Order Out of Chaos

How to complete a major library renovation while still serving your students and faculty

Margaret Haines
Former University Librarian
Carleton University
Outline of My Presentation

- Historical background
  - With thanks to former AUL Linda Rossman for her photographic history of the Library
- Challenges of Getting a Major Building Project Funded
- Challenges of Going Through the Renovations
- The Final Product!
- Lessons Learned
A bit of historical background

- Carleton started as Carleton College in 1942
- 1942-46 – housed in a local high school
- 1946- moves into the former Ottawa Ladies College
- 1951 – the Library has its own extension
- 1956 – a new campus plan was started
- 1958-59 – a 2 story Library was built on the new campus and the library moved there
Situated on the Rideau River Campus within the academic core of Carleton University and facing the Henry Marshall Tory Building for Science, stands the modern and functional Maxwell MacOdrum Library. Built on two levels and designed for flexibility on the open stack principle, this library of 43,700 square feet will seat 400 readers and allow for the accommodation of 26,000 volumes. During the first two periods of development, the university administrative staff will occupy a part of the main floor space. In the future, as the need for further expansion becomes evident, the administrative staff will occupy their own building, and three additional floors may be added to the library.

Dr. Keyes D. Metcalf, librarian emeritus of Harvard University and one of the most outstanding library administrators in North America, acted as consultant in the planning of the Maxwell MacOdrum Library. The result is a library which will allow maximum and efficient use of floor space and provide quiet and comfortable surroundings for reading and study.
“On the day that the Ontario Minister of Education came to open Carleton's newest buildings a pile of construction materials in the library caught fire.

It wasn't a good omen.
Smoking will be permitted because of the better ventilation system.
Pretty as a picture
The Library at night
1961-62 Carleton Library

The way it was
Main Reading Room

Note windows on the left
The Smoking Lounge!
Those were the glory days, but...

- Over the next two decades, there were problems:
  - Heating difficulties
  - Leaks
  - Overcrowding – 24 study rooms became offices for staff which had grown to over 175
  - lack of elevator to the 5th floor

- Library briefs submitted regularly
Re-Cladding the Library in 1984/5

“universally regarded as ugly and ill-conceived”
The Library in 1986
Interim Fixes

- An extension opened in 1991
- A new storage facility opened in 2006
- Some interior changes e.g. Learning Commons added in 2005
- Minor renovations e.g. staff lounge in 2006
- Space freed by move of collections to storage did allow us to add laptop counters BUT…
- New tenants (LSS and CCS) took up many of the group study rooms
1972 Brief - 5 floor extension...
The extension in 1991: 3 floors instead of 5
The Storage Facility

Approved in 2006 due to overcrowding in the Library stacks!
The Storage Facility
24 foot high density shelving
Did that end our problems? – NO!

- No more space for students overall
- Group study space allocated to LSS
- No space for graduate students
- No space for collections despite storage facility – not fully shelved
- No space for storage in main library
- Rapidly deteriorating décor in library
- Student behavior was a major problem
- Not AODA compliant
Space Problems

Student Population & Library Student Seating Space

- Total Student Population
- Seating Capacity

# of Students/Spaces

- 1986/1987
- 2006/2007
Overcrowded shelves

Peeling plaster

Why we needed a new building or at least renovations!

Stained carpets

Lounge = storage
Our Wish List

- Build a brand new library **but** if that was not possible then:
  - Improve appearance of the building and “open it up to campus like it used to be
  - Make the space high quality, technology equipped and diverse
  - Improve heating and ventilation
  - Renovate some areas of old library
The political reality B.C. (before construction)

- A campus master space plan that encouraged renovations to QUAD facing buildings **but**...
  - Competition from other building projects on campus and no interest in a new building
- Government funding for shovel ready projects **but**...
  - Funding was tied to projects that could deliver on increased enrolment
- NSSE surveys supported *library/study* space improvements **but**...
  - Project leadership for all campus projects rested with administrative not academic management
Latest round of library planning

- In 2008, the 2004 library space plan was updated by DSAI
- In 2009, the Campus Master Space Plan made improving the Library a priority
- In 2010, the library project finally made it to the top of the building project list and a proposal was developed for the Ontario gov’t tied to student enrolment increases (+3000)
- Proposal was carefully crafted by Facilities Management to show greatest impact for smallest per FTE investment!
The political reality A.D. (after decision)

- The original library extension was designed for three additional floors **but**...
  - Building codes had changed and significantly reduced the floor loading on upper floors

- The Librarian was the Building Authority and had total control over library space **but**...
  - Facilities saw the building as “university” property and planned to move in other “tenants”

- The project was supposed to have been staged **but**...
  - To save money, Facilities decided to do all stages at once, leaving **no** swing space, and major features of the design were no longer included to save money
Our team

- **Clients:**
  - Library, LSS, CCS, Graphics, Discovery Centre

- **Architects:**
  - Cuhaci and Associates
  - Diamond Schmitt and Associates

- **Project Management:**
  - Turner and Townsend (changed multiple times)
  - Facilities, Management and Planning staff

- **Construction:**
  - Pomerleau and many, many sub-contractors
THE VISION

East Addition

28,500 square feet of study space extending towards quad

West Addition

2 floors added
45,700 square feet at back of building
East Façade – View to Quad
During Renovations

- November 2011 to October 2013
- All services operating in MacOdrum Library carried on throughout construction
- Temporary entrances including disabled entrance at tunnel level
- Conditions:
  - Dust, noise, asbestos abatement, floods, multiple relocations of staff, reduced seating for students, infiltration by rodents, squirrels and raccoons, etc
And so it began....
Preparations

Page break closed

Ramp built

Moves start

Fire Safety
Cranes were everywhere
Preparation of extension roof
And the front started to disappear
And became something alien-like
I worked right behind the plastic sheeting!
The new staircase was built
Soon, it began to take shape
Especially when the glass was added
Until we got to the finishing stages
Meanwhile the back started to appear
Right on top of the existing roof
Great jubilation when the roof was installed!
And soon it was almost done
Inside, things were not the same...
We had to put directions on the floor!
Inside the construction zone
Leaks,’ leaks, and more leaks!
Staff were always happy to help
And we all pitched in...sort of...
Even our new tenants!
We stayed calm and carried on
And we had some interesting moves
Moving in – MADGIC level 1
So...after all that, this is what we got!

- SPACE, LIGHT, TECHNOLOGY, BEAUTY
- Archives & Research Collections
  - Climate controlled vault, display & teaching space
- Reference
  - New offices, new teaching and consulting space
- Expanded/improved Centre for Adaptive Technology
- Discovery Centre
  - Multi-media lab, Gaming lab and Learning lab
  - Flexible, innovative, collaborative space
- Beautiful double height main floor reading room
The new front façade to the Quad
And at dusk...
The view of the Library at night
The view from the canal showing extension

Old façade on the main building on left - still to be replaced
The view from the side windows
View from the Front Facade
Our café came back!
And it was behind glass walls
The spiral staircase from inside
Students in main reading room
The main reading room
Group furniture in Discovery Centre
Mediascape configurations
Mediascapes in use
Learning Lab
Multimedia Lab
Gaming Lab
Gaming Lab and 3D printers
Makerbots – 3D printers
Graduate Rooms 5th floor
Graduate carrels – 5th floor
Undergraduate Study Room
David Fels sculpture on 5th floor
And the picture is back!
Ann Lazear with the Premier of Ontario at the official opening – December 5, 2013
Project Summary Stats

• Started in November 2011
• $27.2m project budget ($16.7m from Ontario)
• +75k sf added for a total of 240k sf
• Doubled the seating capacity to 2000 seats
• Now have 3 classrooms, 8 reading rooms, 3 seminar rooms, 3 high tech labs (gaming, multimedia and learning), 47 group studies (including 15 dedicated graduate rooms); 80+ Graduate carrels and lockers
Lessons Learned

- The right person for the right job - Val!
- Communication, communication, communication!
- Patience, perseverance, persuasion, political acumen
- Keeping the vision alive in the minds of users
- The importance of allies – students, faculty, Deans
  - And also the construction crew!
- Learning to compromise and make trade-offs
- Tenants = building partners not adversaries
- A sense of humour and malt whisky in the cupboard
New Opportunities and Challenges

• Opportunities:
  • Community engagement
  • Research Partnerships
  • Learning and Teaching Partnerships
  • Developing new organization and service models

• Challenges
  • Increasing demands from campus for space
  • Need for fair and transparent policies on public use
  • NEED FOR NEW SKILLS FOR STAFF
  • Keeping up the interest in finishing the renovations
At the official opening with the Premier

This event gave every stakeholder a real boost!
For further information:

• Margaret Haines 613-825-9615
  • Margaret.haines@Carleton.ca
• Valerie Critchley 613-520-2600 ext 1808
  • Valerie.critchley@Carleton.ca