
Special Collections Reading Room

Photographs, Architectural Drawings, Maps and Documentary Art

103 Customer
Service Guide

Most Recent Update: December
2007

Our Mandate and Holdings

The **Special Collections Unit** of the Archives of Ontario is responsible for preserving and providing access to approximately 1.7 million photographs, 190,000 architectural drawings, 35,000 maps, and 4,000 items of documentary art. These have been created and collected by private individuals, organizations and the Government of Ontario. They document the people, places and events in the province from as early as the seventeenth century to the present. These records complement the extensive textual holdings of the Archives.

Using the Special Collections Reading Room

Special Collections records are accessible only through the Special Collections Reading Room, one of the three reading rooms at the Archives of Ontario.

Location: 2nd Floor, 77 Grenville Street, Toronto, ON, M5S 1B3

Hours of operation: Monday to Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except statutory holidays). No appointment is necessary.

Telephone: (416) 327-1552 or toll free within Ontario 1-800-668-9933

Registration: All new researchers must present identification at the Main Reading Room Registration Desk located on the main floor. Acceptable identification includes: driver's licence, passport, university or college ID card, birth certificate, S.I.N. card, Senior Citizen's card, or Government of Ontario employee ID card. Credit and business cards are not acceptable. Researchers will then obtain a Researcher's Pass that is valid for one year.

Coats and bags: Coats and bags must be left in the Main Reading Room Registration Area before proceeding to the Special Collections Reading Room. Lockers are available in the Main Reading Room Registration Area.

Sign-in: All researchers must sign-in at the Main Reading Room Registration Desk before going to the Special Collections Reading Room. You must also sign-in at the Special Collections Reading Room and show your Researcher's Pass to the Reference Archivist. Please remember to sign-out at the Registration Desk before leaving for the day.

Accessing the Records

Finding aids: Inventories are available in both the Main Reading Room and the Special Collections Reading Room along with a subject/title/name card catalogue. Researchers can also access the Archives Descriptive Database and Visual Database from the Archives' website (www.archives.gov.on.ca). Please consult the Special Collections Reference Archivist for assistance.

Retrieval: A request slip must be completed to order material. Retrieval of most material is on demand. The last retrieval is at 4:30 p.m. Materials may be used in the Special Collections Reading Room only and must be returned at the end of each day.

Handling: The Special Collections Reference Archivist will supply the gloves and soft-lead (2B) pencils that must be used while viewing Special Collections material. Assistance is available for the safe handling of particularly large or fragile items. For more information on handling archival records, please see Customer Service Guide 101, *Reading Room Rules*.

Legal Restrictions: Access to some records may be restricted because the Archives must comply with provincial and federal legislation; however, most legal restrictions are time limited. For terms regarding specific records, see access and copyright terms in the finding aid descriptions or talk to the Special Collections Reference Archivist for details. Access to some government records is restricted under the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***. Access is restricted to some private records by third parties, i.e. **donor restrictions**.

Restrictions on Reproduction: Researchers should consult with the Special Collections Reference Archivist to determine if reproduction is possible and for advice on the most appropriate format. Please note that **photocopying** of photographs and most original Special Collections material is **not permitted**. For more information about reproduction processes, fees and payment policies please see: Customer Service Guide 105, *Reproduction Service Fees*. The Archives must abide by **Copyright** laws. Please consult *Customer Service Guide 108 Copyright and Your Research* for details.

Restrictions Due to Preservation: Access may also be restricted for **preservation** purposes.

Archives of Ontario, 77 Grenville Street, 3rd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1B3
Tel: (416) 327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-668-9933 Fax: (416) 327-1999
e-mail: reference@archives.gov.on.ca Website: www.archives.gov.on.ca

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This document may contain references to electronic links that can be activated only by using the HTML version found on the Archives of Ontario website.

This information is provided as a public service. Although we endeavour to ensure that the information is as current and accurate as possible, errors do occasionally occur. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information. Readers should where possible verify the information before acting on it.

This Guide was formerly Information Handout 5.