

The Quinte Branch Online Finding Aid

by Bob Dawes



After four years, the Quinte Branch online finding aid is getting some much needed improvements.

The number of records will increase to over 1,356,000 thanks to the efforts of our volunteer indexers. That's almost a 25% increase in the size of the searchable database. But there's more, much more.

Last fall, the ad hoc library committee met to look at indexing and divided our library holdings into four categories based on the size and quality of their indexes or lack thereof. This breakdown looked at whether or not there was an existing index in the book, the number of index pages, was it typed, etc. Obviously, anything with a printed index is pretty easy to copy and send out to a volunteer but lots of books don't have any index at all and not all of them are typed. Our most troublesome category was referred to as Category 4 which were large books without an index which we wanted to include in the database but would take years to complete. So we came up with an idea to just include the primary family names in each of these books which, at least, gets their call number included as well as the main surname that researchers would be looking for. To this end, John Carew and Terry Buttler have been beavering away to get this part completed for the update.

In addition to these previously unrecorded titles, there are also a lot of new library acquisitions and many upgraded ones like the cemeteries that have been re-transcribed by the Horwat's over the past few years. Gerald Belanger's collection with over a century of BMDs from central Hastings County, which has been published on two new DVDs, is also included as are Dr. Brearley's medical and political databases.

More importantly, the actual titles for everything have been added to the database so that both online and library researchers can see the name of the resource making it much easier to find. The library call number is still included but the name gives you much more insight into the document. Anything that is from a DVD or CD that is available for sale as a publication is also noted in the title field.

Finally, a field for the location of the document has been added making it easier to find, especially if it is a digital resource located on one of the research room computers. There are four new codes for this field as follows: **L** for Quinte Branch Library Shelves; **D** for Digital Resource on the computers; **C** for CD Resource in the CD storage cabinet and **Q** for Quinte West Public Library shelves. This will become more valuable in the future as more of our material is digitized to free up space on our shelves.

As usual, researchers can still create an on-line list to help with their personal time in the library or to send to our volunteers for assistance. And best of all, this is still a free service to our worldwide genealogy audience.

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June 2016