

CHA Council Considers Future

In addition to its regular fall meeting in November, the CHA Council devoted a full day's session to a wide-ranging discussion of the organization of the CHA and directions that members might like to see the association take in the future. Everything from the organization of the office to the broad objectives of the association was considered.

The subject of membership provided the opportunity for the discussion of a number of issues. It was noted that our professional membership has been declining in recent years, that Francophone membership continues to be low, and that non-Canadianists are also underrepresented. A number of suggestions were put forward regarding the reasons for this situation and the ways in which it might be addressed. Among these, it was argued that the association should be offering more professional services, including lobbying and discussions of cultural policies and their impact on the historical

profession in Canada. A number of changes to the structure and planning of the Annual Meeting were also suggested, particularly so that non-Canadianists would be encouraged to participate. Another suggestion included the addition of non-Canadian topics to the *Historical Booklets* series. More communication and joint activities with the Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française were also urged.

Council also considered the question of whether more high school teachers should be encouraged to join the CHA. Some members of council argued that the CHA really has nothing to offer high school teachers, while others argued that although we offer little at the moment, we should consider broadening our activities to include those that might be of interest. It was agreed that before we took any initiatives alone, we ought to consult with teachers themselves to learn what they would like to see from the CHA.

Increasing overall membership seemed to be a desirable goal, so Council discussed a variety of strategies for recruiting new members. It was agreed to set a goal of a 25% increase in professional membership over the next three years and undertake a recruiting campaign to that end.

Problems with the structure of the Annual Meeting were considered at length. There was a general sense that the meeting had become very large but that quality had deteriorated. Furthermore Canadian history was dominating the sessions; fewer and fewer non-Canadianists were participating. Donna Andrew agreed to draft a set of guidelines for Annual Meeting planning purposes that would be presented at the June council meeting for further discussion.

In a discussion of the organization of council itself, the portfolio system was examined and the continuing value of particular portfolios was considered. Council members concluded that the portfolio system was a good way to handle the affairs of council.

Among the issues that arose in this discussion was the question of CHA participation in the Social Science Federation of Canada and the Canadian Federation for the Humanities. The situation will continue to be monitored throughout the coming year.

Another major question put forward for discussion was the role of public historians in the CHA. Council members had a sense that the public historians were somewhat dissatisfied with their position within the association, but little specific information on that problem had been reaching Council. Some specific suggestions were made to rectify the situation, including better liaison with the Public History Group and publication in the *Bulletin* of a column about public historians equivalent to "News from Departments".

Finally, Council recognized that if the CHA has any hope of improving services to members and making the lines of communication more efficient and effective, our current office arrangements in Ottawa were severely lacking. Anne-Josée Delcorde, our Executive Director, was authorized to hire a secretarial assistant. It is also clear that some long-term planning is necessary because of the very real possibility that the National Archives may move from the



Prizes and Scholarships

The Heritage Canada Awards Program

The purpose of the Awards Program is to recognize and promote excellence in the heritage preservation field as demonstrated by individuals and groups, through achievements or projects, consistent with Heritage Canada's mission, philosophy and guiding principles. The Gabrielle Léger Award is Canada's premier honour in the heritage field. The Lieutenant-Governor's Award was established in 1979 by Heritage Canada to recognize outstanding work in heritage conservation by an individual or group in a designated province. For more information on the selection of Jury members and on nomination procedures, please write to Awards Program Co-ordinator, Heritage Canada, P.O. Box 1358, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5R4.

Old Sturbridge Village, an outdoor living history museum in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, announces its second annual **Research Fellowship** to be awarded to a scholar working in the social history and material culture of rural New England from 1790 to 1850. The project need not be limited to rural New England nor to this period, but must relate significantly to the Village's time and place. The fellowship is for a 6- to 12- week period (prefer spring and fall semester) with a stipend of \$2,500. (Application deadline: July 1, 1992). For information, contact Dr. John Worrell, Director of Research and Collections, Old Sturbridge Village, 1 Old Sturbridge Village Road, Sturbridge, MA 01566. Tel.: (508) 347-3362, ext. 302.

The Toronto Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies has announced the winner of the first **Michael Lynch Grant in Lesbian and Gay History**, going to "Lesbians and Gays in Montreal: Histories, Cultures and Societies," the first Quebec Lesbian and Gay Studies Conference to be held in Montreal in November of 1992. The Michael Lynch Grant was established to provide an annual award to one or more individuals doing significant work in lesbian and gay history in Canada, and to encourage the development of research, writing and cultural work which contributes to a critical understanding of the historical development of lesbian and gay identities, communities and politics in Canada.

Letters to the Editor

Private Scholars Funding

The SSHRC may have decided to cut off funding to private scholars only last May, but at that time policies were already in effect which virtually disqualified at least some private scholars.

Teaching opportunities in Canadian history are non-existent where I live, and I've been compelled to pursue a freelance career. In this capacity I applied for a research grant in the autumn of 1990, proposing to complete a book which two scholarly presses had expressed an interest in publishing. Last April I learned that my application had been "successful," but that the Council had awarded me only the expenses for which I had applied and not the stipend that was a prerequisite for incurring the expenses (or, at any rate, for incurring them productively). When I drew attention to the absurdity of the decision, I

was told that I was ineligible for the stipend because I had not provided "proof of release from actual employment." Of course, as a freelance I could not have done so; nor, I suspect, could many other private scholars.

The reason given for this disqualification, was the same as that now given for cutting off private scholars entirely: "financial constraints." I find this puzzling. Even if cutting the number of potential applicants saves a significant sum in administrative costs, it is saved only at the cost of eliminating potentially superior projects, and the money saved goes to research that would not have qualified under the old rules because it was deemed less worthy.

Of course, the president of SSHRC asserts that private scholars, no matter how important their contribution to knowledge,

necessarily make an inferior contribution the the "larger research enterprise," and in particular to the area of "teaching and training." Her argument implies a model which is inappropriate to the humanities. Important scientific research is virtually impossible nowadays without an institutional affiliation. In the sciences, moreover, and perhaps some of the social sciences, teaching and training entails mainly the imparting of information and technique to aspiring practitioners, and it can't be done without a concentration of professionals and a lot of expensive equipment. This does not apply to the humanities, in which a private scholar is quite capable of doing fundamental research and can make a valuable contribution to "teaching and training": by means of writing that offers a fresh approach to the subject and provides examples of clear and imaginative reasoning.

Paul Romney

The End of An Era

Members outside Ottawa may wish to know that as of March 30 the reading rooms of the National Archives of Canada and the National Library of Canada will no longer be open on a 24 hour basis. The new hours are 7 am to 11 pm 365 days a year. Budget cuts are the reason given. A survey showed a poor ratio of usage to staffing costs. Graduate students can no longer follow the fabled example of a predecessor — the out of town student who lived in the archives, using a sleeping bag and sofa in order to save hotel costs.

Lorne Hammond

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from page 3

premises, requiring the CHA to find alternate accommodation.

While Council discussed a wide range of issues, there are undoubtedly many more that the membership would like to raise. Your comments on any of these points (or issues that you believe were omitted) would be most helpful. Please address your suggestions to any member of Council, or particularly to the secretariat (Kerry Abel and Denise Rioux) or Gail Cuthbert Brandt.



Calls for Papers and Conferences

from page 4

be "The Artist and the Missionary: A Native-American and Euro-American Cultural Exchange." Lillian Turner, Public Programs Coordinator, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, P.O. Box 1000, Cody, WY 82414. For more information call (307) 587-4771, ext. 248.

The **Canadian Association for American Studies** will hold its 28th annual meeting October 29 to November 1, 1992 at the University of Western Ontario In London, Ontario. The theme for the conference is: "Goodbye Columbus? Five Centuries of Reinventing the World." All enquiries should be addressed to Prof. Ernest Redekop, Department of English, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, N6A 3K7.

Graduate Work Seminar, Edinburgh, 9-10 May 1992. Edinburgh University Centre of Canadian Studies will hold a seminar on graduate work in Canadian Studies by students based in Britain and across Europe. Sub-titled "Projects and Problems", the seminar is intended to enable graduate students to outline their findings and to discuss needs and priorities. For further details, contact Edinburgh University Centre of Canadian Studies, 21 George Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9LD.

Alaska Highway Commemorative Symposium, Edmonton, Alberta 3-7 June 1992. Topics to be covered include: the politics, development, and implications of the Alaska Military Highway, Canol Project, the Northwest Staging Route, and the presence of Americans in Northwest Canada during the war. Information: Chairperson, Alaska Highway Commemorative Symposium, P.O. Box 1013, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 4M1 or Dr. Michael Payne, Historic Sites and Archives Services, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, Old St. Stephen's College, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2P8. (Fax 403-433-6122)

XVIII International Congress on Military History, Turin, Italy, 30 August - 16 September 1992. For more details, contact Serge Bernier, President, Canadian Commission on Military History, Directorate of History, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K2 (Telephone 613-998-7063; Fax 613-990-8579).