



McLaughlin Library Update

SPRING 2021 EDITION



McLAUGHLIN
LIBRARY



Welcome from the University Librarian

As we continue to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am proud of what library staff have accomplished this academic year. There have been constant changes and shifts in the ways we do things, and the staff at the McLaughlin Library never cease to amaze me. Their commitment to providing the University of Guelph community with the supports and services needed to continue with their studies, research, and teaching is unwavering.

In this edition, we will be highlighting some of what has been done in the past academic year like collaborations that have led to developing exceptional online collections, supporting students online and what it may mean moving forward, and the addition of three new strategic team heads. We will also share some exciting news of what's to come a bit later this year, including welcoming a new associate university librarian, academic, and highlighting the progress on our new entrance that is slated to open in the fall of 2021.

These shorter reports will be shared following each semester to provide you with a glimpse into the many changes happening at the U of G McLaughlin Library. We hope you enjoy this first edition.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rebecca".

Rebecca A. Graham

A Changing Leadership Team

Introducing McLaughlin Library's
new Associate University
Librarian, Sarah Beaubien

Sarah Beaubien will be joining the McLaughlin Library as associate university librarian, academic, effective July 1, 2021. Beaubien will oversee the library's Collections & Content and the Learning & Curriculum Support teams, as well as Access Services. Beaubien is currently the associate dean of curriculum, research, and user services at Grand Valley State University in Michigan.



Q&A with Sarah Beaubien (SB)

Q: Please tell us a bit about yourself...

SB: I was telling a friend recently about our upcoming move to Guelph, and she said, “How adventurous, an international move during a pandemic!” Setting aside the possible multiple meanings her remark may have had, it struck me because I don’t consider myself to be a particularly adventurous person (except where food or music are concerned). But I do try to remain open to new experiences, new knowledge, and opportunity. This one seemed worthwhile, despite the timing.

I’m an extroverted introvert, which I define as very much enjoying working with and interacting with people, ideally followed by quiet time to regain focus and recharge. My weekends and down time typically involve spending time with family, reading, and getting outdoors for leisurely walks and hikes. Among the things I’ve valued during the pandemic is that some aspects of life slowed down a little, and I have been able to spend time doing things like daily walks with my 9-year-old son, a habit I hope to retain post-COVID.

As a colleague, I value open communication, transparency, creative problem solving, empathy, and finding joy in our work whenever possible. Recently, a few colleagues commented to me that I have a calm demeanor; one told me that I’m easy to disagree with – and then went on to explain that they are comfortable having an honest conversation with me on an issue where we had very different perspectives. This was lovely to hear, as it reflects my intent of inviting a diverse range of perspectives to inform a project or decision.

Q: Please tell us a bit about your professional career...

SB: I’ve been fortunate to enjoy a variety of jobs in academic libraries, from my undergraduate years at Northern Michigan University (NMU), through my MLS program at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB) and beyond. I began as a student assistant in the technical services department during my undergraduate years. After graduation, I was hired full-time at NMU doing interlibrary loan and circulation work. A few years into this position, I went on to grad school. There, at IUB, I held student positions doing reference and instruction, and a graduate assistantship with collections and scholarly communications. My first professional position after graduate school was as a liaison librarian at Grand Valley State University (GVSU). At the time, I worked with humanities departments, and later went on to several other liaison roles with arts, humanities, and then sciences departments. I served as the instruction coordinator at the University of Minnesota Duluth, eventually returning to GVSU and moving into leadership roles as scholarly communications outreach coordinator, then head of collections & scholarly communications, and finally as associate dean of curriculum, research, & user services. I’m grateful for the breadth of experience these roles have provided, and how each one has enriched my perspective.



Q: What are you passionate about professionally?

SB: So many things! I'll share just a few here.

- First and foremost, it's about valuing people. By this, I mean the entirety of our user community – learners, educators, researchers, community members – and, of course, our staff, librarian, and student colleagues. When considering any service, collection, or space decision, I'll almost always ask how does this benefit our users, and what does the data or user input tell us about the need? Similarly, it's just as important to me to foster a workplace culture where colleagues feel comfortable sharing feedback, suggestions, or concerns. Which leads me to...
- Inclusion, equity, and belonging, for library users and colleagues. Systemic racism and identity-based inequities can feel overwhelming to address, at times leading to inertia, or fear of further perpetuating harm if mistakes are made. My hope is to identify ways – both large and small – to develop and/or improve services, collections, and spaces that welcome all identities and offer a sense of inclusion and belonging. Some examples of work I've been involved in include policy revision, gender-inclusive restroom advocacy efforts, improvements in hiring practices, and inclusive and accessible space planning.
- Open access and open educational resources remain important priorities to me, and I see these as connected to nearly all areas of the library. I'm especially interested in how libraries – often in partnership with scholars and/or other groups – can lead positive change in increasing access to information, increasing awareness of the complexities of knowledge creation and access via information literacy instruction, and facilitating the dissemination of our university's scholarly and creative output.

Q: Why did you choose to apply for this role?

SB: There were several factors. First, I was looking to move to a more research-focused university, but one that still prioritizes the student experience, and my impression of U of G is that it balances both. Second, I was aware of some of the innovative things happening at the McLaughlin Library and was excited by that potential. Third, I appreciated that the library values were clearly communicated on the website, and that they align with my own professional values. Finally, I was intrigued with how the position advertisement was written with the AUL portfolio areas undefined; it indicated to me that flexibility and strategic, big-picture thinking were important to the hiring process and the leadership approach.



Q. What are you most looking forward to when your appointment begins?

SB: I'm looking forward to meeting all of you, whether that is virtually or in-person! Getting to know colleagues in the library, the university, as well as those involved in regional partnerships is at the forefront of my mind. More specifically, I'm eager to learn more about each of the teams I'll be working with – what are their priorities, goals, and needs? I'm also looking forward to exploring the curricular and research needs at U of G, particularly as these relate to our collections and services.

Another area of interest for me is the strong consortial partnerships the McLaughlin Library is part of. I have some experience with consortia in Michigan, but it seems to me there are stronger collaborations and, in some cases, a larger scope of partnerships in Canada than in the US.

Q: Why U of G?

SB: I appreciate the balanced approach U of G takes in prioritizing students and research. This fosters a vibrant academic community that I'm looking forward to joining. Mission statements are important, and U of G's mission resonates with my view of the values of higher education, in particular the learner-centered focus and the intent to foster "open inquiry, collaboration, and mutual respect."

Three New Strategic Team Heads

In the fall of 2020, we had the pleasure of welcoming three new strategic team heads to our leadership team. Read on for their bios and brief Q&As with each of them.



Melanie Parlette-Stewart, Head, Learning & Curriculum Support

Melanie Parlette-Stewart is a professional librarian whose experience in academia spans over a decade. Parlette-Stewart joined the University of Guelph in 2013 and has held roles as a blended learning librarian and a digital media librarian before leaving for a secondment as a training coordinator with the Portage Network. Before working at U of G, she worked at Conestoga College and Dalhousie University.

Q&A with Melanie Parlette-Stewart (MPS)

Q: What are you most passionate about in your work?

MPS: I'm passionate about creating learner centered experiences and services. I'm interested in how we put the learner at the centre of what we do, and I believe that this is key to the success of Learning & Curriculum Support. For me, I enjoy seeking out opportunities where we can challenge assumptions. Using tools like user experience testing and regularly committing to improving what we do over time. For me this means looking for the evidence and recognizing how students experience things holistically.

I'm also passionate about creating opportunities for collaboration and building strong relationships. We don't do what we do alone – it's necessary to collaborate with each other and across campus. My scholarship work with Sajni Lacey from the University of British Columbia, Okanagan on Imposter Syndrome has really highlighted to me the importance of finding “your place” within a diverse field such as librarianship. The relationships that we build with our colleagues are key to our success. I've been so excited over my time at U of G to work with so many different units from across the University, including, the Gordon S. Lang School of Business and Economics, the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute, and the Office of Research.

Q: What are you most excited about in your new role?

MPS: Working with a group of talented individuals who are passionate about learning. This unit provides exceptional face-to-face service and I'm excited about the opportunities presented to us to translate this to the online environment. The team has already made incredible leaps forward with this – for example moving our face-to-face supported learning group sessions to an online classroom. I think we're now presented with the opportunity to challenge ourselves to take what we've done in an incredibly short period of time and look to learn from these experiences and continue to meet the needs of learners in these challenging times.

I'm also excited to think about what this means for the future of learning in higher education – how we provide academic support services is going through a dramatic shift. Now is an incredibly exciting time to think about what we do with this and how our services will evolve.

Q: Why U of G?

MPS: The University of Guelph has continued to provide me with exciting opportunities – whether it's been to start a Media Studio or take on a leadership role. People are passionate about what they do here, and this shows. U of G is beautiful campus and Guelph is a vibrant city to live in.



Ian Gibson, Head, Collections & Content

Ian Gibson, our new head of Collections & Content, is interested in all things open and is especially excited by the growth of preprints and the initiative for open citations. Gibson is also interested in collection assessment and the different kinds of evidence that is emerging from the use of our collections. Gibson joins U of G from Brock University, where he was acting head, Collections. When unwinding, he enjoys board games, cooking, and listening to music.

Q&A with Ian Gibson (IG)

Q: What are you most passionate about in your work?

IG: I am passionate about leveraging collaboration with other units and other libraries to move the work of Collections and Content forward. Right now, in Ontario we are just starting to scratch the surface of collaborative possibilities with the Omni system. We are not used to thinking about the possible deep collaboration that this system makes possible. It is therefore incumbent on those of us in leadership positions to think big and to articulate our vision of what could be to those in our organization who do not necessarily see the opportunities and advantages that deep and meaningful collaboration will bring.

Q: What are you most excited about in your new role?

IG: I am most excited by the Collections & Content team. One of the primary reasons I wanted this role was the people at U of G. My background is collection development, and in my time in that area, U of G librarians have always played a prominent role so it is very exciting to inherit that tradition but also to ensure that we continue to make our voices heard nationally and internationally. I don't know the Acquisitions, Course Reserve and Electronic Resource Management staff as well yet but I'm confident that we have the right people to tackle the challenges present in our current landscape.

Q: Why U of G?

IG: The University of Guelph has so many great things going for it:

- It's a good size – large enough to do exciting things but not so large as to be overwhelming
- The library is well resourced – both from a budget and human resources perspective
- The location is perfect for my family

But the single biggest pull was the people. I knew several U of G people from other contexts and the prospect of being able to work with them more closely was irresistible!





Curtis Sassur, Head, Archival & Special Collections

Curtis Sassur joined us as head, Archival & Special Collections, and digital archivist in December 2020. Sassur joins U of G from Ryerson University where he was an archivist. Sassur's research focuses on the monetary appraisal of Canadian archival properties.

Q&A with Curtis Sassur (CS)

Q: What are you most passionate about in your work?

CS: Although I am attracted to many aspects of the role, I suppose I am most passionate about supporting young people to develop and grow in the archival profession.

Q: What are you most excited about in your new role?

CS: As we all know, U of G has an excellent library system and archival repository, and I can't wait to eventually get onsite and immerse myself in the collections. I'm also very much looking forward to potential future collecting directions that may dovetail with my personal interest in music related archival collections.

Q: Why U of G?

CS: Guelph is where I initially moved to when I left my hometown to go to university. I graduated from U of G with a philosophy degree and lived and worked in Guelph for almost ten years during that period of my life. I am so happy to be coming back to the city and the University at this time, and to be entrusted with helping to maintain the A&SC's wonderful collections.

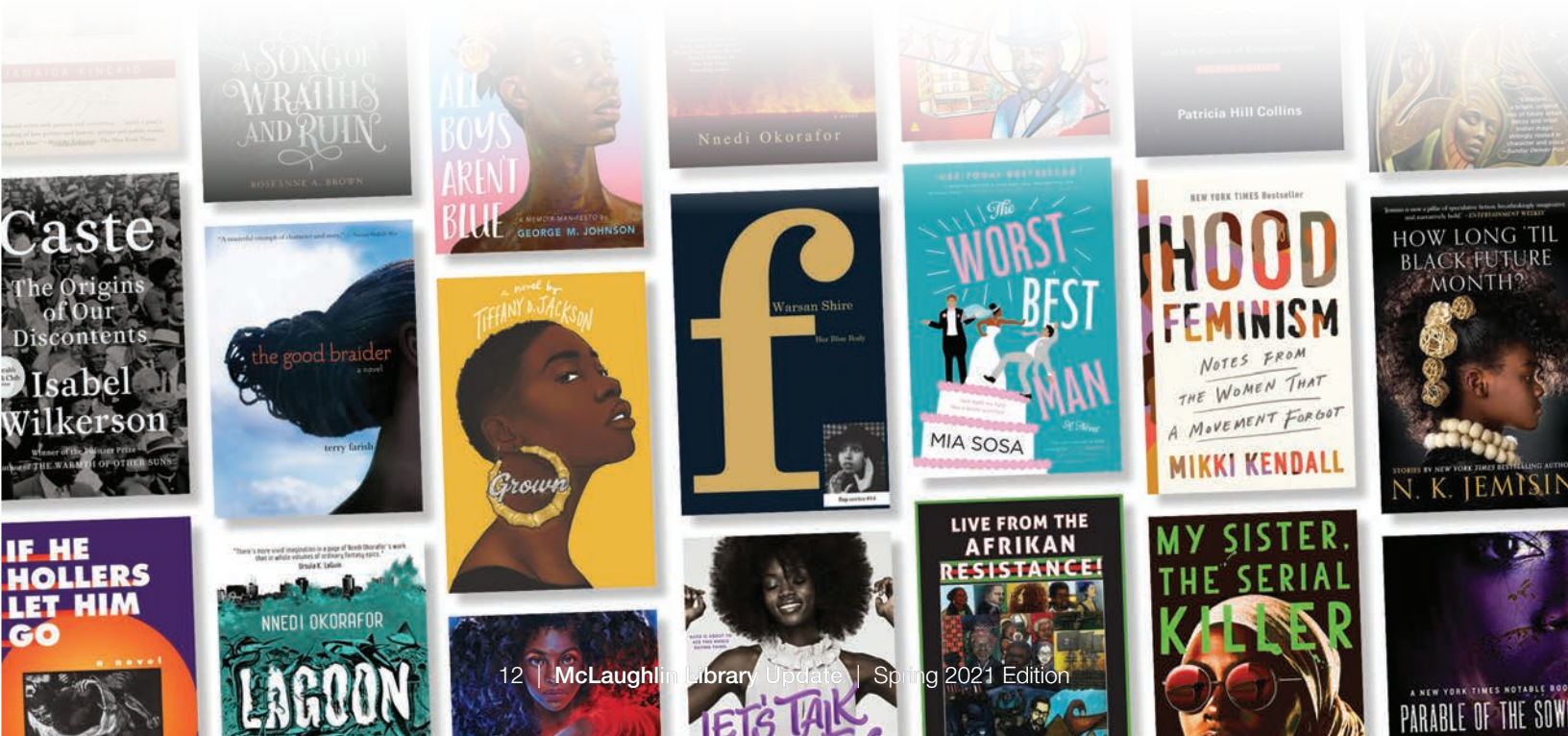
Collaborating Across Campus on the Curation of Digital Collections

Throughout the winter 2021 term, members of the library's Collections & Content team curated online collections in collaboration with other on-campus groups. These collections are featured on the library's website.

Celebrating Black Narratives

In recognition of Black Heritage Month, an online collection titled [Celebrating Black Narratives](#) was developed. This collection is a collaboration between the Cultural Diversity Office, the Guelph Black Students Association (GBSA), and the library. It was made to highlight the experiences and perspectives of Black people through a variety of narratives. "Black lives are multidimensional, and we felt as though portraying Black authors and characters in a variety of genres will give homage to this fact," said Chioma Nwebube, president, GBSA, and Mechaela Alfonso, vice-president, GBSA, in a joint statement.

The titles in the collection were selected by members of the GBSA and include a range of literary genres. "We hope that this collection will help readers picture Black people in romance, horror, science fiction, fantasy, and more. Our goal is to expand the societal box of where Black people belong, so that we can all move forward in picturing Black bodies as an ever-present reality," said Nwebube and Alfonso.





International Women's Day Film Collection

International Women's Day (IWD) is a global day of recognition celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women and girls. The theme of IWD 2021 was Choose to Challenge, and this collection of documentary films – by women and about women – challenges, inspires, educates, and entertains.

This [International Women's Day Films: Choose to Challenge online collection](#) was curated by members of the GenEQ Advisory Group in collaboration with the library to celebrate IWD. All current U of G students, faculty, and staff have access to the collection through the library's streaming media collection.



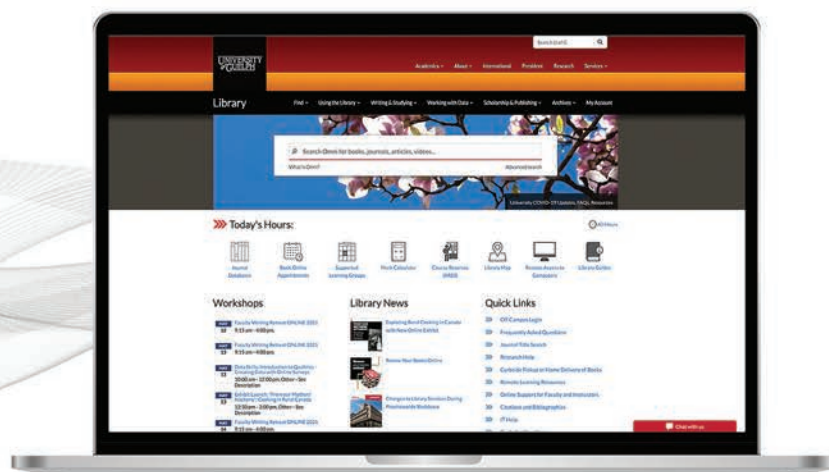
Supporting Students Online: Now and Into the Future

The library supports U of G students in many ways, one of them being online, by offering a variety of online services and resources. One of the most recent developments with the onset of COVID-19, has been a shift to online workshops.

One of these workshops, titled Control Academic Stress, saw higher attendance in the fall 2020 term. “We saw a 70% increase in attendance between fall 2019, when we offered the Control Academic Stress series in person, and fall 2020, when we offered it online,” said Joannah O’Hatnick, manager, Learning Services, Learning & Curriculum Support (L&CS).

Along with the significant increase in attendees, student participation in the online version of the workshop was higher than the in-person workshops previously offered. “Students used the chat function in Zoom very effectively; they not only shared their own strategies for reducing procrastination, but they also responded to other students’ questions and provided support to other students who expressed challenges around procrastination,” said O’Hatnick.

The rapid development of online resources and programs throughout the pandemic has had some advantages – providing staff the opportunity to consider different modes of services to meet student needs going forward. “It’s exciting to imagine how we can transfer this learning to future workshops and programming in the library, taking advantage of a variety of formats and reaching more students,” said Melanie Parlette-Stewart, head, L&CS. The knowledge and experience gained over the past year has equipped library staff with an increased flexibility to offer programs and workshops in a variety of ways – whether it be fully online, in a hybrid format, or in a face-to-face setting – always adapting the way we work to better support U of G students.

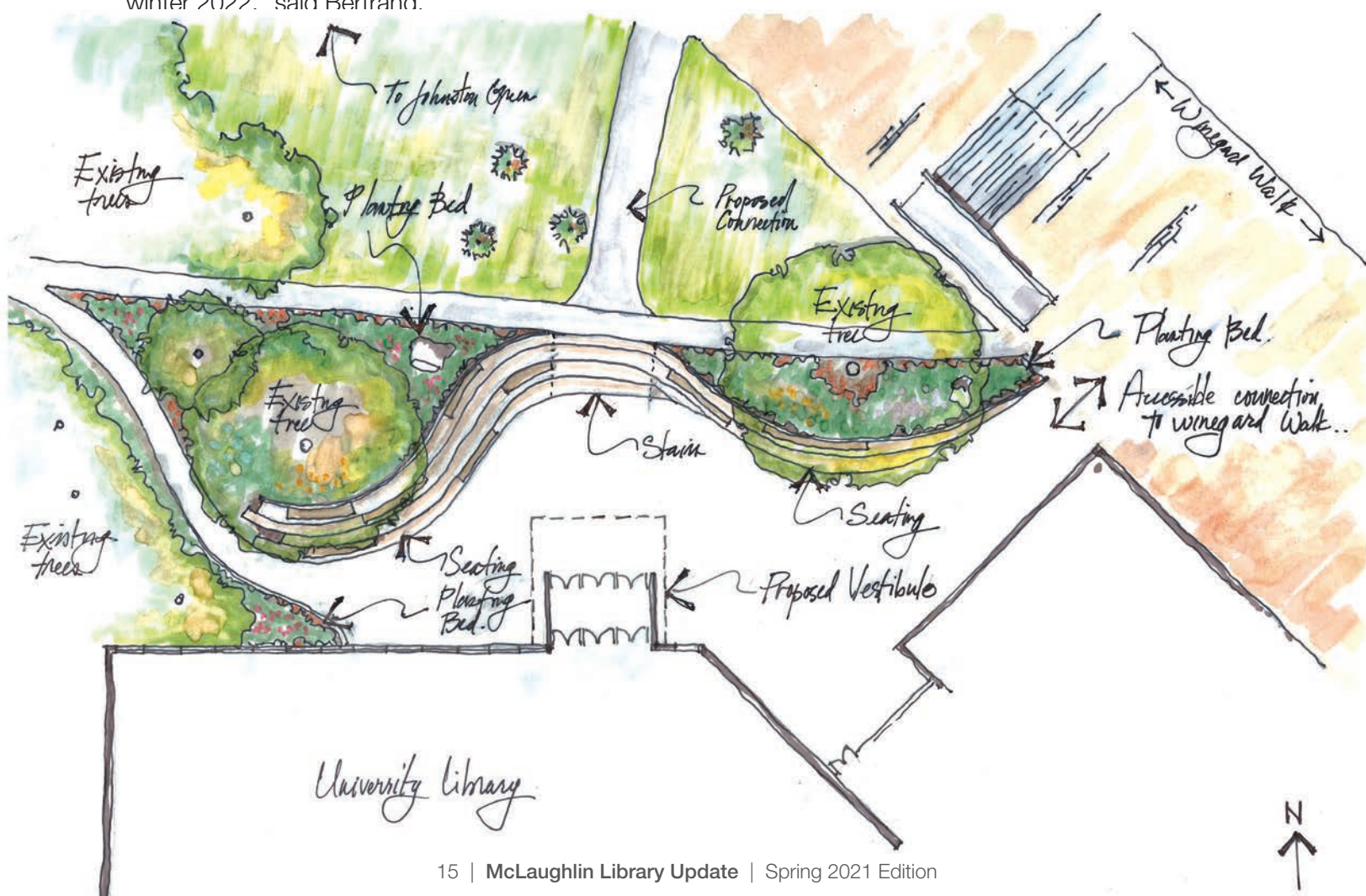


Looking Forward: New Entrance Construction to Begin

After years of planning and a delay arising from the pandemic, the construction of the new entrance is slated to begin early summer 2021. “We are excited to embark on this project. Not only will this new entrance transform the aesthetics of the building, it will also provide library patrons with an enhanced experience,” said Kelly Bertrand, director, Administrative Services.

The new entrance, situated at the north end of the building, facing Johnston Green, will provide a more welcoming space, increased safety, and a new drainage system. It will also help regulate the temperature near the entrance of the building, keeping cold air out in the winter and warm air out in the summer.

In addition to the changes happening to the building, there are plans to redesign the outside space leading up to the new entrance. This includes landscaping, outdoor seating, and lighting, ensuring a safe and inviting place to visit. “If construction stays on schedule, the new entrance will be available for use by winter 2022.” said Bertrand.



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