



# BUILDING THE ARMY'S INTELLECTUAL SOUL: THE EVOLUTION OF THE FORT FRONTENAC LIBRARY

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Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the Canadian Army relocated its staff college from the Royal Military College to Fort Frontenac, Kingston, where it was joined soon after by the newly created National Defence College (NDC). In 1946, a new library was also founded at the Fort to provide advanced research support for these two courses. Simply called the Fort Frontenac Library (FFL), it began its collection development largely through donations from the college's first postwar staff and students. Army legends such as Guy Simmonds, Andy McNaughton, George Kitching, John Rockingham, Jacques Dextraze and others all left personal notes, staff college exercises and books to the new library, creating a unique and nationally important foundation upon which the collection has since grown.



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As the library evolved, the demands for its support increased as well. In addition to serving the needs of the NDC (until its closure in 1994) and the newer Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College (CLFCSC), the library witnessed an increasing number of academic, scholarly, student, and professional visitors as well. The reason they were coming to the FFL was straightforward. Nowhere else in the country could one find such a rich and focused collection of sources dedicated to the study of land warfare, and more specifically, to the study of Canada's Army.

Currently housing over 100,000 items and continuing to grow

daily, the library possesses a strong collection of primary source documents on the legacy of the army's conceptual and doctrinal design evolution; unique personal memoirs, records, and materials from six decades worth of soldiers and scholars; thousands of volumes dedicated to military art and science, land operational research, military history, war studies, as well as a wide range of ancillary topics. In addition, the library carries the latest journals dedicated to land warfare studies, building on its already existing collection which includes holdings dating back as far as the mid-nineteenth century. In the rare books collection, researchers may find volumes dating back to the eighteenth century—the library includes over a thousand volumes published before the year 1900.

The FFL has a mandate to collect and preserve the army's intellectual legacy as a cultural resource for all. In the pursuit of that goal, it acts as the primary repository for the archives of CLFCSC and the *Canadian Army Journal*, as well as for materials from a number of other land force development organizations. In addition, the library has recently undertaken a major legacy project known as the Land Forces Capability Development Collection and Archives. This collection seeks to include, among other items, a hardcopy of every single conceptual, operational research, doctrinal, and training document and manual ever produced by the Canadian Army since confederation. Finally, as the most widely recognized military library in Kingston, the FFL enjoys regular donations of books and other primary source materials from soldiers and veterans in the area.

## CURRENT OPERATIONS AND FUTURE EVOLUTION

Today the library serves approximately 6000 research requests and loans annually, a tremendous challenge for its small but highly professional and dedicated staff. In addition, there is an ongoing demand to access, catalogue, bind, preserve and repair volumes, journals and materials. Such important tasks require both personnel and resources that are constantly being chipped away at these days, making it vital that the Army's intellectual soul continues to receive the dedicated support it has from the Land Force's senior leadership.

As with many intellectual foundations, the FFL benefits from a wide range of additional support from soldiers, patrons and other volunteers. This constantly growing community has added much needed stimulus to a number of projects, making it possible for the FFL to continue growing its nationally important collection as well as providing first-class service to the Army.

Still, there is much that all ranks of the Army as well as those who are interested in any and all aspects of land warfare studies and the Canadian Army's history can do to help. First and perhaps most important, is the support of the library's collection development through donations. The FFL is always seeking to obtain copies of regimental and branch/corps histories, operational tour books, newsletters, and journals, as well as locally produced yearbooks and materials. All Commanding Officers and Task Force Commanders are encouraged to donate copies of their histories and operational summaries to the FFL, as well as any other materials of interest for land warfare studies research. In addition, the library gladly accepts book donations, whether a single volume or whole libraries. The FFL can create special collections for large subject specific private collections.

Today, the Fort Frontenac Library is a key institution that the whole Army may take pride in. And armed with a clear mandate, tremendous senior leadership guidance and support, as well as a developed campaign plan and sound strategic management, the library will continue to evolve as the Canadian Army's intellectual foundation and legacy for many decades to come.



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## GET TO KNOW THE FORT FRONTENAC LIBRARY

The FFL exists to preserve the Army's intellectual legacy for all ranks of the Canadian Army, as well as the nation writ large. Everyone is encouraged to get to know the library and its staff. Details on how to get in touch and explore the resources available are as follows:

### SERVICES

The FFL offers reference services and assistance with research questions to the army and the Canadian Forces across the country. In addition, we offer an inter-library loan program that provides distance services to those not in our immediate vicinity.



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## VISIT US ON THE DIN

Under Land Force Doctrine and Training System: [http://lfdts.kingston.mil.ca/main\\_e.asp](http://lfdts.kingston.mil.ca/main_e.asp) Scroll down to Fort Frontenac Library on the right hand side of the screen click on this and when you reach our home page click on Search Fort Frontenac Library. You will then be presented with a Dynix search screen which will allow you to search the collection in a number of ways.



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## CONTACTS

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## HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday—Friday 8:00—16:00



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