

January 10, 2003

12:15p.m- 1:30pm

Guest speakers: Wendy Newman, President, CLA Don Butcher, Executive Director, CLA

1. Ruiling Guo, President of the CLA McGill student chapter thanked students, professors and others for attending this special speaking event open to the McGill university community and asked everyone to welcome the two guests. The President and Executive Director of the CLA were invited to GSLIS to talk about the association, job opportunities in the field and the latest news about the CLA and ALA joint conference in June in Toronto.
2. Wendy Newman, President of the CLA, began by talking of current trends in library service and use demographics. The past decade has seen a decline in school libraries in Canada and the U.S., as well as a leveling off of hiring patterns. Cataloguing has seen a decline as a career trend. However, current employment statistics see a prominent baby boomer group that faces retirement in the next few years with an exit of a large number of people in the profession. This succession "crisis" will require new professionals with fresh ideas, who can aspire to leadership positions, and those as well who have the ability to specialize in fields and subjects. Organizations also face a challenge to make librarianship attractive as a profession.
3. Ms. Newman emphasized the importance of being active in associations, developing advocacy skills and talked of success factors. She placed importance on individuals who are committed to libraries and institutional access to ideas in this information age, citing the example of the depository service programs of Canada and the government's innovation strategy and libraries as a part of the solution. Successful individuals are those who are continuing learners, good advocates, willing to network, and not afraid to choose an issue and "make it yours".
4. Don Butcher, Executive Director, CLA, talked of the power of the "collective" such as the CLA which has the ability of focussing attention on issues and allowing networking of individuals. He added that the association has many benefits of membership including an interest group for new librarians, and the ability to attend the annual CLA-ALA joint conference this spring, which is expected to have an attendance of twenty thousand from Canada and the U.S. Mr. Butcher added that employers of information professionals, such as those who will be attending this conference, value individuals who research these potential employers, ask questions at interviews, and value individual's skill sets that can help solve their organization's problems.