



# SLIS 40th Anniversary Commemorative Issue

## CELEBRATION BRUNCH 2008

TRISH CHATTERLEY

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This year's Celebration Brunch, held on September 20th, was a resounding success! Seventy-five alumni, faculty, and current students turned out for the event, which featured wonderful food catered by SLIS graduate Thane Chambers and her husband Jason, classical music presented by four UofA music students, and an engaging program.

Distinguished Alumni Awards were presented to Dr. Anna Altmann, Jeannine Green, and Pat Jobb. Dr. Merrill Distad received this year's Honourary Alumni Award. Each award winner has had their name inscribed on a plaque which hangs on the third floor of SLIS and a book selected in their honour for the Bruce Peel Special Collections.

Dr. Sheila Bertram amused us all with recollections of her first experiences at SLIS. Three alumni from the first graduating class of 1969 were in attendance. Ann Farebrother, Betty Schwob, and Keith Turnbull were cheered by the crowd as they were named and each presented with a flower. Dr. Ann Curry ended the program with a toast to the School. There was still plenty of time for socializing, and the din in the Carrel Room was an excellent indication of everyone's excitement over returning to SLIS and being reunited with friends.

It was an event filled with food, friends, and fun! We hope you will consider joining us again next year!

### WINTER EVENTS

#### LISAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 14th 2009  
Time: 5 p.m. / Place: SLIS

### FACT

Since 1968, the School has benefitted from 125 faculty and sessional instructors. Together, they have contributed to the education and careers of 1372 graduates. 40 current and former instructional staff members met at the School on October 24th for a Celebration of Teaching.

## GUEST EDITOR'S MESSAGE

ALVIN SCHRADER

Whenever I hear the marvellous stories of escapades, pranks, meltdowns, breakdowns, general eccentricities, triumphs, hard work, fun, and all-round camaraderie of the earliest years of the University of Alberta's School of Library Science, I have a momentary twinge of sorrow about missing all those exciting times of laughter and tears. And when, one by one, retirement has beckoned faculty colleagues who had actually lived those beginnings, my nonchalant, taken-for-granted access to all those memorable stories was also ended, and the weight of time and history felt suddenly heavy.

So I am honoured to have been asked to organize this small tribute to our pioneers, and to the storytellers who keep alive the link from them to us. My thanks to those who contributed their thoughts and memories to this special 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative issue. I owe a special debt of gratitude to my graduate assistant Richard Hayman who edited and contributed so much to this work. I also want to take this opportunity to thank all of our alumni who have volunteered in service to the Alumni Association over the 22 years since it was formed in 1986.

Happy anniversary to those with the passion and commitment to create this legacy of professional and educational activism at the University of Alberta. Congratulations to all 40 years of graduates and students, instructors and support staff, community supporters and advocates. Let the best traditions and the core values bequeathed to us continue to inspire into the indefinite future!

## SHEILA BERTRAM ON THE HISTORY OF SLIS



When I first started teaching, I would spend hours writing out my lectures almost word for word, living in fear that I would run out of things to say before the bell rang - yes we had bells in those days. While a fellow faculty member would write five or six words on the back of a used envelope, and manage to only cover four of them.

So I now have an envelope - with seven words, and I will cover them all because I also have my speech written out. Although the theme is change, there are certain things that do not.

### SPEECH PRESENTED AT THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BRUNCH

#### Beginnings

If you really want to know more about the early history of the library school you should read Dr. Brundin's *From the Codex to the Computer: Twenty-five Years of the School of Library and Information Studies*. Knowing how unreliable memories are, I spent this week in Las Vegas, when I wasn't betting my penny at the casino (I cleared \$50.00!), sitting by my pool reading it. Since all the information is there, I can but add a few personal recollections (probably suspect) so this is really my beginnings.

I arrived in early January 1970 having just driven from Illinois in our Corvette with a husband, two cats, two brand new Ph.D.s and a secret - I had just found out that I was pregnant. We moved into an empty apartment - relatives lent us a table and some chairs and we had two cots with sleeping bags. Needless to say our first purchase was a mattress. My husband then went back to Illinois for a couple of weeks to finish things off. I started teaching three courses (automation, science literature, and special libraries) never having taught before, and told no one about the baby until classes were over in April. How we (including the students) all survived I'll never know. It was midway through the second year of the School - and let me tell you, nothing ever lived up to the first year. John and Shirley Wright, who were faculty members then, are here today and I am sure they would love to tell you why it was the best! All the other faculty members were well known practitioners with many years of library experience. It was made very clear to me that if and when I had a sabbatical, it would have to be spent working in a library.

#### Sarah Rebecca Reed

My early memories of the School revolve around the formidable Sarah Rebecca Reed, the founder and first Director of the School. She had enormous energy and expected the same from all her faculty members. She would sweep us all off to the Faculty Club for lunch almost every day - at that time we could drive through campus. She would check my teaching schedule and just when I thought I had a few minutes to get ready for tomorrow, she would appear in my office doorway and off we would go to visit another special library. She was very disappointed in me when I went to a family wedding instead of the Alberta library conference (I didn't realize that all

faculty members were expected to attend it, CLA, and various other conferences to wave the School flag). Shirley Ellison (at that time) and I (the only two female faculty members) actually rebelled once, put up a united front, and in spite of Sarah's expressed feelings about pant suits, continued to wear them to work. But most of the time everyone did it Sarah's way.

#### Orientation

I cannot talk about the beginnings of the School without mentioning orientation. This was a four week introductory program, starting in August and ending when the term officially began. Miss Reed felt it was necessary to make the Alberta BLS academic year equal in length to the US MLS for accreditation purposes. It was quite an undertaking. One week was spent on the road, visiting libraries in other cities - the route changed each year - along with a pause somewhere for seminars and reflective thought. Memories of the road trips include watching a mother and her baby go by, missing my own, not watching while I opened the door of the Saskatoon Public Library, and giving myself a black eye, the PCTC cookies, Moody Blue (only available in Saskatchewan at that time), and catching a pair of students sneaking out to spend the night together - it turned out that they married over the summer but were afraid to mention it when applying for fear that only one would be admitted to the program.

The other three weeks were spent in the classroom or touring local libraries. I am told that the first class visited every branch of the Edmonton Public Library, all carefully timed beforehand by Shirley and John Wright. When the evaluations came back saying "a branch library is a branch library is a branch library" it was decided to cut back somewhat in future years. There were guest lecturers, panel discussions, seminars on the lawn, etc. etc. plus a final exam. Professors were given a day to introduce the required first term courses. On my day for Collections, I would bring in book trucks full of various materials and discuss them all. Of course I would end the day with "are there any questions?" I still remember two: "Dr, Bertram, you have raised a lot of questions, when will we be getting the answers?" and "Do you always talk that fast?"



I heard all about orientation immediately upon my arrival and when I tried to say that maybe I might not participate, was firmly told that there was **nothing** I could possibly do to get out of it. However, Sean was born August 8 so I managed to miss the road trip, but I was still expected to give my lectures. U of A had no maternity leave program at that time and I started teaching full time in September. I timed the second one a bit better, Kelley was born in April, the day after I gave my last exam. With the change to the two year MLS, orientation disappeared. To me, the final note was Dr. Brundin coming out of the first lectures of the new program, visibly shaken. With orientation, by the time classes really started, everyone knew each other and there was always lots of chatter. He had walked into dead silence and it took awhile to figure out what was wrong.

### Space

The School began in quarters on the second floor of the Education Library. The elevator was very small, Sarah Rebecca Reed was not, and I eventually was very pregnant. The male faculty members were extremely chivalrous and would insist that the ladies get on the elevator first. And then insist we get off first!! It was almost physically impossible but it happened every time!

The entire space was windowless and I found that to be very difficult. I was so glad when we moved to Rutherford (not South then because there was no North) in August after the third year. It was a three part move, Law went to their new building, the School went to the old Law space, and the Education library got its space back. Everyone was happy, except for a few students who didn't think that moving a collection should be a part of orientation. As you are aware, the faculty offices are quite large. At one point, when the projections for enrollment were (unrealistically) high, I was part of a committee that went looking for more space. As the adage goes, be careful what you wish for. The space people proceeded to get very agitated about our large offices and the amount of furniture we had (in the move we brought ours while Law left everything behind). Because of the load bearing walls, it turned out to be too difficult to renovate our space and eventually they left us alone. But it was a close call.

The space continued to evolve. One notable change was switching the bathrooms on the third floor: over the summer the men's became the women's and vice versa. To make sure everyone remembered, a sheet of flip chart paper was hung over each door so it hit you in the face and you had to read it. The incoming students could not understand why a small sign would not suffice. Years later, faculty members would still forget and go into the wrong room. Being in the same building as the library continued to have its pros and cons.

### Admin

I think all I will say here is that, like the space, the administration continued to change. Externally we went full circle from a

School to a Faculty and back to a School. Reporting structures changed. Faculty members began to serve on important University committees. Internally Deans and Directors came and went, committees formed, met, reported, dissolved, and reformed. Faculty meetings were held weekly, monthly, as needed, never, and what seemed like all the time. Accreditation took up hours and hours, and days and weeks. As did the move to the Faculty of Education. When I was interviewed for the Board of the Edmonton Public Library, some councilors wondered if, being an academic, I knew much about attending meetings. Sometimes I felt as if that was all I did! But we did manage to continue to produce very competent, entry level librarians. And that leads to the next topic on my envelope.

### Curriculum

Which also involved many, many meetings as the original BLS program was designed, the 'old' MLS was added, the move was made to the two year MLS, accreditation recommendations were taken into account, and courses were constantly added, revised, deleted. In the beginning, different courses had different credit weightings. Between accreditation recommendations and the University Administration, Miss Reed was finally convinced to make all courses a standard 3 credits. And there were a number of non-credit requirements, notably Colloquia - which consisted of a series of weekly guest lecturers. I was in charge one year when there was to be an emphasis on Canadian topics and I got to meet faculty members from across campus who came and talked about their subject from a Canadian perspective. I am not sure about the students, but I learned a lot that year.

There were many, many discussions about core courses - what were they, how did they differ from required courses, what topic went in which core course, why did the core courses need to be taken all together in one term? Once the core was 'unbundled' (thanks to Herb White's influence), part time students could finally be admitted. The name of the degree changed. The non-thesis project was added with the two year degree, requirements constantly changed until it eventually disappeared. Practical experience evolved from being required for admission to a three week program between first and second year, then disappeared, reappeared as a course and now I hear is under discussion again. We could never understand those who somehow thought that the program never changed from when they went to library school. And finally number seven and most important.

### Students

The students who made it all worthwhile. Obviously I could tell lots of stories but I think I am pretty well out of time. However, I did want to tell you about the surprise Christmas party the faculty used to throw for the students in the BLS days. The biggest problem was getting them all together suspecting nothing. One year we had a special required talk by the Head of the Boreal Institute for Northern Studies on book

delivery in the north (by Santa of course). Another time the student association executive were concerned about the level of stress over Christmas exams and asked the Director to speak to it - a perfect opening for us. But the best was the year we suddenly announced that the Rutherford roof needed desperate repair and so second term classes would have to take place elsewhere, and since it was so late in the year, we would just have to take whatever was available. A meeting was held to announce the rooms, which were all over campus - and then Santa came. Afterwards, several students just wanted to make sure that it was all a joke.

I will mention one other thing and that is again, the many, many discussions we had about 'professional promise'. The original entrance requirements called for 'evidence of professional promise, as reflected in: responses on the application form, three letters of reference, the personal interview, and satisfactory performance during the four-week Orientation program. And the discussion continues to this day. So how

does one identify this illusive professional promise? Maybe if we looked at those who have achieved it, we could identify common characteristics to look for. Now if we could only agree on who has achieved professional promise. Well, at least today, we have agreed on three. Anna Altmann is an academic, graduated in 1974, with a background in classics, served on GFC and other major University committees and likes Kraft caramels; Jeannine Green is a university librarian, graduated in 1980 with a background in sociology, was the first President of LISAA and likes Hershey's kisses; Pat Jobb is a public librarian, graduated in 1987, with a background in journalism, served on the CLA executive and likes Purdy hedgehogs. So what do they have in common? The only thing I can identify is that they are all our graduates. So maybe 'professional promise' comes with graduation, not before.

Whatever the answer, I hope I have given you some flavour of the early days of the school.

## CHRONOLOGY

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|--|---|---|
| <p>1964 – UofA Chief Librarian Bruce Peel and the Coburn Committee recommend the creation of a library school on the Prairies</p> <p>1966 – The School of Library Science is approved</p> <p>1967 – Sarah Rebecca Reed is appointed Director</p> <p>1968 – First class in the BLS program</p> <p>1969 – The 'Class of 1' graduate</p> <p>1970 – ALA accreditation is granted with full retroactivity to the 'Class of 1'</p> <p>1971 – The MLS is adopted as a one-year, post BLS degree</p> | <p>1975 – The School becomes the Faculty of Library Science</p> <p>1976 – The 'Class of 8' graduate, the last cohort of the BLS program – First class in the two-year MLS program</p> <p>1978 – First graduates of the two-year MLS program</p> <p>1986 – The Library and Information Studies Alumni Association (LISAA) is formed</p> <p>1988 – The Faculty of Library Science becomes the Faculty of Library and Information Studies, and the MLS becomes the MLIS</p> <p>1991 – The Faculty becomes a School</p> | <p>again, within the Faculty of Education</p> <p>1992 – Diane Oberg completes the School's first interdisciplinary PhD</p> <p>1993 – The School celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</p> <p>2001 – SLIS celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first era of the School, the BLS graduates from 1968-1976</p> <p>2003 – The joint SLIS/Humanities Computing program is created</p> <p>2008 – SLIS celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!</p> |
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## SLIS MEMORIES

### BEA TOBIAS, BLS, 1969, "CLASS OF 1"

Forty years is a long time--I was in the first class in 1968, so most of those memories are gone. But there are a few that were vivid enough to remain about some professors and our field trip.

- Sarah Rebeccah Reed, our founder, guided us firmly. She taught Reference, and to this day, I hear her voice reminding me to "check the catalogue first" and "know your collection".
- Reference class had "runarounds"—instead of clicking around a keyboard to find answers, we ran around the campus to actually look in books in the reference departments on campus.
- Miss Fowke(?) taught "Automation in libraries". All I remember of the class was a story she told us about her thought that some evil forces might fly over cities with giant magnets and wipe out all the computer files. The cold war was still raging at that time, and computer security was probably not so highly developed, so who knows. I thought it could have made a great plot for a book or movie.
- Mr. Pannu taught Cataloguing and Classification. He was a very kind man with a wonderful warm sense of humour. I

was deeply saddened when I heard that he had passed away while on a trip to India. One of the best stories was when he was teaching us about the “mnemonic devices” of the Dewey Decimal system. He said that paintings, drawings, and **photographs** of the Holy Family would have a similar call number. I also remember that we shuffled a lot of paper slips representing catalogue cards in that class. I did become a cataloguer for my first job, and felt quite well-prepared.

- Mr. Pannu promoted women’s rights when the admission policies were being established for the school, arguing that women over 40 should be admitted. Of course there was no question about the age of men at that time.
- Before our classes began in September, we all went on a week-long bus tour of Alberta libraries, ending up in Jasper. We stayed at some little cabins, camp-style, near Jasper Park Lodge. We heard that Pierre Trudeau was at the Lodge for a dinner, and a few of us wanted to go and see him, if only a glimpse. We arrived at the Lodge door in our camping clothes, and were turned away by the doorman, because “we don’t allow ragamuffins here”. Humiliated, we headed back to the cabins. By this time it was pitch dark—I remember five of us walking arm in arm because we couldn’t even see each other. Somehow we found our way back, but could not find the wine that we had stored in the lake to chill.

Over my library career, I have worked in 7 libraries. Most of the past 30 years has been at Red Deer College in Reference part time. I have seen a lot of changes here—one of the highlights was dumping the catalogue cards into the dumpster. I saved a few cards in memory of Mr. Pannu.

### **KURT F. JENSEN, BLS, 1972, “CLASS OF 4”**

I graduated from the School of Library Science in 1972 with a BLS. I think it only became an MLS a bit later. In fact, the school year was extended so that we could cram everything into a one-year undergraduate degree. Over my career I have accumulated five university degrees -- the BLS was the toughest and required the most work.

The reason I am writing is to inquire whether you or the School have a copy of our yearbook which we published at the end of our term. It was the Yearbook of the Thomas Frognall Dibdin Society -- he was a 19th Century librarian and the yearbook, I think, was titled "Frog 'n All". The students all liked it, the faculty were split into two factions one of which was with the students and an additional few who wanted us sanctioned, expelled, or pilloried. We poked a lot of fun at everyone although a few members of faculty were special targets. The yearbook tells about some of the things we got up to, including writing phoney letters to the editor at the UofA newspaper poking fun at almost anything and signing them Thomas Frognall Dibdin, an Emeritous Professor, and other characters we created (with puns on library terms). The letters were drafted in secret by Basil Pogue and myself but soon half the students became involved (I remember one student, a Catholic nun, who provided the signatures for a fictional student who was a revolutionary). One Prof tried to have Basil and me expelled. The head of the school thought it was all a lot of good fun but warned us not to do anything too outrageous. The other students were involved in similar antics to relieve pressure. One spent the year walking around dressed as Dracula -- he wrote books on the side!

Although I enjoyed my year in library school, and have used some of the management skills I learned there, I never did work in a library. I spent my career as a diplomat all over the world and now teach part-time at Carleton University in Ottawa. One of the other Library students, Barbara Cram, also joined the foreign service that same year. There were 4 or maybe 5 students selected from UofA for the foreign service that year and 2 came from what was probably the smallest school at UofA.

### **ANNE STANG, BLS, 1969, “CLASS OF 1”**

1968 is a LONG time ago. I was one of the first class, or “The class of one” as we liked to call ourselves. As you may know, we started with a tour. If I remember correctly we went to Saskatoon, Regina, Calgary, Banff and Jasper. It was a fast way to get to know your classmates and the faculty. I think the thing that stands out most in my mind is the cohesiveness and loyalty that developed among us. Again, it included both students and faculty. We worked hard, but we didn’t forget to play. One faculty member said it was the first time he’d ever gone to a pub with his students and he did it more than once!

Memories of Sarah Reed come to mind too. She expected us to work hard and be professional, but she had a soft heart as I found out when the bank (before the days of multi-branch banking) mistakenly bounced my cheque for a

trip to Europe. She offered to lend me the money, no questions asked. My classmates and I were profoundly shocked to hear of her tragic death. We were equally shocked by Mr. Pannu's untimely death. He worked so hard to coax us all through cataloguing. And I'll never forget John Wright's always steady hand, or Shirley Wright's love of children's literature. I think they had a greater influence on me than I realized at the time.

I worked as a teacher-librarian, mostly in Calgary, until I retired in 1996. I was active for many years in both the Alberta Teachers' Association's Learning Resources Council and in Children's Literature Roundtable, and thoroughly enjoyed meeting a wide variety of authors and illustrators. In retirement, I volunteer for my church, several musical groups, my ethnic group and the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society, I cycle and ski, I belong to a book club, I indulge in various domestic pursuits like sewing and cooking and I travel when I can afford it. My most recent trip was to the Antarctic.

## HELENA F. BROOKS, MLIS, 1988

I graduated in the fall of 1988 with a MLIS. I presented my project paper in, I believe, August of that year and was back to work for the Edmonton Public Board in the September. On October 28th I was diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia and rushed into the Cross Cancer Institute on the 29th and immediately hooked up to chemotherapy drugs. This meant that I was then not allowed to leave the hospital in order to be convocated, due to my complete lack of an immune system.

My husband with the support of Gail de Vos, who became a very supportive fellow student during my two years in the Library School, met with Sheila Bertram, Dean of the Library School, to explain that sadly, I would not be able to convocate in the usual manner at the Jubilee Auditorium. Within a short time Sheila called Dr. Myer Horowitz, the President. They arranged to be free on the morning of convocation and would come to the Cross Cancer Institute and convocate me in my hospital room, if that could be arranged with the hospital staff. Happily they agreed and on the specified morning we had a lovely ceremony in my room with my husband, children, doctors, nurses, cleaners and anyone else who happened to be passing by. My oncologist was horrified at the numbers, but all went well with no ill effects. As you can imagine, I am eternally grateful to Sheila and Dr. Horowitz, who I met again last year at an Alumni Tea here in Victoria, and he remembered the occasion very well and was delighted to see me again, as he had always wondered how things had turned out. That was twenty years ago! I received a Bone Marrow Transplant from my sister at the Tom Baker Hospital in Calgary in 1989, which was successful. Lucky me!

What was a very challenging time for me and my family brought me into contact with many wonderful people, so even adversity can provide opportunities one could or would never dream of. Throughout my lengthy stay in the CCI Gail visited me daily, I think, and has remained a close friend ever since. We found we clicked from the first day. I was also, because of the timing, the first person to receive the new MLIS Degree, of which I am very proud.



Do you have news to share with your fellow SLIS alumni? Send a note to [lisaa@lisaa.ca](mailto:lisaa@lisaa.ca) to let us know what you've been up to!

More memories and other information on the colourful history of the School of Library and Information Studies can be found in these resources, available online.

- Robert Brundin, *From the Codex to the Computer: Twenty-five Years of the School of Library and Information Studies* (1995). Available at [http://lisaa.ca/From\\_Codex\\_to\\_Computer\\_Brundin\\_1995.pdf](http://lisaa.ca/From_Codex_to_Computer_Brundin_1995.pdf)
- The BLS Commemorative Booklet (2001), celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the BLS program. Available at <http://lisaa.ca/BLSCommemorativeBooklet.pdf>
- John Wright and others, SLIS Detailed History (2004), which outlines many significant events in the School's history. Available at <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/slis/pdfs/SLIS%20Detailed%20History.pdf>

## SHIRLEY WRIGHT ON THE FORMATION OF LISAA

I have been asked to write something about the origins of the Alumni Association. Unfortunately, the details of its beginnings seem to have disappeared into the mists of time! Even if the mists only extend as far as back as 1985, the quartet (all librarians no less!) who were among those instrumental in setting it up are not only unable to recall all the details, but we don't even agree on some of them.

What is certain, the need for a formal association seemed to become more evident as we moved to the Master's program. Then Dean, John Wright, asked me to get together a group of alumni to see what needed to be done to create a library school division of the University of Alberta Alumni Association. The graduates who agreed to work on the project included Sandra Mikalonis (class of 1980), Sylvia Martin (1981), and Christina Andrews (1986); we were ably assisted all the way along by the staff of the UofA Alumni Association, in particular, Sandra Kereliuk. We held a number of preparatory meetings, mostly at my home, eventually came up with a proposed constitution and organized an initial meeting. There is where memory becomes particularly foggy. We know we got a good turnout and a positive response and we passed along our responsibilities to the first elected Executive under the capable leadership of President Jeannine Green. Christina can remember passing along our records as well. Incidentally, Christina was our first official representative to the parent Alumni Association and later went on to become its President, the first and only, I believe, of our graduates to do so.

The school graduated its first class in 1969. So why did it take so long to get around to formalizing relationships with the UofA Alumni Association? Probably people were too busy establishing their careers to worry about such formalities. But also probably because of the time. The late '60s and early '70s were the time of student unrest, and a general distrust of organized institutions. This was when a small group of U of A students, our own Anna Altmann among them, replicated the actions on some other campuses by challenging the exclusiveness of that 'holy of holies', the Faculty Club. Their protest was short-lived as they chose a VERY cold day in January and found themselves subverted by an invitation to come inside for hot drinks. It was also when, within the school itself, one class declined to establish a student council on the grounds that all were equal and even the idea of a student yearbook was suspect. Certainly they weren't about to have class pictures!

But all that has changed and we now have a vibrant alumni association of our own which includes interested members from the '60s and '70s as well as from later years.



Formative Meeting of the Alumni Association in Calgary, Alberta

When Alvin first asked me to write on the history of SLIS, I wondered what I could add that hadn't been said before. My plan was to produce a summary that went beyond re-counting dates and facts. Absorbed by the material, I began reflecting on that history in light of my own experiences. The end result was not what either of us expected. I quickly discovered that the School's history goes beyond details and dates: it is based in traditions, handed down from year to year and from cohort to cohort. SLIS has an identity of its own, one created by its faculty, staff, students, and connections with the University and Edmonton LIS community.

**TRADITION  
AND  
IDENTITY:  
A STUDENT  
PERSPECTIVE**

RICHARD HAYMAN

Robert Brundin's *From the Codex to the Computer* finds the early foundations of the School in 1964, when the kernel of an idea that eventually led to SLIS popped into life just as Alberta was booming with oil and gas revenues. The library profession was thriving, the need for new librarians recognized (especially on the Prairies), and the UofA was the most likely candidate to play host to Canada's newest library school.

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It is now forty years later and again the province is booming with oil and gas revenues. The University is now a top-calibre research academy, the LIS profession flourishes, and skilled information professionals help lead our information society. Now, as then, SLIS is a high-quality, resourceful institution for instruction and research in the library and information sciences.

From the "Class of 1," who began their BLS studies in 1968, to the most recent graduates of 2008, there has been an understanding between the School and the greater library community that each benefits from the presence of the other. Modern SLIS students no longer take the tour to visit Prairie libraries (what adventures for those early classes!), but the many similarities between past and present professional development opportunities show that the library community is still interested in visiting us. As in past years, librarians from across Edmonton and Alberta welcome students at the Chief Librarian's party, and they enhance our education through guest lectures, participation in Partners' Week, PD Day, various Research Colloquia sessions, and other events. While many of these are networking sessions for young professionals, they also offer the socialization necessary for our success as people.

I find it striking that for each of the last 40 years, faculty and students have been encouraged to bond in so many ways. SLIS still provides roles for students to play in shaping and leading the School, just as faculty lend their experience to student-run initiatives. From the Orientation Day buffet lunch to the year-end party and graduation day, faculty take an interest in the student body. The years of open-door policies, the freedom to explore, and the right to express have fostered an environment in which students know that staff and faculty are mentors willing to help with real life problems too.

SLIS seeks students and faculty with the collective experience and knowledge to build and reinforce the reputation of the School. Over the years, this practice has repeatedly earned SLIS both respect and support from the University. Since its beginnings as a fledgling program under the direction of the formidable Sarah Rebecca Reed, the School has placed a high value on first-class research, and continues to meet and exceed expectations.

Undeterred by multiple reorganizations, budget cuts, degree changes, accreditation years, transformation of the profession, and the influx of new students each September, SLIS has held on to its traditions and history. The School knows what it is, and this memory, this identity, has been preserved thanks to the people who have passed through its halls. Our history is refreshed every time our students graduate into the community, and so it cannot be lost. Here on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SLIS, we celebrate our past and look forward to the future.