

KEEPING OUR HISTORY ALIVE...AND SAFE!



Irene Lefort
Honorary Life Member

A committee of six experienced members gathered in Winnipeg in late February to carry out the task that was assigned to them by the national executive: to review all files (not including current operations), purge files of materials no longer relevant, and prepare materials for placement in archives, the Archives of Manitoba and the archives in national office. Honorary life members Marie Cameron, Lucille Cullen and Irene Lefort, and life members Shirley Bernier, Gertrude Nowlan, and Margaret Beardon comprised the committee. Marie and Shirley got a head start on Wednesday and worked until the following Monday, and the rest worked from Thursday through Saturday. Marie directed operations in a very capable manner, with staff cooperation, and saw to it that all archival supplies were on hand, down to the white gloves. The committee was joined on Sunday afternoon by National Past President Lorette Noble who is responsible for archives.



The archives team all set to begin work. L to R: Gertrude Nowlan, Lucille Cullen, Irene Lefort, Shirley Bernier, Margaret Beardon, Marie Cameron.

The committee made a start on their assignment two days previous to the national convention in August 2008. It was an opportune time to get together as we were all travelling to the convention which was held in Winnipeg. It was very evident that there was much work to do, as this task had not been done completely since 1994, when Lucille spent some time at national office preparing materials for the Archives of Manitoba.

A summary of the work done by the committee follows. It is not all inclusive, but it will provide the reader with an understanding of the important work that must be done on a regular basis, in order to preserve League history, and classify the important documents that are part of that history. It is important to note that this purging of files, from time to time, is best done

by experienced members under the supervision of the national chairperson of laws, or her appointee.

Files and materials placed in national office archives: Bequests – split between archives and current files, Breast Cancer Research Challenge Fund; CWL Affinity Card; CWL Foundation proposal – correspondence; CWL Requests for Government Grants; *Criminal Code* Revisions; Deceased Life Member files; Definition of Marriage; Development and Peace; Financial Advisory Committee; Goods and Services Tax; Life Member files – reviewed and updated; MaterCare International, Inc.; National Bursary Awards; Old Briefs and League Statements on Various Issues; Per Capita Increase – correspondence; Pro-Life Funds – Birthright International, Alliance for Life; Resolutions, including correspondence to and from government, action plans, press reports, and synopses of resolutions; Respect for Life – 1973; UN Conference on Women – Beijing; World March of Women

Lists were made of all items that were placed in the archival boxes to be kept at national office. Files reviewed, purged and retained in the current filing cabinet at national office: Abortion, Birthright International, Euthanasia, Fetal Alcohol; Syndrome; Catholic Organization for Life and Family; Life Member files – reviewed and updated; Standing Committees: Spiritual Development, Organization, Christian Family Life, Community Life, Education and Health, Communications, Resolutions, and Legislation

The following materials with accompanying lists were prepared and deposited in the Archives of Manitoba: Correspondence from early years, executive, bishops, national presidents; Historic scrapbook; Provincial, diocesan, and parish histories; Publications and handbooks; Resolutions from 1979-2008; Various certificates, i.e. certificate of merit, life membership

All materials to be archived, either at national office or in the Archives of Manitoba, were placed in acid free files, see-through protective sleeves where needed, and acid free boxes. All contents were listed and boxes labelled. Four boxes were delivered to the Archives of Manitoba by Lorette, Marie, and Shirley.

The national archives committee has rendered a wonderful service to the League by bringing 15 years of archives up to date. It is a labour of love for which we can all be truly grateful. Maintaining archives is ongoing work and it's up to each level of the League to keep its story alive... and safe! †