Awarding of the 2017 Tremaine Medal and Watters-Morley Prize to Anne Dondertman

At the Annual Meeting of the Bibliographical Society of Canada on 29 May 2017 at Ryerson University, Christopher Young read the following citation, written by John Shoesmith:

Through her long and distinguished stewardship of the University of Toronto's Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library — the country's largest rare book library — along with her important bibliographic contributions, Anne Dondertman has few peers in Canada. As one of the most highly esteemed rare book librarians in this country, she is a most deserving recipient.

Having worked with Anne for over 11 years, I can personally attest to her steadfast dedication to the Fisher and to her contribution to the library's crucial role in furthering the study of book history and bibliography. She has been a professional mentor to me and to the many special collection librarians that she has hired over the last 15-plus years since being named head of the University of Toronto's Rare Books and Special Collections department to serve as the "right hand" to the Fisher Library's long-time Director Richard Landon. Since replacing Richard as the Fisher's Director after his death in 2011 — she was also named the university's first Associate Librarian for Special Collections in 2013, which added the University Archives and the Media Commons to her management portfolio — she not only continued to grow and enhance the established and impressive strengths of the library's collection, she also expanded the scope of the library's collection through her focus on acquiring — both via purchase and by establishing new donor relationships for gift-in-kind donations — twentieth-century material, particularly ephemera and the Canadian small press.

Alongside her collections and management responsibilities, Anne was also instrumental in expanding the Fisher's collections beyond our walls. She initiated and spearheaded a number of important digital collections, some of the first large-scale digital special collection projects in Canada, including: the Anatomia Digital Collection, Barren Lands, Canadian Pamphlets and Broadides, *Canadian Printer & Publisher*, Agnes Chamberlin, Wenceslaus Hollar, and the

Discovery and Early Development of Insulin. These important digital collections have increased the visibility of the Fisher Library to the broader academic community and the general public.

As chair of the Fisher's exhibitions committee and as one of the general editors of the exhibition catalogues, she has overseen numerous award-winning exhibitions. She has contributed her curatorial talents to a number of these exhibitions, including exhibitions on Dutch Sea Atlases, Ephemera, Horticulture, and modern Canadian manuscripts. The library's most recent exhibition, *Shakespeare at 400*, was perhaps the crowning achievement of her tenure (she retired this past summer). Through extensive provenance research, she uncovered many new aspects to the Fisher's 1623 First Folio (an important copy given it's the only one in Canada).

Outside of the Fisher, Anne has contributed to Canadian bibliographic history in other crucial areas. She has served many different roles within the Bibliographical Society of Canada, including Secretary (1991–98), President (2008–11), and Past President (2011–14), along with contributing articles and reviews to its *Papers/Cahiers*. She was one of the organizers of the founding conference for the *History of the Book in Canada* project (May 1997), and was a member of the Local Arrangements Committee for the Volume I conference (November 2000). In 2003, she chaired the Local Arrangements Committee when RBMS (Rare Books & Manuscripts Section of the ACRL) held its conference in Toronto, and she acted as program chair and organizer for the Fourth National Conference on Canadian Bibliography in Montreal in June 2007. She served as the program chair and coordinator for the BSC conference held at the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Vancouver, June 2008, and organizer for the BSC conference held in conjunction with SHARP in Toronto in 2009, and with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Montreal in 2010, and in Fredericton in 2011.

In short, Anne has played a pivotal role in many different facets of Canadian bibliography as a leader, scholar, and mentor. While her retirement has left a hole here at the Fisher, her work and achievements have left a lasting legacy. Her name is a solid addition to the many distinguished individuals who have been awarded the Tremaine Medal.

Anne Dondertman made the following response:

Thank you, Chris. I am truly honoured to be awarded the Tremaine Medal and the accompanying Watters-Morley Prize. During my years

as Secretary and as President of the Bibliographical Society of Canada, I have arranged for the engraving of the medal, and have presented the award to other very distinguished recipients, but I certainly never expected to be receiving it myself. It is a deeply humbling experience to look through the names of those who have gone before, beginning with Marie Tremaine herself, who was a shining beacon to the next generation of Canadian bibliographers who in turn would receive the award, including my University of Toronto colleagues Patricia Fleming, Joan Winearls, and Sandra Alston. Reading through the citations and the acceptance speeches of previous medal winners has been inspiring and has revealed the expansion of the scholarly pursuit of bibliography into what we now loosely term book history. The award has certainly and rightly gone to practitioners of descriptive and enumerative bibliography, but also to book historians in a broader sense, including literary scholars, historians of libraries and the book trade, and academic administrators. Many of the recipients were also teachers, passing on their knowledge and passion to the next generation of students. Although I too was one of those students, with a love of hands-on bibliography, my career path veered off in other directions. However, I would like to take a few minutes to look back a bit and publicly acknowledge the impact and influence of some of those teachers.

When I took the required bibliography course, as part of my Masters in English at University of Toronto, with Desmond Neill, the librarian at Massey College and formerly of the Bodleian, my eyes were opened to a whole new approach to books. I saw them for the first time as material objects, heavily weighted with their own individual histories of production and use. Although the pedagogical approach was dry and rigorous, the course had a profound effect on me. One of my assignments was on the First Folio, and I read through with great interest and excitement, Hinman's monumental work on the printing of the folio, only augmented in recent times by Peter Blayney's further elaborations and insights. It has been a foundation for all my later knowledge, not only of seventeenth-century printing, but of bibliography in general. I immediately transferred to the Faculty of Information and took every course I could on bibliography, the history of printing, and rare books. Patricia Fleming allowed me into Descriptive Bibliography even though I didn't have the prerequisite. All of us who were her students at the time lived through some of the challenges she was grappling with on the final stages of *Upper Canadian Imprints, 1801–1841*. I was fortunate

to work with her and my classmate Judy Donnelly on a bibliography of Canadian almanacs, and with Joan Winearls on her monumental map bibliography, *Mapping Upper Canada, 1780–1867*. Both of those works, published close to three decades ago, remain groundbreaking works of Canadian descriptive bibliography, and it was exciting when later I was very occasionally able to acquire for Fisher something “not in Fleming” or “not in Winearls.”

I was incredibly lucky that I started my career at the Fisher Library right out of library school. Richard Landon had been one of my teachers and mentors, encouraging me to publish the research paper I wrote for him, and he now became my boss. Especially after 2000 when I took on the role of assistant director, I daily had the benefit of his deep understanding of books and the book trade. My colleagues at Fisher were also always a source of knowledge, and as a new librarian I learned from Sandra Alston, Philip Oldfield, Katherine Martyn, Luba Frastacky, and Elizabeth Anne Jocz. Later I had the privilege of hiring outstanding and dedicated staff such as P.J. Carefoote, as well as many, many incredible students, including John Shoesmith and Chris Young, both of whom have played important roles in the BSC. We always had the rich and diverse resources of the Fisher Library at the ready, just waiting to give up their stories. Library cataloguing is not the same as descriptive bibliography, but there are overlaps, and I remember early on being asked to collate a copy of *Canadian Wildflowers*, to determine whether it was a “duplicate.” Well, that was a learning experience to be sure.

However, as administrative duties increasingly took over my energies, I moved farther away from hands-on study, although that intimate experience of looking closely at a book or other printed text always remained central to my approach. I had the opportunity to advocate for special collections and to make the Fisher holdings as broadly accessible as possible, for both research and teaching, and to reach out and share our treasures with the wider world through social media and digitization. I worked on many exhibitions and exhibition catalogues, which was always a welcome opportunity to spend time with the books. My interests had always been inclined toward popular culture of all periods, and I valued and always tried to acquire for the collections, the ephemeral products of the press — from pulp fiction and almanacs to small literary press imprints, auction and library catalogues of all kinds, advertising, printed forms, and letterheads — which are rich resources for the study of material culture and the history of both printing and design. Two of my proudest

acquisitions for the Fisher are a collection of about six thousand Canadian beer labels, and the enormous and comprehensive Nicky Drumbolis collection of Canadian small press imprints. As the first person to hold the position of Associate Chief Librarian for Special Collections at University of Toronto, I also had the opportunity to promote and expand the media collections, working with Brock Silversides. I strongly believe that media collections (including games) tell the story of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and we must strive now to acquire the materials that will enable future bibliographers to study our own time.

Ten years ago, when I was Vice-President of the BSC, we organized the Fourth National Conference on the State of Canadian Bibliography. In her summing up, Ingrid Parent said, "The intersection of bibliography and digital technology in Canada today creates crucial questions both for libraries and for the future of bibliography. How is digital technology transforming bibliographical practice?" These questions are still being answered, and perhaps another evaluation is due soon. In any case, the work will continue, and it will be exciting to see how analytical and descriptive bibliography continues to adapt itself to the study of "material" culture, whatever new and shifting forms that may take.

I would like to thank the members of the Nominating Committee, and my many friends and colleagues here today, as well as the Bibliographical Society of Canada for this great and unexpected honour. It is truly a pleasure to be here with all of you today.