



THE SCOTTISH Country Dancers were out in force to entertain the crowd at the library opening

ceremonies. Many of the dancers are involved with the library on a regular basis as well.

OCT 3, 1984

Official opening for the library



Three members of the original library board of directors cut the red ribbon celebrating the opening of the new facilities for the Fort St John public library on Saturday.

A considerable crowd saw members of the present board, past and present members of the staff, representatives from the libraries in Dawson Creek and Chetwynd, members of municipal council and a representative from the library services branch of the provincial government gather to welcome the library into its new 3,300 square-foot home.

LIBRARY BOARD Chairman Peter Vanderugut was on hand to welcome the guests just before the official ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday. The new

facilities are just until funds can be raised for a brand new building which will cost an estimated one million dollars.

New at the library

by E.S. BRADLEY

Returning to this column after a summer vacation my first thoughts were: What's not new at the library? It's official now, with our grand opening on Saturday, September 29, we are installed in brand new space at the Overwaitea Complex, with some new shelving, new reception desk, additional part-time assistant, over 20 per cent more library users, a host of new members, and many, many additions to the collection for you to delve into this fall. But the best of the "old" — that cheerful and efficient service from Romi Haseo and her staff — still with us.

Children's books seem to be more colorful and numerous than ever and children of Fort St. John perhaps appreciate their

new reading area as much as any of the library habitués. You can see their absorbed faces, as they search through their own little stacks, in the children's circle behind the plate glass window at the front.

Since it is now possible to browse, reach the highest shelves with ease and not run into anybody, I'll note a few "fun" and delicious-looking books first. Louis XIV looks enticing, as does a huge volume called *The Gardener's Catalogue*. There is a real feast of pop music books: one on Culture Club, and two on Boy George alone, a biography with great pictures of Michael Jackson, another of the "Police" group, and a large soft-cover collection of famous guitarist's biogs, from Chuck Berry to Montoya to Andres Segovia, with photos, how-to-buys, etc.

A lot of recent best-sellers are in, notably *Natalie*, by Natalie Wood's sister; the vastly entertaining collection of

Gloria Steinem articles, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*; and — though I swore I wouldn't sink so low myself as to read that much-maligned story of John Belushi's decadent life, "for the column" I am still reading it! *Wired* will be back on the shelves when you read this; it is gripping!

Many best-selling authors are also represented in the new fiction. Joyce Carol Oates, off her gloomy-sordid industrial-town kick at last has another gothic-magic-mayhem tale out: *Mysteris of Winterburn*. Successful young Canadian Matt Cohen includes an excellent novela and seven short stories in *Cafe Le Dog*; the cafe being in Paris, other settings are Victoria, Toronto. For those fans of Trinidadian V.S. Naipaul, a reprint of his first delightful best-seller, *A House for Mr. Biswas*, is in.

There seems to be a new wave of bizarre
Continued on page 7

The library has come a long way from when it was an 8' by 10' cloakroom at the Elk's Hall with 639 books. The staff was entirely volunteer until 1952 when Dorothy Forster became the first paid staff. She received \$25 per month.

The library was later housed in a 16' by 20' skid shack next door to the Elk's Hall and then in the provincial government buildings.

But the fundraising work goes on even now. The library has a three-year lease on the space in the Overwaitea complex. There are plans for a brand new building which will cost around one million dollars. With the help of the community, service clubs, the library board and the city, the Library Development

Fund will continue to grow from the present balance of about \$30,000 to the grand \$1,000,000, board members hope.

SEPT 12 1984

Efforts by the Fort St John Public Library Association to raise funds for furnishings at their new location got an \$8,000 boost from the local Lions Club on Monday. Library board president Peter Vandergugten received a cheque for \$8000 from the city's Lions Club to help add tables, chairs and new shelves to library's new facility at the Overwaitea shopping plaza.

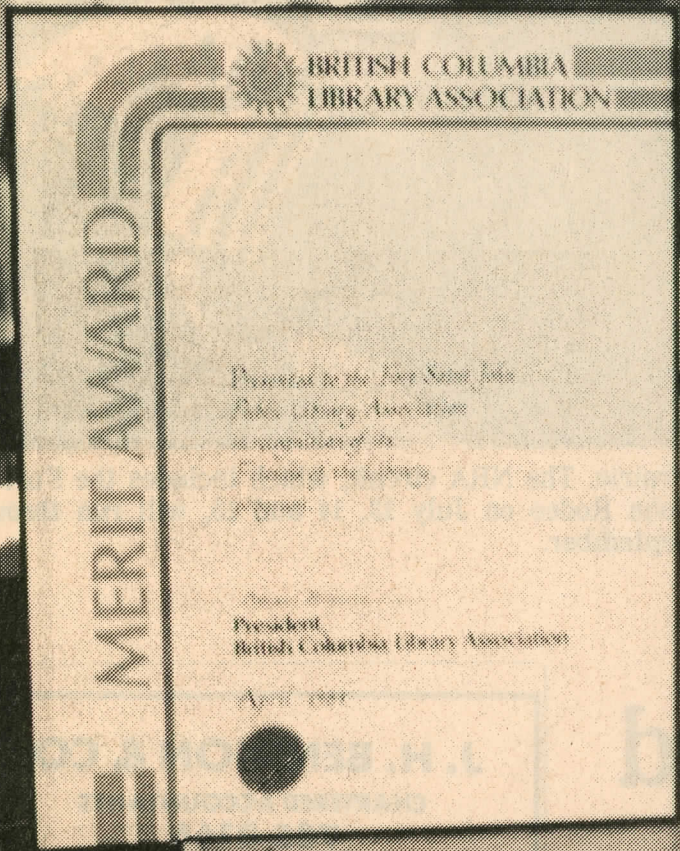
Vandergugten says the Lion's club commitment got started earlier this year at the Spring Trade Show. Shortly after the show, the Lions Club pledged just over \$22,000 towards the Library Development Fund, to be raised over a two year period. The initial presentation of \$8000 will go toward furnishings and monies left over will go toward the building fund project.

Donations from local businesses and many individuals have been outstanding according to Romi Haseo, Supervising Librarian. She says the move to their new location has been good for memberships and good for book circulation. The July statistics indicate a 24 percent increase in book circulation over the same month last year.

Romi says. "I think its the location. Patrons say its more

convenient and we have a bigger walk-in clientele".

Memberships are sitting at the seven thousand point and the growing interest in the library facility has volunteers of the organization busy planning for expansion within the next three years. While the official opening of the library will not be held until December 29th, a trial period of Sunday openings will begin September 9.



APR 25, 1984

HELENA MOTT OF the Fort St John Library proudly displays a certificate awarded to the library by the BC Library Trustees Association in

recognition of its 'Friends of the Library' program. She and Librarian Romi Haseo received at a recent convention of the BCLTA in Vancouver.

MAR 20, 1984

Library Friends Contest Winners

The Friends of the Library held an essay contest in conjunction with the BC Winter Games, earlier this month. Tanya Brown was the winner in the Grade 4 to 7 category and Wesley Berge won the Grade 8 to 10 division. Essays were to be entitled "How I think the BC Winter Games will benefit our community."

by Wesley Berge
When the BC Winter Games come to Fort St John, March 1-4th, 1984, I think they will benefit Fort St John. The art work that has been done on some of the buildings has made Fort St John an interesting looking place. These paintings are well done and after the games are over they will still be here in town to brighten the walls and streets, and also remind us later of good times, and good events we had whether participating or just observing.

The new equipment that has been put in some of the centres where events will take place, such as diving boards, gymnastic equipment, lighting and bleachers, all these will be left for the town's use after the games are over.

With the economy low and a lot of people out of work, I think the BC Winter Games have come at a good time. They will help the town economy a little as well as give the people a lift. I think the BC Winter Games will attract enough outside people that the advertisement of good times and a good time will attract more tourists to our town.

The way the wolf hunt has been publicized nationally, hopefully the BC Winter Games will show outsiders that northern BC is not just a slaughterhouse for wolves, but a place to come and enjoy for a holiday or enjoy as a beautiful place to live.



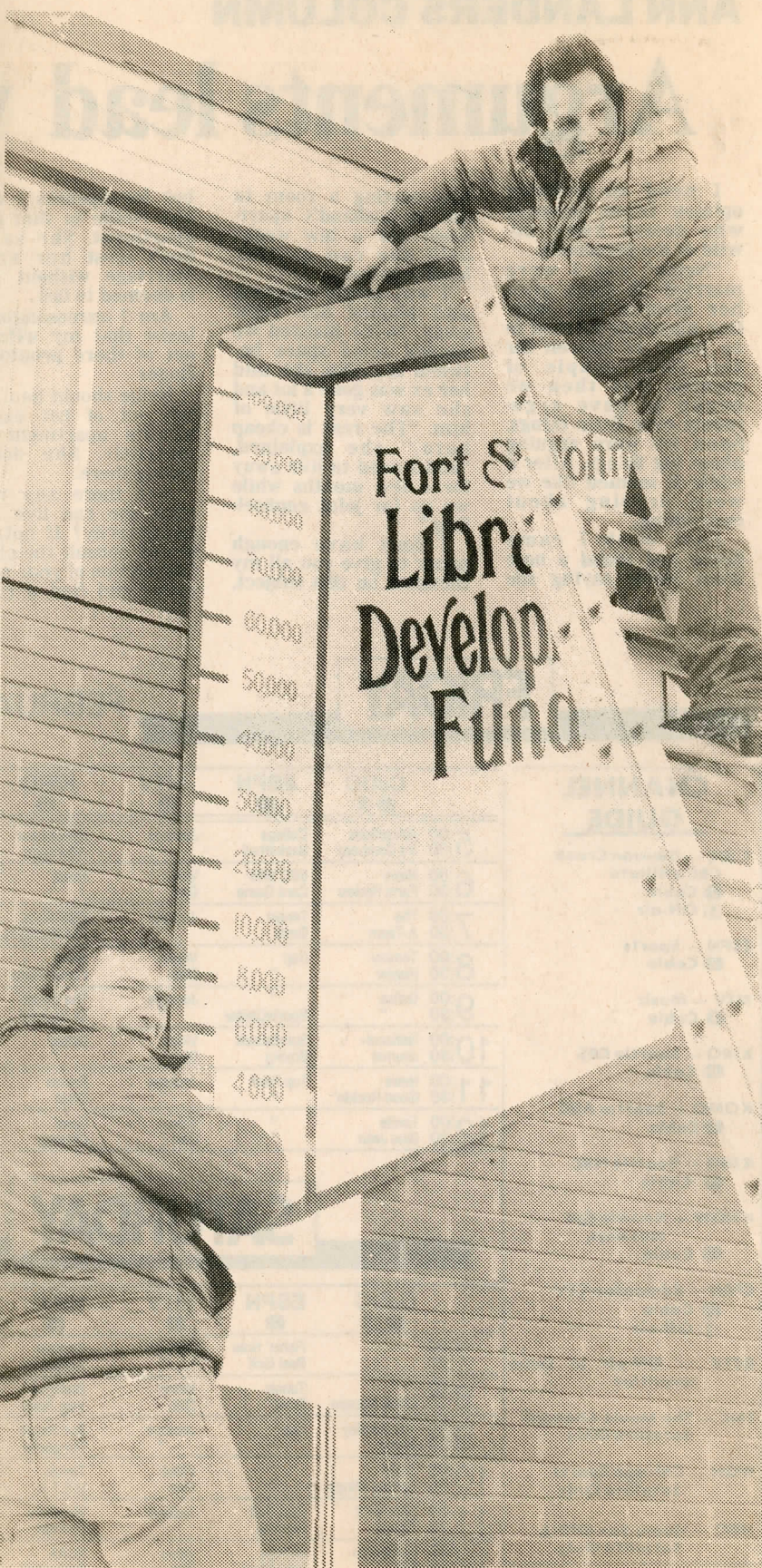
THE LIBRARY BOARD managed to get a fairly good crowd out last night at the city council meeting where they made their push for more funds. Gene Blishen handled the presentation, but council declined to render a decision last night.



MEET YOUR Library Board for 1984 - elected at last Tuesday's meeting. President for 1984 will be decided at their next meeting.

Norm Gleadow stepped down from the board this year after serving a year as president.

FEB 1, 1984



LIBRARY BOARD CHAIRMAN Peter Vandergugten and director Joe D'Attilio put up this sign to publicize the Library Development Fund, yesterday. Despite difficulties due to the current recession, the board continues working to get a new library for Fort St John.

Library tries to soften up council

Fort St John's Library Board is getting ready to move the library to new premises, but city council was hesitant to endorse the move last night.

Library board president Peter Vandergugten appeared before council to advise them of current library board directions, to emphasize once more the inadequacy of the existing location and to request a meeting on March 19 to discuss the

board's budget.

He stated that the library was planning to move to a 4,200 square foot location in the Pioneer Square, for an annual rent of \$32,000 a year. The existing location is 1,504 square feet and is generally acknowledged to be a tight squeeze.

In the board's presentation, read by new board member Joe d'Attilio, the board emphasized that it remained committed to building a new 10,500 square foot structure, but that the Pioneer Square premises would serve in the interim.

Commenting on the board's presentation, Mayor Brian Palmer noted that the board had

picked a bad year to make such a move, considering the city's financial constraints. The rent on the present premises had been set at \$13,000 but an initiative by former board president Dr Norm Gleadow had secured a reduction of the rent from BC Building Corporation to \$7,700. BCBC is proposing a five year lease with increases set to reach the market equivalent rate by the end of the term.

"This is quite a significant reduction," said Palmer. "It compares very well with \$32,000. In light of the years we have operated out of these facilities, including during our peak boom years, I'd say we still had some

life left in them. Though the facility is not ideal, it doesn't deter the public from using it."

Alderman Todrick noted that it seemed a steep price to pay for space considering the abundance of rental area in the city at the moment.

Alderman Gretzinger commented that there remained the possibility that the regional district would absorb the function, as the Dawson Creek library was also running into budget cuts and had requested help from the region.

"I hope the city's library board will co-operate with the region," he added. "The time will come when they own all the libraries in the area. The writing's on the

wall, municipalities can't fund them."

Vandergugten told council ways would have to be found to fund them.

"I feel we have to make a move. Now's as good a time as any. We won't be asking for that much from council for the move, just the operating costs down the road. If the Museum Committee and the Campsite Committee can do it, so can we."

He outlined a number of ways in which the board hoped to fund the move and the new shelving that would be required.

Council will consider the board's budget request on March 19.

Library may move to Pio

The Fort St John Public Library Association accepted the resignation of library board chairman Norman Gleadow, chose a new library board and discussed plans to move the library into facilities in Pioneer Square at their annual general meeting last night.

In announcing his resignation Gleadow stated that he was pulling back from many of his community activities for a year to give him a chance to re-assess his priorities.

Although he claimed that his resignation was not a result of disillusionment resulting from a lack of progress towards a new library, Gleadow did state that he does not agree with the prevailing view that the city cannot afford a

library.

"It is not a question of affordability, it is a question of felt need and priorities ... The cost would be less than the price of one cup of coffee per week per household. Can you afford a cup of coffee?" Gleadow asked.

The present wisdom of constantly trying to live within our present means endorses a pessimism about the future of this area which he does not share, he added.

Gleadow says he had lots of offers of coffee when he presented this view to the Chamber of Commerce but gained little overall support for a new library facility.

He pointed out that this area spends less per capita on library

facilities than most other areas in the province.

The new nine-member board will choose a chairman at their next meeting.

The library spent \$112,619 last year, down from \$123,514 in 1982.

Receipts were \$113,354, up from \$108,842 in 1982.

The city grant of \$73,000 in 1983 was up from \$66,000 in 1982

A provincial grant of \$22,225 was the other major source of financing.

PLAN TO MOVE

For the first time in the 28 years the library has been at their present location, they are being asked to pay rent. The BC Buildings Corporation, the provincial crown corporation which controls the building, has asked for \$11,500 in rent this year.

In light of this the association hopes to convince the city to go along with a plan to move the library to a space in the Pioneer Square which is four times the size of their present premises at a cost of \$32,340 per year.

To pay the rent, even if they stay in their old facilities, the association has asked for an increased grant of \$97,455 this year.

"I hope we are not going to be cut. We have gone over this with a fine toothed comb ... I feel it is very very important for the community," former mayoralty candidate and vocal restraint advocate Peter Vandergugten stated in a presentation on behalf of the library finance committee.

near Square



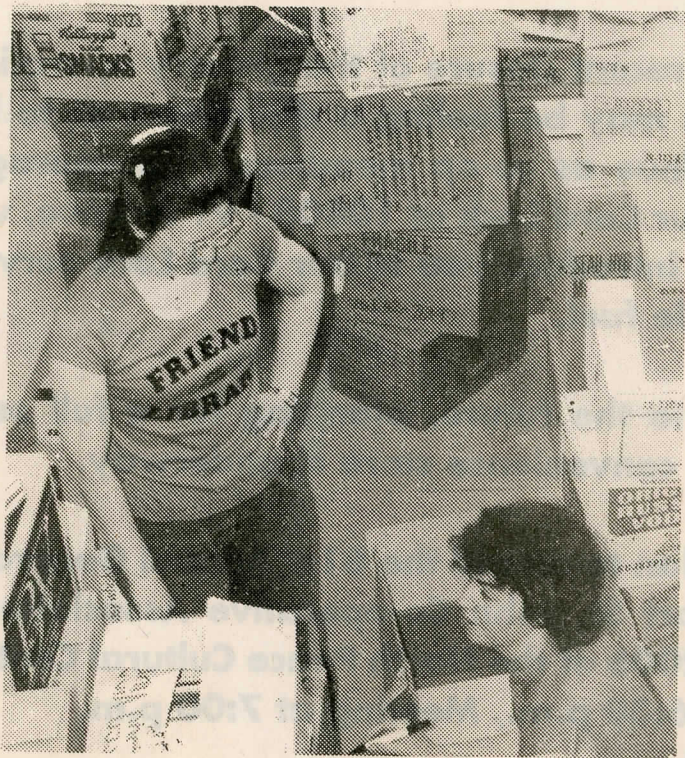
Retiring library board chairman Dr Norm Gleadow got a present at last night's library association annual general meeting - a kiss from supervising librarian Romi Haseo.



JANIS, 1984

LINDA BALDWIN presents \$150 to library development committee member Peter Vandergugten on behalf of the Xi Alpha Delta chapter of Beta Sigma Phi. The money will added to the Library Development Fund. Donations to the library are tax deductible.

TimeCapsule



AHN file photo

More than 500 books were packed into boxes as the library prepared to move into the Overwaitea complex in 1984.