

News from Prince Edward Island

News from Robertson Library, University of Prince Edward Island

Donald Moses, Interim University Librarian, Robertson Library

News

On February 15th an announcement went out to the campus about planned renovations for the Robertson Library - the move of the campus Bookstore to the Robertson Library Annex, and a notice that “the President will soon launch a fundraising campaign dedicated to the multi-phase expansion of the Robertson Library, representing the first significant renovation of the building since it opened... The transformation of the Library will allow us to better accomplish our mission and further engage our students, faculty, and staff.”

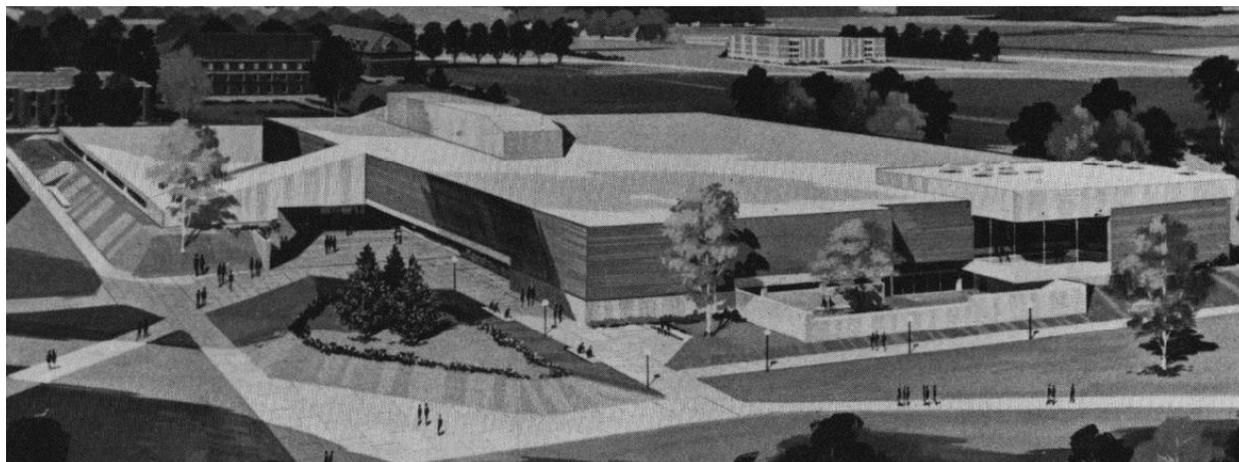


Image: From University Archives and Special Collections, Robertson Library, University of Prince Edward Island, *Topics Newsletter*, April 13, 1973, concept illustration of the Robertson Library.

This is an exciting opportunity to think about the Robertson Library’s space and how best to improve and utilize it for current and emerging needs.

Staffing Updates

UL Search

A search committee for the University Librarian continues to do its work

Library Staff

The Robertson Library welcomed Kelsey MacDonald as the digitization technician. She will be working on the Library's National Heritage Digitization Strategy grant. Kelsey will be focused on making digital versions of the *Examiner* (1847-1900) and the Island's first French language newspaper *L'Impartial* (1893-1915) accessible through its newspaper portal islandnewspapers.ca.

Events

UPEI's 50th Anniversary

As part of UPEI's 50th anniversary, the Robertson Library is presenting the Frank (Franklin) Pigot Memorial Lecture Series to celebrate the historical roots of higher education on Prince Edward Island and its future. Named after educator and librarian Frank Pigot, who was honoured as a UPEI Founder for his work building the Library's PEI Collection and University Archives. Dr. Edward MacDonald delivered the first lecture of the series, "The School of Experience: A Patchwork Quilt of Informal Island Education, 1825-1965" and historian and folklorist John Cousins presented the second lecture in the series, "Stand for Your Lessons: Educational Change and Cultural Reaction." Historian Georges Arsenault delivered the third lecture of the series in the Faculty Lounge of UPEI's SDU Main Building. Arsenault's talk was titled "Société Saint-Thomas d'Aquin and French Education on the Island." Additional lectures are planned for the series.

Movie Talks

This winter, the Robertson Library hosted a series of "Movie Talks". In recognition of Black History Month, Robertson Library and the UPEI Student Diversity Office (SDO) presented and facilitated a discussion of the Oscar-nominated documentary, *I Am Not Your Negro*, narrated by Samuel L. Jackson. The documentary "...explores the continued peril America faces from institutionalized racism." As part of our Valentine's Day celebrations we partnered with SDO to screen the Sundance Film Festival award-winning movie *The Miseducation of Cameron Post*. In celebration of International Women's Day, WUSC UPEI Local Committee, the Rotaract Club of UPEI, and Robertson Library presented the documentary *To Educate A Girl: Empowering Women and Girls in the Developing World*, by filmmakers Frederick Rendina and Oren Rudavsky. The screening raised awareness and funds for the Shine a Light Program, an initiative that provides women and girls within refugee camps the opportunity to better their educational prospects.

Freedom to Read Week

We encouraged library users to explore and check out books that have been challenged or banned and also provided a selection of books “under wraps” which were banned/challenged in Canada, with an excerpt of why they were challenged and asked visitors to guess the titles.

Image: Freedom to Read Week display and library student assistant Kaitlyn Humphries.



Young Library Visitors

The Library welcomed a group of three to five year old children from the Wekatesk Head Start Mi'kmaq Family Resource Centre in March. The enthusiastic group enjoyed an interactive story time and craft session, led by Yolanda Hood, Metaliteracy & Student Engagement Librarian.

These ongoing literacy activities are part of the Kitpu Project, initiated by Sherri Russell and the Mawi'omi Centre to engage campus partners to support literacy for Indigenous students in school or on reserves.

Escape Rooms

Robertson Library ran a L. M. Montgomery-themed escape room over the winter semester for UPEI students, faculty, and staff. The game's theme incorporated materials from the library's collection to educate players about the life and times of L. M. Montgomery.

The escape room reviews were very positive and feedback from one participant stated that she “liked the fact that the puzzles were at a level of difficulty that we had to put our heads together to solve them in groups and as a larger team. It really built teamwork and brought us closer together. The strength of each person came through and benefited the team's success! Everyone felt good when they left at the end!”

Planning is underway for new escape room themes for the fall semester.



Image: Student assistant Hannah Cochrane dressed in a prop from the L. M. Montgomery Escape Room.

Stress Free Zone

The Library hosted the *Stress Free Zone* again in April, an area set aside in the Library during the exam period for students to relax, play a game, colour, work on crafts, take a selfie in the photo booth, get creative with Lego, or just unwind in the Library's beloved bean bag chairs.



The Library provided snacks and drinks on a daily basis during the exam period and Chartwells partnered with the Library to provide treats on exam weekends.

And, there was a daily Pop-up Surprise in the Library for students during the exam period. The most popular events were the visit of staff members' dogs for Pet a Pooch as well as the toast, peanut butter, jam, and Nutella event.

The events were well attended, and the staff received many positive comments from students - "These pop-up surprises just make my day", "I feel that the Library really cares", and "I look forward to each day's surprise".



Collections

We cancelled Lexis-Nexis Academic and added HeinOnline and Gale Business Insights Global to our mix of databases. Librarians are reviewing the library's physical collection and a weeding program is underway and will continue through the summer.