

SINGAPORE LIBRARIES Bulletin



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ALL'S TOO QUIET ON THE DIGITAL FRONT...

REVIEWING DIGITAL LIBRARIES 1998

By Saralee Turner

SENSE & SENSIBILITY

It was with misgivings that I plunked down my cheque for \$515 to attend this conference. After all, I'm a traditional librarian, not a 'Teckie'! But, I reasoned, it was definitely time I listened to what these people who've been wreaking havoc in libraries had to say!!

A bit of background may help the reader wade through my impressions of this conference. Having come out of high school firmly in the science end of things, I discovered the finer things of life at university and switched majors mid-way from biology and chemistry to the social sciences and philosophy. Librarianship appeared to be a perfect matching of my interests and talents, particularly when directly out of library school I picked up a programming contract manipulating bibliographic data from the Library of Congress (LC), the National Library of Canada (NLC), the British Museum (BM) and the National Library of Australia (NLA).



"Catalogues are no longer constructed by professionals and it shows."

Taking the path dictated by the increased capabilities of modern technology to do better and faster what typists and filing clerks did, certainly seemed correct to me.

However, it has become apparent over the years that many functions in libraries have not been aided, in anything but a superficial sense, by Information Technology (IT). Catalogues are no longer constructed by professionals and it shows. Even where professional librarians, conversant

with subject analysis (an increasingly rare commodity these days), assign Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), the teckies have so completely sabotaged this area, that we have lost the browsable subject catalogue. The concept of a hierarchy of subject headings appears never to have been grasped by the IT contingent who now control so much of our working environment and the products we spend our lives making. To compound the problem, the necessity of including reference structures within the on-line/machine-readable catalogue for what is essentially a formal

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A 'guest' into the sunset

As was befitting the Digital Libraries '98 conference, which in many ways sent out challenging signals to the Library and Information management profession, I was grateful for the contribution from Saralee Turner on the conference, and not because it was the only one I received! The opportunities to play a pivotal role in shaping the applications of IT to, and for, the communities we serve, are there for the taking, but do we have the courage or conviction to take up the challenge?

The theme for the upcoming IFLA conference "Crossroads of Information and Culture" (see "Announcements - Conferences - News - Courses - etc" on p. 15) likewise recognizes that cultural heritage of libraries places them in a unique position to act as 'signposts' to the changes taking place in information access, retrieval and utilization.

Aside from the traditional role of libraries as institutions of knowledge and enlightenment through, primarily, the printed word, the National Library Board is endeavouring to expand the communities horizons, both on the role and value of libraries, it is hoped, and of their broader social and cultural experience. This is reflected in the aesthetically pleasing designs of the new and renovated community libraries (see "More than meets the eye" on pages 8, 10-11 and 16) and through such multimedia programmes as *Xpressions @ the Courtyard* (see "Have you heard" on p. 13).

The LAS's own 'dream' for a place in cyberspace is also revealed in this issue (see "LAS envisions its dream [site]" on p. 14).

This leaves me a little space to bid everyone a fond farewell. I've enjoyed my brief stint as 'Guest Editor'. It's been both a exciting and sobering experience. I hope, too, that you have found the last six issues of some value. I now leave the SLB in the capable hands of Lim-Yeo Pin Pin. Please offer her your support by getting 'those' articles in. With the number and variety of libraries in Singapore, I'm sure more than 16 pages can be filled...

David Balch

(continued from page 1.)

language (contrary to popular belief, LCSH is not a product of natural language) seems also to have been missed by them.

So we're left with searching by title (keyword or direct order) and name headings associated with items we wish to locate. This is a very sad step-down from the basic task of our field to make available to users items on a topic they want to investigate. Subject searching is difficult now. If present trends continue, it may well become impossible.

So with this biased mindset, I made time in my schedule to devote 4 days to hearing about digital libraries.

Not one to keep people in suspense, I must, right from the start, say that I

"...IT people continue to think of the traditional librarian as fuzzy-minded, old-fashioned ... and essentially not capable of understanding the difference between a bit and a byte."

was pleasantly surprised! Oh, I found the usual number of papers boring and repetitive, but what was impressive was that I detected a willingness on both sides (librarians and the IT people) to communicate.

PRIDE & PREJUDICE

The basic prejudices remain. We think we're smarter than they are. After all, we think about ideas, about knowledge, about what our readers need and how those needs might be met five, ten and in the case of academic libraries 20 years down the road!! And the IT people continue to think of the traditional librarian as fuzzy-minded, old-fashioned, kindly, well-meaning, tip-toeing, spectacled and essentially not capable of understanding the difference between a bit and a byte.

But, there is an increasing recognition on both sides that we need to get together and share. It has become

obvious, even to the most enthusiastic proponent of the new technology that high hit rates do not, in and of themselves, indicate that users are finding what they need. So the need to rethink this simple-minded approach to subject access is now being realized.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

The librarians amongst us also need to accept responsibility for allowing the IT people such a free rein. They didn't and don't understand what we're about. Some 'teckies' still think that intellectual material, the cultural heritage of a society, can be treated like other commodities. Their reasoning leads to the conclusion that stocking the shelves and recording commercial transactions in a retail setting is essentially similar to what we do and similar software (with a few basic modifications) can be employed. There are even some who regard the model of a factory floor, complete with mechanized apparatus, as a possible move forward in the area of technical services!

The professional framework that we work within, the intellectual and cultural products that we work with, dictate a certain mindset which we have failed to transmit. The IT people have not been eager to learn but neither have we been keen to teach people who after all are meant to service, not us, but the goals of our profession.*

The obvious benefits of going electronic were provided by some very impressive speakers, including Michel Bezy of IBM who outlined for us, in the second panel discussion, how the electronic publication of academic journals could provide uninterrupted (during binding, while being used by someone) and less expensive access to the reader. Bruce Royan 'wowed' us with 3-D images of items selected for digitalization by the Multimedia Digital Library of Scottish History and Culture. It was refreshing to hear a non-librarian administrator, such as Brian Lang Chief Executive, (British Library), state that he expected to be succeeded by

someone with professional training and experience. Too many libraries have suffered as a result of policy decisions made without sufficient input from librarians. No one doubts the necessity of having 'bean counters'

"...librarians amongst us also need to accept responsibility for allowing the IT people such a free rein."

involved in decision-making but there are obvious limits to their helpfulness in professional matters. To some extent, as librarians, we've sat back and watched these people flounder, sometimes hoping they could do the impossible and sometimes with less charitable sentiments. At the end of the day, it's our readers who have to pay the price for this experiment!

All is for the Best in the Best of All Possible Worlds

Particularly delightful was Peter Ingwersen's paper on the role of libraries and librarians in organizing information. His assertion that the basic role has not changed but that the environment in which we do this has changed was most welcome and provides all of us with a framework in which to tackle our future development as a profession.

In conclusion, what I came away with was the idea that we need to be vigilant in making sure that the IT people who want to understand what we do are given the correct information and are trained into an acceptance of what our basic role is. Then they can provide us with an environment which makes realization of our professional goals not only possible but also practical.

*For an analogy which should not stretch the imagination, let us consider the outrageous scenario where medical professionals beat their breasts and heap abuse on IT people setting up 'medical expert' systems that don't work because the IT personnel didn't understand medical practice, ethics, etc.

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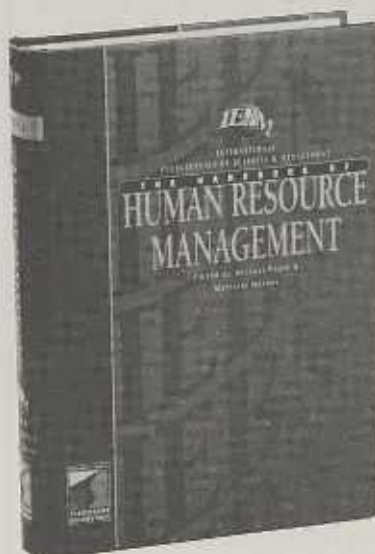
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Introducing TP Library's PEPO : Past Exam Papers Online Service

The Challenge

Past exam papers are without doubt, an essential commodity especially prior to the examination periods. Besides being the central repository, Temasek Polytechnic Library is also the focal access point for past exam papers for staff and students. To meet the demands of a rising student population, there was a need to re-engineer the process of accessing the past exam papers since increasing the number of hardcopies would serve as an interim solution only. Hence the Library took up the challenge to provide an alternative form of access to improve accessibility and availability of the past exam papers to its users.

The solution

- To digitize the exam papers for online access.
- To adopt a Web-based approach for the service to be available easily.

The conversion process

- Establishing a file naming convention
- Scanning the past exam papers
- Saving the captured images as GIF (Graphics Interchanges Format) image files

- Uploading the image files into an electronic repository

The software

- PhotoImpact - a graphics software to capture, edit and manipulate the scanned images.
- TopClass - a web-based software, which allows multiple user access, as the user interface to the repository.

An access hierarchy was established and the path specified in TopClass to reflect the relevant mappings to digital images of the exam papers. One of the advantages of TopClass in this context is its user authorization facility.

The Product

The PEPO service was launched in conjunction with the Polytechnic's Online Learning Environment (OLE) programme on the 20th of February 1998. Presently, the coverage is limited to the 1996/97 Semester 2 exam papers but the past and latest exam papers will be scanned concurrently and uploaded into the electronic repository. To ensure access to only the Polytechnic's staff and students, an online registration is required to obtain a user id and pass-

Exploiting the

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Current Technologies

(Continued on page 6)

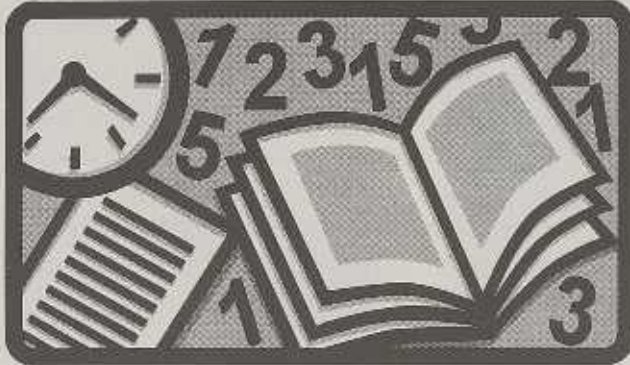
word.

(Continued from page 5)

PEPO will be targeted as the main channel of access for the Polytechnic's past exam papers.

The Satisfied Customer

Users can browse, print and download the digital version of past exam papers. They simply let their fingers do the clicking to obtain the hard-



copy equivalent of the exam paper/s they seek. Students need not come to the Library for the sole purpose of photocopying the 'papers.

PEPO is fast, convenient, easy to use and, most importantly, available anywhere anytime. Statistics taken after the May examination period showed an encouraging response; in excess of 1000 'hits'. Thus suggesting the resources expended for the development of PEPO was worthwhile.

Instep with the Future

The confluence of technological capabilities, namely digital imaging technology which has advanced greatly in recent years has made the option of digitizing the exam papers a reality, technically and economically. The Library will continue to look for ways to enhance PEPO as part of its relentless pursuit in providing quality services. This initiative has brought Temasek Polytechnic a step closer towards a "borderless" educational institute.

*Reported by
Ong Peik Keng
Information Officer
Temasek Polytechnic Library*

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Introducing...**NTU Division of Information Studies****Dr Susan Higgins**

In November 1997, Dr. Susan Higgins, accompanied by her youngest daughter, arrived in Singapore to take up a teaching position at NTU's Division of Information Studies.

Can you tell us a little about your professional qualifications?

I hold a BA from the University of Arizona in English Literature. After working as a library aide in an elementary school program, I decided to pursue my Masters of Library Science. I received a Title II B library fellowship to attend doctoral studies at Florida State University in Tallahassee and completed my Ph.D. there. My teaching specialization is services to youth in libraries. I had the great fortune to work under the direction of F. William Summers, Phyllis Van Orden and Carol Lynch-Brown. I have an abiding interest in public libraries, developmental theory for children and adolescents, and international children's literature. I have recently developed an interest in the study of philanthropy.

What were you doing before coming to Singapore?

I worked as a library aide in an elementary school, and later as a children's librarian in public libraries in Arizona. I enjoyed the public library very much, particularly the interaction over the collection with the children and young adults, their parents and teachers. I also enjoyed networking with other children's librarians in the area schools. I taught children's literature at Florida State University, and school library administration in the School of Information Resources and Library Science at the University of Arizona. I also worked part-time for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, updating donor records for the direct mail department in the national headquarters in Tucson.

How do you find yourself settling down in Singapore?

Once I learned the basic necessities of where to find a nanny for my little daughter, where to buy groceries and how basic transportation routes operate, I began to feel comfortable with my surroundings. Meeting my neighbors in the apartment block has been very valuable. I've enjoyed what few sights I have seen, like the art museum and the zoo. Getting my office in order, learning the

NTU computer system, and beginning to know my colleagues and my students has also been happy and productive work. I have been very impressed by the professional demeanor of the university culture. The weather, although hot, does not bother me much because I have experienced desert heat most of my life. Everyone tells me that there is a great difference between desert heat and tropical heat because the desert is so dry; however, when it's hot, it's uncomfortable in either place! In a tropical climate you can at least seek the shelter of shady trees. Saguaro cacti don't give much shade, and as you know, the desert was the ocean floor millions of years ago. I really appreciate the change of scenery and all the unique and delicious kinds of food one can try here in Singapore. The rainy season was a welcoming change when it came.

What are some of your interests and hobbies?

Swimming and horseback riding are my hobbies. I can play the piano. I collect decorative tins. I am very fond of children, aquarium fish, birds, cats and dogs, history, nature shows & museums. I developed a real liking for lizards in Florida. They amuse me here in Singapore, too. I am particularly interested in Southern fiction as a genre of literature. I enjoy reading picture books to my daughter. If she asks for a book to be read many times over, I will repeat it for her. If my mind starts to wander, she makes me read the page again. For a while I thought perhaps I could learn to read out loud robotically, and concentrate on different thoughts in another part of my brain, but it didn't work - she always catches me.

Is your family here with you?

I have two lovely daughters. Eve Marie, my youngest daughter, is in Singapore with me. She is just beginning to talk in words that one can recognize, although she babbles constantly with perfect inflection. I also have a daughter, Valerie, who is studying fashion merchandising at the University of Arizona. She is anxious to visit us and look into the global world of fashion evident here in Singapore.

Our man with the notepad: Dr Chris Khoo

AESTHETICS AT THE LIBRARY

NLB Mission

To expand the learning capacity of the nation so as to enhance national competitiveness and to promote a gracious society.

Library Services and Facilities

Since the formation of the National Library Board (NLB) on 1st September, 1995, the Board has been expanding and upgrading public library services and facilities in our fervent pursuit of a convenient, accessible, affordable, and useful library system to meet Singaporeans' information

However, recent years have seen the government emphasizing on the promotion of the arts and culture, and the development of a gracious society.

There has also been an interest in the promotion of local artists and their works. The Board supports the move towards this direction by taking active steps to encourage Singaporeans to appreciate art and culture. Thus, whilst the priority is still the delivery of a functional library system, much more emphasis is being given to visual appeal and the promotion of the arts.

Michael Lau, Iskandar, and Hasan.

Art Collection

The Board's efforts in the promotion of the arts are further seen in its collection.

The Arts collection of the National Reference Library houses 22,000 volumes of print materials. The aim is to build up an encyclopaedic collection of the fine arts (e.g. painting, sculpture, print making) and the performing arts (e.g. theatre, music, dance) span-

More than meets the eye

needs. The last two years have seen the delivery of, among many others:

1. Shopping mall libraries;
2. Bookdrop;
3. Self check terminals;
4. Learning Centre at the Tampines Regional Library;
5. Multimedia stations with cash card readers;
6. Multimedia Centre at the National Reference Library;
7. Collaborative ventures with major libraries such as the National Library of China, the British Library, and the Kent Ridge Digital Library;
8. Connecting to Singapore ONE;
9. Re-launch of NL.Line, the NLB website for loans, enquiry's etc.

These mark the Board's efforts in establishing a world class library system with excellent information services and library facilities.

The Library's Role

Traditional library building in Singapore had taken a functional approach viz. the promotion of reading and the provision of information. Little attention had been paid to library aesthetics.

Avant Garde Libraries

Stepping into a modern library, such as the Yishun Community Library (YICL) or the Bukit Panjang Community Library (BPCL), one will immediately notice new, vibrant visual components distinctly different from those "traditionally associated" with libraries.

The interior design, art exhibits, murals, and furniture, all come with an artistic and environmentally pleasing appeal. For example, in the YICL, the ceiling is an array of pyramidal recesses. On display are a dyed paper-pulp sculpture by Teo Eng Seng, paintings by Dr Earl Lu and the late Dr Chen Wen Hsi, among others.

The interior of BPCL has been carefully planned. The colour scheme is a subtle blue; everything has a touch of blue: the ceiling, the carpet, the signs, the book shelves, the chairs and benches, and [not forgetting] the circulation counter too. The soothing colour theme sets just the right mood for reading comfort. Also at BPCL you can find artworks by water colourist Ang Ah Tee, monotype print artist Jessie Lee, and potters Jessie Lim,

ning all countries and time periods, but with special in-depth coverage of the arts of Southeast Asia, East Asia, and India. While our strength is in the print collection, we are also building a collection of audio visual materials (e.g. CDROMs, music CDs) to complement the printed works.

Towards a more Gracious Society

It is part of the Board's mission to promote a gracious society. Thus, the library goes beyond its role as an information hub.

By including art and cultural icons in the set up of the public libraries, complete with library aesthetics, the Board hopes to establish them (i.e. the libraries) also as an institution for art and cultural exchanges, so that users can be encouraged to appreciate the finer things in life.

(see pages 10-11 & 16 for pics)

*Submitted by Wong Jock Onn
Corporate Communications Executive
National Library Board*

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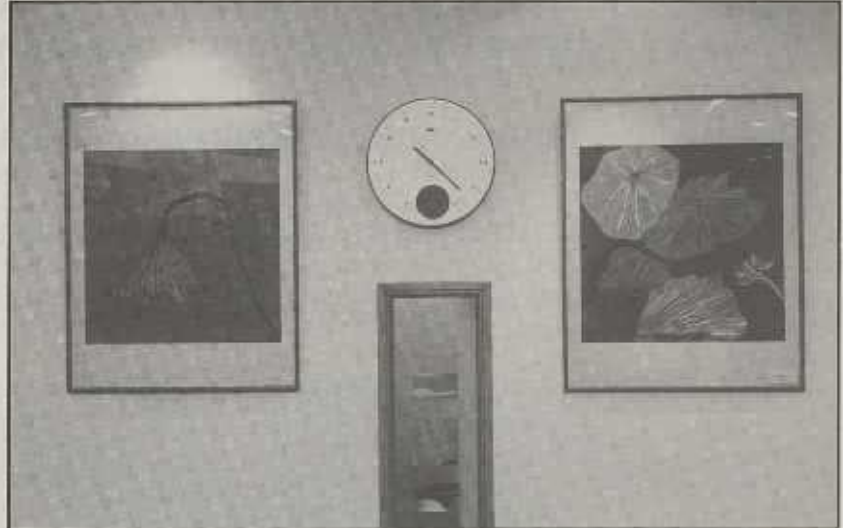
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Colour, form & warmth

▼ Dr Earl Lu's Paintings

On display in Yishun Community Library are 2 of Dr Earl Lu's vibrant paintings, on the lotus plant. These art pieces give YICL a touch of class. (Other artworks include those of the late Chen Wen Hsi.)

Dr Earl Lu is the Chairman of the Singapore Art Museum and also Chairman of NLB's Art Acquisition Committee.



◀ Teo Eng Seng's 'Space Platform'

This sculpture on display in YICL is a 'paperdyesculp' (i.e. dyed paper sculpture) by Teo Eng Seng.

This art piece symbolizes a colourful world filled with warmth and excitement.

▶ Mural

This mural is found in the Bukit Panjang Community Library's Children's section, depicting a weasel reading to its fellow forest animals. The painting definitely sets the right atmosphere for storytelling sessions. Kids will love it! (Don't you already?)



Blue skies & open spaces

► Designer Book Shelves

In new and upgraded libraries, books and book shelves are laid out 'book shop' style. The shelves are low and books are arranged by subjects. In Yishun Community Library, the top of the shelves consists of 2 translucent plastic panels. This allows light to pass through for readers to browse the shelved books.



More than meets the eye (from page 8)



◀ The Display Cabinet

At Bukit Panjang Community Library this attractive display cabinet is placed under a slightly cloudy blue 'sky'. Just the place for a quiet read...

► Blue

For BPCL blue is 'theme' which runs through its colour scheme. Almost everything from the ceiling, carpet, to the signs and furniture come with touches of blue. The effect is a soothing one. Just the thing for a pleasant read.

BPCL gives you a sense of space too. No claustrophobic towering shelves or narrow, dark, aisles.



HAVE YOU**HEARD?****AUTHORS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP**

Kenneth Lyen is trying to start a group of established and aspiring authors to meet on a regular basis with the aims of:

- a) Promoting reading and writing.
- b) Providing a forum for new and old writers to meet and discuss their works.
- c) Networking different people involved in the writing and publishing

Of books: e.g. historians, photographers, cartoonists, publishers, designers, distributors, etc.

- d) Learning about how to get one's works published and distributed.

Adeline Leong appointed KK council president

Adeline Leong, director of the Kota Kinabalu State Library for the past 25 years, took up her post as president of the Kota Kinabalu Municipal Council, on June 2.

Holder of a BA in Asian Studies from the Australian National University and a post-graduate Diploma in Librarianship from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, she has also served on a International Federation of Library Associations committee, as well as being the current chairman of the Sabah Infor-

mation Technology Committee and a member of the Working Committee on IT in Social Development.

Leong told reporters at a May 15 press conference that she was "...looking forward to the position and [I] also look at it as a new challenge."

The LAS congratulates Adeline on her appointment and wishes her every success in her new role.

Source: New Straits Times, 16/5/98

MTI RESOURCE CENTRE STAFF CHANGES

Mrs Ng Bing Tang, Head, Ministry of Trade & Industry Resource Centre will be transferred to the National Library Board, School Division wef 1 July 98. She will be replaced by Mr James Koh from the National Library Board.

Mrs Ng has been working with the MTI Resource Centre for more than 16 years. She was responsible for moving the Resource Centre twice: once in Apr 1987 from the CPF Building to the Temasek Tower and again in Mar 1997 from the Temasek Tower to The Treasury Building. Mrs Ng also successfully merged the Department of Statistics Library with the MTI Library in Apr 1987 and embarked on the Library Computerization Project in Apr 1989.

In May we had Goh Eck Kheng from Landmark Books talk on "Smart approaches to publishing."

For June, acclaimed local author Catherine Lim was the guest speaker. The title of her talk was also the title of her newest book, *The teardrop story woman*. We hope to have a review of the talk in the next issue of the SLB.

MONTHLY INFORMAL GATHERING

I'm thinking of starting a coffee shop discussion in the evenings, say once a month. Ah Meng's Cafe at Orchard Plaza has offered us to use their air-

(Continued from page 12)

conditioned room during a weekday evening. A set meal is very reasonably priced at around \$7 per person. I would like this to be an informal discussion group, where we can talk about anything and everything under the sun. If you are keen to attend, please let me know, and also please state which weekday you prefer to come.

NEWSLETTER

We are also starting a newsletter of book recommendations. Entitled "Booked for reading", this newsletter will be written by readers like yourselves. We are now soliciting book reviews of between 300-600 words of books that you have read

and would like to recommend others to read. Please include the title, author, publisher, date published, hardback or softcover, number of pages, ISBN number, and local price. Please e-mail your reviews to CHENG ritterl@mbox5.singnet.com.sg. The editors reserve the right not to print a review, and to make changes to the article(s).



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NUS Central Library Annexe completed

The Central Library Annexe is our new 7-storey building linked to the existing Central Library Building. Construction work for the new building started in mid-August 1995 and the building was officially handed over on 26 March 1998. The Central Library Annexe houses the Central Library Technical Services Division (TSD) on one storey with 4 storeys for closed stack storage of library materials. The Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning occupies the top 2 storeys of the building and has its own entrance. The new building provides a more cost effective storage of the Library collection, which now exceeds 2 million volumes, thereby allowing the Library to assign more reading areas for the users in the Central Library Building.

The new closed stacks can hold up to a million volumes and will be used to store the less often used materials from the Library collection. This will release shelving for new additions to the collection. The controlled environment in the closed stacks area is designed to conserve and preserve the library collection. The area is equipped with a compact shelving system that is state-of-the-art technology, electrically powered and uniquely controlled by individual microprocessors. The key-pad controllers mounted on each end panel allows the staff to select a range of operating commands to control the rows.

Lim-Yeo Pin Pin Assistant Librarian I (Web Kepala, LINUS Editor)

Express yourself

The National Library at Stamford Road is providing a venue for artistic and creative expressions at its very heart, the Courtyard. This initiative will be realized through a series of activities to be held over selected Fridays during June and July.

There will be live bands, performances by local and foreign artistes, poetry, prose and script readings, drama sketches, calligraphy displays, film screenings and discussions, travel photography, talks, and demonstrations on cooking, and other hobbies.

In time, it is hoped the Courtyard will prove to be a convenient and desirable meeting place for writers, artistes, and book lovers alike. As part of its new lifestyle concept, the Courtyard is the one place at the Library where people are able, and encouraged, to read books and magazines taken from the shelves, to chat, and have a cup of coffee, or a snack.

Xpressions @ the Courtyard made its debut on 19 June with the launch of 3 new poetry books written by 3 young Singaporeans Felix Cheong, Alfian Sa'at, and Gwee Li Sui, and published by Landmark Books. Local rock band The Padres also played a set.

Other events scheduled are: 'The Art of Eric Khoo', and the launch of Ken Lim's new CD *Simplify* (26 June); and the launch of *A Collection of Singapore Female Writers' Literary Works* (10 July). The book is a collection of Chinese (translated) literary works by local writers.

Submitted by Wong Jock Onn

The LAS envisions the dream [site]

(Current reality @ www.las.org.sg)

After much thought, discussion, negotiation and grafting, the Publications Committee is delighted to announce the establishment of the LAS's very own web site. The project, spearheaded by Dr Chris Khoo and Lim-Yeo Pin Pin, however, is still very much in its infant stages and much more work is still needed. It is hoped that LAS members will be inspired to provide assistance with refining its structure, design and content. LAS members with either an eye for creative ideas and/or the skills to design web pages are encouraged to contribute to the worlds' window on the LAS. But, for now, let us share a *dream...*

Audience & Their Information Needs

LAS members

Contact info (of librarians & libraries)
 Info about LAS
 Activities organized by LAS
 Info to support librarians in their professional work
 Vendors for various kinds of products & services (& list of customers for each vendor)
 Info resources on the Web
 Continuing education
 Entertainment

Librarians who are not LAS members

Same as LAS members
 How to join LAS & benefits of joining

Librarians in other countries

Contact info
 The state of library & info services in Singapore

General public in Singapore

Info about the library profession
 Info about training for librarians
 Learn about info literacy
 Info resources in Singapore

Objectives

Serve information needs as listed above
 Project an image of an association that is:
 Vibrant & dynamic
 Progressive & up-to-date
 Cohesive & cooperative

Provide a channel of communication between LAS & members, & among members.

To form a Web community of librarians
 Maintaining a central database for LAS

Design

Dynamic & interactive

Web site packed with info but well-organized for locating relevant info!

Fun & entertaining

A big informational, educational & entertainment site! (A virtual world but not necessarily Virtual Reality.)

Features

One directory is restricted to LAS members. Another directory is restricted to selected office-bearers.

Initial page

a general overview of the site (some kind of map?)
 a quote or piece of library lore that changes all the time.
 headlines of recent news items.
 what's new in the site

History of LAS & librarianship in Singapore (including biographies of past librarians)

Virtual mall -- with directory of vendors

Newsgroup (& listserv?)

Access to library-related electronic journals

Database for members to update particulars.

Directory of librarians & libraries

Links to Web sites of interest (including reviews of Web sites)

Resources - pathfinders for selected subjects (select from student projects)

Info about library science courses & research at NTU, Temasek Poly & in Singapore.

And many others too numerous to mention here.

For more details on the above and how you may be a part of this exciting project please contact the above named persons at the following email addresses:

Chris Khoo: ASSGKHOO@ntu.edu.sg

Yeo-Lim Pin Pin: clblimpp@leonis.nus.edu.sg

Announcements - Conferences - News - Courses etc.



→ **ALIA 5th Biennial Conference and Exhibition - *Pathways to Knowledge*, 25 - 28 October 1998, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide, South Australia.**

The theme *Pathways to Knowledge* has been chosen to emphasize the role of library and information services in empowering their clients to operate effectively in the information society of the 21st century. A special 'Fringe' program for students and new graduates, for the 24th and 25th of October, is also being planned.

For more information contact: Anne Hazell,
Convener, Program Committee.
Email: ahazell@decsop.nexus.edu.au
Conference Home Page: www.alia.org.au/alia/conferences/adelaide98/

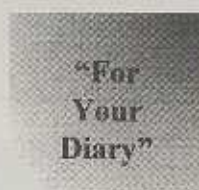
→ **64th IFLA General Conference on *Crossroads of Information and Culture* August 16 - 21 1998, Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

"The library and information profession stands on a crossroads. The written word which has held a prime position for centuries as the medium for communicating news, facts and figures, ideas ... knowledge is giving way to a multimedia age. Libraries - public, academic and special - as traditional harbours of a country's written cultural heritage are facing a new challenge." Can libraries not only cope with the changes but "act as signpost to this new crossroads"?

For more information contact:
Conference Secretariat IFLA '98
Congrex Holland BV
P.O. Box 302, 1000 AH Amsterdam
Email: ifla@congrex.nl
IFLA website: www.ifla.org

✎ **CLAIR Information Technology Training Courses**

Conducted by the Center for Library and Information Resources at the Asian Institute of Technology, Pathumthani, 42km north of Bangkok, Thailand, the Center has scheduled a series of 5 of library and IT related courses



for

1998-99. These are:

- Information repackaging, consolidation and desktop publishing (duration - 1 month, Jan '99)
- Resources discovery on the internet (5 days, Oct '98, March '99, Oct '99)
- Building a web site (5 days, Nov '98, March '99, Nov '99)
- Emerging technologies for automated information services and management (2.5 months, July '99)
- CDS/ISIS: UNESCO's software for information storage and retrieval (1 month, Aug '98, Aug '99)

For more information contact:
CLAIR - Training
Center for Library and Information Resources
Asian Institute of Technology
P.O. Box 4, Klong Luang
Pathumthani 12120, Thailand
Tel: (66-2) 524 5869 or 516 0110
Fax: (66-2) 524 5870 or 516 2126
Email: nai@ait.ac.th
Web site: <http://www.ait.ac.th/clair/training/training.html>

● **Japan Special Libraries Association**

The Chairman of the International Committee of the Japan Special Libraries Association (JSLA), Yoichi Sekino, has recently written to LAS to introduce the JSLA to Singapore colleagues, as part of a broader strategy to promote awareness and international ties.

The JSLA has about 700 institutional members representing libraries and information centres in private industry, the government, academia, and other types of organizations.

For further information contact Yoichi Sekino, Chairman, Japan Special Libraries Association, Keidanren, Japan Federation of Economic Organizations, Information Resources Section
Sekino@keidanren.or.jp

The sun shines on little minds

“Children's books are written for upbringing...but upbringing is a great thing; it decides the fate of the human being.”

Vissarion Grigor'evich Belinski (1811 - 1841)

► **The Pool**

Featuring a shining, smiling sun overhead, *The Pool* is a 'warm and cozy' reading enclosure designed especially for toddlers.



▼ **Monkey benches...**

... but no monkey business? The kids corner at Bukit Panjang Community Library is enlivened by an animal theme captured delightfully by these attractively designed benches.

