1965 was a year of enormous change in the Douglas Library. It was the year of the completion of construction on the new north wing of the library, the move of all departments (they were not called “units” in those days) into the new wing, and the beginning of the renovations on the “old” south wing.

The first move was of the Map Room, renamed the Geography Library, which moved from its second floor north location in Douglas Library into Ontario Hall (where the Art Library is now), as this building had just been vacated by the Physics Department’s move into the newly completed Stirling Hall. The Geography Library, renamed the Map Library, would move twice more: to MacIntosh Corry Hall in 1974 and to the basement of Stauffer in 1994.

The other departments were to remain in Douglas, and the move was complicated by the fact that different sections of the new addition were ready at different times. The other problem was that it was for many units a double move, since those that would remain in the old section had to move temporarily into the new section until renovations were complete in the old section. The first section to move, starting at the end of April, 1965, was Neil Bunker's Periodicals Section, which would now have its bound journals and continuations intershelved in call number order, no longer alphabetically, with the books in the main stacks.

The Factotum, Bulletin of Douglas Library Facts and Opinion, began publication in April of 1965, under the editorship of William Morley. Luckily for these articles, this publication adds some specific details, some social notes, and other items of interest to my fading memories of this era. We read in Factotum, for example, that the big move started on April 27, and the last of the newspapers went over to the new wing on May 20. Also in May, Mrs. Harriet Scott announced that the Geology Library was a beneficiary under the estate of the late Professor J.E. Hawley of his personal library, mainly consisting of books on igneous petrology and economic geology. Other news for May was that Mrs. Gladys Graham had bound 100 theses in 3 1/2 days (in 1965, binding was done locally, in the basement of the Douglas Library). Also of note was the fact that on May 19th Valerie Potts (now known as Val Knapp) had earned her driver’s license!

As the combined Archives/Special Collections room was to be partially in the new and partially in the old building, temporary quarters had to be found for the Lorne Pierce and John Buchan collections, on the mezzanine of the new Reading Room. A cartoon in Factotum depicts Messrs. Pierce and Buchan, looking down disapprovingly from their perches on either side of the mezzanine, and commenting (Buchan in a Scots accent of course) on the garishness of the new purple carpet (which had been laid on June 5th).

By this time the move of the main stacks was well underway. David Wang, newly hired at Queen's, was in charge of the timetable and logistics of the move, and
Peter Greig was in charge of the moving crew, which consisted of students hired for the summer, many of whom had worked in the library before. But there was also a lot of participation from regular staff members. My main memory is of the clouds of dust that arose from the old stacks, as we moved volumes that hadn’t been touched in years.

David Wang’s estimate of June 12th for the completion of the transfer of the main collection proved to be entirely accurate. June 12th was also the day that David Wang went to Toronto to meet his long-awaited fiancée Chu Jung-Hsuan, who arrived in Canada that night. Circulation began for the first time from the circulation desk in the new wing on June 15th. The Order Department moved in three hours on June 16th, and all the staff were in the new wing by June 18th, except Archives, the Bindery, and the old Reading Room.

In July the Bindery moved, and the contract for alterations (to begin immediately) of the “old” Douglas Library ($457,000) was awarded to James Kemp Construction of Hamilton (Mathers and Haldenby had been the architects of the “new” Douglas Library). July 16, 1965, was the wedding day of David Wang and Miss Chu, and a reception was held at the New Canton Restaurant afterwards.

One day at the beginning of August, we had the excitement of seeing a hole finally put through the wall between the old and new Reading Rooms on the third floor. There was not much time to admire the view, however, because frantic efforts began almost immediately to evacuate the books ahead of the construction workers. Summer students (95% of whom were education students, as, in those days before MacArthur College, an education degree was granted after two years of summer courses) were studying in the new Reading Room by 9 a.m. the next day.

By the end of August almost all of the departments had been moved from the old wing, and renovations had begun in earnest. I remember that Archives, however, stayed in the old building long after all the other departments had moved. The head of Archives, Mr. Charles Beer, quoted the poem “Casabianca”, and compared himself to the "Boy (who) Stood on the Burning Deck/ Whence All but He Had Fled", and any visitors to Archives were issued hard hats and ear plugs!

On September 7th, after much discussion, the “momentous decision to experiment for the first time with an open stack policy was reached” (remember that there was no security system in those days). Library hours would be 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 2 to 11 p.m. on Sunday, with the Reading Room open an extra hour (8 a.m. to 11 p.m.) Monday through Saturday. As far as periodicals were concerned, all unbound material was to be non-circulating, and bound material would only circulate to graduate students (overnight) or to staff members (one week loan).

September 28th was the date of the first general meeting of PLAQ, the acronym of the newly formed Professional Librarians Association of Queen’s. (In those days “professional” generally meant having a degree, but not necessarily a library degree, as several members, including the Chief Librarian, did not have a library degree.)
October saw another first for the library, its own panel truck and deliveryman (Mr. Sunderland), to do the job that had formerly been delegated to general campus mail.

November was the month of the XEROX - the library’s first photocopy machine. The hours of 8 to 11 a.m. were reserved for staff use only, and 6000 copies were made in its first month of operation. The cost for non-staff users was 10 cents a page (the dime was of course worth a lot more in 1965 than it is today).

In December Mrs. Norah Partington was hired as stack supervisor, a newly created position which the library felt was now necessary because of the open stack policy. Her other duties were to oversee the Xerox machine, and instruct the users. The very end of December saw the beginning of the move of the Government Document stacks from the Law Building back to the old Douglas Library stacks.

There were several arrivals and departures in 1965. Departing staff included Blair Wilmot, who had been head cataloguer for a number of years; Barbara Aitken, order Librarian, who left for a year’s stay in Paris, and Dr. Steve Mohan, U.N. Documents Librarian, who began library school at the University of Toronto, on a leave of absence.

Additions to the workforce in 1965 included Paul Dyment, a former library employee and recent graduate of McGill Library School, who returned as Periodicals Librarian on June 1st, and was promptly appointed the new editor of Factotum. In July Susan Miller and Frances Brown (later to be Frances Duncan) joined the staff in Serials, and Diana Wood started in the Order Department. Mrs. Phyllis Egan arrived in September as a typist in Cataloguing, and Harold Naugler, a post-graduate Queen’s history student, came in October to assist Mr. Beer in Archives. Peter Girard, a graduate of the U.B.C. Library School, and formerly of the R.M.C. Library, took the position of Order Librarian on November 1st. And in December, 1965, the former Miss Chu, now known as Amy Wang, started a fulltime job in Cataloguing, where, in fact, she still works today [as of 1998].