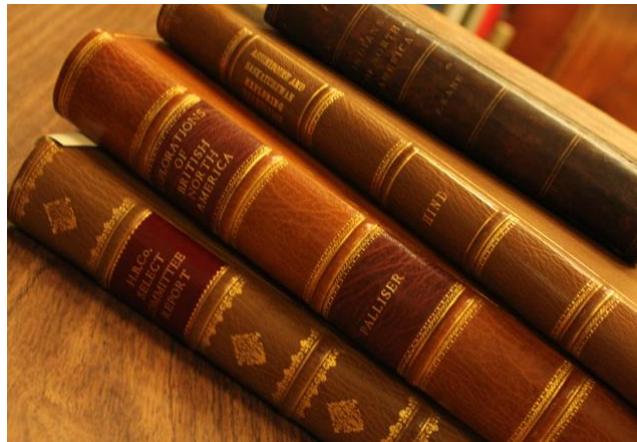


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Dr. Dorothy Lampard Reading Room established through historical contribution to University of Lethbridge Library

A voracious love of the written word and a lifelong pursuit to quench this thirst for knowledge has led to an historic gift to the University of Lethbridge's Library.

Dr. Robert Lampard, a physician who practiced in Red Deer for 26 years, is donating his 6,774-item Western Canadian book collection to the U of L Library, where a large portion of the gift will be added to Special Collections and housed in the newly renovated rare book room, the Dr. Dorothy Lampard Reading Room. Named in honour of Lampard's aunt, a founding faculty member and U of L senator, the room is a celebration of her lifelong commitment to reading.



"The broad scope of the collection will provide western Canadian researchers with a wealth of information about early Canadian exploration, the Arctic, mountaineering, early Canadian railway development (especially Sandford Fleming), western Canadian banking and business history, the political and religious history of the prairie provinces, native studies, the HBC, railways, ranching, the fur trade, local history, the Canadian military and policing, natural history, geology and Canadian art," appraises Barbara Ellis, owner of The Edmonton Book Store and a member of the National Archives Appraisal Board of Canada.

The gift includes a complete series of the Champlain Historical Society publications, all the volumes of the Hudson's Bay Record Society, and many seminal primary narratives of the exploration of the Canadian Arctic. Approximately 50 monographs have been signed by their authors. Other materials of note include those from John Palliser, Henry Youle Hind, Paul Kane, George Dawson, George Gladman, Alexander Begg and George Simpson.

"We are very grateful for the generosity of Dr. Robert Lampard in making this important donation to the University of Lethbridge Library, and for his entrusting the care of these significant historical materials to us," says Dr. Chris Nicol, University librarian. "This extensive, formerly private collection, will now be accessible to a wide audience of researchers at all levels. Members of the University's Department of History are particularly captivated by the opportunities that this unique collection will afford in the furtherance of Canadian historical research, particularly from the perspective of graduate education at the University."

Lampard describes a childhood surrounded by book-lined shelves in his home as one impetus to his love of the written word.

"With a grandfather who was a Presbyterian minister, an aunt whose specialty was reading, and a mother who read to you at bed time, the foundation was laid," he says.

While he read consistently as a youth, Lampard says he put it aside while studying medicine. When a serious knee injury threatened his mobility, he rediscovered books and reading, beginning with the Rocky Mountains.

"If you can't climb, you can read about those who did," says Lampard. "Then, a friend introduced me to the Champlain Society and I became one of only five Alberta members. It wasn't long before the mountain theme spilled onto the plains. My interest became a disease, and every trip involved searching the local book stores."

Now a collector, he sought out complete collections, from Sanford Fleming's Surveys for a CPR mountain pass (eight volumes), to Richard Gordon's Ralph Connor novels (30 books), to Grant MacEwan's 49 books. In 1979, a former University of Alberta medical research associate offered Lampard the complete Champlain Society volumes dating back to 1905.

It was not long before his collection totaled more than 4,000 volumes and had taken over the indoor swimming pool in his home.

"The question of what do you do with it arose," says Lampard.

Just under two years ago, he contacted professional librarian and U of L Archivist Mike Perry, whose interest was piqued. Given a chance to review the collection, Perry is inspired by how it will impact the University going forward.

"This generous gift from Dr. Lampard has already had many positive repercussions," says Perry. "It has made our Special Collections a destination for students and other researchers in a number of areas. It has increased our ability to preserve and protect the collection and having the collection stay in Alberta, and accessible to the public through

the opening of the Dr. Dorothy Lampard Reading Room, is fantastic. In a hundred years, it should provide just as much excitement as it does now.”

Lampard says the gift gives him comfort, knowing that it honours his remarkable aunt all while continuing a legacy of reading and literacy.

“I am pleased and honoured that now other researchers will have access to the key historical prairie books dating back to the first one by the British Parliament in 1749,” he says. “The “chase” is now over and my avocation now has a new and welcoming home.”

To view online: <http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/dr-dorothy-lampard-reading-room-established-through-historical-contribution>

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