VIU library faculty and staff thank the Coast Salish peoples on whose traditional territory VIU resides for the opportunity to learn, live, and work in this beautiful land.
The end of each semester is a stressful time for students, with final projects due and exams looming. In 2015, VIU Library began offering Dog Therapy to help students cope. More than just fun, research shows that pet therapy reduces stress, improves cognition and memory, and enhances student learning. In Fall 2015, we hosted three therapy dogs (and their handlers) throughout the end of the semester.

The students loved it! Crowds of library users stopped by to pet and play with their new-found friends, and chat about their schoolwork. “Several students commented, ‘You have no idea how important this is for us; you made my day, my week, my month. I only wish the dogs could be here every week!’” says Laura Halliday, a library assistant at VIU, and Dareby’s handler. Some students would swing by for a quick greeting and a selfie or two, while others preferred to hang out for an extended visit.

According to Jennifer Franklin, VIU Library’s Media Advisor and Desi’s handler, “I was amazed at the number of students who sat down and stayed! Many of them talked about missing their family dogs at home, and sometimes far away. They’d start telling me stories, but ended up engaging with each other in such lovely ways.” We’re excited to continue offering dog therapy at VIU Library.

PAWS-ING FOR A STUDY BREAK

Therapy dogs Dareby (far left), Desi (above left), and Pilot (above right) helped students de-stress.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE LIBRARY?

Alan Milabaev
MBA
“There is a good atmosphere to study here. I can combine the good view and the learning process.”

Veva Leigh
ABE
“I like to study. I like to work here. It’s quiet.”

Mahima Gupta
Business
“The library is an easy source for all sorts of information. Anything you want!”

Wade Biasutti
Biology (B.Sc. graduate)
“I like to work here and stare out at the downtown while I’m studying, to de-stress.”
In any year, the VIU Library collections budget faces challenges such as inflation, changing formats and user expectations, and flux and consolidation in the scholarly publishing marketplace. We mitigate these challenges through diligent assessment, innovative acquisition models, and participation in provincial (BCELN), regional (COPPUL) and national (CRKN) library consortia to maximize buying power.

For the past 18 months, the plunging Canadian dollar has been a key cause for concern. With 80 to 90% of our collections budget committed in U.S. dollars, a 25 to 30 cent drop in the loonie means an increase of $150,000 to $200,000 in costs for journals, databases, books and videos. Faced with consequent budget overruns, we have been reviewing our resources not just as usual for overlaps and efficiencies, but to economize while minimizing impact on learning and scholarship. We have discussed possible cancellations with faculties and departments, and have made some cancellations based on low use, but with the support of VIU’s faculty and senior management group key resources have so far been retained.

This problem is not unique to VIU. Across Canada, academic libraries are confronting this crisis and making painful decisions to cut core information resources. While the low dollar is the current focus, the source of the crisis is a deeply flawed academic publishing paradigm: university faculty provide publicly-funded scholarship and peer review services to commercial publishers at little or no cost, and publishers sell these products to libraries at hugely inflated prices. The public pays twice for research output, while for-profit companies reap massive profits; it is a problem that no library budget increase will solve. Many faculty and librarians are exploring alternative publishing models to ensure access to publicly-funded research for citizens, but such a paradigm shift requires consensus, commitment and solidarity among faculty, researchers, librarians and university administrators. To this end, the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) formed the Institutional Mobilization Task Group (IMTG), of which VIU librarian Jean Blackburn is a member. The IMTG was tasked with gathering information and developing tools to help communicate about these important issues; the resulting “toolkit” is available at www.crkn.ca/imtg. We hope that faculty, students and university leaders will join us in these critical conversations and help us keep publicly funded research accessible.

This year we participated in an innovative open access publishing project, Knowledge Unlatched (KU). Driven by concerns about economic barriers to accessing current scholarship, a charter group of educational institutions and research funders founded KU to facilitate access to scholarly research in the humanities and social sciences.

The KU model relies on many libraries contributing toward the costs of publishing scholarly books; contributions are paid to academic publishers to cover production costs, and in return the books are made available online in perpetuity as downloadable PDF files. Because the publishing costs are fixed, per-library contribution rates are lowered as more libraries participate in KU. KU’s pilot phase “unlatched” 28 front-list titles from 13 scholarly publishers, which have been downloaded more than 60,000 times in 175 different countries. Supported by a grant from the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN), VIU Library contributed to Round 2, which will unlatch 78 books from 26 publishers.

We are proud to do our part to support open access scholarly publishing. Other open access projects supported by VIU Library include the Canadiana Heritage Project, Erudit, Internet Shakespeare Editions, SCOAP, and CRKN’s Digital Content Infrastructure for the Humanities and Social Sciences (DCI) Project.

www.knowledgeunlatched.org
DUOS TO WATCH OUT FOR: TEACHING PARTNERSHIP BROADENS NOTION OF “INTERDISCIPLINARITY”

“Like Batman and Robin” is how students have described a unique partnership between librarian Kathleen Reed and English professor Dawn Thompson. For the last two offerings of English 480 – Research Methods, the two faculty members have been team teaching together. While Thompson covers English methodologies and Reed leads content related to research skills and methods, instruction is frequently a back-and-forth conversation.

Thompson speaks enthusiastically of the benefits of this approach: “Team teaching a Research Methods course with a librarian enriches the course tremendously for both students and disciplinary faculty. Students are given the opportunity to view research, and get feedback on their own research, from both perspectives, thus deepening and broadening their understanding of the research process. Disciplinary faculty have a chance to update and broaden their own research skills. Teaching partnerships such as these broaden the notion of ‘interdisciplinarity,’ which is often conceived of only amongst instructional departments. I would think such partnerships would be of benefit in every discipline.”

Thompson and Reed presented on their partnership at the Association of College Research Libraries 2015 conference in Portland, and recently published a book chapter: “Duos to Watch Out For: Blending Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication Instruction through Faculty-Librarian Collaboration,” in Rewired: Research-Writing Partnerships Within the Frameworks (ACRL, Winter 2016). The chapter is available in VIUSpace: https://viuspace.viu.ca/handle/10613/3114

In music, the word adagio describes slow tempo—nothing fast or lively. But when VIU Jazz Studies student Candice Jones came to the library and asked for help finding information on a well-known adagio piece, her research really sped up.

“I was coming up with sources that seemed to say different things,” said Jones, “and you [in the library] helped me find the best evidence.”

Jones was researching the Adagio for Strings in B-flat minor, written in the 1930s by American composer Samuel Barber.

“The piece is famous for describing sadness,” explained Jones. “You hear it in lots of different places.” Jones related how Barber’s Adagio is played when announcing the deaths of famous people, and was featured to show tragedy in movies like Platoon and The Elephant Man.

Jones said her research challenge was in trying to synthesize different articles and books written on the topic. “[The library] helped me find sources and gave me advice on organizing different authors’ ideas.”

From her research, helped by the VIU Library and the Writing Centre, Jones developed the thesis that a space exists between what composers intend when they write a piece of music, compared with how people interpret that piece.

“When Barber first wrote Adagio, he wasn’t thinking of something sad,” said Jones. “But now, when you hear that piece, you think of a funeral.”

However, Jones’ research ended happily—with high marks in her Music History course: “It was a lot of work, but it ended up being a really interesting project!”

Library faculty Kathleen Reed (left) and English faculty Dawn Thompson (right) have been described as “Batman and Robin” by the students they teach.
VIU LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS
2015-2016

308K in-person visits
220K visits to viu.ca/library
1.1M library searches
62K ebooks accessed
27K print books checked out

4351 INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVED LIBRARY INSTRUCTION
80% OF STUDENTS USE WHAT THEY LEARN FROM LIBRARIANS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM
91% OF STUDENTS SAY STAFF ASSISTANCE IS IMPORTANT
79% FIND THE INFO THEY NEED IN THE LIBRARY ALL OR MOST OF THE TIME
61% OF STUDENTS VISIT THE LIBRARY WEEKLY
GISÈLE MERLET: VIU LIBRARY’S AUTHOR-IN-RESIDENCE
—AND HER OFFICE

Gisèle Merlet passed away on June 14, 2016. It is with heavy hearts that we publish the following piece in the format edited and approved by Gisèle. Library faculty and staff send our deepest sympathies to her family and friends. —Editors

A case can be made that Gisèle Merlet, author of the recently published short story collection *As I Rise*, is Vancouver Island University Library’s author-in-residence. There’s even an office plaque to prove it.

In January, Merlet was honoured as one of VIU Library’s most faithful patrons, and the Library Commons computer station where she regularly sits—and where much of *As I Rise* was written—was officially recognized as “the Office of Gisèle Merlet.”

Librarians and staff at VIU have long regarded Merlet as a central figure in student life at the library. “In one word: inspiring,” said Tim Atkinson, VIU University Librarian.

Merlet, a student in the Creative Writing & Journalism program, has been a library regular since 1999 when, at the age of 65, she decided to enter university studies. “When I was younger, I never dreamed I’d be living here,” said Merlet, “and never thought I’d be going to university.”

Merlet was born in Montreal and raised in a convent school: “The nuns taught us [girls] to be secretaries, maybe teachers or nurses, but not other careers.”

Eventually, Merlet would marry Jean, a chef, whose desire to run his own business led the couple to Vancouver Island in 1973. In Parksville, they opened Ma Maison, a successful French restaurant that operated until 1989. In retirement, Merlet wanted further adventures—of the educational variety—which brought her to VIU.

“It was so intimidating,” recalled Merlet of her earliest days at university. “I remember how scared I was to even enter the library. It took me five times before I walked through the door!”

Once inside, Merlet gradually made herself at home. She asked for a library tour, and then for research help. She recalls an 18-year-old student teaching her to draw mindmap diagrams to help her study.

Merlet attributes much of her educational transformation to people in the VIU community such as professors Joy Gugeler and John Lepage, who helped her find her writing voice. And in time, Merlet would become a mentor, helping other students, even in hard times. “I remember one day a student was crying in the washroom,” said Merlet. “I asked her what was wrong, and she said she had lost all her work on her computer and she had to start all over again. I told her to keep going: ‘Don’t cry! Write it! Go do it!’”

With the recent publication of *As I Rise*, Merlet hopes to give back to VIU. Sales of the book go toward the Gisèle Merlet Student Award, offered to Creative Writing students demonstrating potential and financial need.
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS TREASURE

ATLAS SUPPORTING THE HISTORIC DELGAM UUKW CASE

Wonderful treasures reside within the walls of our library’s Special Collections such as the 1987 atlas, Delgam Uukw v. The Queen: Cartographic Support for the Plaintiff’s Evidence. One of our instructors makes an annual booking with her students to view this important resource, created for the Gitksan and Wet’suwet’en chiefs to provide documentation for a series of B.C. land claims hearings. Delgam Uukw is a colourful atlas that depicts the history, culture, and natural resources (such as berries, caribou, and deer) used by the Gitksan and Wet’suwet’en peoples for thousands of years. The harvesting range of these important food sources provides evidence of the claimants’ ancient territorial use of this region. The atlas has 27 maps and gazetteers with text written in both native languages, in addition to English.

As in the case with this atlas, we hope our users will continue to discover the research value of our Special Collections resources.

A close-up of the map for Saskatoon berries shows a section along the Nass River, indicating the distribution and abundance of this food source.

NEW DIRECTION FOR SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

The library has been busy this year developing Special Collections guidelines for acquisitions. Our focus will be on the regional history and culture of First Nations peoples, and the diverse ethnic groups who settled on and around the island, while continuing to collect material on Canadian exploration and selected VIU publications (e.g. VIU Strategic Planning, Inside VIU, Journey, student and staff newsletters).

A Special Collections website has also been created to highlight material, facilitate user access to this collection, and outline the collection guidelines: http://libguides.viu.ca/specialcollections
Chinese throughout the province took great pride in street arches they would erect each time an important dignitary visited their area. This arch was erected in Nanaimo in 1882 to welcome the Marquis and Duchess of Lorne.

COWICHAN

It’s been another great year at Cowichan, with success primarily due to superlative library assistants Joanne Fulton and Annie Smith, who provide 60 hours of library services weekly, including critical support for research and computing. Our Cowichan Library team was joined this year by Patricia Geddes, graduate of VIU’s First Nations Studies program and newest library faculty member. Team members served in various ways: Geddes interviewed Ruth Kroek to receive some of Kroek’s wisdom and institutional knowledge, Meg Ecclestone chaired the Cowichan Learning Commons Advisory Group, Dana McFarland participated on Cowichan Development & Management Team (CDMT) and reached out to the Education program, and Jean Blackburn participated on CDMT and offered workshops to volunteer tutors and local community groups. VIU librarians Kathleen Reed and Cameron Hoffman-McGaw collaborated with Cowichan’s Innovation Lab and taught information literacy skills in Cowichan courses. We have been privileged to participate in campus life through student orientation and planning for Cowichan’s fifth anniversary celebration. Recently, Dan Sifton and Sarah Ogden established a special collection of digitized materials celebrating the development and history of Cowichan Campus in VIUSpace, our online institutional repository. Thanks to Cowichan’s leadership team and staff for supporting us.

POWELL RIVER

The past year at the Powell River Campus has been marked by change. We said goodbye to retired longtime employee Ann Trousdell, and welcomed Brenda Paisley to the VIU Library team. In our unique operation at the Powell River campus, where we collaborate with the VIU Bookstore to run a combined library/bookstore service, Paisley worked closely with Laurie MacNeal throughout the fall to offer outstanding services to the campus community. She left VIU for other opportunities in December, and MacNeal has been running the library/bookstore on her own this spring. We owe her heartfelt thanks for such flexibility and dedication!

Campus liaison librarian Jean Blackburn travelled to the campus to teach information literacy classes and liaise with faculty; Blackburn and Cameron Hoffman-McGaw also delivered online library workshops to Alison Taplay’s online School and Community Support Worker students. University Librarian Tim Atkinson visited the campus in February to consult with faculty and Campus Administrator Greg Cran on ideas for transforming library services at the campus. The library is proud to contribute to the great work and learning happening at VIU in Powell River, and is grateful for the support of campus faculty and staff.

ASIAN CANADIANS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND WORKSHOP

In February, VIU’s Nanaimo Campus hosted a history workshop, Asian Canadians and First Nations on the Islands: Sharing Stories, Re-Connecting Communities. Co-sponsored by the VIU Library (Faith Takishita, Archives & Special Collections Coordinator). The aim was to recapture the significant roles that Asian Canadians (Chinese, Japanese, and South Asians) played in the building and development of numerous communities while connecting with the indigenous peoples throughout the islands.

Panels of local historians, authors, and descendants of original settlers (e.g. Margaret Horsfield, Masako Fukawa, Dick Jung, Margarita James, and Gurdev Attariwala) shared captivating stories about the people who built our islands’ past.

Ralph Nilson, VIU President and Vice-Chancellor, honoured Stanley and Masako Fukawa for their significant contributions to Japanese-Canadian history on the West Coast and for their important roles, over many years, in the development of VIU. A scholarship in their names will be awarded to international students majoring in Social Sciences.

This workshop was one in a three-year series of collaborative events organized by SSHRC grant researchers John Price (UVic, History) and Imogene Lim (VIU, Anthropology,) as part of the Asian Canadians of Vancouver Island (ACVI) project.
GO NARROW, GO BROAD!:
A BBA STUDENT GETS AN “A” GRADE

Andrew Gagnon is no stranger to hard work. Coming to VIU after years of night shift managerial duties at a Nanaimo food warehouse, the 30-year-old father was ready to dig deep when he came to the library for research help.

A first-year Business student, Gagnon is taking courses in management, accounting, mathematics, and English. It was for his first-year English course that he started to feel stuck. The project dealt with computer systems and how they index online information. “It was kind of an obscure subject,” recalled Gagnon. “I wasn’t finding anything on it.”

“You [in the library] helped me see things in a different way,” said Gagnon. “At first, we narrowed down the topic, and then we opened it up more broadly, and that let me think about it from multiple angles.” Gagnon explored topics such as “natural language” searching vs. “controlled vocabulary” searching, which can be done in library databases. The result was a well-organized presentation and paper that earned Gagnon an A grade.

Gagnon now uses what he learned at the library to help motivate others in their research. He is considering a career as a financial manager after his VIU studies.

VIUSPACE COLLECTS PRESENT AND PAST

It was a productive year for the library’s VIUSpace institutional repository, which showcases and preserves VIU scholarship as well as online special collections that represent the character of our region.

This year the VIU Library has provided open online access to previously unavailable scholarship and digital objects that include:

- Selected faculty work, making grant-funded research and other scholarship freely available to the public
- Recent student work such as prize-winning papers and graduate research in Education
- Images and documents related to the development of VIU buildings and campuses, and to the history of Nanaimo

We expect to develop VIUSpace further in the coming year, adding more regional content, innovative map-based access and presentation features, and greater capacity to capture and preserve new media that increasingly represent the life of our communities.

Library technician Sarah Ogden and librarian Daniel Sifton worked together to geolocate local archival photos from VIUSpace onto a map of Nanaimo. The map is available at: https://www2.viu.ca/library/SpecProj/NanSlideMap1.h
“Is there more to research than Google and Wikipedia?” “Where are the resources in my specific discipline?” VIU librarians help answer these types of questions—online and in the classroom.

The library plays a critical role in developing information literacy, the skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information—recognized by VIU as a “Graduate Attribute,” or a competency required of all students as they complete their programs.

Every year VIU librarians collaborate with faculty, entering 200 classes to address information topics such as:

- Going beyond Google into the “invisible Web” of databases
- Helping students differentiate scholarly from popular information
- Expanding students’ knowledge of different formats: datasets, videos, trade publications, “grey” literature
- Navigating the research process: developing topics, refining thesis statements, creating annotated bibliographies and literature reviews
- Using information ethically: attributing and citing research sources

The library supports development of student information literacy through an intensive instructional initiative in VIU’s 100-level English classes. Faculty and librarians then expand this training through more specialized instruction in the undergraduate and graduate curricula.

“It’s really important that information literacy be relevant,” says Cameron Hoffman-McGaw, VIU’s Learning Services Librarian. “So we always work closely with faculty to align our instruction to assignments and to what students will need when they graduate.”

E-learning is an important part of VIU Library’s information literacy outreach. The library works with students through various technologies such as webguides, screencasts, and webinars, and is experimenting with tools such as animated whiteboard software and lightboards.

VIU Library also reaches out to students in the greater community through programs such as Clemente—VIU’s course for adults who’ve never had the opportunity to go to university.

“Being information literate isn’t just a university concern,” says Hoffman-McGaw. “Everyone needs to know, in whatever job or station in life, how information works and how to use it.”

**LIBRARY DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT EVENT**

On October 2, 2015, the Advancement & Alumni office and the VIU Library hosted an event to honour the individuals and organizations that so generously donated to rebuilding the library ten years ago. The event was a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with community patrons and to celebrate advances made in the library over the past decade.

In addition to tours of the library, the Special Collections room was open to visitors for the evening, and displayed several beautiful and rare items. The institutional repository, VIUSpace, showcased our digital collections, including a prototype to map photographs of early Nanaimo to their geographic locations. Photos of the 2005 library building project were also featured. It was a truly lovely event and an honour to meet so many of VIU’s generous benefactors.

**LIBRARY OUTREACH TO CLEMENTE COURSE**

Student Engagement & Community Outreach Librarian Patricia Geddes visited students in VIU’s Clemente initiative at the Princess Royal Family Centre in Nanaimo.

Clemente is a non-credit humanities course that promotes reflective thinking in a community-based setting where faculty encourage students to explore post-secondary education. A key aim of the visit was to present the library as a welcoming environment for students.

Students eagerly asked questions about the library spaces, services, and collections. Discussion revolved around how the library might better serve students with unique needs. The class provided an opportunity for the library to gain insight into some of the personal challenges faced by some students in accessing libraries and the world of university.
The story of the Nanaimo Women’s Poetry Group illustrates how the establishment of Malaspina College in 1969 changed the lives of people in the community it served. Malaspina’s first president, Dr. Carl Opgaard, and the Malaspina faculty were committed to building an institution that, in Opgaard’s words, “has come into existence because of people seeking ways to help themselves to a better life … We must put our resources to bear on, somehow or another, having a positive influence on the attitudes and behaviour of the total communities which we serve and make this community better for the fact that we exist.”

There were many beneficiaries of this philosophy, and none more notable than four middle-aged women in Nanaimo with a passion for writing: Winona Baker, Mae Hill Brown, Mildred Tremblay, and Ethel Layer. They had led busy lives raising families, which precluded their having time to write until 1975, when they enrolled in a class taught by Kevin Roberts and Jack Hodgins. Committed and willing to work hard, they formed a writing group. They also continued to take courses in English and “imaginative writing,” as it was called until a separate Creative Writing department was formed.

In 1977, the Malaspina Continuing Education Department celebrated a successful International Women’s Day. Building on the excitement of the day, a number of people came together to form the Nanaimo Writers Group. Although it was intended to be a women’s group, several men wanted to be part of it, and to that end insisted they were feminists. During the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, the group met twice a month. Members brought work to be critiqued and shared information about literary contests. Their work was often shortlisted for prizes and printed in literary journals, including the Malaspina student-run literary magazine, The Stump, which was named by Brown.

In 1992, after Malaspina offered a course by Gabriola writer Sandy Duncan, the Nanaimo Women’s Poetry Writing Group was formed. Laurel Baird, Leanne McIntosh, Rosemary Hayward, and Joan van der Goes came together with Winona Baker, Mildred Tremblay, Mae Hill Brown, and Ethel Layer to write and study poetry. They met twice a month for fifteen years.

In the 1980s, Brown, Tremblay, and Baker had begun to have their books published. Brown, who was born in New Jersey, had worked in public health and psychiatric nursing before moving to Vancouver Island in 1967. In 1982 she published a book of poetry, Tracings, at the age of 74. In the acknowledgements of Tracings, she offers special thanks to “those who helped me along the way”—Bob Lane, Shirley Goldberg, Kevin Roberts and Ron Smith—all faculty members of Malaspina’s early English Department.


Winona Baker specialized in haiku. She received international recognition when she won the Japanese Foreign Minister’s Prize, the top prize in a 1989 world haiku contest held in honour of Basho’s three-hundredth anniversary. She was flown to Japan to receive her scroll and have tea with the Emperor. Her book Moss Hung Trees takes its title from the prize-winning haiku. In all, Baker has published six books, has had work included in more than seventy anthologies published all over the world and has been translated into six languages. Her most recent book is Flesh in the Inkwell (2010).
One of the enduring legacies of the Nanaimo Women’s Poetry Group has been the mentoring of other poets. Alison Watt, the award winning writer of *The Last Island* (2002) and the poetry book *Circadia* (2005), wrote of it for Brick Books. “In 2008, we held a reading, a celebration of the group’s work over the twenty-five years or so that some of the members had been meeting … At the book table were over thirty book titles, published by small literary presses like Oolichan Books … It was a formidable accomplishment and one that was mostly unsung… They taught me almost everything I know about poetry: the power of metaphor, the importance of word choice for sound and beat, how line and stanza breaks create space for thought. But mostly they taught me that a poem is about itself as much as about the poet and at some point you must put the ego aside and use the tools of the craft to serve the work.”

The success of the women poets who studied writing at Malaspina College is an inspiring example of the way the institution has had a positive influence on the community and has met Dr. Opgaard’s goal of serving “people seeking ways to help themselves to a better life.” Not only did these women help themselves to become writers, they helped and encouraged others to do the same.

**Rhonda Bailey      Milena Essig      Thora Howell**
LIBRARY STAFF AND FACULTY

JENNIFER FRANKLIN
Media Services

When did you start working at VIU?
I started working at the old Kennedy Street campus in 1975 as a student, then as a one-year leave replacement and finally as a regular part-time employee in the A/V dept. I also ran a stained glass studio downtown for 25 years while working here.

What’s the biggest change you’ve seen in your career?
The changes in technology moving from 16mm film to various videotape formats, to DVDs and now streaming video. I also remember when we thought IBM Selectric typewriters were pretty cool.

What’s a memorable moment you can share with us?
While attending an early Film Society showing, the entire audience watched the lamp from a 16mm projector burn a hole in a single frame of film on the large screen, melting the image completely.

What do you do for fun?
I like to make things: stained glass, jewellery, repurposed and found art. I have a lot of fun with my daughter and our animals, raising chickens, and volunteering with Catnap rescue society.

What’s your favourite thing about working at the VIU library?
I love the energy of the students and staff, the sense of community and the many wonderful co-workers I’ve known over the years.

PATRICIA GEDDES
Student Engagement & Community Outreach Librarian

My name is Patricia Geddes. For ten years, I have lived, learned, and worked as a grateful visitor in traditional unceded Coast Salish territory. I was raised near the Shubenacadie River in Mi’kma’ki by my parents and grandparents, a family of mixed Mi’kmaq and Scottish settler ancestry.

You did your BA at VIU. Tell us about the transition from student to VIU faculty.
In my transition from VIU alumni to faculty, I appreciate seeing and working with familiar faces, especially the Elders-in-Residence. It’s a bit like returning to my second home with a shift from a learner’s perspective to new roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

What’s a memorable moment related to your job you can share with us?
Last term, I received an invitation from VIU Elder-in-Residence Ray Peter to attend a First Nations Studies field trip to Holland Creek. We learned and practiced singing songs led by Uncle Ray and students, and listened carefully to teachings shared by the land, Uncle Ray, and Auntie Flo [VIU Elder-in-Residence Florence James].

What do you do for fun?
For fun, I enjoy trail running in the forest, dog walks, reading, and visiting water places.

DALYS BARNEY
eResources Licensing & Access Assistant, Technical Services

How is Technical Services work changing?
We are seeing a lot of new work emerging in Technical Services. The flow of traditional print materials into the department has slowed, but our work is increasingly digital. I don’t physically handle books that much, instead I work with electronic materials and metadata. Additionally, many of our digital collections aren’t text based. Right now, we are working on major digital projects that are centred on expanding access to local historical photos and audio recordings. In Technical Services, there is an increasing demand for technical skills, from knowing how to manage an Excel spreadsheet to a familiarity with programming languages.

What’s a memorable moment related to your job you can share with us?
Recently, I was a co-presenter at the Vancouver Island Library Staff Conference. Our presentation showcased the new types of work we have been doing in the department. I’m very proud of my involvement, and I am pleased about the positive feedback and interest that has been generated coming out of the conference.

What do you do for fun?
I’m the mother of twin one-year-old boys. They fill my days with learning and fun, but when I have the chance I enjoy reading, baking, and gardening.
It's been a tremendously busy two years for me at VIU. The VIU Libraries are an extraordinary hub of activity for students and for the faculty and staff who work in them. Frontline services are open 79 hours per week across our three campus locations, and most of those hours are busy. You will have seen earlier in the report some of the activities at Cowichan and Powell River. A host of other activities are happening behind the scenes at all campus libraries.

This year in our physical collections we worked on updating our video and DVD collections as many of the titles had been replaced with new streaming services; Media Advisor Jennifer Franklin did an outstanding job in removing obsolete or damaged materials and finding replacement copies in up-to-date formats. An ongoing inventory project was started to ensure that print materials in the collection are where they should be when needed; a committee which included Helen Godolphin, Laura Halliday and Jannine Grant began to develop displays of still valuable print materials that might be overlooked because of the popularity of e-resources. Jean Blackburn led our participation in a project with a number of Western Canadian universities to compare duplicate holdings, identify unique materials and establish regional practices for the preservation of print materials as they begin to see less use. We developed guidelines for Special Collections and accepted a number of generous donations to it, which created a great deal of work behind the scenes; this work was deftly handled by Faith Takishita and Ivan Cormier.

Kate Challenger integrated full photo ID service into the workflow of the Nanaimo Service Desk front-line staff and streamlined the process for students so that wait times have been reduced. Nelda Bonsor, Laurie Wiebe and Ivan Cormier brought hundreds of interlibrary loans into the library when our collection didn't have what students, staff and faculty needed for their work. Margo Thorp worked tirelessly to ensure that our audiovisual equipment was repaired, kept up-to-date and was available for loan when folks needed it. Laura Halliday and her dog Dareby pioneered the dog therapy program last year and expanded it this year to include other folks and their dogs as profiled in our cover story. Mike Culbertson worked on updating and streamlining documentation on the Nanaimo Service Desk so staff could provide quicker service to students. Through the efforts of Meg Ecclestone, we welcomed Student Services and International Education as partners in the Learning Commons. In the fall of 2015, we took part in an event to honour the donors who helped build the new library ten years earlier, and participated in the VIU Open House.

Janice Buie, a long-time employee at the Nanaimo campus library, retired at the start of the year. Her hard work and sense of fun have been missed. Another long service employee, Glenda Wray, retired in August and we hope she will come back to help us out on a casual basis.

Patricia Geddes, our newest faculty hire, has been incredibly busy this past year working with First Nations Studies and the Gathering Place to determine the best role for the library in supporting aboriginal students, and Kathleen Reed has worked on developing mechanisms to assess our services and collections—invaluable research that will help us refine what we do. Dan Sifton, Systems and Technical Services, has ensured that the library catalogue runs as seamlessly as possible. He has also worked on enhancement projects such as geographic mapping tools for materials found in VIUSpace and has been a key contributor in discussions around a future provincial digital library.

In our digital collections, Sarah Ogden catalogued open textbooks and shared the records so that other post-secondary libraries could make them easier for their students to locate. We worked with the Associate VP Research on VIUCreate and Dalys Barney in Technical Services added some of these projects to the digital repository, VIUSpace; Dana McFarland, e-Resources librarian, has identified and recruited many published works by faculty that could be included in VIUSpace but had not yet been contributed. We've renewed licences, purchased back runs of electronic journals, negotiated with vendors to get the best deals, and participated in three major Canadian consortia to leverage our resources in the best possible way. Additionally we had employees attend and present at conferences and workshops, and publish their own research. We continued to have a robust in-house training program, and worked on this Library Report. I'm sure I've left out something!

In our digital collections, Sarah Ogden catalogued open textbooks and shared the records so that other post-secondary libraries could make them easier for their students to locate. We worked with the Associate VP Research on VIUCreate and Dalys Barney in Technical Services added some of these projects to the digital repository, VIUSpace; Dana McFarland, e-Resources librarian, has identified and recruited many published works by faculty that could be included in VIUSpace but had not yet been contributed. We've renewed licences, purchased back runs of electronic journals, negotiated with vendors to get the best deals, and participated in three major Canadian consortia to leverage our resources in the best possible way. Additionally we had employees attend and present at conferences and workshops, and publish their own research. We continued to have a robust in-house training program, and worked on this Library Report. I'm sure I've left out something!

This has been an incredible amount of activity in addition to the day-to-day running of our libraries—liaising with faculty, research assistance, library instruction classes and tutorials co-ordinated by Cameron Hoffman-McGaw, lending thousands of items, assisting clients with resources, printers, photocopiers and other technologies, setting up course reserves and booking equipment, etc.—and a testament to the engagement of the people in the VIU Library and their desire to bring the best services and materials to every student, staff and faculty member. It's a joy for me to come to work each day and see this level of dedication and the differences that these people make in the lives of individuals at VIU. I can hardly wait to see what they accomplish next year.