

Ian Campbell Wees



Ian Campbell Wees, c. 1960. Credit ALA Bulletin.

b. Oct. 28, 1927, Winnipeg, MA; d. Nov. 4, 2019, Ottawa, ON

Education

BA 1945 University of Manitoba

MA 1947 University of Manitoba

PhD 1949 Sorbonne (Université de Paris)

BLS 1952 McGill University

Positions

1946–1947 Teaching assistant in the French departments of the University of Manitoba and St. John's College

1952 Assistant reference librarian, Winnipeg Public Library

1952–1961 Librarian, Canadian Bibliographic Centre, then National Library of Canada

1961–1965 Head, Union Catalogue Section, National Library of Canada

1965–1967 Head, Public Service Section, National Library

1967–1977 Assistant Director, Reference (later Public Services) Branch, National Library of Canada

1977–1978 Cultural Programs Officer, National Library

Publications

Wees, Ian C. (1947). "Le comique chez Molière étudié d'après les théories de Bergson." Thesis (Department of French), U of Manitoba. [English translation "Comedy in Molière Studied via the Theories of Bergson."]

Wees, Ian C. (1949). "Les idées de René Boylesve" (PhD dissertation, Paris: Sorbonne, Université de Paris).

Wees, Ian C. (1958). "Joseph Burr Tyrrell November 1, 1858–August 26, 1957," Canadian Historical Association. Report of the Annual Meeting held at Edmonton June 4–7, 1958 with [Historical Papers](#).

Wees, Ian C. (1960). "Bibliothèques gouvernementales" Bulletin de l'Association Canadienne des bibliothécaires de langue française, 6, no. 3 (sept): 84–85

Wees, Ian C. (1960). "Early Libraries in Quebec City and Montreal," [ALA Bulletin](#) 54, no. 4 (April): 303–308.

[Wees, Ian C.] (1960). "National Library Unique Serving All of Canada," Ottawa Journal, April 4, 1960.

Wees, Ian C. (1960). "Vocabularum bibliothecarii. Supplement 1958" Revue de publications de l'UNESCO / UNESCO Publications Review, no 9, février / February: 29–30

Wees, Ian C. (1964). "At last, a National Library," RCMP Quarterly 21, no. 4 (April): 253–258.

Wees, Ian C. (1964). "The National Library of Canada," Optimist magazine 44, no. 11 (Nov.): 8–9.

Wees, Ian C. (1970). "Lending policies of Canadian libraries," Canadian Library Journal 27, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb.): 40–50.

Wees, Ian C. (1973). "Proposed service of the National Library to the blind and physically handicapped," BCLA Reporter 17, no. 5 (Dec.): 15–16.

Wees, Ian C. (1973) "Proposed service of the National Library to the blind and physically handicapped," Manitoba Library Association Bulletin 4, no. 1 (Dec.): 22–24.

Wees, Ian C. and J. Ross Hotson (1976). "Library Service to the Handicapped," Canadian Library Journal 33, no. 5 (Oct.): 473–479.

Wees, Ian C. (1978). The National Library of Canada: Twenty-Five Years After: A Retrospective Overview. Ottawa: National Library of Canada.

Wees, Ian C. (1978). "The National Library of Canada: the First Quarter-Century," Canadian Library Journal 35, no. 6 (June): 153–164.

Wees, Ian C. (2000). "The Germ of the National Library," [National Library News](#) 31, no.5 (May): 12.

Wees, Ian C. (2009). "Martha Shepard (1911–2009)," Feliciter 55, no 5 (May): 188.

Committees and Task Groups

Ian Wees was a member of the National Library's Canadian Task Group on Cataloguing Standards and the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group. He chaired the national Task Group on Library Service to the Handicapped which produced a major report in 1976. He was the Secretary (1966–1968) and Chairman (1968–1970) of the Government Reference Libraries Committee of the Canadian Library Association. He was a member of the Canadian Library Association's Subcommittee on Telecommunication Code, Library Mechanization Committee (1966–1967) and Chair of the Association's Scholarship and Awards Subcommittee (1970–1972). He was a member of the CLA's Copyright Committee as well as a federal government Interdepartmental Committee on Copyright. Lastly, he was also a member of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History's Bibliography

Committee

Achievements and Comments

Ian began work at the Canadian Bibliographic Centre in November 1952 then housed in a corner of a museum room on the ground floor of the Public Archives building at 330 Sussex Street in Ottawa (now the Global Centre for Pluralism), Something of an academic prodigy, he was one of four librarians and four clerical staff and the first male employee of the Centre, soon to become the National Library of Canada. His visits to microfilm card catalogues for the national union catalogue in Hamilton (Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University and Hamilton Public Library) and Kingston (Queen's University, Royal Military College and Fort Frontenac libraries) were chronicled in the October 20, 1954 Hamilton Spectator ("All Being Filmed: Book Files On Record For Future") and the August 22, 1955 Kingston Whig Standard ("Libraries Here on the List"). Ian helped to create a number of specialized services at the National Library including rare books, children's literature and handicapped persons. He led the national Task Group on Library Service to the Handicapped and was the first editor of the National Library News (1969-1972). In addition to organizing exhibitions for the National Library including "Olympic Sports in Art and Literature" (1976) and "National Library of Canada: the first Twenty-Five Years exhibition (1978).

Awards: Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal (1977)

Sources

"Task Group on Library Service to the Handicapped," National Library News 8, no. 3 (May-June 1976): 10-11.

"Retirement [of Dr. Ian Wees]," National Library News 10 no. 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1978): 5.

Interview with Ian and Eleanor Wees for a history of the National Library project May 2013.

[Obituary](#) at Arbour Memorial.

ELA biography compiled by Paul McCormick

From:

<https://www.exlibris.ca/> - **EX LIBRIS ASSOCIATION**

Permanent link:

<https://www.exlibris.ca/biographies/ian-campbell-wees?rev=1773533850>

Last update: **2026/03/15 00:17**

