

THE DOUGLAS LIBRARY IN 1973

by Hilary Richardson [originally published in 2001]

In 1973, Kingston celebrated the tercentenary of its founding as a city. Queen's University joined in the tercentenary events in several ways. One was the special Open House on the weekend of February 10-11th, in which several library staff members participated. The Display Committee planned the routing and the leaflets for do-it-yourself tours of Douglas, Ian Wilson and Bill Morley entertained and instructed many people in the Special Collections/Archives area on the second floor, Sandy Casey had a busy time in the Information Services area (where there was also a slide-tape demonstration), and Mrs. Marge Webster also kept the Music Library open for the special weekend.

Kingston's tercentenary also initiated a literary renaissance in the city, in which several library staff members took part. Ian Wilson, University Archivist, and Professor J. Douglas Stewart of the Art Centre, after many months of labour in the seminar room on 4S, came out with Heritage Kingston, the catalogue for the summer exhibition to be held in the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. It consisted of 200 pages of text and 250 illustrations. Stuart MacKinnon, Cataloguing Librarian, published his long poem set in Kingston: The Intervals. Also, a 350-page book celebrating tercentenary, Kingston 300: a Social Snapshot was put out in 1973, containing 82 articles describing many facets of Kingston's past, present and future. Several people connected with the library contributed articles, including Lin Good, H.P. Gundy, Anne MacDermaid, Rose Mary Gibson, Roger Olson, Bill Morley, Linda Dumbleton, Stuart MacKinnon, Elinore Phillips (formerly Elinore Brown, she had married Associate Chief Librarian Ted Phillips on January 13th), on topics ranging from "Count Frontenac" to "The Birds of Kingston".

New arrivals in 1973 included Catherine Johnson, as an LT1 in the Reserve Room in January, and Helen Garrah as an LT1 in Serials. Diane Carroll (now Diane Nuttall of Douglas Library Circulation) joined Central Collection Services as an LT1 in May. In the summer Susanne Reeves started as an LT1 in Cataloguing, and two LT1s started in the Education Library: Janet Banger (now Janet Burgess of Douglas Library Reference) and Vince Kidd (now of Cataloguing). Helen Garrah arrived as an LT1 in Serials.

Several librarians were transferred to new assignments in the fall of 1973, including Elinore Phillips to Archives, Stuart MacKinnon to Special Collections, and Doreen Rutherford to Information/Resource Services.

Education staff now numbered 17, and came and went as frequently as in the other departments. Tony Frazao briefly got a shock when, at a farewell luncheon for an Education staff member, Holiday Inn employees presented him, the only male in the group, with the bill for everyone's meal. You see, it happened to be National Secretaries' Week, and Tony, impeccably dressed as usual, was assumed to be the big business tycoon taking his bevy of lovely secretaries out to lunch.

The Education staff were also a well-travelled lot, with holiday destinations in 1973 including New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, P.E.I., Vancouver, California, Portugal, England, Florida, Barbados, and the Azores. As for the Chief Librarian, Mr. Redmond's idea of a holiday seemed to

be visiting secondhand bookshops, and staff would follow his itinerary by looking at the postmarks on the parcels which arrived from far-flung places, or by reading the addresses on the invoices which he brought back with the boxes of books he had accumulated on his travels.

The minimum wage was raised in February to \$1.80 an hour from \$1.55, which greatly decreased the amount of hours of casual help which would be available, as the following year's budget had already been set. There were at this time 245 casuals, working for minimum wage in various parts of the library.

The Health Sciences Library, still located in the Theological Hall, had over 30,000 volumes and more than 900 current medical journal titles. At the beginning of the year, it was announced that through the National Science Library in Ottawa, the Queen's Library had access to the National Library of Medicine's new computer service MEDLINE, covering about 1000 journals and going back to 1 Jan. 1969. One of MEDLINE's advantages over the previous service MEDLARS (mentioned in "Douglas Library in 1970") was that it took much less time to consult, and cost less. MEDLINE searches cost \$10 each, and took about 12 days by mail, and less time by using the long-distance telephone.

The Union Management Committee, made up of three members of CUPE Local 1302 and three members of the library administration, had been hard at work since the year before, deciding on the grade level of each position description, and putting out the document setting down salaries and other conditions of work, known as the Collective Agreement between Queen's University and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 1302. The new point system, first discussed by Union and Management in the summer of 1972, was announced in April of 1973. The formula was based totally upon education, working experience, and number of years spent in the employ of Queen's. Since the new system assumed that two people with equal points were equally capable of performing a given job, it seemed to transform people into numbers in the personnel files. Some library employees, both professional and non-professional, objected that, by failing to recognize human merit, the point system effectively destroyed all motivation to work, since the incentive of promotion as a reward for capability, industriousness and efficiency was gone.

Another contentious issue was the introduction of flexible hours that summer. There were complaints that people weren't arriving on time for early morning shifts, and were up to 15 minutes late from 30-minute lunches. Since everyone, except the public service people who generally had to work regular hours, had a different schedule, it was difficult to regulate who was supposed to be where when. Other staff members countered that they should be trusted and not treated like a flock of children, telling mother their every move. It was pointed out that jobs were getting done and getting done well, and nitpicking was not appreciated.

Recent acquisitions by the Queen's Archives included the early papers of Sir Mackenzie Bowell, Canada's 5th prime minister, and the Homer Watson papers. Homer Watson was a landscape painter who lived at Doon, near Kitchener, who won many awards for his painting and in 1918 was president of the Royal Canadian Academy. The Archives had also acquired the records of the Orphans' Home and Widows' Friend Society, which was formed in 1857. It established a home and maintained an orphanage in Kingston from 1857 and 1947, and since then a home for disturbed

children called Sunnyside Children's Centre on Union Street (this became an outpatient clinic in the 1980s, but has more recently fallen a victim to Ontario Government cutbacks).

These records were particularly interesting to Queen's because the first building owned by the Society and run as an orphanage was at the corner of Union and University Avenue. Here in 1862 the Society purchased three acres of ground and built a stone building of "ample proportions and modern construction", all for \$4,727. In 1928, this building was bought by Queen's University for use as a university "community center". Essentially a campus men's club, the Students' Memorial Union first admitted women to a common snack bar in the building in 1949. This was after the building had been gutted by fire in the fall of 1947 and rebuilt. When I started as a student at Queen's in 1961, the Robert Wallace Hall had just been integrated, meaning that the whole building was at last fully coeducational. The Students' Memorial Union still stands at the corner of Union and University, with the later addition of the John Deutsch Centre behind it.

The quadrennial count of library holdings took place between 8 a.m. and noon on June 25th, coordinated by David Wang. The count showed that the Queen's Library System possessed over one and a half million items. There were 996,652 monographs and journals, 39,954 government documents, 411,605 microforms, 81,207 maps, 19,874 pamphlets, 6275 musical scores, 5055 sound recordings, 2424 films and filmstrips, 21,770 photographs, and 241 miscellaneous items, bringing the total count to 1,677,161 items. This count did not include the University Archives, which measured its holdings in shelf feet. Its holdings in 1973 consisted of 4240 shelf feet, estimated to be the equivalent of more than a million pieces of paper.

Some patrons objected to the posting of "No Smoking" signs in the third floor Reading Rooms, and insisted that there should be a study area upstairs where people could smoke. It was pointed out by the Chief Librarian that if one wanted to smoke, all one had to do was to go to the Periodicals Room or the stacks, as they were (believe it or not) designated as smoking areas.

On November 10th, the first workshop of the Kingston and area branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society was held in the Queen's University Archives. The resources of Documents, Special Collections and Archives were pooled for a display of genealogical sources available at Queen's. About 35 people attended, and nine speakers talked about one or another aspect of genealogical research. This became a continuing thing, as every third Saturday morning (except during the summer), the Ontario Genealogical Society would meet in the Archives/Special Collections reading room of the Douglas Library. Between 30 and 50 members would attend the meetings, although the membership was over 170. (At the present time, the Ontario Genealogical Society, which still meets on the third Saturday of each month, holds its meetings in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library.)

The indefatigable long-term editor (since 1966) of Factotum: a monthly bulletin of Douglas Librarian facts and staff opinion, Dr. Steve Mohan, was as usual busy going out and about to every unit, drumming up articles for the journal, which was still published twelve times a year in those days. This year, "plain old" technicians (instead of the same selected number of professionals each month) were encouraged to contribute articles.

The fall of 1973 also saw the official opening of the Bruce Wing of Miller Hall, which

housed the new Geology Library. For a week students toiled until midnight putting up direction signs, getting the Museum into presentable shape, and setting up displays. The books had already been moved the previous May, but Harriet Scott, Geology Librarian, assisted by Mary Mayson, who had returned that year to the library system as an LT2 in Biology and Geology, worked hard to get the new library into tip-top shape. On October 23rd at 3:30 p.m., the Honourable Minister of Colleges and Universities cut the ribbon, and the Bruce Wing, a castle in the air since 1961, was now officially open.