



**COURTHOUSE
LIBRARIES | BC**

Annual Report 2007





A brand refreshed.

The British Columbia Courthouse Library Society is changing.

To provide the best possible service to our diverse community we must be both innovative and creative in our approach.

In that spirit, we have looked afresh at all aspects of our organization and are making changes accordingly. One such change is a

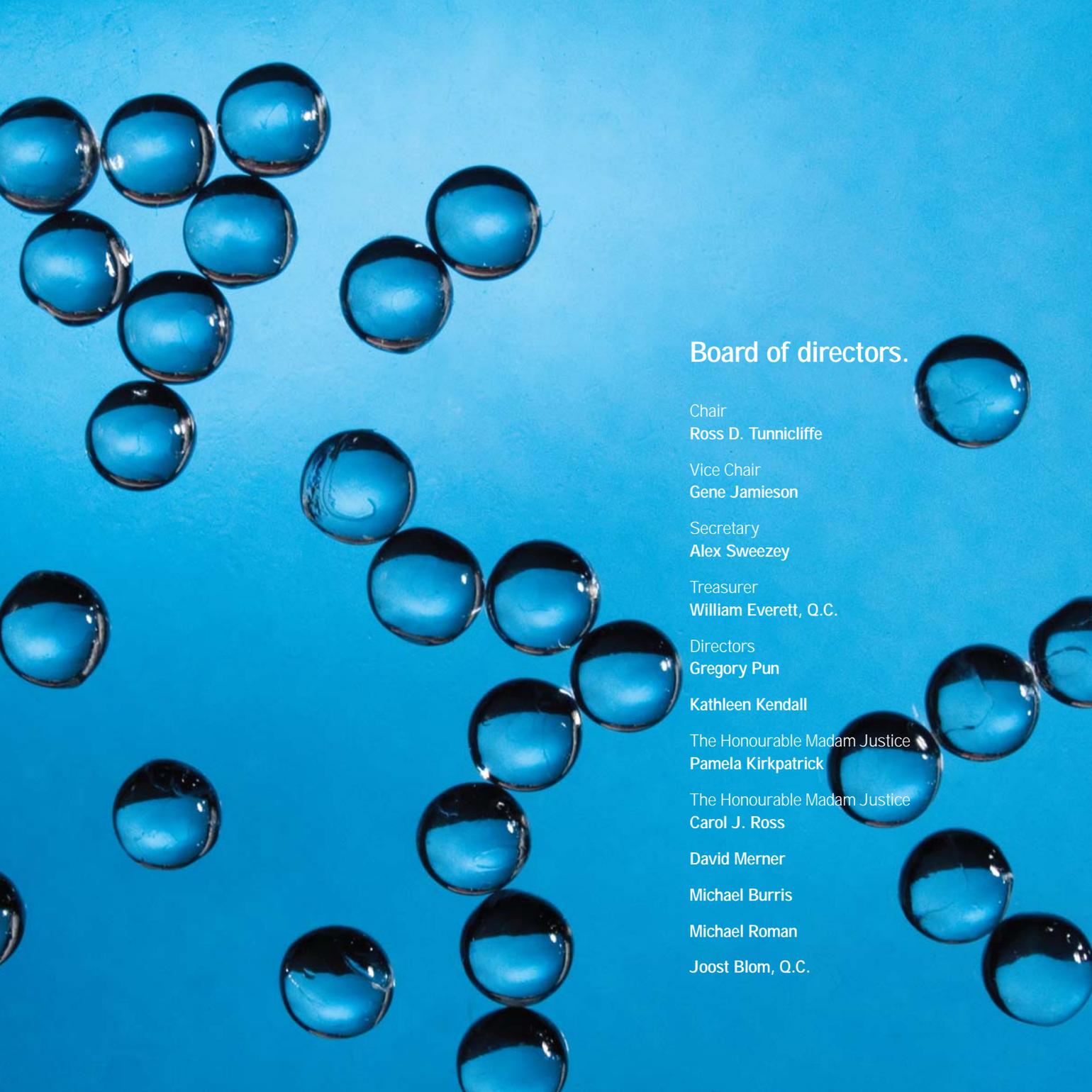
new brand identity that better reflects who we are today: a forward-looking, service-oriented enterprise comprised of multiple branches—both physical and online—dedicated to providing a superior legal resource for the citizens of British Columbia.

Our new name for most marketing purposes becomes **Courthouse Libraries BC**, while our legal name remains the same.

Our new icon uniquely combines the distinctive shape of an opened stack of books—the core object for any library organization—with the colour and form of a fountain, representing both the proverbial fountain of knowledge and the primacy of water as a fundamental element of life.



As we turn the page to the next chapter of our history, we seek to be that fundamental source of knowledge and an essential part of legal life in this province for many decades to come.



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Message from the Chair.

Computer service upgrades and public outreach projects shared centre stage at the BC Courthouse Library this year.

In the past few years, we have focused on building the necessary technological infrastructure to enhance client service and improve operational efficiencies. At the same time, the Library has become increasingly involved in public legal education and information initiatives. Efforts in both spheres of activity continued in 2007.

Library users in all locations will have noticed a number of improvements to our public computers, including the addition of flash drive capability and easy access to word processing. Researchers have also taken notice of our new web resource for legal information, the A-Z Knowledgebase. Website analysis indicates it is popular, with a high usage count.

As for public outreach initiatives, two exciting new projects were launched: *LawMatters*, a joint venture with the Public Library Service Branch of the Ministry of Education to improve access to legal materials in public libraries, and the PLEI Portal Project,

a group undertaking by various members of the public legal education information (PLEI) community to develop a web portal for unified access to information. The BC Courthouse Library has assumed a leadership role in both endeavours, an indication of the Library's strong commitment to improving public access to legal information in BC.

None of these activities would be possible without the generous support of the Law Foundation of BC, the contributions of members of the Law Society of BC and the facilities provided by the Ministry of the Attorney General. I would like to make particular mention of the Law Foundation for providing funding for both *LawMatters* and the PLEI Portal initiative, two worthy access to justice projects that would otherwise not exist.

I must also gratefully acknowledge the dedication and commitment to excellence shown by our Board of Directors. The Courthouse Library is fortunate to benefit from their guidance and from the efforts of its incomparable staff, whose innovation and creativity have kept the Courthouse Library at the forefront of legal information providers in the province.

Our new brand and logo marks a new chapter in our history. As we plan for the future, we will continue to engage our users in an ongoing dialogue to ensure we develop a library system that is accountable, affordable and delivers the best possible service to the legal profession and the citizens of BC.

Ross Tunnicliffe
Chair, Board of Directors.



...by the numbers

298 New titles purchased for the Vancouver library
1,566 Copies of new titles added to branch collections

Collections.

"How often do you borrow books from courthouse libraries?"

"What resources do you buy for your office?"

"How often do you have a specific legal information issue that you can't research using the materials you have in your office?"

These were some of the questions posed to lawyers around the province in a survey conducted by the BC Courthouse Library in 2007. The survey was designed to gather information about lawyers' research needs to help determine the type of material and kinds of services the Library can best provide. Of those surveyed, more than 95% buy materials for their office, but over half say they have a specific issue that they can't research in their office seven or more times per year. Only 6.2% of lawyers in small communities and 2.6% in larger ones say they never have something to research that can't be done at the office. Clearly, many lawyers have some kind of resources at the office; many also have to go beyond the office to complete their research.

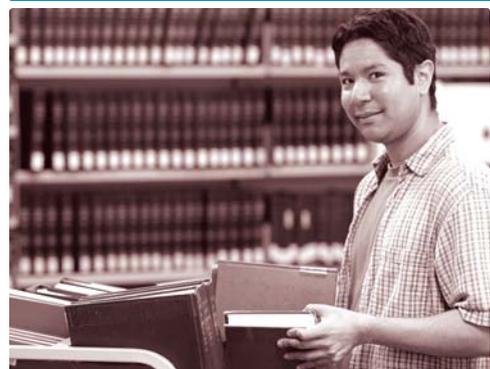
With insight gained by this snapshot of modern day practice, the BC Courthouse Library continues to develop its collections to reflect the needs of the community.

In 2007, the Library renewed its license with WestlaweCarswell for public access to *LawSource*, an electronic product that has proven to be an invaluable research tool, providing a comprehensive, fully searchable database of Canadian case law and legislation.

As well, the Library acquired user rights to *LLMC Digital*. Drawn from a consortium of law libraries' microfiche collection, *LLMC Digital* provides electronic access to historical statutes and ordinances of Canada, Canadian cases, U.S. federal and state case law and selected material from international organizations.

While striving to maintain a balanced collection, the Library continued to grapple with the forced migration of many print resources to electronic format. Many publishers have chosen to discontinue their print products and offer internet or CD-ROM versions only. The cost of licensing these electronic products for multiple users can be prohibitive and is a significant issue for libraries with many branches working within a budget.

As for print material, extra funding from the Law Foundation of BC enabled the purchase of replacement contents for looseleaf services in all library locations. Rather than paying for frequent updates, for some publications it is more cost effective to target new contents for purchase every three years or so. In 2007, 24 titles in the Vancouver library were updated; 30 titles were updated in the branches, making a total of 285 new branch copies.







Client services.

Accessibility is a cornerstone of the modern library. The computer age has not only extended the library's reach, but heightened expectations: to connect with its clientele and position itself as a key player in the delivery of information services, the library today must make substantive content freely available and accessible in a manner reflective of the way the current generation gathers and uses information.

In 2007, the Courthouse Library continued to assert itself as an essential resource through service enhancements devoted to providing optimal access to legal material and information.

A new server system was implemented, enabling access to word processing software on all public computers and providing users with the convenience of flash drive functionality to save documents and upload files. As well, all public workstations were outfitted with new flat screen LCD monitors that are energy efficient and provide a large viewable area that is easy to read.

Preparations were made to convert the Prince George, Kamloops, New Westminster and

Kelowna libraries to an automated circulation system. As is currently the case in Vancouver and Victoria, lawyers in those communities will soon be able to check availability of books and renew them online.

Expansion of the BC Courthouse Library website to include a number of new resources placed more material at the fingertips of members of the legal community and the general public alike. Chief among new resources is the A-Z Knowledgebase. Originally conceived as an in-house reference tool, conversion to a fully searchable database, made publicly available on the Courthouse Library website, has broadened access to a wide range of information. From hard to find citations to research tips and answers to a diverse assortment of legal research questions, the knowledgebase will continue to grow as new items are added and older ones updated.

Web users may also now access research and resource guides covering such topics as noting up British cases, judicial consideration of words and phrases and the use of various electronic services and products. In addition, new screencast technology was used to develop video tutorials which effectively demonstrate research techniques and strategies in short, easily digestible video clips. Researchers around the world now need only click on the Courthouse Library website to receive useful instruction on finding a precedent or tracing legislative intent.



“It was very helpful to have the BCCLS staff present and participating in the legal workshop discussion. ...And good to know we can call them with tough questions.”

— participants in *LawMatters* pilot project

Partnerships.

By strengthening connections with its diverse clientele, the BC Courthouse Library has bolstered its reputation as the source of first resort for legal information. Collaboration both within the legal community and without has elevated the Library's presence and visibility, resulting in an increased awareness of available information resources and ensuring these resources are accessible by all BC citizens.

Working with the courts, the Law Society of BC and the University of British Columbia, the Courthouse Library provided training and instruction in legal research to lawyers, law clerks, interns and students throughout the year. The Library is also an active participant in a number of public legal education initiatives. As leader of a working group of information providers, the Courthouse Library was instrumental in 2007 in the continued

development of a Public Legal Education Information (PLEI) web portal, intended to provide a unified point of access to the myriad sources of public legal education and information in British Columbia. The PLEI Portal will allow members of the public in BC, as well as intermediaries and educators, to search across and link into PLEI content that resides on a range of websites.

LawMatters is the result of a working partnership with public libraries and their provincial agency, the Public Library Services Branch of the Ministry of Education. Supported by funding from the Law Foundation of BC, the aptly named project aims to provide all British Columbia residents with local access to basic legal information. Public libraries throughout the province will receive financial assistance and recommendations for purchasing appropriate legal resources, legal research training and reference and referral support. The BC Courthouse Library will act as consultant, trainer and a source of expertise for local public librarians. A pilot phase was launched in 2007 with the formation of a core list of recommended materials and resources and the development of a variety of formats for staff training. Full implementation is scheduled for 2008.





More numbers...

- 162,033 Visits to the Vancouver library in 2007
- 11,417 Books borrowed from regional branches
- 3,300 Books used in the Vancouver library every month

books are in storage. In Penticton, however, the library moved to a permanent home in June 2007. Since that time, library staff members have reported a significant increase in use, attributable at least in part to a more convenient location in the courthouse and a brighter, more attractive workspace.

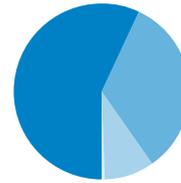
In Vancouver, renovations created four new offices for staff, with the remaining available rooms reallocated for use by lawyers and as a meeting space for counsel and clients of Pro Bono Law's civil chambers duty counsel project. As well, new, more functional information and book circulation desks were installed.

Compact shelving was also installed. With space at a premium, a large portion of Vancouver's main print collection was shifted to allow for future growth. Outdated material was removed and over 10,000 volumes were consigned to compact shelving, creating growth space for five years.

Facilities.

Through much of 2007, the BC Courthouse Library was on the move. Renovations in the Rossland and Penticton courthouses required both libraries to relocate. In Rossland, as renovations continue, the library is still housed in temporary quarters and a large number of

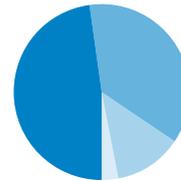




Funding Sources

● Law Foundation of BC (57%)	\$2,682,457
● Law Society of BC (33.3%)	\$1,568,707
● Operating Revenue (9.4%)	\$441,337
● Amortization of deferred contributions related to capital assets (0.3%)	\$17,066

Total \$4,709,567



Expenditures

● Staff (47.8%)	\$2,259,636
● Information Sources (36.9%)	\$1,746,439
● Operations (12.5%)	\$583,392
● Amortization of Capital Assets (2.8%)	\$131,228

Total \$4,720,695

Financial highlights 2007.

The complete audited financial statements for 2007 are available on the BC Courthouse Library website: www.bccls.bc.ca. The British Columbia Courthouse Library Society is funded by the Law Foundation of BC, the Law Society of BC through its members and the Ministry of the Attorney General for British Columbia through the provision of facilities and maintenance support.



Information Sources Expenditures

● Print Subscriptions (61.4%)	\$1,071,778
● New Information Materials (21.6%)	\$376,758
● Electronic Subscriptions (13.7%)	\$240,042
● Other Expenditures (3.3%)	\$57,861

Total \$1,746,439



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