

Legal Research Section Report 2011-2012

This year, the Section executive (Co-Chairs Melanie Bueckert and Darla Rettie, and Vice-Chair Cynthia Lau) kept busy planning several sessions targeting various practice areas across the private and public bar.

In **October 2011**, our Section offered a session on *Researching New Communication Technologies, Including Social Media* with local expert Brian Bowman (Pitblado LLP) and David Whelan (The Law Society of Upper Canada, author of *Finding & Managing Legal Information on the Internet*). Interesting and informative websites, privacy, and proper use of Internet research were covered during this fascinating session on the technology that is having an ever-increasing effect on our lives.

In **November 2011**, our Section collaborated with the Administrative Law Section for a presentation on *Researching That Dreaded Question: What is the Appropriate Standard of Review?* The Honourable Mr. Justice Richard Chartier (Manitoba Court of Appeal) and Denis Guénette (Justice Manitoba - Civil Legal Services) provided an in-depth analysis of how to determine the applicable standard of review, particularly in light of the leading cases of *Dunsmuir* and *Housen*.

In **December 2011**, our Section celebrated the holidays with its annual holiday party, complete with an Italian banquet catered by DeLuca's (courtesy of Pitblado LLP) and door prizes generously donated by LexisNexis, Carswell, Irwin Law, and Maritime Law Book. Our members shared in engaging banter about the vision for the future of Manitoba legal libraries (following the October article in *The Communiqué* by the CEO of The Law Society, Allan Fineblit, Q.C.).

To address questions from our Section members about pending changes with The Great Library, our Section's executive arranged for a meeting with Allan Fineblit, Q.C. in **January 2012**. During this meeting, discussion was focused on a mutual desire to ensure accessibility of library services amidst changes in the economic and technological climate.

Also in **January 2012**, our Section hosted a Mid-Winter session on *Contractual Interpretation: Substance and Practice*, presented by our own Darla Rettie (Pitblado LLP) and Geoffrey R. Hall (McCarthy Tétrault (Toronto), author of *Canadian Contractual Interpretation Law*). This extremely well-attended session sparked intense debate on how the Manitoba courts may interpret certain contractual clauses, why, and anticipated trends.

In **February 2012**, our Section partnered with the Law Society of Manitoba to present an *Electronic Legal Research Refresher*, which enabled its attendees to bring their laptops and receive "hands-on" training. The presenters, our Section's executive members, provided tips and tools on how to use free and subscription services while researching the law and decisions from courts and tribunals. Young lawyers and students (Tracy McMahan, Jason Roberts, Andrew Robertson, Kyla Pedersen and Jason Bryk) volunteered to provide research assistance to the attendees, making the event a successful one.

At the time of writing this report, planning is underway for several events later this year, including a joint session on policy research co-hosted with the Public Sector Lawyers Forum, a webcast CPD on labour and employment law research featuring out-of-town subject-matter experts Paul Broad of Hicks Morley and Catherine Cotter from the University of New Brunswick (June 19), and our second annual legal research roundtable (to be held at the Law Society of Manitoba on June 12).

Our Section's monthly online newsletter, ***Law and Library Monthly (LLM)***, compiled by Melanie Bueckert with the assistance of its many volunteer contributors (Melissa Burkett, Johanna Caithness, Tony Cellitti, David Davis, Tanya Keller, Krista Klassen, Cynthia Lau, Sarah McEachern, Wilf Scharbach, Catherine Skinner and Jennifer Winter), provided topical updates in the areas of civil litigation, criminal law, family law, immigration law, labour and employment law, tax law, and law reform updates, as well as information on recent Great Library acquisitions, provincial and federal proclamations, upcoming PD conferences and podcasts related to legal research. To date, eight editions of ***LLM*** have been circulated this year, comprising 211 pages, in an effort to provide our Section members with comprehensive information about recent updates to Manitoba law.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melanie Bueckert and Darla Rettie, Co-Chairs