The Audrey and Harry Hawthorn Library and Archives Opens at MOA

By Shannon LaBelle.

On the weekend of January 23-24, 2010, the UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA) opened its doors to over 9,000 visitors who were keen to see the Museum's new facilities, including the Audrey and Harry Hawthorn Library and Archives (AHHLA).

The AHHLA is located in the new MOA Centre for Cultural Research at the intersection of public and research spaces in the Museum. Our new facility brings together three information professionals (Information Manager, Research Manager, and Archivist), a coordinator for the Oral History Studio, as well as temporary research technicians, Work Study students, and a Library volunteer committee.

The AHHLA was made possible by the "Partnership of Peoples" Renewal Project, a major renovation and expansion project at MOA, which received funding from the Canadian Foundation for Innovation and British Columbia Knowledge Development Fund, the University of British Columbia, UBC Faculty of Arts, the Koerner Foundation, the Museum itself, and other donors. In particular, the AHHLA is supported by an endowment from Henry Hawthorn, the son of MOA founders Audrey and Harry Hawthorn.

The functions of the AHHLA

The functions of the space are diverse but complementary. The Library has a non-circulating collection focusing on MOA staff publications, Museum Studies, Northwest Coast material culture, and world ceramics and textiles. The catalogue is available online, and new items are featured on LibraryThing and Facebook.

The Archives, open by appointment, holds MOA's institutional records as well as private records that reflect the collecting interests of the Museum. The Archives is currently creating a digital collection of Northwest Coast historical photographs.

The Oral History Studio and media management for the Museum are also connected to the AHHLA. The Oral History Studio exists to work with communities and researchers to record oral histories and to capture endangered languages in association with material culture housed at the Museum. The Information Manager is developing centralized management and access to digital media for the Museum.

Kirsty Dickson, a SLAIS Work Study student, examines archival documents at the AHHLA.   © Elizabeth Padilla

The Reciprocal Research Network & MOA CAT

The AHHLA provides access to and training in the use of two digital resources MOA was involved in developing: the Reciprocal Research Network (RRN) and MOA CAT. The RRN is a distributed network that enables collaborative research between MOA, B.C. First Nations communities, and major Canadian and international museums. The MOA CAT (digital catalogue) contains information about objects in MOA's collection.

Come visit us!

We are excited to be working in this new space, and we see many opportunities for developing and improving information systems that cross library, archival and museum boundaries. We invite you to visit us Mon.-Thurs. 10:00-4:00 (to the end of April) or by appointment. Please email library@moa.ubc.ca to learn more about our services and resources.

Shannon LaBelle is the Research Manager at MOA's Audrey and Harry Hawthorn Library and Archives.