment from "the seat of power". He asserts that this commitment does not require large amounts of money, but rather an investment of allocated time and resources.¹⁷ Without such a commitment, the continuity of a program is threatened by the absence of qualified and trained staff, the lack of supplies, and by inadequate physical facilities. Thus, the development of an archival program requires more than the simple acquisition and creation of a culturally significant collection of documents for a single celebration, it requires a continual commitment of resources to preserve and to provide access to archival records.

Finally and most important, local governments need to recognize that an archival and records keeping program is an essential public service in the effective administration of government information, which itself is of continuing administrative, financial and legal value. In 1899, the Public Archives Commission formed by the American Historical Association stated,

Fundamental to the proper care and preservation of local records is an appreciative understanding of their importance by those who have them in custody. Local archives are valuable as business or administrative records; and second, as historical records.¹⁸

Until recently, local governments have not been compelled to deal with the management and the preservation of local government records. In fact, most municipal governments have neglected the management of their information.

According to the survey of local government record keeping practices conducted by Billesberger mentioned earlier in this chapter, most municipalities lacked a systematic approach to maintaining their information sources. Her study revealed that there is an absence of control over the generation and receipt of records, and that it is questionable whether those surveyed municipalities, which stated that they have uniform control over their records, in fact have

systematic programs in place -- as they reported. In addition, most municipalities have no formal control over their filing or indexing of information.¹⁹ For example, although Richmond instituted a block numeric file classification scheme in several administrative departments including the Municipal Clerk's office and the Law department, this filing system has not been extended to all other departments, such as Planning and Engineering. Thus, several filing systems continue to be in operation throughout the Municipality. In addition, Billesberger found that most municipalities lack control over the administration and maintenance of their current and non-current records, such as systematic microfilming programs and vital records.²⁰ Delta, for example, implemented a microfilming program to reduce the volume of records in the office, however, there is no systematic appraisal of the contents of the files, since the program includes the microfilming of all documents. One might speculate whether the absence of standard record keeping practices and policies is a reflection of how little local governments value the management of their information. Nevertheless, the recognition that a record-keeping and archival program is an essential public service and a responsibility of accountable and open government, is probably the most important aspect of a conceptual framework for the organization of a local archival institution.

Although this lack of attention to archives and records keeping has been inadvertently reinforced by senior levels of government by the absence of archival and record keeping legislation, both federal and provincial governments have recently encouraged the development of local archival programs through special grants. In 1986, the Federal government announced an additional funding of seven million dollars to support specific projects of archives and archival organizations, such as description and arrangement and later, conservation. In April

1990, the British Columbia government committed funds towards the establishment of a Community Archival Assistance Program to be administered by the British Columbia Archives and Records Service. By 1992, \$235,015 was allocated towards some forty-eight one time projects, two of which specifically assisted the organization of archival programs in local government.²¹ Nevertheless, both the British Columbia and Federal governments have recognized local archival responsibility as an activity of municipal government because to qualify for these grant programs, municipal archival institutions must demonstrate that they have a commitment of continuing funding from their parent organization. Again, no studies have been conducted on the impact of these grant programs on the organization of municipal archival institutions.

Perhaps the importance of a systematic record keeping and archival program will become most apparent with the promulgation of freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation at the local government level. On September 1, 1992, the Government of British Columbia issued a discussion paper about the extension of provincial freedom of information and privacy legislation to include local government which was under consideration by the Provincial Legislature in mid 1993.²² If adopted, such legislation would bring municipalities in British Columbia in step with those in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, which are currently operating under freedom of information and privacy legislation.²³ Again, no studies have been conducted on the impact of such legislation on record keeping practices in Canada, however, archivists and records managers have acknowledged that freedom of information legislation compels both the archivist and government administration to deal with records in their current environment. Further, the legislation identifies access to public documents as a right of the

citizen and the onus to prove otherwise falls upon government. In fact, the Provincial government's discussion paper points out that it is not too early for local governments to prepare for the legislation by upgrading records management systems and practices, training staff, and establishing the administrative structure to handle information requests.²⁴

In addition, local governments need to acknowledge the important cultural role that an archival institution plays within a community in the management of heritage resources by preserving and making available both public and private records. Moreover, this role is distinct from the cultural role of creating and promoting a common memory. According to J.M.S. Careless in a 1962 report on "Government and Historical Resources in Canada",

The significance of archives can hardly be overstressed. They contain the essential raw materials of history; for history is basically the study of the written record. The data supplied by sites and buildings, or held in museums, must all be checked against the record and woven in with it...In general, therefore, through collecting and conserving records, the function of archives remains fundamental to any programme for the development of historical resources...there is vital importance in the role generally assumed by governments in supporting archival institutions. The accuracy of plaques, of building restorations, or archaeological research and museum information, may all depend in greater or lesser degree on the material available in archives. Thus, it follows that governments which do not make adequate provisions for archives development are skimping at the very centre of a historical resources programme: and in the long run will not get the best returns from their historical budget.²⁵

An archival program, therefore, is the cornerstone of any community heritage program, because it provides the raw data necessary for the accurate documentation of in situ heritage sites, archaeological sites, as well as for the interpretation of museum artifacts. Without such a program, the funds dispersed through community heritage programs, for plaques, museum exhibits and building restorations are public monies squandered.

In today's world, therefore, the principal motive for the establishment of a government archives should be to fulfil the obligation to be accountable to, and to protect the interest of the

people governed. Local government must recognize the importance of the systematic preservation of public records. As pointed out by Jones,

Public records are public property, owned by the people in the same sense that citizens owned their courthouse or town hall, sidewalks and streets, funds in the treasury. They are held in trust by custodians -- usually the heads of agencies in which the records have been accumulated, but sometimes by other officers to whom custody has been officially transferred by the governing authority. Public records may not be sold, given away, destroyed, or alienated in accordance with provision of any state law relating to their care and disposition.²⁶

He further argues that the public record as public property is of greater value than buildings, equipment and even money, because it documents and protects the rights and privileges and property of the individual citizen, and if such a record is lost it cannot be easily replaced. These records also provide evidence of government decisions and transactions. They should be preserved and made available to the citizen, since the measurement of good government is closest at the local government level. According to Crawford,

...in the local field the interval between decision and result is usually sufficiently short, and the result is sufficiently evident, that the citizen can measure the result. His understanding of local issues, his intimate knowledge of members of local government, and the direct impact of local government policies enable him to measure performance against promises. He thus acquires the ability to weigh conflicting programmes against proposals; he learns to discount extravagant election pledges; he develops a healthy scepticism which is his protection against demagogue in politics; and what is most important, he learns that according as he calls the tune, he must pay the piper.²⁷

In fact, the quality of decision making should improve in municipal government, if people are informed of the process and functions of local government.

In conclusion, local governments should preserve and make accessible both public and private records to the citizen in keeping with the tradition of public archival institutions in Canada. First, local governments should develop municipal archival institutions based on an

understanding that the preservation of the complex structure of the archival fonds and its information is the primary purpose of such an institution, not the creation of a memory or historical documentation centre for a community. Second, although public records have a cultural quality, they are created primarily for administrative, legal and fiscal transactions, and their cultural value is derived from the preservation of their structure and the circumstances in which they were created. Third, local governments need to recognize the legal status of public records and that they are inalienable except by due process. In addition, an archival and records keeping program also requires a single wholistic policy for government records from their creation to their final disposition. Such a policy should be sanctioned at the highest level of authority which in the case of local government is the municipal council. Furthermore, to implement such policies and procedures, an archival and records keeping program requires proper placement within a government bureaucracy and the most logical department at this level of government is the municipal clerk's office. Of course, an archival program also requires a commitment of adequate resources for supplies and facilities and to retain trained and knowledgeable staff. Finally and most important, local governments need to acknowledge the preservation of municipal records and their information as an essential public service, because they document and protect the rights, privileges and property of the individual citizen. Together, these aspects provide a framework for the establishment of a municipal archival institution which fits into the Canadian tradition of total archives.

Chapter 4 - Endnotes

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 6. Valerie Billesberger, "Municipal Record keeping in British Columbia: An Exploratory Survey," (Master of Archival Studies Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1990), 87-88.
 7. Victoria Bryans, "Canadian Provincial and Territorial Legislation: A Case of Disjunctions between Theory and Law," (Master of Archival Studies Thesis, University Of British Columbia, 1989),4.
 8. Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 290, ss. 239a, 242
 9. Municipal Act, R.S.B.C. 1979, c. 260, ss. 244b, 244c
 10. The Archives Act (Statutes of Quebec 1983, c. 38), includes records of all public bodies. Within the Act's schedule these bodies include municipalities.
- It should also be noted that although the B.C. Legislature controls the Municipal Act, amendments to this piece of legislation can be brought about through political lobbying. Interest groups, such as the Union of British Columbia Municipalities which is composed of elected officials, and the Municipal Officers Association which comprises municipal administrators are two active organizations which have successfully lobbied the government to enact legislative amendments. According to Bish, there are other groups which have also successfully influenced municipal legislation, namely the British Columbia Museums Association. Therefore, it is possible for the archival community to bring about amendments to the Municipal Act or other chapters of legislation regarding record keeping and archival programs by lobbying through organizations such as the Archives Association of British Columbia, as well as through contacting their own elected members of the legislature.
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