

News from Robertson Library, University of Prince Edward Island

Donald Moses, University Librarian, UPEI Robertson Library

COVID-19

We had a brief closure in December 2020 - a “short circuit” period to address concerns related to a rise in COVID cases on the Island. Following the holidays, the Robertson Library reopened on January 4, 2021. More information about our operations during COVID-19 are available on our [website](#).

Staffing

We are hoping to advertise for a Systems Librarian soon and we are in the process of filling a vacancy in the Circulation Unit. Maggie Gordon has been hired as a graduate student assistant working on the Ryrie Campbell Collection in [KindredSpaces.ca](#). We have also hired several new student assistants to work on the Service Desk including Alexandra Campbell, Maria Dinh, and Alexander José Chang Ojeda.

Dr. Yolanda Hood has been selected by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) as one of as one of the recipients of the 2021 Volunteer of the Year Award for her work as Chair of the Outstanding Books for the College Bound (OBCB) committee. Congratulations to Dr. Hood and her committee. The hard work of the committee can be viewed in the [substantial list of books that have been reviewed](#).

All Robertson Library staff engaged in a 3-part Anti-racism Education series facilitated by Angela Ma Brown, an education consultant on social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

SAD Lamps

Inspired by the PEI Public Library Service’s program and in collaboration with the Student Union, the Library purchased 15 lamps that help mitigate the impact of Seasonal Affective Disorder. This led to a wonderful opportunity to collaborate with 3rd year Nursing students and a project they will carry out related to the health information associated with the use of these lamps.

Refurbishing Laptops

We provided the Student Union with several refurbished laptops for them to distribute to students in need. Thanks to our technician Larry Yeo for making this happen. Larry has also been exploring the possibility of writing chrome OS onto some of our older laptops, essentially turning them into Chromebooks for redistribution.

In Memoriam

University of Prince Edward Island's first president, Dr. Ronald Baker, passed away peacefully on December 12, 2020. University Archivist, Simon Lloyd, shared his memories:

"I had the pleasure to meet with Dr. Baker many times over the last decade, and I quickly understood why he had been an amazing president during UPEI's foundational years, and why his leadership was widely credited with helping the University overcome numerous challenges during its first decade... Dr. Baker received many honours, including Officer of the Order of Canada (1978), the Queen's Silver and Golden Jubilee Medals (1977, 2002), and honorary doctorates from the University of New Brunswick, Mount Allison University, Simon Fraser University, and UPEI. On behalf of the entire UPEI community, I offer my most sincere condolences to Dr. Baker's family, friends, and former colleagues and students."

Prior to his passing, we were able to interview Dr. Baker as part of the 50 Years, 50 Voices project and that interview has been added to the [site](#).

Digital Collections

As part of our ongoing digital collection migration project, we have relaunched two collections recently including the [Prince of Wales College Digital Archive](#) and the [Island Narratives Digital Collection](#). We are hoping to relaunch other collections before the end of the winter semester.

Collaboration with 4th Year Computer Science students

Librarian Rosie Le Faive and developer Alexander O'Neill are working with Dr. David LeBlanc's 4th-year computer science capstone students to bridge Islandora / [IslandNewspapers](#) with the Library of Congress's [Newspaper Navigator](#) machine learning-based entity extraction system. This will facilitate a search of images that appear in the newspapers.

Black History Month/Year

Dr. Yolanda Hood is coordinating a year-long Community Reads collaboration to read Desmond Cole's book [The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power](#). Leila Edwards from the Citizens for Public Justice says "*The Skin We're In* actively contests Canada's national narrative by following a year in Black encounters with and resistance to white supremacy.... This book forces readers to confront Canada's historical and contemporary narratives and reflect on what exactly is being celebrated." Each month participants will read a chapter from Cole's book each month and discuss the chapter using an intersectional and antiracist lens.

Open Textbook Champions Program

As part of the Library's Open Education Resource Development Program, librarian Kim Mears has developed a [Textbook Champions Program](#) and will be launching that during Open Education Week, March 1-5th. The program profiles UPEI faculty that have created, adapted, or adopted Open Education Resources for use their courses.

Nursing Exhibit

We are in the process of putting together a new exhibit on the history of nursing education on PEI, with special emphasis on Dr. Vera E. Dewar, a pioneer in nursing education and nursing practice on Prince Edward Island.