

## **The Sir Guy Carleton Branch Library**

### History

Velma Rust was the originator of the Library of the Sir Guy Carleton Branch, United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada (UELAC). When she was Branch Genealogist, meetings were held at her house and members could browse her extensive book and periodical collection. She held annual genealogical workshops and brought examples of her books for display at Branch social events. More than half of the present collection is from her vast private library that was left to the Branch on her death in October 2000. Branch members boxed the books and stored them at Sylvia Power's home until a suitable location could be found.

Sylvia approached the Archivist for the City of Ottawa, to see if the books could be located at the City Archives. In 2001 an agreement was reached between the Sir Guy Carleton Branch, the City of Ottawa Archives and the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogy Society (OGS) to collocate the Sir Guy Carleton Branch Library with the Ottawa Branch Library at the City Archives. The book collection was actually moved to the Archives in 2002. The libraries are housed as separate collections. The two organizations, however, share volunteer duties, so together Sir Guy Carleton Branch and the Ottawa Branch, OGS provide volunteers every day the Archives is open to the public to assist researchers with genealogical questions. These volunteers provide the backbone of all partner collections at the Archives and are the quid-pro-quo which allows us to maintain our collection there.

The City of Ottawa Archives, including the Branch Library was located at the old Ottawa City Hall, 111 Sussex Drive until December 2010 when the Archives moved to a new, purpose-built building at 100 Tallwood Drive. This arrangement is of great benefit to the Branch as the Archives houses collections of four other partners as well as the library of the Archives itself. The five partners are the Sir Guy Carleton Branch, UELAC; the Ottawa Branch, OGS; the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa (BIFHSGO); the United Church Archives of the Ottawa and Seaway Valley Presbyteries; and the C. Robert Craig Memorial Library on rail transportation in Canada.

### Management of the Collection

Donors are the mainstay of the collection which has now grown to over 800 books and 27 periodical titles. The library has been fortunate to receive books from 25 donors. The Branch has recently provided a budget of \$200 each year for the purchase of new books to fill gaps in the collection. Duplicate books and those from donations that don't fit with the goals of the collection are shared with other organizations or sold to raise funds for the Branch.

The Library acquires books that relate to the Loyalists and their experience in Canada. This includes biographies; family histories; census, cemetery and vital records; military records; and histories of the American revolution, of the provinces where the Loyalists settled, and of the original 13 American colonies.

Cataloguing the books was a challenge as most Branch volunteers are not trained librarians, and computer availability at the Archives was limited. In 2007 an initiative was undertaken to catalogue the collection using the Dewey Decimal System and to put it in an Excel spreadsheet on a donated, dedicated computer. This effort benefited greatly from the assistance of the librarian for the BIFHSGO collection. She was a trained librarian, who provided helpful advice and access to a set of Dewey Decimal cataloguing books. The re-cataloguing and re-labelling is now complete. The collection is on the Branch website, arranged by title. A Finding Aid has been prepared for the library with the books listed by Dewey Decimal number, title and author. Cataloguing procedures have been documented so the collection can be maintained consistently in the future.

### Accessing the Library

The collection is available to anyone visiting the James Bartleman Centre at 100 Tallwood Drive. Parking is free and the Centre is served by several transit routes. Hours are 9:00 to 4:00 Tuesday to Friday and 10:00 to 5:00 on Saturdays from September to May. The Archives are closed to the public Sundays, Mondays, statutory holidays, and Saturdays on long weekends and during June, July and August. Volunteers from the partners are available all days that the Archives are open to assist researchers with genealogical searches in the library collections, as well as microfilmed records held by the Archives. The City of Ottawa Archives and the Partners do not provide lending libraries. All books and records must be consulted on site.

In conclusion, the Sir Guy Carleton Branch is grateful for the opportunity to house its library at the City of Ottawa Archives and for the richness provided by having the collections of the other partners along with the books and records of the Archives available in one place for consultation.

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