

# VALL REVIEW

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March, 1992

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## VALL 1991/92 Executive

Vancouver Association of Law  
Libraries  
P.O. Box 48663, Bentall Centre  
Vancouver, B.C. V7X 1A1

**President: Judy Atkins**  
Librarian, McCarthy Tetrault

**Treasurer: Eve Porter**  
Head of Technical Services  
& Branches, B.C. Courthouse  
Library Society

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**Past President: Annabel Knispel**  
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**VALL REVIEW Editors:  
Teresa Gleave, Assistant  
Librarian, Ladner Downs**

**Joan Honeywell, Electronic  
Accounts Representative,  
CCH Canadian**

**Desktop Production:  
Nancy Cotter, Western Legal**

## From the Executive of VALL

Judy Atkins

On behalf of the Executive, I would like to thank all of you for participating in VALL activities so far this season. We have had excellent turnouts for all of our meetings to date. In fact, Leanna Hayes of the Georgia Hotel catering department was quite surprised to hear that we have only 120 members in view of the number of people attending our lunches. She commented that our turnout is much better than other organizations with many more members. Congratulations!

Thanks to everyone, panelists and participants alike, who attended the January workshop on *Space Planning and Moving a Library*. Those attending remarked favourably on the extent of the practical content of the workshop. There are outlines available for the planning and moving portions of the workshop. Please contact me if you would like a copy of the outlines. Our February speakers, Susan Lyons and Bob Franson, raised some interesting and controversial questions about electronic distribution of judgments and Crown copyright. I'm sure these topics will come up again and again over the next few years. As information is increasingly published in electronic format, information specialists, among others, will have to grapple with issues of distribution and availability of information and government assertion of copyright.

VALL, Special Libraries Association, and VOLUG are jointly sponsoring a function to be held in the latter half of April (the date is not yet finalized). We are planning a dinner at which Madge Aalto will speak about the new Vancouver Public Library building. You will receive a notice about the dinner when all details are finalized.

After discussions with various people about *Canadian Law Online*, I wrote on behalf of VALL to Anne Foster of Thomson Professional Publishing to clarify the scope of the contents of *Canadian Law Online*. If anyone has any questions about the issues I raised in my letter, or Thomson's response, please contact me.

You received an announcement about the Peter Bark Memorial Fund Bursary with your notice of the March meeting. VALL is very pleased to make this bursary available to honour Peter. I urge all of you who qualify for the bursary to apply. The VALL Executive will choose the successful applicant at our meeting on March 23.

You also received an announcement calling for nominations for the 1992/93 Executive. Please get involved.

## From the Editors

Teresa Gleave  
Joan Honeywell

Decisions, decisions!! Most of us use them every day but we may not be aware of the selection process used by the various publishers in their products. We asked the publishers of B.C. case law to provide some background information for us.

Upcoming events we will be watching for the next issue include the release of *Canadian Law Online* and the CALL Conference in Winnipeg.

The deadline for the June 11 newsletter is May 21.

# VALL REVIEW

## SELECTION OF B.C. CASES - HOW, WHEN, AND WHERE

We are all familiar with retrieving information from *B.C. Decisions*, *B.C.L.R.*, *B.C.W.L.D.* or *B.C.J.'s*, but how many of us know how judgments are selected for these publications? We asked editors from Carswell, QL, and Western Legal to provide information on their selection and editorial policies, as well as the timeliness of their publications.

### British Columbia Weekly Law Digest

The *British Columbia Weekly Law Digest*, now in its eleventh year of publication, digests all B.C.S.C. and B.C.C.A. civil and criminal decisions received from the court registries; S.C.C. appeals from B.C. decisions; and selected Provincial and Federal Court decisions forwarded by Judges or counsel who feel the cases will be of general interest to the Bar. Cases are regularly sent in by counsel and are welcomed. The average currency from judgment date to publication date is approximately one month.

*B.C.W.L.D.* case digests are prepared by Vancouver freelance editors drawn from the ranks of research, practising, and non-practising lawyers. The digests follow a consistent style, intended to provide readers with a quick appreciation of the facts, reasons, and holding in the case, and all are reviewed by the in-house legal editor in Vancouver for accuracy, style, and correct index classification. The *B.C.W.L.D.* index classification is the same as that used for *B.C.L.R.*

*B.C.W.L.D.*, which is in broadsheet form, is published weekly fifty times a year, with a two week break in late December. Cumulative topical indexes and Tables of Cases are published eight times a year, or roughly every six weeks, and each issue is headed up by a list of the cases digested in that issue.

### British Columbia Law Reports

The "modern" *British Columbia Law Reports* were launched in 1977 and are now in their second series. *B.C.L.R.* reports the significant civil decisions from both the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal, selected criminal decisions from those courts, and Supreme Court of Canada appeals from B.C. decisions. The selection of cases for reporting is carried out by the Editor-in-Chief. From 1979 to 1985 *B.C.L.R.* was published under the distinguished editorial direction of Editor-in-Chief, Mary F. Southin, Q.C. (now Madam Justice Southin), and Editor, Darrell Burns. Since 1986, Mr. Burns has continued as Editor-in-Chief, providing the benefit of a practitioner's appreciation of the needs and interests of the B.C. Bar. Case selection is made from all decisions received for digesting in *B.C.W.L.D.*, including those cases drawn to the editors' attention by counsel. One of the objectives of the *Reports* is to be timely, and currency is now averaging three and a half months from date of release to publication. Paper parts are published approximately every two weeks.

Cases are selected for reporting that represent new developments in the law or a novel application of existing principles; that clarify or resolve conflicting lines of authority; that provide a comprehensive survey and analysis of the law in a particular area; or that authoritatively cast doubt on a previous decision or practice. Attention is given to practice issues, and cases of special interest or media notoriety are also considered. Criminal cases are reported which deal with important principles of general interest to the profession. *B.C.L.R.* also comprehensively reports appeals from previously reported proceedings.

*B.C.L.R.* headnotes are prepared by experienced freelance editors in Vancouver, and reviewed in-house by the Vancouver based legal editor.

With respect to both the *B.C.W.L.D.* and *B.C.L.R.*, improvements have been introduced as a result of customer suggestions and the editorial staff welcome the input provided by our customers.

**Leanne Berry**  
Acquisition Editor  
Carswell, Thomson Professional Publishing

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# VALL REVIEW

## SELECTION OF B.C. CASES - HOW, WHEN, AND WHERE, continued...

### QL Systems

QL's coverage of case law, statutes, and administrative decisions from British Columbia is extensive. *British Columbia Judgments* (code *BCJ*), with over 17,800 decisions, is the most frequently used database by users in B.C. It contains the full text of all decisions received from the B.C. Court of Appeal and the B.C. Supreme Court since January of 1986. *BCJ* also contains County Court decisions for the period January 1986 to July 1, 1990, when that court merged with the Supreme Court. Currently, there is a small number of Provincial Court judgments in *BCJ* and QL is working toward having more included. Yukon Court of Appeal, Supreme Court, and Territorial Court decisions are also included in *BCJ*. *BCJ* is updated several times a week and may contain decisions released as recently as the past week. QL does not make any editorial selection of decisions to be added to *BCJ*. All judgments received from the Court Registry are added; in time, some of these judgments will be reported.

QL has begun the task of adding citations, keyword indexing and summaries to judgments in the *BCJ* database. In order to do this QL is taking advantage of its purchase of the *Dominion Report Service*, a service which contains digests of court decisions from 1968 to the present day. The *Dominion Report Service* database (*DRS*) provides summaries of decisions from over 40 law reporting series and is updated weekly. Every *DRS* digest since 1986 will be added to the full text version of the decision in the appropriate "L" database (*BCJ*, *AJ*, etc.). Conversely, in the *DRS* database, all digests added since 1986 will contain a reference number which can be used to retrieve the full text of the judgment in its corresponding "L" database. This cross-referencing will allow the researcher to move easily from the *DRS* database, containing the digest, to the full text of the decision.

QL is pleased to announce the addition of a new database (code *BCAC*) containing headnotes of B.C. Court of Appeal decisions. *BCAC* is provided by Maritime Law Book, and corresponds with their new series, *British Columbia Appeal Cases*. *BCAC* can be searched separately or as part of the *NRS (National Reporter System)* database. Both databases can be searched using Maritime Law Book's topic and key numbers and by cases and statutes noticed.

QL offers several databases containing decisions of administrative tribunals in British Columbia. Recent additions are *BCCO* (decisions of the Commercial Appeals Commission) and *BCLI* (judgments from the Liquor Appeal Board). Database *BCLD* contains over 3,800 decisions from the Industrial Relations Council and its predecessor, the Labour Relations Board. The full text of all decisions, orders, press releases and notices of the B.C. Securities Commission are available in *BCSD*.

*Tim Outhit*  
Marketing Manager  
QL Systems

### Western Legal Publications

As many of you are no doubt aware, Western Legal Publications evolved from a single practitioner's need for fast, unreported case law. Since our beginning two decades ago, Western Legal has continued to grow in direct response to the particular needs of the legal profession.

Western Legal receives copies of all full text reasons for judgment on a weekly basis. The judgments are distributed to our editors (six in number) who are assigned publications according to their expertise - e.g. Civil (General), Family Law, Criminal Law, Charter of Rights matters, Labour Law. All judgments forwarded to us are summarized as soon as they are available and published in the fastest possible turnaround time (usually four to six weeks). Judgments that do not contain sufficient information with respect to the facts and issues to enable our editors to prepare a summary are noted in the relevant Case Table as "n.d." (not digested).

Summaries for *B.C. Decisions, Civil Cases* are released twice a month. Case Tables are cumulated monthly and an interim Case Table is provided with the mid-month release. All other publications and Case Tables are monthly releases (with the exception of the *Charter of Rights Decisions* series which is bi-weekly).

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## SELECTION OF B.C. CASES - HOW, WHEN, AND WHERE, continued...

Electronic access to digests of both civil and criminal decisions for: B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, is available through CAN/LAW (database WLP). WLP further includes summaries for B.C. Labour Arbitration Awards, B.C. Industrial Relations Council Decisions, and Federal Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Canada decisions.

If practitioners are aware of any reasons for judgment that we have not published (and unfortunately, some "slip through the net"), we encourage them to bring the matter to our attention.

B.C. Judgments are available from us dating back to 1972; Alberta/Saskatchewan/Manitoba to 1974; Ontario (Criminal only) to 1980; Supreme Court of Canada to 1978; Federal Court of Appeal to 1981; Industrial Relations Council (formerly Labour Relations Board) to 1979; Labour Arbitration Awards to 1974 (although we did not commence publication of the summary service for this series until 1982).

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions regarding our publications or services.

*Ronda McNabb*  
President  
*Western Legal Publications*

\* \* \* \* \*

## JANUARY WORKSHOP

Thirty attendees participated in the January workshop on *Renovating, Space Planning and Moving a Library*.

Johanne Blenkin, Chief Librarian at Russell and DuMoulin and Judy Atkins, Librarian at McCarthy Tetrault presented the segment on space planning. Phase I is finding out you are going to move. Important steps in this phase are determining who is in charge and ensuring they understand the library's priorities; consulting with other librarians, your users and library staff for input; and deciding what can be compromised on. Phase II is planning the space which includes meeting with the designer; determining shelving requirements, planning the configuration for the new library and any satellite libraries, considering work and study space requirements for staff and users; and technical details such as floor loading, lighting, and electrical requirements. A sample memo outlining these details to the designer and space planning committee was included. Phase III involves reviewing and revising plans with the designers and committee. Be prepared with plans to scale and a lot of energy!! Phase IV is the final phase involving the approval of the plans and the move itself.

Catherine Kerr from the B.C. Courthouse Library Society gave a presentation on the mechanics of moving. These are the essential and detailed procedures that ensure a smooth and painless transition from one space to another on moving day. They include hiring movers; planning and documenting every step of the process; packing and unpacking; and "forgettable" details such as having sufficient supplies on hand, booking a moving elevator, and informing staff and users of expected disruptions in service.

Suzanne Dodson, Facilities and Preservation Manager, University of British Columbia Library completed the workshop with a discussion of earthquake preparedness. She detailed the precautions required from both library planning and personal protection standpoints; brochures and handouts from various government agencies were made available.

*Teresa Gleave*  
VALL REVIEW Editor

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## COMMITTEE NOTES

### Canadian Legal Information Centre - INFOLEX PROJECT

#### INFOLEX UPDATE

INFOLEX was created by the Canadian Legal Information Centre (CLIC) in response to the need for information regarding the costs of operating law libraries in Canada in the 1990s. The objective of the project was to develop cost projections for law libraries over the next five to seven years. Price Waterhouse was selected in June, 1991 to conduct an extensive survey and based on the results, to prepare a report detailing historical costs and cost projections for all types of law libraries.

The project has now proceeded to the stage where we have a draft report from Price Waterhouse.

As a member of the Advisory Group I recently attended a meeting in Toronto where we discussed the report and made recommendations for improvements. The final report should be finished by March 31, 1992. It should be ready for your perusal shortly after that date.

I want to thank all of you who painstakingly filled out the survey. Without your input, CLIC could not have completed this project.

Liisa Riesen-Tella  
(Harper Grey Easton)  
INFOLEX Advisory Group

## INFOBITS

### Spring 1992 Line-up

- VALL**
- April 9 - Suzanne Dodson, *Preservation of Materials*.
  - May 14 - Wade Nesmith, *Securities Regulation in Canada and B.C.*
  - June 11 - Summer Social.

### CALL/ACBD

- May 10 - 13 - Annual Conference - *A Meeting Place* at the Westin in Winnipeg. Preconference workshop on *Law Libraries in the Mainstream*, Sunday, May 10, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### BCLA

- May 21 - 24 - Annual Conference at the Conference Centre, Whistler, B.C. - *Making the Connection*. Keynote speaker, Ray Spaxman, urban planner. For details contact **BCLA** office at 430-8595 or Envoy A. Bacon.

- AALL** • July 18 - 23. Annual Convention in San Francisco.

- CLA** • June 11 - 14. Annual Conference in Winnipeg.

### SLA/WCC

- March 18 - Robert Lesperance, *Copyright law and the information professional: an overview of the history and current status of the copyright law in Canada*. Location: Price Waterhouse, 4:00 p.m. RSVP Janet Parkinson 682-4711.
- April 1 - 3 - **SLA's** Middle Management Institute is offering a two and one-half day course entitled *Analytical Tools*. Michael E.D. Koenig will help to sharpen your skills by covering the budgeting process, understanding financial documents, using statistics effectively, performance analysis and reporting, and the value and cost of information. Contact: **SLA's** Professional Development Section, 1700-18th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20009 (202) 234-4700.

### VALL/SLA/VOLUG

- April - Date not yet set for a dinner event co-sponsored by **VALL**, **VOLUG**, and **SLA/WCC**. Madge Aalto will be the speaker discussing plans for the new Vancouver Public Library building.

### OTHER NEWS

- The Central Vancouver Librarians' Group is publishing the CVLG Serials list. Holdings include over 60 business, technical, engineering, accounting, and law libraries in the Vancouver mainland. If you are interested in adding to your holdings or would like to order the list, please contact Teresa Murphy 683-7702 (telephone) or 683-8601 (fax).

### BIBLIO NOTES

Recent items of interest from library and legal literature.

Access to government information in electronic formats. By Vivienne Monty. In *Database Canada*, December 1991, Vol. 4, Iss. 1, p.6.

Summarizes the major issues of this topical question in terms relevant to the library profession. Discusses public access to government information and the right to that information, plus the various shadings on the meaning of "access." Reminds us there is some urgency to finding a resolution to these issues.

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## BIBLIO NOTES, continued...

Computer searching will become more important than manual searching. By Ken Chasse. In *Legal Research Update*, December 1991, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 7-8.

Outlines the shortcomings of law reporters and suggests that computer databases can overcome all of these with their advantages of currency, convenience, necessity (when a publication is only available online), and the flexibility offered by the ability to conduct fulltext, field, factual, and index searching. Concludes by asking whether lawyers should remain as dependent on others for their computer searching given its importance.

Computerized legal databases: the thrill is gone. By Eric Gertner. In *Legal Research Update*, December 1991, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 4-5.

Presents an alternative to the Chasse article on the argument for computer searching. Suggests that legal publishers must decide between selectivity and comprehensiveness, and argues against the latter in online services. He suggests that the comprehensive approach puts a premium on quantity rather than quality, encourages a linear rather than a lateral approach to research, and has a major impact on work methods because of the 24-hour availability of online services.

Effects of the recession on libraries. By Theresa Kennedy. In *TALL Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Jan. 1992, pp. 1, 4-5.

Representatives from all types of law libraries met to discuss this issue, which is foremost on many librarians' minds. Recessionary measures such as cancellation of serials, looseleaf services, and multiple copies; cutbacks in services, staff, hours of operation, and special projects; and cancellations and cutbacks in supplies, and memberships and conferences, are briefly discussed in terms of overall effect on service, staff morale, and resource sharing. The long term effects are described as "disastrous" because of the difficulty in reinstating services.

LEXBASE: A national fax network for immigration practitioners. 1210, rue Sherbrooke ouest, 5th floor, Montreal, H3A 1H6. Telephone (514) 288-5252; fax (514) 847-1370 or (514) 288-7479.

This is a volunteer network of approximately 175 immigration law offices which disseminates information concerning three areas in the field of immigration: immigration delivery system, policy and planning, and jurisprudence. The newsletter is faxed every six weeks.

Retrospective catalogue conversion in mid-sized law libraries: some practical guidelines for automation. By Robert E. Riger. In *Special Libraries*, Winter 1992, Vol. 83, No. 1, pp. 10-15.

This brief primer for converting a book or card catalogue to a computerized format outlines the benefits of such a project plus the steps required to carry it out. Pre-planning, selection of software, inventory of the collection, MARC sources, converting the records, post-conversion issues and marketing tips are examined in terms of the steps required for completion plus ramifications in terms of staffing and library clientele.

*INFO* Association des Bibliothèques de droit de MONTREAL Association of Law Libraries. Newsletter.

*TALL Newsletter*.

*VERBATIM Calgary Law Library Group Newsletter*.

VALL exchanges newsletters with other local groups. Anyone wishing to see these newsletters may contact Teresa at Ladner Downs.

## BOOKSTORE

*B.C. Decisions. Criminal Conviction*, 1972-86; *Sentencing*, 1984-86. \$50.00.

*Charter of Rights Decisions*, Vols. II-XXI. \$150.00

*Supreme Court of Canada Decisions*, 1978-86. \$50.00

*B.C. Decisions. Statute Citator*, 1978-91. \$150.00

Prices are not fixed; can be shipped by bus. Contact: Peter R. Grant, 842-6456, Hazelton.

*B.C. Decisions. Labour Arbitration*, 1982-91.

*B.C. Labour Relations Board Decisions*, 1985-91.

Contact: Jeff Peterson, 861-4022, Kelowna.

*B.C. Decisions. Civil Cases*, 1974-91.

*B.C. Decisions. Statute Citator*, 1980-91.

*Business Law Reports*, 1977-91.

*Supreme Court of Canada Report Service*, Vols. 1-5 and indexes (current to 1991).

*Canadian Abridgment* (current to October 1991).

*Canadian Bankruptcy Reports*, new series, Vols. 1-69.

*Carswell's Practice Cases*, Vols. 1-47.

*Dominion Law Reports*, 1912-91.

*Real Property Reports*, 1976-91

*Reports of Family Law*, 1970-91.

*Supreme Court of Canada Decisions*, 1980-91.

*Western Weekly Reports*, 1912-91.

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## BOOKSTORE, continued...

Western Law Reporter, 1900-16

A complete list of texts for sale is being prepared.

Contact: Stephanie Taggart, 689-1811.

Criminal Reports, new series, Vols. 1-40; 3d series, Vols. 1-52.

B.C. Decisions. Labour Arbitration, 1984-89.

B.C. Labour Relations Board Decisions, 1979-89.

B.C. Labour Relations Board Decisions, unreported decisions  
1/74 - 269/84, 1974-84.

Canadian Labour Relations Board Reports, 1974-82, new series,  
1983-88.

Labour Arbitration Cases, 2d series, Vols. 1-30; 3d. series,  
Vols. 1-35; 4th series, Vols. 1-6.

Labour Arbitration News (including contract clauses), 1965-75;  
1977-79.

Lancaster Labour Law Reports, 1986-89.

Contact: Shirley Hyndman, Richards Buell Sutton, 682-3664.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### *New Places*

As of April 1, 1992 Ladner Downs' new address  
will be:

900 Waterfront Centre  
200 Burrard Street  
P.O. Box 48600  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V7X 1T2



# VALL REVIEW

## VANCOUVER ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES PETER BARK MEMORIAL FUND BURSARY

The Vancouver Association of Law Libraries (V.A.L.L.) is pleased to make available a bursary in the amount of \$500.00 to assist a member of V.A.L.L. to attend the Canadian Association of Law Libraries Conference. The bursary is drawn from the Peter Bark Memorial Fund, a fund established by V.A.L.L. to commemorate Peter Bark and his contribution to V.A.L.L.

The criteria for eligibility for the bursary are as follows:

Applicants will have been a member of V.A.L.L. for one year.

Applicants will demonstrate financial need.

Preference will be given to applicants attending the conference for the first time.

Please send applications in the form a letter including the above information as well as a brief description of your involvement with law libraries or the management of legal information by **March 20, 1992** to:

Judy Atkins  
Vancouver Association of Law Libraries  
c/o McCarthy Tétrault  
1300 - 777 Dunsmuir Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V7Y 1K2  
Tel.: 669-2611 Fax.: 643-7900