

# REPORT OF SHELAGH PATERSON

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ONTARIO LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



“Collaboration and collegiality” is how I would describe the OLA experience in 2015. We welcomed the opportunity to work more closely with a number of library associations and organization on projects and issues important to our sector. Here are just a few:

- **Libraries 2025:** a futures symposium for the public library sector and developed by a steering committee including the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), Southern Ontario Library Services (SOLS), and Ontario Library Services–North (OLS-N).
- **Treasure Mountain Canada:** OLA jumped at the opportunity to host this school library research symposium in conjunction with our Super Conference. TMC intends to move to a different host province every two years.
- **The Library Marketplace (formerly The OLASore):** we consulted broadly with the Canadian library community and rebranded. This included developing special sales offerings for and with The Partnership members—Canada’s network of provincial and territorial associations (because everyone should buy a pair of library socks!).
- The formation of the new **OLA Indigenous Libraries Task Group**, who have the goal

of working collaboratively and strategically with other organizations to strengthen library services for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities.

- A important ‘to-do’ project that had been on our list for a number of years finally met its match! Jane Hilton, 2015 president OLA was the perfect leader for OLA’s governance review. Thanks to Jane and the award winning **OLA Governance Committee** (now disbanded as their task was accomplished), OLA has a foundational set of policies and position descriptions that are key to a strong association.

And finally, at a special members meeting of CLA at the 2016 OLA Super Conference we began to say farewell to the **Canadian Library Association**, a venerable institution created by the Canadian library sector 70 years ago.

Freda F. Waldon, First President of CLA (1946) and president OLA (1941–1942), commented at the time: “I grew up thinking myself as a Canadian citizen and not very much more. It was only when I came into the library profession that I became very conscious of local loyalties—first through my own library and then through the Ontario Library Association. I hope that those local interests have not weakened my interest in the Canadian scene, and I am very glad I can now think nationally in the library field as

well in other fields. I do feel that this is a challenge to us and an historic occasion.”

We are at another historical moment in the Canadian library landscape where collectively we decided that CLA had gone as far as it could for the Canadian library sector and this challenged us to imagine what sort of entity could serve us well into the future. Just as OLA was a founding supporter of CLA in 1946, our members in 2016 have endorsed support for belonging to the new **Canadian Federation of Library Associations- Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB)** to ensure that in addition to our voice at the provincial table, we now have a direct opportunity to shape national and international policy and a government engagement strategy.

I can’t think of a better phrase than the 2017 Super Conference theme chosen by Todd Kyle, 2016 OLA president of “All In.” to capture this increasing sense of collaboration and strategic alliances in our library world. My thanks and appreciation to the 2015 OLA Board for guiding and supporting our strategies over the past year and to the hard-working staff team who are always up for any challenge.



Representatives from The Partnership (2015)