

NEWS

Deadline: Wednesday at 12:00 noon Newsdesk 453-4983

Books disintegrating in Harriet Irving Library No temperature or humidity control - Moore

by Gail Anthony

Ken Moore, Reference Librarian and Chair of the Preservation Committee, says there are many books disintegrating at the Harriet Irving Library due to the temperature and humidity.

He explains that from the middle of the Nineteenth Century until the middle of the twentieth Century paper had a high acid content as a result of the paper making process.

"We could have a situation that a book that was published as late as 1950 could be quite brittle as opposed to a book published 200 years ago. Paper will eventually disintegrate. The rate at which it disintegrates depends upon the paper, temperature, humidity, and amount of light in the library," Moore notes.

"What happens in older libraries is that much of the collection dates quite far back so a lot of our books are brittle," he adds.

He says many universities have done studies on this subject and claim that 1/4 of their collection is severely affected with this problem.

"My suspicion is that it is more than that at our library because we have not had any temperature or humidity control in 15 years. Our collection is suffering," Moore says.

According to Moore when the Harriet Irving Library was new it did have air

conditioning, but in the mid 70's when the university experienced financial restrictions the air conditioning was turned off.

"My understanding is that it is now unusable. The air conditioning wasn't used and if equipment isn't used, it just will not work. It's unfortunate," Moore notes.

Moore points out that the University of Manitoba which has air conditioning and therefore better temperature and humidity control replaces 1600 books a year due to this disintegration of books.

"The average life expectancy of a book at the University of Manitoba is 79 years. Although I do not have any figures we would probably expect the life expectancy of a book at our library to be less, considering the temperature is greater and humidity variation," he says.

He quickly points out when budgets are tight books might not be able to be replaced.

According to Moore there has been attempts to preserve the collection.

"About five years ago a sprinkler system was installed which protects the collection from fire and in Special Collections and Archives there has been temperature and humidity controls installed to protect rare books and manuscripts," he explains.

"It is in the general collection and periodicals that we are having a problem right

now," Moore adds.

He says a survey was done in 1986 by Harold Holland, a Paper Conservator at provincial Archives here in New Brunswick. The survey was to determine what the status was of the collection at the Harriet Irving Library.

"The survey indicated that 20 per cent of the collection at that time had some degree of brittle paper. It indicated that at that rate in ten years from now 40 per cent would be brittle," he says.

According to Moore there are a number of things one can do for brittle books.

"One can simply put up with it then take them out of the collection, you can microfilm

them, or buy a new copy if you can afford it. In any case it is going to be expensive. There is some money, but at the rate of disintegration it is going to be difficult to maintain the collection," Moore explains.

He says the library has spoken to the various parties involved about correcting the situation. Many are interested and sympathetic, but financially it is a problem.

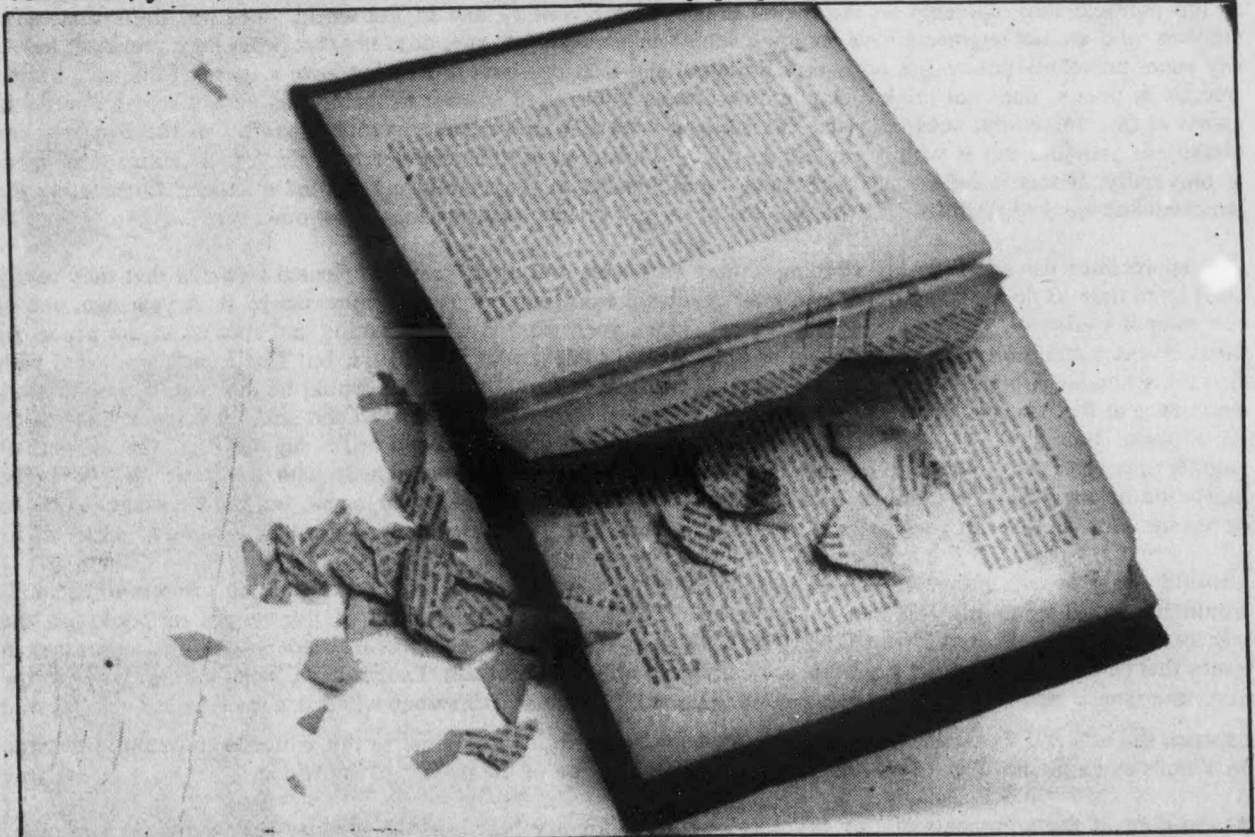
"We would probably need a study to tell us how expensive the air conditioning would be, then have a fundraising program ... Just changing the humidity makes the books last three times as long," he says.

"I don't think many people

realize how valuable the collection is. It seems to me that it is one of the most valuable assets of the

institution ... It is not so much that the cost of the material is being lost, it is the fact that you cannot do research if the books are not there," Moore adds.

Moore says he thinks something will be done in the long run, but points out all major research centers are trying to deal with this problem. He concludes by saying that if there was a way to control the heat and the humidity in the library it would slow this process of disintegration a great deal.



Disintegrating: Ken Moore, chair of the preservation committee, says at the rate of disintegration of the library books, it is going to be difficult to maintain the collection.
Photo by David Smith

New contract with photo company

by Patsy Wallace

A motion enabling the Student Union to enter a contract with Cambridge Studios was passed at last night's Student Union Council meeting.

The one year contract gives the Massachusetts photo company permission to set up graduate photo sessions in the Student Union Building.

Greg Lutes, VP Fiance, brought forward the motion to accept Henry O'Donnell's proposal at last week's meeting. The motion was tabled until this week.

The VP of finance promoted the proposal as a beneficial business deal, for the Student Union and students.

The company offered the Student Union a \$4,000 scholarship, or the equivalent contribution toward yearbook

production costs. It costs the Student Union \$30,000 to produce 1,000 yearbooks.

The company also offered to donate black and white and colour films to the yearbook. These two proposals would cut the Student Union costs considerably.

The cost of the standard photo-portfolios for graduates were estimated to be eight dollars cheaper than local studio prices.

In addition, O'Donnell does not require a down payment, nor does he charge a sitting fee. These benefits combined with their convenient set up location, better service students' needs.

Several councillors objected to Lutes' motion at last week's meeting. They were concerned over possible detrimental effects it could have on
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Summer courses may be cancelled

by Aime Phillips

Summer courses abroad may be cancelled at UNB.

The final decision has yet to be made, however, the coordinators and the Extension Department will reach a decision shortly after the March break.

According to professor Erickson, an instructor involved in the planning of the courses in Europe, enthusiasm for the summer sessions is present, but sufficient registration is not.

Poor registration is being blamed on the war in the Gulf and the troubles in Europe.

Diane Reid, a student interested in the program, is also partially responsible for

planning the sessions abroad.

As a professional travel agent she states: "Travel to Europe has been affected and we anticipate that we may have to forego the program until next year. People are afraid to plan in advance, but for a program like this we have to. Under the circumstances, who

knows what tomorrow will bring."

Summer sessions overseas began last year with courses offered through the Extension Department to Greece and Italy.

Should a cancellation take place this year, students currently registered will be individually notified.

SOUNDCHECK

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entertainment paper, the Three Blind Mice hopes to "carve a niche that is relatively untouched in Fredericton."

He stresses that it is this desire to head in a different

direction from any presently taken by Fredericton area publication that prompted the three to resign and begin work on Variance; there is, he emphasizes no animosity between the former SOUNDCHECK editors and CHSR radio.