



Jessica MacQueen <jlmacqueen@gmail.com>

follow up on recent meeting?

Jim Anderson <j39anderson@mymts.net>
To: Jessica MacQueen <jlmacqueen@gmail.com>

Tue, Nov 5, 2013 at 10:18 AM

Hello Jessica,

I enjoyed that panel discussion held in Winnipeg recently – it was very well attended and the discussion involving panelists and audience (the latter comprised of ‘who’s who’ of Winnipeg’s library/archival community) was quite lively and informative.

Here, very briefly, is an outline of the concerns I wish to share – also, I believe but offer no evidence here that this view reflects the position of most leading booksellers in Canada, and likely that of the Association of Antiquarian Booksellers of Canada (ABAC).

By way of precis, (and please use this as you see fit) I can tell you that the antiquarian bookseller community in Canada is perplexed and disappointed in recent policy and organizational developments at Library and Archives Canada. First there was the (probably ill-advised) amalgamation of Canada’s archival and library function in what we now call Library and Archives Canada, but then we Canadian antiquarian booksellers faced a multi-year moratorium on purchase by LAC of items from Canada’s print heritage – e.g rare books and other items. Within recent months, LAC has quietly responded to questions from my community (but has not to my knowledge publically announced) that it is back in the business of purchasing some print materials. I know of no actual sales by booksellers to LAC in recent months however, and I wonder if their ‘theoretical’ purchasing policy is smoke and mirrors. Let me add another concern – LAC had purchased over the past 15-20 years three subventions/accruals of papers from a major Canadian poet and prose writer whom I represent. When the moratorium was in effect LAC told me they could not purchase his latest accrual/subvention. Recently, however, LAC said they would consider doing so. They have had my proposal for the latest 15 or so year subvention on their plate for several months now, and they are telling me I will hear of their decision in due course. If this author’s latest iteration of papers do not go to LAC (my client wishes to sell, not donate his papers), I will likely broker a sale to a provincial archives or to a Texas repository. Imagine the absurdity of an acquisition process which may stop in midst of the process of acquiring a major Canadian writer’s papers, such that his papers become scattered as it were among two or more repositories, potentially in two countries.

Let me add that in the past 5 years or so I have sold many scarce and rare Icelandic Canadian books, periodicals, ephemera and the like to LAC. During the moratorium LAC refused to purchase any more of these items, even though they had not acquired even half of the Icelandic-Canadian canon. Nevertheless, I had sold well in excess of one hundred thousand dollars worth of these ethnic print materials to LAC when they ceased buying it. I am not sure if LAC plans to resume their acquisitions of this collection, nor do I know the size of the budget, if any, they have for such acquisitions, but I know I can supply the bulk of this canon, because my collection of these materials is the largest private collection in North America. Imagine the policy and financial folly of stopping this acquisition process in mid-stream, if in fact that is LAC’s continuing position.

I would be pleased to discuss these matters with you or others on your panel.

12/3/13

Gmail - follow up on recent meeting?

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From: Jessica MacQueen [mailto:jlmacqueen@gmail.com]

Sent: November 5, 2013 10:45 AM

To: Jim Anderson

Subject: Re: follow up on recent meeting?

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