Preserving Your Heritage

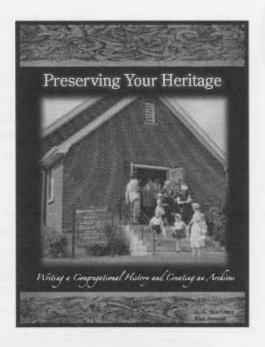


Writing a Congregational History and Creating an Archives

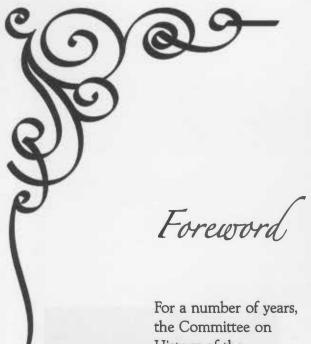
A. A. den Otter Kim Arnold

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For a number of years, the Committee on History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada had discussed publishing a handbook that would assist congregations wishing to write the history of their church. As an instructor in first-year history-writing courses at Memorial for many



G-1202-FC Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON: St. Andrew's P.C., ca 1930

years, I accepted the committee's request to undertake that task. With the assistance of Kim Arnold, the archivist of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and church office staff, I completed the booklet in 2003.

Available at the church's bookstore and at many Synods, Remembering Your Heritage: Researching and Writing A Congregational History proved popular and 1000 copies were sold within two years. Meanwhile, Kim Arnold and I talked about publishing a revised edition and adding a section on how to create an archives and properly store documents. All congregations produce a large number of records yet few have the knowledge on how [and have the facilities] to store these invaluable resources. With the enthusiastic support of the Committee on History, Kim Arnold and I prepared a lengthier handbook for researching and writing congregational histories and for preserving the churches' records. We hope it will be useful to you as you research and write your congregational history. We also hope that this booklet will inspire you to create an archives in your church and preserve the invaluable records that contain within them your story.

Andy den Otter March 2007 The authors are thankful to the members of the Committee on History of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to the staff of the Presbyterian Church Archives for their enthusiastic support for this project and for their helpful suggestions. Of course, the authors remain solely responsible for any errors of omission or commission.

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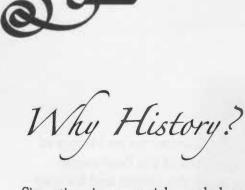
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Since time immemorial people have celebrated the stories of the past. Whether informally around campfires or kitchen tables, ritually in churches or temples, or formally in class-rooms or lecture halls, humans have recollected the events that define them as a family, tribe, community, or nation. For centuries, parents and relatives, schools and universities have placed the study of family, local, national, and global histories as central in the learning process. Similarly, the Christian Church has always assigned great importance to remembering the past. It does so because it is rooted in history. Its God is not abstract nor impersonal, but a Creator who in Jesus Christ entered into time and thus into the everyday flow of history. Accordingly, both the Old and New Testaments are concerned with the events of salvation history and often reference specific secular historical events, suggesting how important history is for the Christian Church.

The Psalmists certainly appreciated the necessity of knowing the past. The lengthy, but exuberant, paean of Psalm 78, for instance, stresses the importance of telling young people of "the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord." Its message is stridently clear, to know the past actions of God is to know Him. Again, to understand the church and, for that matter, a congregation, one must know the origins of its practices, its traditions, its culture.

Recently, however, the importance once accorded history in formal educational settings has eroded. With the emphasis now placed on supposedly practical knowledge and experience, young people are only sporadically exposed to the study of the past. Meanwhile, ironically, the mushrooming interest in genealogy and the popularity of historical fiction, drama, and film strikingly demonstrates that people yearn to discover their heritage that they want to know about themselves. Likewise, congregations increasingly seek to recover the stories of their church family to relive the shared culture from which they arose and which now binds them into a religious community. To see where they should be going, they must know where they have been.

Of course, a person or a committee may undertake the task of researching and writing a congregational history not for any practical, utilitarian purpose but for its own sake. Much as we appreciate a work of art for its intrinsic, aesthetical value rather than its monetary worth or pragmatic use, so a congregational history merits doing because it is worthwhile in itself. Happily, however, when the task is completed, the author or authors will not only celebrate their efforts and the work they have produced, they will have captured for their readers an appreciation for the congregation's legacy, a better grasp of its origins, its evolution, its triumphs and failures. Perhaps most importantly, a congregational history can bring this new awareness to bear on debates within the congregation. A sensitive evaluation of a congregation's past can have a vital influence on decisions about its future directions.

What is History?

The simplest definition of History is that it encompasses all the events that ever occurred to all human beings. It is the totality of our past. In other words, it is billions upon billions of happenings in all parts of the world. In a way, History is like the turbulent wake behind an ocean liner. Imagine yourself on the stern of this vessel: the white green foamy water churned up behind it is like human history irretrievably gone, except in oral, written, or pictorial form, in our minds or on paper.

Transferring this understanding of History to your congregation means that its story includes the activities of all those people who were members of your faith community or who in any way affected its conception, birth, and maturation. The history of your congregation comprises all that has ever happened within its physical and spiritual walls. All events and all people are part of its past.

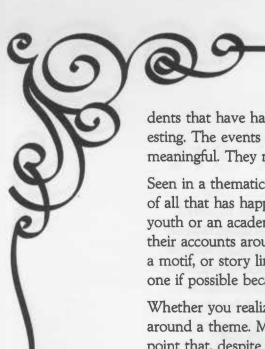
Needless to say, you will not be able to include the thousands upon thousands of occurrences in your congregation's past. No book would be large enough to contain all those facts nor would anyone want to read about them, let alone be able to buy the collection. Moreover, the sheer volume of facts would make the history incomprehensible. A compete tally of all the incidents that ever happened, even were it possible, would overwhelm and have no value to any human being but God.

Instead of recounting everything that has occurred, you will include in your history only those happenings you deem to be significant, inci-



Montreal, PQ: Beckwith Memorial Italian Church, ca 1955





dents that have had some impact in the life of your congregation or that are especially interesting. The events that you want to incorporate in the narrative of your congregation must be meaningful. They must contribute something to the point you want your story to make.

Seen in a thematic way, your history will be more than a recitation of past events, a recalling of all that has happened. Story tellers, whether a grandfather embellishing tales from his youth or an academic historian meticulously explaining the complex causes of a war, organize their accounts around a theme. Although congregational historians may have difficulty finding a motif, or story line, around which to reconstruct their history, they should try to identify one if possible because an organizing theme will ease their research and writing.

Whether you realize it or not, as a Christian you are already familiar with organizing a history around a theme. Much of the Old Testament is comprised of histories that drive home the point that, despite the repeated apostasy of the people, God continually forgives and remains faithful. Similarly, each of the four Gospel authors wrote their accounts of Christ's life for a specific purpose. While Matthew emphasized that Jesus was the promised Messiah, Mark taught that discipleship involves suffering, Luke proclaimed that Jesus is Lord of all Peoples, and John, aiming his account at the Greeks, declared that Jesus was the Word incarnate. Consequently, each of the authors, especially John, interpreted Christ's earthly presence in a different way.

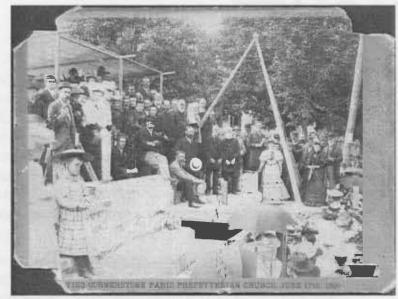
Just as the Gospel writers organized their story around their themes, so you, the author[s] of the congregational history should, if possible, arrange your chronicle around a central idea. To begin, you [and perhaps the committee working with you] must ask a number of questions.



G-1237-FC St. Andrew's NB: The Kirk P.C., ca 1930

Perhaps the very first question will be: Why do we want to write this history? Once you have established a clear answer to this foundational question, you may want to consider broader inquiries like: "How did our congregation get where it is today?" Or "What have been the landmark events in our congregational life?" And "What has made our congregation unique, different from other congregations, and what things did we have in common with them?" In essence, what you are asking is not the standard "what, where, when, and who," but the more difficult and more meaningful "why?"

If you are able to articulate answers to these fundamental queries, you will not be overwhelmed by the numerous facts you will encounter. You will have a better idea of how to judge which events are relevant to your story line, which you want to include, and which you wish to exclude. You will also find it easier to organize all the retained data into a coherent, meaningful story. You will be able to fit them into a pattern, much like the



G-1319-FC Paris, ON: Paris P.C., 1893

pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. In other words, a central thread will run through your narrative like the pattern in a woven cloth; it will inform the choices you make on what to incorporate and what to omit from your history and how to organize your narrative.

In sum, your congregational history will be organized memory. It will relate what the people associated with your congregation have done in the past, how they built their church, the decisions they made, the changes they adopted, the reforms they instituted, the errors they committed. It will not be the total story; you will be able to uncover and relate only fragments of an intricate tale but it will enhance your understanding of how your congregation came to be, how it defined itself and how it solved its problems throughout the years. Carefully done, your congregational history will also add a new facet to the diverse identity of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Who Will do the History?

In some congregations, one person may undertake the task of writing the history. Likely that individual has had a longtime interest in the congregation's past, has gathered over the years a considerable amount of material, and has acquired an invaluable amount of knowledge. Those congregations that are fortunate to have such persons and have confidence in their abilities and perspectives, can leave the task to them. Still, prospective solo authors are well advised to utilize volunteers for gathering specific materials, including illustrations, thereby adding a broader perspective. In addition, assistants can lighten the essential but mundane tasks of proof reading and the time consuming chores associated with publishing.



In most cases, however, congregational histories are the work of committees. There are good reasons for this. A superior history will require a considerable investment of time; delegating the work among many will alleviate the burden and minimize the risk of people losing interest. Likely, a group will uncover more sources, information, and interesting asides in a shorter time than an individual could. Moreover, since even the most harmonious congregation consists of a wide range of personalities and views, the larger the number, within reason, of people working on the project the better the history will reflect that complexity. Lastly, the committee that represents a cross section of the congregation will most probably produce a history reflective of the pew rather than the pulpit and session chamber.

Depending on the size and character of the congregation, an informal committee structure might work but formal organizations, with a co ordinator, convener, or chair are likely to function best. As long as responsibilities and tasks are clearly defined, and all decisions and assignment of responsibilities are formally recorded in minutes, the committee will probably work harmoniously and successfully.

Committees can be launched in many ways. Perhaps a minister or other member of the congregation, a session or some committee will perceive the need or desirability of a history. In any case, however it is formed, a history writing committee should have the approval or support of the Session and, if there are financial obligations for the congregation, from the Board of Managers.

The history writing committee should have at least one co-ordinator, convener or chair. In order to share the workload of volunteers and to balance skill areas, some congregations prefer to have two people in charge. In either case, the primary qualifications for co-ordinators are excellent organization, communication, and interpersonal relations skills. Ideally, leaders will have a keen interest in history and preferably some experience in archival research. Obviously, organizers will be enthusiastic about the project and able to transfer that excitement to members of the committee. Since a high quality history will absorb many hours, even the most dedicated volunteers will need continual motivation.

In most cases, co-ordinators select the team and ensure that all members of the congregation have an opportunity to either join the committee or make a contribution in some other way. They call and chair any meetings of the committee, being careful to find a balance between insufficient and excessive gatherings. Most importantly, co-ordinators supervise the work of committee members. In consultation with the committee they assign research and writing tasks, support and encourage the work, set and then diplomatically enforce deadlines, edit completed work and guide it through the committee, and, finally, impose a common style throughout the document.

How do we get Moving?

Once it has been formed and the co-ordinator is in place, the committee can begin its work. While it will want to establish its own procedures, it should consider an initial meeting at which it can lay the ground rules for the congregational history project.

The purpose of the start up meeting is to have members become acquainted with each other and to set some of the basic parameters of the history project. Since most will already know each other and so need not resort to the plethora of often embarrassing ice breaker exercises, the fledgling committee should instead plumb one another's conceptions of what the congregation means to them, what its history is likely to look like, and what themes will possibly inform the history. In other words, the first meeting should be a relatively informal brainstorming session.

Although a free wheeling interchange of ideas will usually produce valuable and interesting suggestions, the co-ordinator should guide the discussion around some basic points. That means he or she should be able to throw out possible answers to broad questions. In other words, the chair must avoid a free for all unstructured and unproductive marathon session.





Ideally, the participants at the founding meeting will centre their conversation on the basic structure and the themes of the history. What is the purpose of the history and what is its intended audience? Will the history commence at the founding of the congregation or at some other significant point in its past? When will it terminate the narrative? Will you organize the history chronologically? In that case, you need to talk about periodization, that is, the division of history into stages. What are the significant milestones that signal a

A suggested agenda

Founding meeting of the History Committee

- 1. Welcome and devotions
- 2. Reasons for the History
- 3. Possible Themes
- 4. Budget
- 5. Type of manuscript
- 6. Length of manuscript and number of illustrations and addendum
- 7. Assignment of tasks
- 8. Any other business
- 9. Date of next meeting

G-1271-FC Belfast, PE: St. John's P.C. and cemetary, ca 1950 new phase in the congregation's past? Will any one period require one, two, or more chapters for full development? A useful exercise might be to sketch a horizontal time line, perhaps on a blackboard or on large wall charts, diagramming pivotal events. At various spots on the time line, draw vertical lines pointing to consequential circumstances in the histories of the denomination or Christian church or in the local, provincial, national, or even global communities. In this way, the committee can see at a glance the stream of events in the life of the congregation and the context in which episodes occurred.

Alternatively, the committee may prefer a thematic approach either for the entire history or at certain intervals within the chronology. Either way, the committee will have to identify the subjects. It can devote chapters or sections to the clergy and governing bodies as well as other organizations such as the choir, Christian educators, men's, women's, young parents' or youth groups. Evolving worship style as well as forms and types of outreach can also be considered. Still other topics include the brick and mortar details. How many church buildings has the congregation constructed or bought, expanded or renovated? Richly illustrated, all these subjects will draw enormous interest.

The initial meeting should also consider various mundane but essential topics. One of the most important is a proposed budget.¹ How much is the congregation prepared to spend? How does it intend to recover the cost? Closely related to these practical considerations are the questions of the manuscript's length, the number of illustrations to be incorporated, and how the work is to be published. Will the end product be a word processed photocopied booklet, a desk top publication, or a professionally published soft or hard covered edition? Will the history con-

¹Ralph Milton, *How to Write and Publish Your Church History* (Winfield, B.C: Wood Lake Books, 1986) contains a superb section on budgeting. It also provides detailed instructions on how to deal with publishers and printers. Especially useful are the appendices A, B, C, E, and H.

G-1314-FC Windsor, ON: St. Andrew's PC., ca. 1953

tain charts or graphs, foot or endnotes, a bibliography and index? Although no definitive conclusions need to be reached at the initial meeting, ballpark goals have to be considered and discussed.

The purpose of the first deliberation, then, is to explore various possibilities. It is best, at this point, not to make binding decisions, that will affect the whole scope of the project but merely to explore the general directions the project might take. To ensure that every one has a sense of accomplishment, the convener should assign those questions that could not be resolved due to lack of information to various people and ask them to report at the next meeting.

As soon as possible, the committee should reconvene to resolve the issues discussed in the previous meeting. At this gathering, it should set a budget, determine the approximate length of the manuscript, and stipulate the likely number of illustrations and necessary appendices. Participants will have to decide how to organize the history by establishing a tentative theme. Lastly, the chair should, in accordance with the interests and capabilities of committee members, assign specific, well defined tasks to everyone. For example, committee members may be given definite time periods or particular themes to research; be allotted a maximum number of words for one or more reports; and be asked to present their findings at committee meetings at designated times.

After these two start up meetings, committee members can commence the research. While going through the sources, the researchers need to be constantly aware that the factual information they are discovering should be interpreted in light of the themes the group has chosen. Remember also that, while untangling the complex strands of your congregation's history, the past even after you have finished the project is not finite nor fixed. History is living and dynamic; your interpretation of past events will be different from other committee members and of future generations. Much of the enjoyment of researching and writing the history of your congregation will be discussing your discoveries with other members of the committee and eventually reaching a consensus on how to incorporate all your findings into a coherent tale. In the end, the research and the discussions will enrich your understanding of the congregation's history, its place in the community and in the church at large.

To appreciate the larger setting of your congregation's chronicle, committee members should consult what professional historians call secondary sources such as previous histories of your congregation as well as histories of Presbyterianism and of the Christian church in Canada. An earlier congregational history may verify factual data, supply some lost information, and provide an older perspective. Meanwhile, the general histories will place your account in a wider context. They will also help you determine those broad general thematic questions that will inform your research and writing.

Where do we Find Information?

Among the most exciting tasks you and your committee will undertake is the hunt for information. The job will take you on an intellectual journey limited only by your imagination and the time available. Many of the places you will visit are obvious and easily accessible but others are obscure and remote. Very little is out of bounds, however, and you may find useful material in official documents and correspondence, in physical objects and illustrations, and in personal correspondence and interviews.

The most obvious place to begin is in your own church building. The office, storage rooms, cupboards, and even under the gymnasium or hall stage are good places to look for baptismal, marriage, and death records as well as surviving minutes from the many organizations that your congregation has supported over the years. The Board of Managers' minutes will yield a good outline of your congregation's physical development while the Session's minutes will provide an excellent overview of its spiritual and liturgical growth. Session minutes, generated within the past 50 years are still confidential, but can be examined with the permission of the session clerk or minister. Older sets may be available and employed with discretion. Equally valuable are your congregation's annual reports and the minutes of congregational meetings. Newsletters and bulletins will also yield useful information.



Do not overlook two sources of material outside the congregation—the Presbytery and local newspapers. Presbytery minutes will corroborate many of the dates, names, and figures that will emerge from your research. They will contain, for example, all the relevant dates covering a minister's service in your congregation as well as the dates and figures for properties bought and sold. Its correspondence will locate your congregation's activities not only within the affairs of the Presbytery but also regarding the Synod and General Assembly. Local newspapers, on the other hand, will provide a context for important events in the congregation's history and provide a sense of the place it occupied in the community.

Since history is comprised of stories and recollections, you should also gather pertinent knowledge by interviewing participants active in congregational life. Used with care, oral history can be invaluable, adding a personal and often colourful perspective to documents and illustrations. Carefully select your subject and create or ask for a short biographical sketch. Use it to draw up a list of questions. Give the interviewee a copy of the questions beforehand so that he or she has time to reflect and prepare. Make certain that your equipment is in good condition. Select a quiet location for the interview to prevent outside noise from distorting the recording. Before you begin the interview, have a trial run with the interviewee to test volume levels on your machine. Help to fully reveal the subject 's personality by placing the recorder as unobtrusively as possible, encouraging him or her to relax, and asking non confrontational questions. By adopting a conversational milieu, you are most likely to record the person's usual patterns of speech and expression.²

As soon as possible, after the interview, make a copy of the tape for the interviewee and deposit the original tape in your congregational archives. Create a paper transcript of the interview if time permits. Consider depositing another copy of your tape in the Presbyterian Church Archives in Toronto to join a growing collection of former missionaries, national staff, Christian educators, and lay people of all ages who have served on national office committees of the Church. Be sure to inform and obtain consent of the interviewee before making the tape publicly accessible. Carefully guard copyright and privacy rights. Lastly, when using interviews, be sure to verify all dates and facts for accuracy; remember that biases and prejudices will inevitably colour any recollection. But, as long as you use the material as you would an editorial in a newspaper or a column in a magazine as an opinion interviews can inject personality and life into your story.

You might also consider searching for information in The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives, located in the national office at 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto. The Archives has a substantial collection of official congregational documents. Its collections are multi-media, meaning they consist of textual records, graphic materials such as photographs, negatives

²If you need further information on oral history techniques, The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives has an excellent guide for interviewing.



and slides, audio visual materials, architectural plans, and microfilm. The dates of the collection range from 1775 to the present.³ You may borrow your congregation's records from the archives for a reasonable period of time provided your session clerk or minister has given the archivist written permission to lend out the material.

To use the Archives most effectively, you need to be aware of how it is organized. Once documents come to the Archives for deposit, they fall into one of the following categories: national office, synods, presbyteries, congregations, personal papers, colleges, microfilm, or graphics (essentially photographs and negatives). Most likely, you will be interested primarily in congregational records. The Archives has collected session, board of managers, and congregational meeting minutes, and communion rolls, baptismal, marriage, and death registers, Women's Missionary Society materials, young peoples records, Sunday school documentation, and any other organizational materials that congregations have submitted for preservation. The Archives may have the original records on deposit or it may have copies of the documents on microfilm and the congregation may have the originals. If the latter is the case and the papers are not too fragile, you will be able to use them locally.

The Archives has a database which the archivist will search to find whatever records it holds for your congregation. To access congregational records (4000 series) you begin by looking for the name of a hamlet, village, town, or city and next by searching for the name of the congregation. The Archives also has a finding aid (detailed inventory) for congregational records so that you can match a file catalogue number with a certain book of minutes.

A typical finding aid will have a reference number like the following:

1978-4004-1-3 (Brampton, Ont., St. Andrew's P.C.)

The example on the following page indicates that the Archives received a collection of records from Brampton's St. Andrew's Church in the year 1978, that it was the fourth collection of congregational records it received that year in the 4000 series, and that the file is located in box number 1, as file number 3.

The following is a mini version of a standard congregational finding aid found in The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives. The columns reflect the file number, date range, and title of the file respectively.

Depending upon historical circumstances, you may find material in other archives. The United Church Archives at Victoria University in Toronto, for

G-3405-FC-5 Quebec, PQ: 225th Anniversary, St. Andrew

³The Archive hours are from Monday-Friday 9:00-4:45, except in summer when it is available 9:00-4:00 by appointment. You can contact the Archives by e-mail: Karnold@presbyterian.ca (Ms. Kim Arnold, Archivist/Records Administrator) or Banger@presbyterian.ca (Mr. Bob Anger, Assistant Archivist); by phone 416-441-1111 ext. 310 or 266; or 1-800-619-7301, same ext.; or by fax 416-441-2825.

example, houses some Presbyterian material that predates church union in 1925. A congregation in the Presbytery of Winnipeg, wanting to trace its history back to Red River days would consult the collection of correspondence of John Black, the first Presbyterian minister in western Canada, then known as Rupert's Land. Similarly, many of the United Church conferences have archives which may have useful records. [See Appendix I] In other cases, congregations, like some of those in Atlantic Canada, have deposited their records with provincial or local archives or museums. [See Appendix II] In other words, successful historical research requires patient and innovative sleuthing.

File Number	Date Range	File Title
1978-4004-1-1	1849-1876	Baptismal Register
1978-4004-1-2	1910-1956	Baptismal Register
1978-4004-1-8	1858-1876	Marriage Register
1978-4004-2-4	1912-1935	Session Minutes
1978-4004-3-1	1877-1890	Communion Roll
1978-4004-5-1	1931-1940	Annual Reports
1978-4004-10-3	1921-1925	Sunday School Record Book
1978-4004-10-10	1930	Brampton Jubilee, 1880-1930 (congregational history)

No congregational history will be complete without illustrations. Once again, your imagination and your budget will determine how many photographs, drawings, or paintings you will be able to reproduce. Ask members of the congregation to provide images of social and worship occasions in your congregation's past, of its buildings, furnishings, banners, and communion ware and baptismal fonts. You can also contact The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives which holds thousands of photographs covering all aspects of congregational life. Contact these archives to request a search of their photograph collection, using the name of a person or a congregation. For a nominal fee, the Archives staff can reproduce the images electronically in a scanned format or by way of hard copy print.



How do we Record the Information?

Presuming that you are using a committee approach, and that you and your peers have identified a number of places where you are likely to unearth information, your next step is to divide the research work load. Assign each member of the committee a reasonable share and periodically meet to discuss results. The frequency of meetings will vary from committee to committee but discussions not only animate the research process but will generate new ideas and approaches.

Before you commence the research, you should devise a system of note taking. At one time or another, every researcher, no matter how professional, will think he or she will have no problem remembering a fact or a location, or will hastily jot a note on a piece of scrap paper. Almost inevitably, she or he will forget the information or lose the scribbles and not be able to relocate the source and thus not be able to use it. Avoid this common pitfall by agreeing on a relatively standard and complete notation format.

In today's digital world, note taking and record keeping have been greatly simplified. Most likely you or your committee will have available at least one computer. If you are lucky, you will have a laptop or handheld wordprocessor to take with you to the archives or other record depositories. Although a data base or other note taking programme is useful, any good word processing package will be ample, especially if it has a search function. Of course, the most reliable and portable, as well as least expensive, method is still pen and note cards. Whatever method you choose, however, the essential point is to take down the exact location of your source so that either you or someone else can relocate the material without starting the research all over again.



Sample Source Notation Congregational Archive

St. David's Presbyterian Church (St John's, NF), John Jones Journal, 15 June 1775

Sample Source Notation Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives

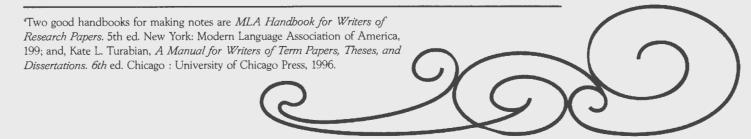
Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives, Chilliwack, B.C., Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Session minutes 1888-1991, microfilm 1993-8009

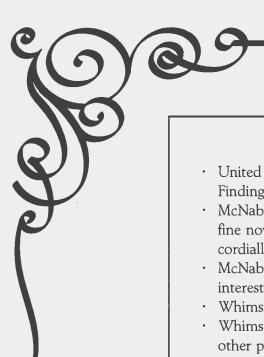
Photocopying technology has eased the researcher's task considerably. Although the technique is very useful, it has its hazards. While copying entire pages can save considerable time and effort, at some point you still need to digest the material into useable portions. In order to avoid plagiarism [the act of illegally copying someone else's words], you must put the material into your own words. Unless you are a very skilled and experienced author, you should not write directly from photocopies. Put the essential facts on note cards or into a computer in your own words. Later, when you commence writing, take the data from the notes. You can always verify your version with the photocopied record.

When taking notes, either from a photocopy or the document, keep in mind several simple but essential rules. First of all, remember that you may not return to the notes for weeks, months or even a year. Consequently, all the information must be clear and accurate. Paraphrase most of the material; that is, read a paragraph or so and then write down the essential thought in your own words. Immediately afterwards, check for correct spelling of names and transcription of dates. Whenever a source expresses an idea in a particularly noteworthy way, use direct quotations; that is, copy all the words and punctuation exactly and precisely. Enclose the entire expression in quotation marks; enclose with brackets [] any words of your own that you add; and, indicate with ellipses ... (three dots for words left out in mid sentence and four at the end of a sentence) any words you have omitted. Immediately review the quotation to ensure you have copied it accurately. Lastly, as they crop up, jot down your own thoughts in the notes but be sure to identify them as being your own ideas so that later you do not confuse them with those of the original source.

On the following page is a sample notation. It illustrates shorthand notes as well as direct quotations, the addition of words within a direct quotation, as well as a personal reminder.

Whether or not your history will have footnotes or endnotes is a matter for you or a committee to decide. Incorporating notes will give the publication a scholarly tone, with accompanying authority but may alienate some of its readers. Should you decide to use notes, you can find several manuals which will provide all the format examples you will need.⁴ Even if you decide not to utilize foot or end notes, you should still include full and accurate citations on all your notes. You never know when you may have to go back to the source. Moreover, you will want to list all your sources somewhere in your history.





Sample Notation

- United Church of Canada, Victoria University Archives, John Black Papers, Finding Aid 53, 86.030C, Black to McLaren, 23 Oct 1869
- McNabb and Whimston arrive last night -suffer much from cold -esp Mrs M fine now and cheerful -"and seems to take to the country and its ways quite
 cordially."
- · McNabb preach today "a good deal in the Highland Style [which] I think interested the congregation considerably" amiable and quiet
- · Whimston well suited -all of us met with elders -also Fletcher
- · Whimston to Portage -rest will take the other 4 stations -Kildonan 2x Sunday, other places once -Headingly will lose 1 Sunday/ month
- · McNabb live in Little Britain in rented house
- · expect us all to live and work together cheerfully
- "We are in some excitement just now on account of the opposition of the French population to the new order of things. They are watching the road to keep out and turn back Gov. [William] McDougall. And it is doubtful whether he will get in. They examined our party closely yesterday lest the Governor should be among them. It was a great mistake to come without troops."

[AdO -note reference to 'opposition' and 'to the new order of things' -may suggest Black aligned with Canadian Party]

How do we Tell Our Story?

No matter how thorough the research, the success of your congregational history will depend upon how well you tell it. Good, clear, and interesting writing is essential. Although you may have a receptive audience, poor organization and awkward prose will leave your manuscript unread. Consequently, if you are an inexperienced writer, consult one or more writing manuals [see the bibliography] or better yet, take a writing course. The effort spent on improving your writing skills will not only save considerable frustration and time but gain a readership.

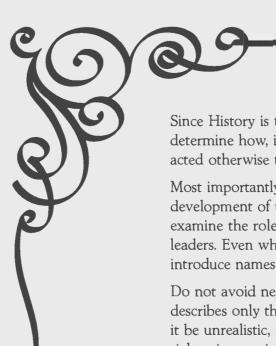
When you write, always keep in mind the basic organizing theme. It is the backbone around which you will build the body of your history. Even if you take a purely chronological approach, fit each period or subject into the general motif. Keep in mind that facts by themselves are meaningless. They are like empty lunch bags waiting to be filled. History is more than a mere listing of facts: it consists of giving meaning to those facts, to explain



G-1315-FC Windsor, ON: St. Andrew's P.C., 1960

why a certain event was important to the history of a congregation or why a certain person made a significant contribution. Having a general theme will make the task of interpretation and organization much easier.

Begin writing as soon as you have finished a body of research. Concentrate on interesting stories and material. Even if discarded eventually or abbreviated, a written piece will help in constructing the full story. Most likely, but not necessarily, you will organize your part of the story along a time line or chronology. Emphasize the changes that occurred within an era or topic. Perhaps it is the construction of a new sanctuary, the tenure of an outstanding minister, the beginning and results of a new initiative, the reorganization of a group.



Since History is the study of change, note the shifts within a period or subject. Always determine how, in the phase or issue under review, the church community was different or acted otherwise than it does today. But, also identify similar practices and values.

Most importantly perhaps, emphasize the contributions that individuals have made to the development of the congregation. Do not limit yourself to the work of the clergy but examine the roles of the laity, of music directors, Sunday School teachers, and youth group leaders. Even when discussing the evolution of groups within the congregation always introduce names and bring them to life with distinguishing characteristics.

Do not avoid negative or controversial events in the congregation's history. A history that describes only the positive elements in the past will leave a false impression; not only will it be unrealistic, it may also be too sweet and thus boring. On the other hand, controversial topics require a sensitivity to the complexities of the issue. Be fair to all sides of the question and, above all, be non judgmental. Moreover, if the event occurred within memory of living participants, interview a representative number of people and ask others to review your assessment.

If you are part of a team approach, bring frequent reports to meetings of the committee for discussion. If submitted in advance of the seminar, your fellow collaborators can comment on the material, perhaps suggest new avenues of exploration, different sources, additional information, redundant material, or alternate or modified explanations. Team discussions will improve the finished product.

The scope of this booklet does not permit a detailed discussion of the principles of good writing. It can only present a checklist of a few important considerations.

- Does each sentence, paragraph, section, and chapter have a clearly defined purpose, message or theme?
- · Does each paragraph have a topic sentence?
- $\cdot\;$ Does each paragraph have a concluding sentence?
- · Does each paragraph discuss only one subject?
- Who is the intended audience and does the level and style of writing suit this readership?
- · Is the writing clear?
- · Are the words simple and appropriate?
- · Are the sentences direct, avoiding unnecessary words, excessive adjectives and adverbs and redundant prepositional phrases and forms of the verb 'to be'?
- · Are most sentences written in the active voice?
- $\boldsymbol{\cdot}$ Do most answer the question: who is acting?
- With a few necessary exceptions, do they place the subject before the verb and object? (For example, write: "Michelle Noel conducted the choir." rather than the weak: "The choir was conducted by Michelle Noel." or still flabbier: "The choir was conducted.")

- · Do the sentences get off to a fast start. Do they avoid lengthy introductory phrases?
- · Do the sentences and paragraph vary in length?

In sum, use vivid, lively everyday language. Write as if you are speaking in conversation.

When you have finished a draft, read it out loud. If you stumble over a phrase, rewrite it. After reading the manuscript, rewrite the entire piece, examining each sentence and every paragraph in light of the checklist above. Also look for errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style as well inconsistencies in logic, explanations, and content. Likely, not only will you discover construction errors but gaps in information which you can remedy with further research. After that is completed, rewrite the paper and read it out loud again; rewrite it once more, following the previous procedure. Do not be discouraged; remember that good authors repeatedly rewrite all or portions of their manuscript. Finally, when satisfied, give it to friends or colleagues to read and offer advice for the final rewrite.

Unless your committee is small, an editor or editorial team will take all submissions and craft them into a finished product. One, but no more than two editors, will bring consistency in style and usage; they are also more likely to keep within the agreed length of the manuscript than a large number of individual contributors. Moreover, editors are removed from the material and have less emotional attachment to the data; they can more easily spot errors and inconsistencies and, equally important, are better able to delete parts that do not contribute to the whole story.



By following the principles of good writing and sound research techniques, an individual, or a committee working as a team, is likely to produce an excellent congregational history. Whether researching and writing alone or as part of a committee, participants must of course be willing to spend considerable amounts of time ferreting information from dusty cupboards, flimsy cardboard cases, crammed filing cabinets, or professionally organized archives. They must be determined to fit their myriad and jumbled findings into a coherent, fluidly written story. The final product, even if but a modestly sized booklet, will give satisfaction to its creators. Their reward will be the joy of discovering and retelling the stories that help explain how their congregation formed its culture. If done properly, it will make a valuable contribution to an understanding of a congregation's origins and its his-



torical development. Remembering the heritage of their family of faith, attempting to see how God has worked within that community, coupled to an understanding of Scriptures and considered prayer and debate, will provide a firm foundation from which researchers, writers, and readers can make better decisions about future directions. Moreover, even though their story will be particularly local, it will reflect and comment on the church universal.

Creating a Congregational Archives

Once you have celebrated the birth of your congregation's history, you or your committee should consider creating an archives to store all the material you uncovered in your research. It is vitally important and good stewardship to properly care for your church records, especially older ones. After all, the congregational history is only a very limited record of your church heritage. The actual records are much more comprehensive and deserve preservation.

What are archives? The term archives can have two different, but related meanings. Archives can refer to a specific type of facility designed to store archival records. This booklet, however, will use the word mainly as a collection of multi media records or document of permanent administrative, legal, financial, and/or historical significance.

The General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada [PCC] requires that every congregation adopt the rules set out in the Book of Forms, Appendix G, for keeping its records. Entitled "Archives and Records Management," this section serves as the national church's guide for all people in a congregation who create, use, store, and maintain church

records. It details such topics as: ownership of records, deposit of records, access and restrictions to information, private records (personal papers of church workers). This booklet summarizes in everyday language the official guidelines.

If after reading this booklet, you are still not clear on what records you should preserve, consult Appendix G in the *Book of Forms* or the Presbyterian Church Archives web site at www.presbyterian.ca/archives under the link "Archives and Records Management for Congregations." The website has an information sheet entitled "8 Easy Steps" to beginning a congregational archives as well as answers to a number of frequently asked questions. Look at this web site for a myriad of material related to managing your congregational records as well as information on the general services provided by the national Presbyterian Church Archives related to archives and records management.

If some of your church records are stored with the local public library or regional archives, or you intend to leave the collection with them, you and the institution should sign a formal agreement if this has not already been done to make the deposit official. Please contact the PCC Archives for a sample Deposit Agreement Form. Also a microfilm copy of the records of your congregation needs to be deposited with the PCC Archives. Please see *Book of Forms*, Appendix G, on this.





Record Formats

Records of all formats should be considered as part of your congregational archives collection: manuscript documents, bound books, file folder contents, framed and unframed photos, negatives, lantern slides, architectural plans, videos, and computer files. You may be surprised as to how many types of records you will gather together when working co-operatively with the congregation. Each type of record is a different form of documentation reflecting the work and life of a



G-2592-FC Etobicoke, ON: Grace P.C. Choir, 1987

congregation and forms its own record series. Together they form the collective memory of your congregation created throughout its lifetime. Depending on the age of the congregation, the records you accumulate may date from the current year all the way back one hundred years or more. Apart from being useful, a comprehensive and complete set of congregational records is a matter of pride.

Life—cycle of a Record

All records have a 'life cycle.' Once created, they are characterized as being active, semi active, ready for destruction, or suitable for the archives. Records in a file drawer, that are referred and added to on a regular basis are considered active. Files that are not used regularly are deemed semi active. You might want to box semi-active files and store them securely in another office or safe area in order not to clutter your active filing cabinets. Although you are permitted to destroy unimportant and transitory paper, official records are always considered as archival and must be kept permanently.

Most congregational records are classified as official church records that is, they are records that are created in the regular course of church business such as church registers, financial records, reports, official correspondence, and minute books of church organizations. In terms of administrative records such as correspondence, official records are those that contain information related to church policy and/or procedure and those that contain information and advice from someone working in an official capacity as a church employee.

Consult www.presbyterian.ca/archives for assistance in determining what kind of church records may be culled and which are to be kept permanently.

Records Ownership

Official church records should perpetually remain the property of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. If you are involved in the process of drawing up a church property sale agreement, make certain that the church records are not included in the sale of the contents. In such cases as the closure of a congregation, the records should ultimately come into the care of the Presbyterian Church Archives. Again, please consult the *Book of Forms*, Appendix G.

Unofficial Records

An example of these are a reference collection of subjects that church staff and/or the minister might access for current information on a specific subject area relevant to their ministry. This material typically consists of government studies, news clippings, and magazine articles.

Files should be created for them under the relevant subject headings. These items do not need to be housed in acid free materials because they are not official records. This collection should be weeded regularly in order to remain current and useful.



G-1913-FC Victoria, BC: Chinese P.C.: True Light Group tea party, ca. 1955



A portion of official records are considered to be your *vital records*. Vital records are the ones which are crucial to ongoing functioning of any organization. They represent the key to the congregation's memory, enhance its ability to carry on its ministry, and, perhaps, help it to re establish itself as an institution. Session minutes, financial records, and legal property documents are obvious examples of vital records. These must be specially protected during their life as well as microfilmed.

Archival Arrangement

Two key concepts in general archival practice should not be contravened. One is *provenance* and the other is *respect des fonds. Provenance* refers to the original creator of the documents which, in your case, is your congregation and, more specifically, the particular church board, church committee, or church official. *Respect des fonds* refers to maintaining records in their original order, the chronology in which their creator initially placed them. For example, all the marriage registers should be grouped together in date order, all session minute books together in date order, all Sabbath school records together in date order, and so on. Each one of these types of records forms their own record series. Even if you do not initially find these records placed in their date order, as they may have been stored in different locations in the building, it is correct archival practice to put them in the date order that they were made.

G-1336-FC Winnipeg, MB: Kildonan Presbyterian Church, ca 1950



The records you create as a result of regular church activity will all be considered as *official church records* and therefore will possess potential legal value. For this reason, they must be maintained in good order and permanently preserved. You also need to ensure that they will be available for both current and future use. Not only do these records have legal value to the Church they also possess administrative, fiscal and historical worth. They are an important part of the congregation's tangible assets.

Records Inventory | Catalogue

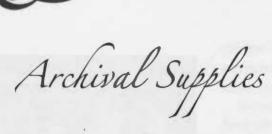
Next, you will need to make a thorough inventory of all the records you have amassed. Once this is created, make multiple copies of the records inventory and keep one with the records themselves, one with the Clerk of Session, one with the minister and one with the convener of your Archives Committee. The inventory should include the title of the record (eg. Baptismal register) and the date range (eg. 1858-1865). List your records according to the records series arrangement as illustrated in Appendix III.



G-3544-FC Swift Current, SK: St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, unveiling a baptismal font, 1952

Access to Information

The Presbyterian Church in Canada asks that all congregations adopt a standard "best practices" approach to the information in their care. The General Assembly has ruled and the *Book of Forms* states that session minutes are closed for the most current 50 years. Any church record that contains information of a personal, confidential, and/or personnel nature must be specially protected. These records are to be stored in a secure place such as a locked filing cabinet accessible only to authorized church personnel.



Your Committee should secure a budget from the Board of Managers for the purpose of suitable supplies to properly house valuable records. You will need to purchase record/banker boxes, acid-free document boxes, acid-free file folders, acid-free envelopes of various sizes, and white gloves for handling photos. If your church can afford it, it is best to use acid-free paper supplies for the older archival records. Carr McLean has an excellent on line catalogue [www.carrmclean.ca] for archival supplies. They are providers for many archives and will deliver anywhere in Canada. If your budget is more modest you can purchase similar products from business supplies store such as Staples, Grand and Toy, or other local stationary suppliers. The important thing to remember is to improve to the best of your means and abilities the way records are currently being stored and organized as this will extend their life and make finding information much easier.

Location of Archives

The best choice for your archives is a safe and secure place on the main floor of your building. When looking at the best location in the church for the storage of your archival collection, consider the following crucial components for a good environment to keep records of all types. Above all, the climate of the room must be stable, that is, maintained at the recommended 20 C temperature and 40 per cent humidity levels. An erratic indoor



G-3460-FC Port Cartier, PQ: Some of the initial members of the Church of the Good Shepherd, 1961

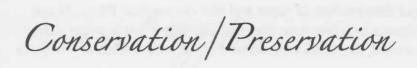
climate contributes to the rapid deterioration of paper and film documents. If you do not have a room with stable conditions, one that is on the cool, dry side is much better than a hot, humid one. Mildew and mould, the dread enemies to records, will flourish in a humid environment.

Security Issues

Security of the records and the information therein must be guaranteed. Ensure that your records area has a lockable door and windows. Only a minimal number of appointed church officials should have access to the key. If space permits, purchase metal shelving for your records boxes - otherwise clean file cabinets will also work. Ensure that archival records are handled gently and with respect. Keep records away from UV light when possible as this will cause an acceleration of fading and wear. Do not permit food or drink near the documents because of possible spillage and/or attracting unwanted pests. The area should be well ventilated and in a location away from any direct water/heat supply. You should also have fire and security alarm systems in place for your entire church facility as this will also serve to protect your irreplaceable, one of a kind archives. Have recently inspected fire extinguishers in place and ensure that staff know how to use them. To prevent loss, do not allow casual borrowing of your church records no matter how well meaning and trusted the borrower is. If a loan is absolutely necessary, create an 'out and in record' in an official sign-out book to be kept in the church office.

G-3523-FC Sydney Mines, NS: St. Andrews's Summer Bible School, ca 1930





To help preserve the life of your precious church records make sure you unfold and flatten paper that has been folded or rolled; carefully remove all rusty staples and paper clips; and, remove elastic bands and cello tape. Glue based products are not good for the paper as the glue will leave permanent stains on the paper and will dry out in time thus losing their effectiveness. Place your record books in folders, label the folders using pencil, place them in boxes, arranged chronologically and according to their record series categories. For oversized materials use acid free tissue paper as wrapping and then label the package. In order to secure the torn bindings on any size bound book, use dress makers cotton ribbon/tape and place it around cross wise as if you were wrapping a gift. Never laminate archival documents - use Mylar folders instead. Some minor rips in paper can be mended with archival mending tape found in the Carr McLean catalogue. It is a good idea to consult with the national PCC archivists before attempting any sort of repair on your church documents.

Safeguarding Records

Church archives are unique and irreplaceable and so it is important to protect them. Unfortunately, vaults and safes are not always the sure safe guard that you expect they might be. Older ones will often have badly disintegrated insulation and likely the door seal may have disintegrated. Should this be the case, conducted heat from a fire can cremate documents trapped in the safe. Similarly, water used for fire fighting may leak into the safe and soak the records. Soggy paper may go unnoticed until it is too badly damaged to be recovered.

A backup copy is the first step in preserving your archives should original records be damaged or destroyed by water or fire. Recognizing the value of duplicated records, the General Assembly, the Assembly Council, and the Committee on History all strongly urge churches to microfilm their records. Please consult the PCC Archives web site for additional details on the microfilming programme.

A tested Disaster Preparedness Plan, that includes church records, is also invaluable in the case of fire, accident, theft, flood or any other disaster. Your should print the plan into a formal manual and circulated it to church officials.

Special Media

The category of special media includes: photographic records, audio visual records, architectural plans, scrapbooks, microfilm/fiche, and church artwork. Keep each medium as a separate set of records with an inventory for each medium. Each item should be listed using the following data format: type of record, dimensions, physical condition, date of creation, and brief description of content and context.

Photographs — Photographs may be official in nature if the church commissioned and paid for them to be created. But many photos in your collection will have been captured casually, that is unofficially, and donated to the church by those individuals. Whether classed as official or unofficial, all photographic records are important records reflective of the life of the congregation and should be catalogued and well maintained. Photographic



G-186-MC Knox College Football Team, 1900



records may take the form of photo print, negative, or glass slide. If framed, check the condition of the frame and backing. Years ago, highly acidic barn board was used as photo backing. As the acid migrates from the wood it will damage the photo. It is advisable, therefore, to place valuable photos in a frame under clean glass with acid free supports and matting.

Note: all archival documents should be kept away from direct UV light.

Other special media – Some of the most commonly found audio visual records take the form of reel to reel "home" movies, film strips, videos, and taped interviews. A cool, dry environment is best for both film and photo because of the vulnerable emulsion layer that lies on top of the base. It is advisable to wear clean cotton gloves while handling these objects as they smudge easily. If possible, secure the proper equipment to play sound recordings and play them at least once a year to maintain their flexibility.

Depositing special media – The national Presbyterian Church Archives in Toronto will accept original special media records for deposit. Please contact its office if you wish to deposit original photos, architectural plans, videos, taped interviews, or scrapbooks with them. Please make sure that all items are fully labelled for cataloguing purposes.

Electronic Records and E-mail

Offices now create electronic records on a daily basis. Most often these records take the form of correspondence, reports, or minutes. We know that the computer is an excellent tool to create records and to access information within those records very quickly. Yet, with the constantly changing hardware and software we can very easily, deliberately or inadvertently, change a record. This could compromise the integrity and authenticity of the original record. Moreover, backup disks or memory sticks do not guarantee any long term permanence or integrity of the official record. While the electronic form provides quick and easy access, it is never to be considered a long term storage or preservation method for your official church records.

Permanent and official records must be stored not only on the computer but must also be printed as a 'hard copy' and placed in a secure filing cabinet. It is the hard copy and not the computer version that is your permanent and most reliable record.

Celebrate Your Archives

Archives are useful for finding information but they are also interesting and informative to the average church member. Bring your archives out of their boxes and create thematic exhibits, historic talks, old style church services and special dinners, write skits, or create a gallery wall of your past and current ministers and of group photos of members and adherents. You will find that people, young and old alike, enjoy these special archives projects. Advertise these events to the larger community as a way of encouraging those in your area to enter the church building and experience a little of church life and hospitality.

Note: Only use copies of documents in archival exhibits and displays.



Archival Records, The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives, 1999 (photo credit: Bob Anger)





Congregational Records Series

The following is a suggested list of the various groupings of records series one might find among their set of congregational records.

Vital Statistics

Baptismal Registers Marriage Registers Burial/Death Registers Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials/Death

Session

Session Minutes Minutes of Joint Meetings Session Reports Session Correspondence Mission Record Book Communion Rolls Membership Rolls Membership Lists Membership Certificates Membership Certificates - Counterfoils Orders of Service Session Financial Records Statistical Reports

Congregation

Constitution Congregational Minutes Annual Reports Congregational Directories

Board of Managers/Deacon's Court

Board of Managers Minutes Board of Managers Reports Board of Managers Correspondence Board of Managers Committees Financial Records (Bequests, Weekly offerings, Subscription lists for the building) Legal Papers (Agreements, Deeds, Indentures)

Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees Minutes Board of Trustees Reports Board of Trustees Correspondence Deeds and Indentures **Bequests**

Committees of the Congregation

Building Committee Christian Education Committee Financial Committee Planning Committee Property Committee Worship Committee

Organizations of the Congregation

Women's groups Men's groups Young People's Society Church School Nursery School/Cradle Roll Other Organizations

Publications and Histories

Histories Other publications

Appendix Two

National and Provincial Archives

Library and Archives Canada

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A ON3
(613) 996-5115 or (866) 578-7777
http://www.collectionscanada.ca/

Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador

9 Bonaventure Avenue

P.O. Box 1800, Station C

St. John's, NL, Canada A1C 5P9

(709) 757-8030

http://www.therooms.ca/archives/

Provincial Archives of Nova Scotia

6016 University Avenue
Halifax, NS
B3H 1W4
(902) 424-6060
http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/cap/

Prince Edward Island Public Archives and Records Office

Hon. George Coles Building Richmond Street Queen Square Charlottetown, PEI C1A 7M4 (902) 368-4290

Provincial Archives of New Brunswick

Bonar Law - Bennett Building
23 Dineen Drive
PO Box 6000
University of New Brunswick Campus
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5A3
(506) 453-2122
http://archives.gnb.ca/Archives/Default.aspx?L=EN

Archives of Ontario

77 Grenville Street
Toronto, ON
M5S 1B3
416 327-1600
http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/

Archives of Manitoba

130-200 Vaughan Street Winnipeg, MB R3C 1T5 (204) 945-3971 or (800) 617-3588 in Manitoba only http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/

Saskatchewan Archives Board

University of Regina Campus 3303 Hillsdale Street Regina, SK S4S 0A2 (306) 787-4068 http://www.saskarchives.com/

Saskatchewan Archives Board

Murray Building
University of Saskatchwewan
3 Campus Drive
Saskatoon, SK
S7N 5A4
(306) 933-5832
http://www.saskarchives.com/

Provincial Archives of Alberta

8555 Roper Road
Edmonton, AB
T6E 5W1
(780) 427-1750
http://www.cd.gov.ab.ca/preserving/paa_2002/



British Columbia Archives

Victoria, British Columbia http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca

Church Archives

The Presbyterian Church in Archives and Records Office

50 Wynford Dr. Toronto, ON M3C 117 (416) 441-1111 ext. 310 http://www.presbyterian.ca/archives/

The United Church Archives Network website contains links to all the denomination's archives. See: http://www.united-church.ca/archives/



Select Bibliography

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Gregg, William. Short History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada from the Earliest to the Present Time. Toronto?: Printed for the author, 1893.

Moir, John S. Early Presbyterianism in Canada. Edited by Paul Laverdure. Gravelbourg, SK: Gravelbooks, 2003.

Moir, John S. Enduring Witness: a history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Second Edition. Toronto: Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1987.

2. How to write church histories guidebooks:

Fletcher Marsh, Wendy. Researching, Writing and Celebrating Parish History. Toronto: Canadian Church Historical Society, n.d.

Milton, Ralph. How to Write and Publish Your Church History. Winfield, B.C.: Wood Lake Books, 1986.

3. How to write history guidebooks:

Marius, Richard. A Short Guide to Writing About History. Third Edition. New York: Longman, 1999.

Stefffens, Henry J. Writer's Guide to History. Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1987.

4. Writing guidebook:

Aaron, Jane E. and Murray McArthur. The Little Brown Compact Handbook. First Canadian Edition. Don Mills, Addison Wesley Publishers, 1997.

5. Congregational Histories:

Each year the Committee on History awards a prize to the best congregational history sent for deposit to the Archives. In addition to a \$50 cash prize, the "Presbyterian History" newsletter and The Record will publish a review of the history.

The winners for the last ten years are:

2006

Brian S. Osborne. The Rock and the Sword: A History of St. Andrew's Church, Kingston, Ontario.

2005

John S. Moir. Unto the Hills Around, A History of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, Ontario.

2004

James S.S. Armour. Saints, Sinners and Scots: A History of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal, 1803-2003.

2003

Mildred Sinclair. Ratho Presbyterian Church and Community 1852-2002.

2002

McGugan, Donald. We Must Tell the Stories: The Presbyterian Churches of Bradford, West Gwillimbury.

2001

Carpenter, Evelyn. First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ontario: A History to Commemorate the Millennium.

2000

Tremblay, Mark A. Mission to Bermuda: The Story of St. Andrew's Church, 1843-1893.

1999

Muirhead, Janet. The Changing Scene: 150 Years of Faith and Witness, Knox Presbyterian Church, Agincourt, 18441998.

1997

Moir, John. *They Labour Not in Vain.* (History of Alexandra Presbyterian Church, Brantford, Ontario)



Provincial Archives (see appendix for various provincial contact information)

Local historical societies

Public Libraries

(Note: all institutions can be accessed using their proper name in the search field of your internet browser)



G-3423-FC Halifax, NS: Presbyterian Church of St. David, Christmas. ca 1949 Andy A. den Otter is Professor of History at Memorial University, St. John's, NL. His, The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America, was awarded the Social Sciences and Humanities Federation of Canada's Harold A. Innis Price in 1998. Kim Arnold is the Archivist/Records Administrator for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. She has authored a number of articles on various subjects related to the Presbyterian Church Archives operation and its collections.

Notes





G-2654-FC Victoria, BC: Chinese P.C., Children ready for graduation, ca. 1960

