

sis in Ontario school libraries and has been an active tion for School Libraries. With scarce resources and staff, school library community are more important than ever.”

of Library Science and with faculty such as Pat Fleming, there were lots of courses on Book Publishing and the History of Books and Printing. Then, in Halifax, I taught part-time at the library school at Dalhousie.

When we moved to Winnipeg, I spent change-filled years as the librarian at Balmoral Hall, an independent girls' school. One library served staff and students from JK to Grade 12. There I learned to teach by the seat of my pants, helped by gifted teachers and patient students. I realized the impact of Faculty of Education courses for teachers when a new teacher arrived at the school expecting to work closely with me on her courses and assessing what resources the library had for her Women's Studies program. It turned out that she had taken a course with Gene Burdenuk at UWO that included an assignment on teacher-library collaboration!

Highlights of my school library days included hosting author visits and participating in the Manitoba Young Readers' Choice program. When I left the school 12 years later, the four-year-olds with whom I had shared story time were now young women researching debating topics or attending workshops we hosted with the Guidance department on University Information on the Internet.

TL: How long have you been involved at the CCBC, and where were you before that?

BH: When I returned to Toronto, the Children's Bookstore had recently closed; the Toronto Public Library system, newly amalgamated, was not advertising full-time jobs and teacher-librarian positions were increasingly scarce. I decided to broaden my sights. The Book and Periodical Council, an umbrella organization representing all facets of the book and magazine industry, was looking for an executive director to coordinate its many projects. There, my job description included working on Freedom to Read Week as well as liaison work with publisher, editor, library and writing associations. At the BPC I learned about the challenges of not-for-profit cultural organizations, grant applications and working with a Board, which proved valuable experience for

my position at the CCBC, where I have been for the past two years.

TL: How can we connect kids and books in an era of fewer teacher-librarians in our schools?

BH: Connect is just the right word. My guiding principle in all of the jobs I've had, as I look back, is the famous quote, "Only connect!" from E.M. Forster's *Howard's End*. In a school library, I connected students with books and their authors and illustrators, and staff with resources. At the Canadian Children's Book Centre, part of our mandate is to "bring books and young readers together." To do this, we work primarily with adults! We offer services to authors, illustrators, publishers, teachers, teacher librarians, public librarians, book-sellers and parents.

As librarian, I am responsible not only for the library's collection and reference services, but for producing our annual selection guide, *Our Choice*, co-ordinating the publication of our quarterly magazine *Canadian Children's Book News* (with editor, Gillian O'Reilly) and administering the Geoffrey Bilson Award for Historical Fiction.

The CCBC library in Toronto (located in the lower level of Northern District Library at Yonge and Eglinton) is a research collection of the past 25 years of Canadian children's books and a treasure trove on every aspect of Canadian children's books. We host sessions for children's literature classes from York, teacher language arts classes (OISE and York), teacher and teacher-librarians on PD days, high school Writers' Craft classes, library school classes (UWO), children's book illustration classes (OCAD), Writing for Children classes (George Brown). We also provide a home base for the Toronto Children's Literature Roundtable and IBBY-Canada.

Teacher-librarians across Ontario can visit us at our newly redesigned website: www.bookcentre.ca. Connect with great resources by checking out our lists of award-winners on the Awards section or connect your students with authors and illustrators using our links to their respective homepages.