RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES AND COLLECTION AREAS

In addition to holding books in all disciplines from the 15th-century onward, Special Collections strives to acquire publications that complement the major subject and author areas of its manuscript holdings to provide more comprehensive research collections. These collections of rare books and unbound material provide opportunities for original research in diverse areas. From its inception in the 1960s, Special Collections has developed internationally recognized holdings in Modernist British, American, French and Anglo-Irish literature. Among the authors represented in print and manuscript are: John Betjeman, Lawrence Durrell, T.S. Eliot, E.A.W. Forster, Robert Graves, Alden Hoppens, Wyndham Lewis, Henry Miller, Sylvia Path, Ezra Pound, John Cooper Powys, Kathleen Raine, Herbert Read, Laura Riding, E.E.Cummings, Robin Skelton, and Douglas Golding. A complete listing of our archival collections with research aids can be found at http://library.uvic.ca/site/spcoll/literature/.

The University of Victoria Libraries support a variety of digital initiatives to promote wider access to our unique collections. Our digital initiatives include: an A-Z list of our digital collections. These digital collections bring together rich resources for research and enjoyment by the university and the community. http://library.uvic.ca/site/spcoll/digitalcollections/index.html

UNIQUE COLLECTIONS | Some Highlights

Canadian Military Oral History

The University of Victoria Libraries’ Military Oral History Collection contains interviews with over 400 military and related personnel offering individual perspectives from the army, air force, navy and auxiliary forces, covering topics ranging from the First World War, other conflicts involving Canadian forces, post-war affairs, and a host of other military-related subjects. The Military Oral History collection at UVic has been used widely by all of Canada’s foremost military historians since it was made available in the late 1980’s. In 2005, Special Collections embarked upon the Military History Digitization project ensuring ongoing access to this unique and irreplaceable collection of military memoirs.

Colonial Despatches 1846-71

The Colonial Despatches of Vancouver Island are the correspondence between the Governors of Vancouver Island and the Colonial Office in London, England. In the first phase of the project UVic Libraries digitized documents from 1858 for B.C.’s 150th birthday. With this year’s grants we have collected 11,770 digital image scans for years 1846-57 inclusive. This project was made possible with financial support from the McPherson Library, the Canada Council of Archives, the BC Heritage Digitalization Project and the BC Treasury Commission. With continued support UVic Libraries can digitize the files from 1858 to 1871. To draw students into the past, The Governor’s Letters is a linked website (http://www.govlet.ca/en/index.php) containing classroom challenges designed by teacher educators.

The Jack Wise Archives

The University Archives continues to develop its holdings of local artists’ archives, which to date include Jack Wise, Judith Foster and Herbert Siebner. The Jack Wise archives are fully available to researchers.

Wise (1928-1996) was an artist, calligrapher, poet and teacher. His work from the 1950s consisted primarily of paintings in the abstract expressionist style. Wise became disenchanted with his art production and immigrated from the U.S. to British Columbia in 1963, where he spent several years farming in the present’s interior. Wise, along with Liz Chm-Shih, Emily Carr, and Mark Tobey, is identified with the Pacific west coast region, particularly relating to environmental sciences, women’s studies, and arts and culture. http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/default.html

The Lion and the Fox

Art and literary works by Wyndham Lewis from the C.J. Fox Collection were presented in an exhibition, The Lion and the Fox, to celebrate C.J. Fox’s donation of the material he collected over a 50 year period about Lewis and other non-conformist writers. Cyril (Cy) Fox collected books, art, and other materials by Lewis and other maverick personalities, accumulating this impressive collection. A one-day symposium, The Wyndham Lewis and Modernism Symposium, was part of The Lion and the Fox exhibition topics that ranged from Vancouver to Canadian Modernism. The outstanding scholarly resource will benefit Lewis and modernist studies for years to come. Browse the C.J. Fox Collection Archives: http://library.uvic.ca/site/spcoll/findaids/2007-001.html

Digital Oral Histories

The Archives has just made available digital audio files of the Provincial Normal School oral histories. 19 interviews conducted in 1918 with former instructors and students who attended the teacher training school, which amalgamated with Victoria College, later to become UVic, and now the site of the Camosun College Lansdowne campus. Provincial Normal School Oral Histories: http://contentdm.library.uvic.ca/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=/uvoh&con_lng=En

19th Century Chinese Archives

From the 19th century, the Archives holds the surviving records of the oldest Chinese cultural organization in Canada, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, established in 1868 in Victoria. It served as the representative body for Chinese people in Canada until 1908 when the national Chinese Consolidates was established. The records include population data, minutes of the Chinese Public School, and donation and fundraising records. A number of items are closed to the public but some are online at http://multiculturalcanada.ca/node/1524

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UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Established by the Senate in 1973, the University Archives is the repository for university records of permanent value from executive, administrative and academic offices. The Archives also acquires and provides public access to archives of individuals and organizations from the university community and the Pacific west coast region, particularly relating to environmental sciences, women’s studies, and arts and culture. http://library.uvic.ca/site/archives/default.html