

# The LAS & PPM Presidents' Journey Celebrating

65

## Years of Librarianship 1955 - 2020



**LIBRARY**  
Association of  
**SINGAPORE**



**PERSATUAN PUSTAKAWAN  
MALAYSIA**



**THE LAS & PPM PRESIDENTS' JOURNEY:**  
CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF LIBRARIANSHIP  
(1955-2020)





© 2020 Library Association of Singapore

Published by:  
Library Association of Singapore  
c/o National Library Board  
100 Victoria Street #14-01  
Singapore 188064  
[www.las.org.sg](http://www.las.org.sg)

Designed by Gareth Phua

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission of the publisher, the Library Association of Singapore.

The Library Association of Singapore disclaims all liability and responsibility for any loss caused to any person by any act or omission due to the material contained in this book.

### **National Library Board, Singapore Cataloguing in Publication Data**

Name(s): Library Association of Singapore, issuing body.

Title: The LAS & PPM presidents' journey : celebrating 65 years of librarianship (1955-2020).

Description: Singapore : Library Association of Singapore, 2020

Identifier(s): OCN 1182556445 | ISBN 978-981-14-5466-0 (ebook)

Subject(s): LCSH: Library Association of Singapore-Presidents. | Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia-Presidents. | Library science-Singapore-Societies, etc. | Library science-Malaysia-Societies, etc. | Library science-Singapore. | Library science-Malaysia.

Classification: DDC 020.6225957-dc23



<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>		
<b>List of LAS Presidents 1955-2021</b>	<b>iv</b>	- Khoo Oon Chor	<b>40</b>
<b>List of PPM Presidents 1955-2020</b>	<b>v</b>	- Rosemary Yeap	<b>40</b>
<b>Editor's Note</b>	<b>vi</b>	- J. S. Soosai	<b>40</b>
<b>Interviews</b>		- Lim Hong Too	<b>41</b>
- Datin Patricia Lim Pui Huen	<b>2</b>	- Dr D. E. K. Wijasuriya	<b>41</b>
- Chan Thye Seng	<b>4</b>	- Koh Thong Ngee	<b>41</b>
- Dato' Dr Zaiton binti Osman	<b>6</b>	- Syed Salim Agha	<b>42</b>
- Dato' Zawiyah binti Baba	<b>9</b>	- Wee Joo Gim	<b>42</b>
- Jenny Soh	<b>12</b>	- Rohani binti Rustam	<b>42</b>
- Choy Fatt Cheong	<b>14</b>	- Ch'ng Kim See	<b>43</b>
- Sylvia Yap	<b>16</b>	- Foo Kok Pheow	<b>43</b>
- Ngian Lek Choh	<b>18</b>	- Edward Lim Huck Tee	<b>44</b>
- Dato' Raslin bin Abu Bakar	<b>20</b>	- Datin Ragayah binti Dato'	<b>44</b>
- Puspa Yeow	<b>22</b>	Hj. Mohd Eusoff	
- Gene Tan	<b>24</b>	- Datin Shahaneem Hanoum	<b>45</b>
- Maimunah binti Kadir	<b>26</b>	Dadameah (Shahaneem binti Mustafa)	
- Lee Cheng Ean	<b>29</b>	- Peggy Wai-Chee Hochstadt	<b>45</b>
- Dr Nor Edzan binti Che Nasir	<b>31</b>	- R. Ramachandran	<b>46</b>
- Judy Ng	<b>33</b>	- Datin Rugayah binti Abdul Rashid	<b>46</b>
- Tan Chui Peng	<b>35</b>	- Datin Mariam binti Abdul Kadir	<b>47</b>
<b>Biographies</b>		- Chew Wing Foong	<b>47</b>
- Leonard M. Harrod	<b>37</b>	- Isabel Yeo	<b>47</b>
- Ernest H. Clark	<b>37</b>	- Shahar Banun binti Jaafar	<b>48</b>
- P. G. M. G. Mahindasa	<b>37</b>	- Rashidah Begum binti Fazal Mohamed	<b>48</b>
- Jean M. Waller	<b>38</b>	- Putri Saniah binti Megat Abd Rahman	<b>48</b>
- Hedwig Anuar	<b>38</b>	- Dr Mohd Sharif bin Mohd. Saad	<b>49</b>
- Wilfred J. Plumbe	<b>38</b>	- Dato' Nafisah binti Ahmad	<b>49</b>
- Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin	<b>39</b>	- Samantha Ang	<b>50</b>
- Charles J. Manuel	<b>39</b>	<b>LAS milestones</b>	<b>52</b>
- Syed Ahmad bin Ali	<b>39</b>	<b>PPM milestones</b>	<b>53</b>



### **LAS Presidents 1955-2021**

1955	Leonard M. Harrod
1955-1956	Ernest H. Clark
1956-1957	P. G. M. G. Mahindasa
1957-1958	Jean M. Waller
1958-1961	Hedwig Anuar
1961-1963	Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin
1963-1965	Hedwig Anuar
1965-1966	Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin
1966-1967	Khoo Oon Chor
1967-1968	Rosemary Yeap
1968-1969	Patricia Lim Pui Huen
1969-1970	Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin
1970-1972	Lim Hong Too
1972-1973	Chan Thye Seng
1973-1975	Koh Thong Ngee
1975-1978	Wee Joo Gim
1978-1980	Foo Kok Pheow
1980-1982	Wee Joo Gim
1982-1984	Peggy Wai-Chee Hochstadt
1984-1988	R. Ramachandran
1988-1989	Lim Hong Too
1989-1991	Jenny Soh
1991-1995	R. Ramachandran
1995-1997	Isabel Yeo
1997-2005	Choy Fatt Cheong
2005-2007	Sylvia Yap
2007-2009	Ngian Lek Choh
2009-2011	Puspa Yeow
2011-2013	Gene Tan
2013-2015	Lee Cheng Ean
2015-2017	Judy Ng
2017-2019	Samantha Ang Seok Hian
2019-2021	Tan Chui Peng



### PPM Presidents 1955-2020

1955	Leonard M. Harrod	1982-1983	Shahaneem binti Mustafa (Acting President)
1956	Ernest H. Clark	1983-1984	Dr Zaiton binti Osman
1957	P. G. M. G. Mahindasa	1985-1986	Zawiyah binti Baba
1958	Jean M. Waller	1984-1985	Zawiyah binti Baba
1959	Hedwig Anuar	1986-1987	Rugayah binti Abdul Rashid
1960-1961	Wilfred J. Plumbe	1987-1988	Rugayah binti Abdul Rashid
1961-1962	Charles J. Manuel	1988-1989	Rugayah binti Abdul Rashid
1962-1963	Charles J. Manuel	1989-1990	Mariam binti Abdul Kadir
1963-1964	Charles J. Manuel	1990-1991	Mariam binti Abdul Kadir
1964-1965	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	1991-1993	Mariam binti Abdul Kadir
1965-1966	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	1993-1995	Chew Wing Foong
1966-1967	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	1995-1997	Chew Wing Foong
1967-1968	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	1997-1999	Shahar Banun binti Jaafar
1968-1969	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	1999-2001	Rashidah Begum binti Fazal Mohamed
1969-1970	Syed Ahmad bin Ali	2001-2003	Zawiyah binti Baba
1970-1971	J. S. Soosai	2003-2005	Zawiyah binti Baba
1971-1972	J. S. Soosai	2005-2007	Putri Saniah binti Megat Abd Rahman
1972-1973	D. E. K. Wijasuriya	2007-2008	Putri Saniah binti Megat Abd Rahman
1973-1974	D. E. K. Wijasuriya	2008-2010	Raslin bin Abu Bakar
1974-1975	Syed Salim Agha	2010-2012	Dr Mohd Sharif bin Mohd. Saad
1975-1976	D. E. K. Wijasuriya	2012-2014	Dr Mohd Sharif bin Mohd. Saad Maimunah binti Kadir (Acting President from 9 December 2013)
1976-1977	Rohani binti Rustam	2014-2016	Dr Nor Edzan binti Che Nasir
1977-1978	Ch'ng Kim See	2016-2018	Nafisah binti Ahmad
1978-1979	Edward Lim Huck Tee	2018-2020	Nafisah binti Ahmad
1979-1980	Edward Lim Huck Tee		
1980-1981	Ragayah binti Dato' Hj. Mohd Eusoff		
1981-1982	Rohani binti Rustam		



## Editor's Note

To commemorate the 65th anniversary of library advocacy in both Singapore and Malaysia, the publications committee was tasked to produce this special publication.

Both the Library Association of Singapore's (LAS) and Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia's (PPM) roots began in 1955, when the Malayan Library Group (MLG) was formed. Our pioneers strongly advocated the importance of libraries for the public's continual education and professional training for library staff. Now, we have a network of libraries serving different communities of Singapore and Malaysia, as well as the two associations that have come a long way and still going strong.

Many of us may not be familiar with the history of both associations, let alone the names of those who chose to take the lead in making changes in the library scene. In this commemorative publication, we asked both associations' past and current Presidents to share their recollections of how it was like during their time, from starting off as a new member to becoming President, and finally, leaving some parting words for future members.

Where possible, we have compiled short biographies of those who could not contribute personally.

I hope that their stories will inspire us as well as draw us closer to our associations as we connect with each other through our journey to rediscover our history.

I would like to, on behalf of the Library Association of Singapore, acknowledge with heartfelt thanks all who have made this publication possible:

- The LAS and PPM Presidents who took time and effort to contribute their personal stories and experiences with the library associations;
- The PPM Council, especially Chin Loy Jyoon, who lent their hand in connecting us with past PPM Presidents and providing information required for the publication;
- The LAS Publications Committee members (Carmen Wang, Charmaine Tan, Goh Yu Mei, Lo Wan Ni, Mindy Tan, Nadia Ramli and Phoebe Lim) who worked hard at liaising with contributors, editing and writing for the publication;
- Sadie-Jane Nunis, Vice-President of LAS (2019 to 2021), for her advice on editorial and publishing matters;
- Friends and colleagues who have supported or helped in one way or another.

Kong Leng Foong  
Chair, Publications Committee (2019 to 2021)  
Library Association of Singapore



# Interviews



**Datin Patricia Lim Pui Huen**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1968 – 1969)*

I joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in 1958. I had taken an active part in its activities because I believe that a strong professional organisation is necessary for the development of a strong library profession.

In our first decade, a small enthusiastic group of librarians, then called the Malayan Library Group (MLG), who, infused by the spirit of dedication and cooperation, organised meetings and seminars with colleagues in Malaya. The MLG comprised both local and expatriate librarians and included Mr Wilfred Plumbe and Ms Jean Waller (both from the University of Malaya Library), Mrs Hedwig Anuar (who later became the Director of the National Library), as well as specialists like Ms Kho Lian Tie, who gained international recognition for her work on Indonesian and Malay language materials, and Mr George Ee, Librarian of the Medical Library.

I was elected President of LAS in 1968. I felt that libraries could and should play a public and cultural role in the wider community and therefore, organised a seminar on libraries and the community during my presidency.

Library development during the early period can be attributed to the dedication of the pioneers and to the productive cooperation between LAS and the Library Association of Malaya (later of Malaysia). Regular meetings and annual conferences were held but the most important work was done in the joint committees, especially by JSCLCBS (Joint Subcommittee on Library Cooperation and Bibliographical Standards) later replaced by the shorter acronym BILCO (Bibliographical and Library Cooperation). Long hours went into laying the groundwork for library regulations and standards that



*Patricia at CONSAL II held in Manila, 1973*

- 
1. For more on the early history of the MLG and LAS, see "Recollection of a Pioneer, 1955-1980," by Mrs Hedwig Anuar in *Library Association of Singapore: Silver Jubilee 1955 – 1980* (1980): 25-27.
  2. For more on librarianship during that period, see *Library Association of Singapore: Silver Jubilee 1955 – 1980* (1980) and *Celebrating 50 Years of Librarianship in Malaysia and Singapore* (2005).
  3. Please see Patricia Lim's article on SCOM in *The Information Challenge: a Festschrift in Honour of Dr Donald Wijasuriya* (1995): 74-86.
  4. Please see Patricia Lim's article "Back to the future: 50 Years of Library Development in Malaysia and Singapore". In *Celebrating 50 years of Librarianship in Malaysia and Singapore* (2005): 8-18.



librarians take for granted today. These included the adopting of the ISBN, standardising cataloguing rules, and enlarging the Dewey Classification tables for Singapore and Malaysia. The formulation of these standards facilitated library development and brought Singapore libraries into conformity with international practice as well as promoted progress in international information management and communication.



*From left: Jenny Soh, Patricia Lim (President, PPS), Jek Yuen Thong (Minister for Culture), Syed Ahmad bin Ali (President, PPM) at the Joint Seminar of the PPM & PPS on Planning for the 70's*

Work on international practices brought LAS into the network of the international community of professional bodies like the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA). Through LAS, Singapore librarians had a voice in shaping international professional issues.

It is forgotten today that libraries led the way in the adoption of computers into their routines and that Singapore libraries developed a joint cataloguing database way before easy computer access became possible.

I was the Chairman of the Subcommittee of Microforms (SCOM), which coordinated the microfilming of newspapers in Singapore and Malaysia libraries and archives. I was also the Chairman of the Task Force for Librarians in the Information Age (TALIA), which led to the establishment of the Library School in NTU (Nanyang Technological University)—the culmination of decades of struggle for library education since the days of MLG.

It is a matter of much satisfaction to have played a role in initiating and organising the inaugural Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) in 1970 as a regional platform for librarians and information professionals. CONSAL XVII was held in Myanmar in 2018 and CONSAL XVIII is to be held in Cambodia. Through CONSAL and through the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) Library where I was Librarian, I have met many wonderful people and have made friends from all over the world.

Professionalism, Knowledge, Dedication—these should be the watchwords of our profession.



**Chan Thye Seng**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1972-1973)*

My first point of entry into library service (then Raffles Library) was on 1 June 1959 after completing my 'A'-Level education.

My first exposure to the importance of a library association was my attendance at the Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Library Association held in New Plymouth in 1962 as a student of the New Zealand Library School in Wellington on a Colombo Plan Scholarship. Librarians, including chief and senior ones, came from various cities including Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland.

Upon my graduation and return to Singapore the following year, I was able to join LAS as a Professional Member and opted to be a Life Member two years later.

It was an eye-opener with the meetings and get-togethers with staff from national, public, academic, and institutional libraries. The Council could be considered a "think-tank" for the profession, together with its subcommittees.

Fresh from library school, I was invited to stand for election as Honorary Secretary and served for two successive years from 1963 to 1964 with Mrs Hedwig Anuar, LAS founder-member and Director, National Library, as Chairman of Council. Working closely together, we had also travelled for joint meetings and conferences with our Malayan/Malaysian librarians in Seremban, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, and subsequently Penang by car, train, or plane over a weekend and reporting to office on Mondays. Across the border were our counterparts including the late Mr Syed Ahmad bin Ali, Mr Joseph Soosai, Mr D.E.K. Wijasuriya, and Mr Edward Lim Huck Tee who had also been Chief Librarians in their institutions and past Presidents of PPM.

Upon our country's political separation from Malaysia in 1965, the future looked bleak. Undaunted, LAS took part in a careers exhibition at the Victoria Memorial Hall from 1 to 7 September 1965. We had the theme *To Be a Librarian*. Our then Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, officially opened the exhibition.



*1963/1964 LAS-PPPTM Joint Liaison Council Meeting in Kuala Lumpur*



*1969 LAS-PPM Joint Seminar on "Planning for the '70s" held in Singapore*



*1972 Commonwealth Library Association Council's Inaugural Meeting in Lagos, Nigeria*



In 1970, Mrs Anuar and I were the two conference paper presenters from Singapore at CONSAL I, which was the first Conference of Southeast Asian Librarians held in Singapore.

As President of LAS in 1972, I represented our association on the founding of COMLA (Commonwealth Library Association) at Lagos, Nigeria.

With LAS setting up its new Standing Committee on Library Education, a five-course lecture on Computer Application in Libraries was organised for our members in 1973. During that same year at CONSAL II in the Philippines, a joint paper with Ms Wee Joo Gim on *Professionalisation and Career Development Opportunities of Librarians in Singapore* was delivered. LAS had also nominated me to present a paper *Planning Public Library Buildings: The Singapore Experience* at the third IFLA Building Seminar in Bremen, Germany in 1977.

In my overseas travels for the profession, first to the United States of America on a US State Department's Multi-National Librarians' programme in 1970, and later to United Kingdom on a British Council's library tour in 1972, I noticed the preponderance of male Chief Librarians, even during my time in New Zealand in 1962.

In contrast to this, I had written and published the article *What Makes a LAS President?* in the December 1981 LAS newsletter, covering the years 1959 to 1980. Prior to that, the post was held chiefly by expatriates. Between 1959 and 1980, there had been 10 Presidents, equally balanced in numbers between men and women, although males formed 13 percent of the total membership. It was also noted that seven of the Presidents were from the university libraries. However, those who had served four terms/years or more were three women. True grit and resilience!

Looking to the future of LAS, I am filled and enthused with our young librarians coming forward to serve with "vim and vigour". Even if one may not be professionally qualified yet, one can be "roped" in to serve at sub-committee or organisational levels. This augurs well for the profession. The learning process is in the undertaking, then follows the resultant contributing factor, "I serve because I was called".

In three words for our LAS's Silver Jubilee (1955-1980) publication, I had closed my then memoir with "Viva la LAS".

For this one, upon request, choices are "Love Aspiration Singapura" and "Together We Globalise".



**Dato' Dr Zaiton binti Osman**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1983-1984)*

I first joined Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) as a member in 1971, two years after being appointed as a Library Assistant at the University of Malaya in 1969. At that time, fresh graduates who were appointed as Library Assistants had to sit for and pass the exams of the Associate of the Library Association, London (ALA) within three years before being put on the 'qualified' librarians' salary scale. It was quite a daunting task because most of us were juggling being married with children and working full-time. Obtaining the ALA certification was no mean feat but fortunately, all of us managed to do it within two to three years. On hindsight, I am personally of the opinion that the practical experience gained while working made it easier for me to pass the exams. The books for reading and reference were prescribed by ALA and the contents were very much British-based.

What motivated me to join PPM was, at that time, a natural progression of my career as a Librarian. Being exposed to the Library Association, London via the ALA exams, I was thus aware of a thriving library profession in United Kingdom (UK) as well as in other parts of the world. Vicariously exposed no doubt, but it made me realise that librarianship was a serious profession and that librarians are important agents of cultural and educational development throughout the world.

We at the University of Malaya Library (UML) then were very aware of the activities undertaken by Library Association, London and especially of its role in providing professional leadership in the UK directly and the world indirectly. The senior librarians in UML also played a role in motivating us junior librarians into joining PPM, as well as being involved in library activities outside UML.

PPM was a familiar name as a result of the active involvement of the senior librarians from UML. Prominent library professionals like Mr Edward Lim, Dr Wijasuriya, Mr Soong Mun Wai, Mr Eddie Yeoh, Mr Baradas Gopal, Mrs Hedwig Anuar, Mr Soosai, Mr Aziz Mydin, Mr Syed Salim Agha, and Mr Syed Ahmad bin Ali were icons who inspired us junior librarians. These names and more provided the



*Farewell by PPM*



*With the former President of IFLA, Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, on her visit to Kuala Lumpur in 2018*



*Working with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture for IFLA WLIC 2018*



catalyst for the professional growth of the then fledging association. Even during this period, the senior librarians were already involved at the regional and international levels, like Mr Soosai who was already an active participant in IFLA.

As a new member of PPM and a mother of one in 1971, it was a hectic few years as I became very involved in PPM activities. The outstanding advantages of being a new member then was the ability to form friendships with librarians from all type of libraries, which have lasted till today. For me, the bonds that began in 1971 saw fruition in 2018 when PPM organised the IFLA WLIC Conference in Kuala Lumpur with a committee of 24 members comprising of librarians from the National Library, university libraries, special libraries, public libraries, school libraries, library schools, and retired librarians. It was an outstanding success due mainly to the fact that the organising committee displayed extraordinary teamwork that resulted in excellent delivery.

During my first term in Council in 1971, the person who left a deep impression on me was Mrs Anuar who came from across the causeway because she was unmatched in terms of professionalism. Most importantly, she came across as an ideal leader, blending professionalism in her work and yet, was very warm and nurturing in her approach to new librarians. A few other leaders were totally professional but lacking in the personal attributes. Looking back, I learnt about leadership by observing these icons.

I decided to run for 28<sup>th</sup> President in 1983 because I thought it was time to do so. At that time, nobody wanted to be President because everybody had full-time jobs and since PPM was a voluntary organisation, balancing institutional demands with PPM work was daunting. Sometime back in 1982, my group of like-minded friends and I decided that we should be better able to help PPM progress by being involved at the Presidential and Council level.

I started in 1983 as President followed by Dato' Zawiyah Baba in 1984 and till today, I am still actively involved in PPM activities. The post of the President during my time was not something to shout about—no glamour, pomp, or pageantry and certainly no financial or social rewards. It was just hard work. And this is where the bonds formed in the earlier years helped because Council members pitched in unstintingly and made volunteerism a vocation till today.

My vision as President was encapsulated in the speech I made at the PPM Annual General Meeting on 24 March 1984 at Rumah Universiti, University of Malaya: “Throughout 1983 to 1984, the Council focused on the professional development of PPM members. Towards this objective, priority was given to the organisation of services, courses, forums, and workshops. Through such activities the knowledge of, exposure to, and experience of members in the fields of librarianship and related fields were enhanced.”

It was no accident that I had just completed my Master's thesis on *The Role of Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (Library Association of Malaysia) in Providing Professional Leaderships in Malaysia*. At that time, fellow librarians were calling for PPM and its members to be “professional” but were not exactly sure what being professional meant. This call for professionalism coincided with my undertaking of a Master's degree at the Loughborough University of Technology. I thought it was time I studied the concept of



professionalism in greater depth and apply it to PPM's role. That was in 1982. PPM has progressed in leaps and bounds since then. Maybe it is now time for us to review the topic.

During my Presidency, my best memory was about organising seminars, forums, and workshops particularly in important areas that are new to librarians, e.g. information skills (now known as information literacy, quantitative methods, resource-based learning, etc.), even inviting librarians from UK to present papers. I felt that exposure to concepts and ideas from abroad would help local librarians to think beyond their usual areas of work like acquisitions, cataloguing, and reference services. One workshop organised during my Presidency which was invaluable was the talk by experts about professional education—*Developing the Core Curriculum for Library Education*. This was held on 11 June 1983 at Dewan Sri Paduka, Intan, Petaling Jaya. This forum was an attempt by PPM at professionalising library education in Malaysia.

PPM, even before my time as President, was outward-looking. I merely pushed the boundary further. The previous Presidents were concerned about making PPM and PPM members “professional”. PPM made a critical move in 1995 when via a constitutional amendment, it reconstituted PPM's membership. By virtue of this amendment, PPM members are classed into three categories—professional, non-professional, and institutional. The basis of separating the professionals from the non-professionals (the qualified from the non-qualified members) is “a recognised professional qualification”. The possession of this qualification is the passport to membership of PPM and carries with it the right to vote and hold office. Theoretically, since 1995, there now exists in PPM, a group that is competent to oversee the Association, safe-guard professional interests, and maintain professional standards.

One thing that I have enjoyed throughout my years of involvement with PPM till today is meeting librarians from all over the world. Interacting via PPM-LAS meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences via CONSAL and IFLA provided me with such invaluable and unparalleled experience.

Three words to describe the essence of PPM—volunteerism, team-work, and professionalism. I would advise future Presidents to first understand the role of an association in the context of the profession and then undertake strategies that can help to further professionalise the library profession. They should also have the courage to lead and not be distracted or intimidated by institutional objectives.

The role of the association is to provide leadership for the profession at the national, regional, and international levels. The association of the future must strive to put its membership on par with other professions like lawyers, doctors, engineers, etc.; in short, masters of their own professions. The association of the future must strive to ensure that it alone controls the destiny of its members, independent of authorities, and recognised for professional standards.



**Dato' Zawiyah binti Baba**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia/Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (1984-1986; 2001-2005)*

In 1974, I joined Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) as a member because I thought that it was the best way to meet other librarians and visit other libraries. This was a year after I started working as Research Librarian at the Ministry of Information Malaysia, Angkasapuri, Kuala Lumpur (KL). It was my first public service appointment as a librarian after obtaining the Post-Graduate Diploma in Librarianship at the College of Librarianship Wales, U.K. I was the only professional librarian in the Ministry at the time. Most of my peers who studied overseas were posted to the National Library of Malaysia or to university libraries.

My first introduction to PPM was when a senior librarian whom I was friendly with invited me to attend a meeting of the PPM Lottery Project Committee. It was not an entirely happy introduction as the Chairman and committee members felt it was inappropriate for a newbie to attend this meeting. Nevertheless, they allowed me to stay as an observer and I agreed to help with the sale of the lottery tickets as suggested. It was my first PPM project and I saw first-hand how willingly librarians from all sectors committed and dedicated themselves to a voluntary cause. After that, I took every opportunity to attend PPM functions, especially those at special libraries so that I could meet the librarians and visit their libraries.

Not long after, I met the members of the Special Libraries Committee and I was soon involved with their work. Keen and enthusiastic, I became its Honorary Secretary and learnt a lot about organising activities such as talks, seminars, and forums as well as worked on compiling the *Directory of Special Libraries in Malaysia*. As secretary, I was also involved with Council projects such as preparing the first *Guidelines for Special Libraries*. It would be true to say that I honed my organising and leadership skills while serving in the Special Libraries Committee and PPM Council.

One of the people who left a deep impression on me was Datin Ragayah Eusoff, who was Chairman of the Special Libraries Committee and later, the President of PPM. I worked with her on the Special Libraries Committee and PPM Council when I was Vice-President. I admired her as a library professional and how well she ran the Bank Negara (Central Bank) Library as well as served in various PPM leadership positions. It was amazing how she balanced official, professional, and personal commitments and I always wondered how she managed to juggle her multifarious tasks of running an excellent library at the Central Bank; sending the children to school, tuition classes, swimming, and other extra-curricular activities; while ensuring domestic chores were done. She inspired me in how she did not allow her professional duties and domestic chores deter her from doing voluntary work.

Two others who left an impression were Dr Donald Wijasuriya and Mr Edward Lim Huck Tee, former Presidents of PPM, who, apart from efficiently running the National Library and Universiti Sains Library respectively, were prolific writers. I greatly admire their writing skills and the excellent contributions they made to the library profession's international journals.

Another who left a deep impression was Dato' Dr Zaiton Osman, one of my oldest friends in PPM, for her professionalism, deep interest, and commitment to the Association. In fact, she wrote a thesis on *The Role of the Library Association in Preparing Members for New Trends* for her Master's degree. We shared numerous discussions on PPM and librarianship issues throughout the years and have been involved in organising many activities together as we have both served in various capacities including post-retirement.



I first became President in 1984 after serving as Vice-President before that, so it was a natural progression. During this term, my focus was on fundraising. In one project, the Mount Kinabalu Expedition, fundraising was combined with the added objective of familiarising librarians and libraries in Peninsular Malaysia with those in Sabah. The Mount Kinabalu expedition saw 10 librarians from West Malaysia and 10 librarians from Sabah participating with pledges of sponsorship of RM5,000 per participant. All participants succeeded in reaching the 13,455-feet peak. It was certainly a memorable event for PPM although we did not raise as much money as we had hoped to. An account of the expedition entitled *The Call of Kinabalu* was published in the National Library of Malaysia journal *Sekitar* in 1985. Actually, fundraising was an important activity in the early days of PPM. We organised a series of Book Bangs (sale of pre-loved and unsold books), the PPM lottery, film premieres, stage plays, tea dances, fashion shows, and courses.

In 1978, I produced a stage play of Emlyn Williams' *Night Must Fall* directed by an American Peace Corp colleague from the Ministry of Information. Popular actor Mano Maniam, accomplished dancer Sukanika Venugopal, Garden School Principal Mary Arshad, and others volunteered their talents ranging from acting to set and costume designing.

I served for a second term from 1985 to 1986 as PPM was planning to acquire its own building. We succeeded in doing so before I ended my term in March 1986. PPM was renting shop and building spaces, and even using a Council member's home at one time. It was not only inconvenient and cumbersome, but also placed extra burden to keep raising funds to offset rental and administrative costs. With funds from the Lottery Fund project combined with bonds and shares invested in the past, the Council was able to purchase a two-storey shop lot for its Secretariat Office and additional space which could be rented out for regular income. After going through the necessary constitutional amendments and Extraordinary General Meetings to obtain members' approval, we finally purchased the building in 1986, freeing PPM of long-term financial commitments.

In 2001, I was approached by the President and Vice-President of the outgoing Council to take over the PPM leadership. I was Deputy Director-General of the National Library then. Persuaded by the Director-General Cik Shahar Banun Jaafar at the time, I agreed to stand for elections and was duly elected President for the 2001 to 2003 term.

One of the highlights during this term was the joint-hosting of the International Conference on Asian Digital Libraries (ICADEL) with the National Library and the National University (UKM), held from 8 to 12 December 2003. Themed *Digital Libraries: Technology and Management of Indigenous Knowledge for Global Access*, the highly successful conference was officially opened by then Minister of Education, Tan Sri Musa Mohamed and attended by 300 participants, including 80 from overseas. PPM made special efforts in 2003 to bond with our Sarawak counterparts by organising library workshops in Kuching and organising expeditions to the Mulu caves at the Gunung Mulu National Park via Miri in Sarawak. We were greatly honoured when the Chairman of the Pustaka Negeri Sarawak Library Board, Tan Sri Hamid Bugo joined us for this unforgettable expedition.

I was re-elected President for another two-year term (2003 to 2005) when I voluntarily stood for election to help plan programmes to celebrate PPM and Library Association of Singapore's (LAS) 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005. Nine major programmes were organised, which was launched at a gala dinner graced by then Deputy Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Abdul Razak and his wife Datin Sri Rosmah Mansor at Hotel Istana, KL on



6 April 2005. One of the programmes organised was the PPM-LAS Commemorative Conference chaired by Dato' Dr Zaiton Osman that included guest speakers from South Africa and India.

PPM also honoured five eminent persons as Honorary Members, namely the late Tan Sri Dato' Dr Mohd Rashdan Haji Baba, Y.M. Tengku Dato' Azman Sharifadeen, Dato' Dr Halim Shafie, Dato' Dr Ibrahim Bajunid, and Dato' Dr Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, all of whom had made significant contributions to the development of libraries in Malaysia. They joined Mrs Hedwig Anuar who was PPM's sole Honorary Member at the time. PPM's Library Excellence Awards was also inaugurated that year for both large and small of libraries.

A series of PPM Presidential talks was held with the first talk delivered by Datin Ragayah Eusoff (President, 1980 to 1981) and a voluntary mission known as PPM Iqra' Mission led by Rohani Rustam, Hasbullah Atan and me was also dispatched to Aceh to gauge the support needed by libraries after the devastation of the tsunami and to provide rebuilding assistance. The mission's work was documented in a book entitled *Aceh Reads On: The PPM Iqra' Mission in Post-Tsunami Aceh* published by PPM in 2011.

Having worked with PPM over the years, we developed firm friendships with colleagues from other libraries, including those from LAS, other ASEAN countries as well as IFLA member countries. I recall the Kinabalu Expedition with my good friend Noor Aini Osman who supported me right up to the peak, as well as the endless discussions over tea and *pisang goreng* about issues relating to librarianship especially with my oldest and dearest friend, Dato' Dr Zaiton Osman.

I enjoyed our joint Bibliographic and Library Cooperation (BILCO) and other meetings with LAS in Singapore and KL, visiting each other's libraries and learning from each other especially in the 1970s and 1980s. Many colleagues continue to support and serve PPM in various roles after retirement. It was significant to note that many important positions in the National Committee for IFLA WLIC 2018 were held by retired librarians who had worked with PPM over the last few decades, underscoring the importance of voluntary associations like PPM to maintain good relationships with retired professional librarians.

As a volunteer-run association, it may not be smooth-sailing and free from criticism when you want to embark on what seems a worthwhile and justifiable project as there will be differences of opinions and suspicions, apart from competing interests. Hence, to future Presidents, you must believe in what you want to do, do it for the right reasons, convince a core group of supporters, and proceed to give your best and make it a success regardless.

I would certainly like to see more young librarians join the association early in their careers and be involved with the activities of the profession at different levels. It is a great way to network, learn from each other, develop your confidence and leadership potential, and take advantage of the many opportunities which present itself to become more visible at a professional, national, regional, and even, international level.



## **Jenny Soh**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1989-1991)*

I first joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in 1961. I was a library assistant at the Singapore Polytechnic library then, and I attended a course that LAS was conducting, which prompted me to sign up for a membership. After attending one meeting and finding it very interesting, I became active in the association, and eventually became a member of a sub-committee. I was very young then, and always attended committee gatherings. I was very impressed by the Chief Librarians like Mrs Anuar, Mrs Hochstadt, and Mrs Yeap, because they were very involved in the association. They were very capable and constantly encouraged each other. Subsequently, all of them also became Presidents of LAS in their time.

I continued to serve actively in LAS even after I left the Singapore Polytechnic library and went on to become the Head of the research library at the then Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC).

The LAS was always a very forward-looking association, and we conducted courses on computer systems in the libraries from 1978. In my time with LAS, I also started the Special Libraries section. This section came about because I realised that it was difficult for librarians to find certain information requested by patrons or researchers. I would often have to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs library or the National Library, to find what was requested. With the creation of the Special Libraries section, we would be able to get together to share resources and enlarge the library profession.

Library associations are very important, especially when it comes to getting to know others in the profession. When I was a member, I attended joint seminars with PPM and PPS (Persatuan Perpustakaan Singapura, which was later renamed LAS). We made friends with the Malaysian librarians and visited their libraries in Kuala Lumpur. These seminars were always very popular. The first one I attended was in 1969, when we were planning for the future of libraries in the 1970s. At that time, we not only made visits to the Malaysian libraries, but also to the ones in Thailand.



*Jenny Soh (right) and Glenda Gwee (then Hon Secretary) at the LAS & ALIA Seminar on Strategic Planning & Management for Libraries & Information Centres*



*Trip to Kuala Lumpur*



*Jenny Soh giving a talk in 1991*





*At an event with LAS members*

One of the best memories that I have of my presidency was organising a particularly well-attended seminar. I was, of course, happy to see people attending and participating, but what I remember most was how the sub-committee worked so well together and made the seminar almost painless to organise! I worked with some highly capable and very helpful people, one of whom was my secretary Ms Glenda Gwee.

Now that we are in the age of the Internet, librarians should be equipped and trained to find information faster and better than everybody else. Even on the Internet where information is supposed to be easy to find, certain websites are difficult to navigate especially when you are looking for specific information. In the future, librarians should look to set up a system that allows us to seek information quickly and efficiently.



**Choy Fatt Cheong**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1997-2005)*

I was LAS President for four terms from 1997 to 2005, a total of eight years. During this time, I went through three jobs—as principal lecturer at Temasek Polytechnic, consultant of my own company, and University Librarian at Nanyang Technological University (NTU)! I was persuaded by Ms Isabel Yeo, my predecessor, to run for President because sadly, it seemed that no one at senior levels in the profession wanted to take on the role then.

I was quite reluctant, as I was extremely busy with setting up a new diploma course and starting my family as well (I guess others have similar excuses too). However, I felt obliged to contribute further to LAS, as I believed that there is no profession without a strong professional body. I was grateful that in the previous 10 years (I joined in 1984), LAS had given me the opportunity to grow professionally and to experience the camaraderie in the profession. I developed valuable soft skills that I would not have gained by just merely working. I decided then that I should take on the role and find ways to balance and manage my time.

I did not expect to hold the Presidency for eight years! Every election year, I hoped that someone suitable would come forward to take over. However, I was always returned unopposed except for the last term when there was a strong contestant, clearly nominated by a large institution. As I felt that the independence of LAS was at stake, I decided to throw in the gauntlet. The election was full of drama, unusual for LAS—there were campaigning in both camps, election speeches, and nail-biting tension, but I managed to retain the Presidency. It was a memorable event for me, and I am sure for LAS members too.

As to be expected, there were numerous memorable stories during my term of office, too many to recount here. One event I enjoyed a lot was leading a small delegation of 12 LAS members to the Glasgow IFLA Conference in 2002. After the Conference, we did a grand tour of the United Kingdom (UK) libraries all the way to the South, covering Newcastle, Manchester, Oxford, the British Library, and Blackwell Bookshop. The Information Service Team (INS) at the British Council in the UK assisted us in organising



*Joint Liaison Council (JLC) of LAS/PPM, 1997*



our itinerary. They were extremely hospitable and warm, cumulating in a memorable dinner reception at the Lowry Theatre restaurant in Manchester. They set an example for me to emulate when hosting visiting professionals or delegations for the rest of my career.

Leading a professional body made up entirely of volunteers requires a different skillset from being appointed as a leader of paid employees. Through my time in LAS, I have learned to rely more on persuasion and negotiation to carry out projects and even for the simplest routine tasks. It was fortunate that most of our professional colleagues were cooperative and shared the same desire for the advancement of the profession. Of course, there will always be people who disagree with what we do, but I tried to maintain a collegial relationship with everyone.



*Dinner reception for LAS delegation at Lowry Theatre in Manchester hosted by Grace Kempster, Director of BC Information Services Team (2002)*

One of the most valuable experiences that LAS offers then and now is the opportunity to network with fellow colleagues across the entire spectrum of libraries in Singapore. As President, I also had the privilege of meeting many other leaders outside of our profession. Also, through our relationship with PPM, CONSAL, IFLA, and other international bodies, I was exposed to the varied aspirations and work culture of librarians in other countries. All these experiences heightened my understanding of the critical issues in libraries and librarianship. I felt that I had a good grasp of the profession, which gave me a lot of confidence and inspiration in my own work.

I had a memorable and adventurous career as a librarian, one that I would not have imagined when I first started out as a trainee librarian at NUS when I was 28. My involvement in LAS was instrumental, directly, and indirectly, to the great satisfaction I enjoyed and whatever little success I achieved in my 35-year long career.



**Sylvia Yap**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2005-2007)*

I joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in 1973 when I started work in the then Singapore University Library.

At that time, LAS members were a small closely-knitted community. I was struck by their commitment, enthusiasm, and wonderful camaraderie. The high level of professionalism exhibited by the pioneer librarians were inspiring. I felt compelled to join their exciting journey to grow the profession and build bridges to knowledge to serve the nation. I was drawn into a world that was very new to me; I was exposed to new cultural and literary experiences that were eye opening for me, a science student.

The Association also organised many activities such as talks, conferences, regular meetings, and parties. These provided excellent platforms to gel friendships and for mentoring. Personally, the interactions further deepened my belief that I made a good choice. Members had to serve on several committees at a time and that bonded us further. The friendship forged further facilitated library cooperation in Singapore and with our Malaysian counterparts. They were fun times.

I thought that it was time for me to take on more responsibilities to serve LAS after reaping so many fruits for many years. I should start walking the talk. I was concerned about the waning image of the profession. I hoped to explore how we could change the image of the profession and grow the LAS membership base. LAS is a platform to promote our profession and provide avenues for members to grow professionally.

I had many exciting experiences of which the following were most memorable:

- LAS/PPM's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration which started in Kuala Lumpur and concluded with the Golden Jubilee Dinner held at Concorde Hotel, Singapore. The dinner was a night of reminiscences and a golden opportunity for the Association to honour and recognise members for their past contributions. I was deeply touched by the spirit of





our comradeship that night. The celebration cake, a *lapis tingkat*, was a great representation of our shared identity with the Malaysians.

- The launch of the Professional Development Scheme (PDS). This was in response to formally recognising professional development and to help raise our professional status.
- The establishment of a LAS Award Panel to identify and honour members who had rendered or have a potential to render outstanding service to the profession.
- I remember when we were preparing for a CONSAL Conference at Shangri-La Hotel until very late at night, and we still did not have dinner yet. Shangri-La's food was a bit pricey so we sent someone out to buy food. The person could only get hard-boiled eggs as all the shops nearby were closed. We all had a good laugh and hard-boiled eggs never tasted better.

I salute all future Presidents for taking up the challenge to lead LAS. It will not be easy. But from my experiences, I can promise you new friendships, fun, much laughter, and a great sense of achievement.

I hope to see a new continual flow of enthusiastic professionals. I hope that members will continue to uphold our established traditional professional name "Librarian".

Like all professions, we should be proud of our professional identity. Librarians like doctors, engineers, nurses, etc. are terms that describe the profession traditionally. Once you modernise the professional term, you start to remove the profession from the public's established perception. How many times can we change a name and still keep it meaningful?

We should focus instead, on the products and services that we can provide as Librarians. It is the products and services that define us. Change our services and products to stay relevant to our users but never our professional description. Long live Librarianship!



**Ngian Lek Choh**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2007-2009)*

When I joined the National Library in 1977, Mrs Hedwig Anuar, then Director, National Library, mandated that we join the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) and take up official positions. For me, this was something that I welcomed, to get to know more librarians working in different libraries and a means for me to learn. As a new member, I would join the LAS activities and then, join the LAS Committees to participate and contribute in its efforts. I found the experience interesting and enjoyable.

Many of the old-timers were very committed and passionate in the LAS. Apart from Mrs Anuar, others that left deep impressions on me include Mr R Ramachandran, Mr Choy Fatt Cheong, Ms Ch'ng Kim See, Mrs Patricia Lim, Ms Sylvia Yap, Ms Julie Sabaratnam, and many of the younger librarians who would join committees and contribute. Members were, and still are today, very committed and passionate about their profession, keen to share their experience, and keen to learn from each other.

Being in LAS for so many years made me feel that I could also contribute in the capacity as President, hence the decision to run for the position. I hoped to create more interactions between members to facilitate learning and growth amongst members. I also hoped that members could cultivate a stronger sense of being in a shared professional field and to grow the profession.

One of the best memories during my term was when we participated in the Ministry of Manpower's (MOM) professional development programme and developed a roadmap for librarians and para-professional staff. We also developed training programmes for para-professional staff as at the time, there was no structured training programmes for them. LAS members took certification from MOM's programme and became nationally recognised trainers.

LAS was, and still is, a place for librarians to network and grow at all times, regardless of experience and



*Lee Boon Yang (Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts) presenting Hedwig Anuar with the LAS Lifelong Contribution Award at Singapore Library Week 2007*



*LAS Innovation to Serve Conference, 2008*



positions held. I would say that the essence of the association can be summarised in three words—growth, friendship, camaraderie. The friendship and camaraderie amongst members, regardless of age and experience struck me as something really special in LAS.



*LAS AGM 2009*

To future Presidents, I hope that they will focus on the needs of members and find out from the members what they wish to see LAS doing. To also organise more activities for members to meet and interact with each other. I hope that LAS can also participate more in IFLA and CONSAL to raise regional and international presence and impact, and to engage more LAS members in external activities to raise their awareness and widen their horizons in librarianship.



**Dato' Raslin bin Abu Bakar**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2008-2010)*

I became a member of The Librarians Association of Malaysia, also known as Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) in 1985. It was the year that I first held the position of Librarian at the National Library of Malaysia, also known as Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (PNM). I came to know about PPM while I was studying Library and Information Science at Institut Teknologi MARA (ITM) now known as Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), from 1979 to 1982.

Young librarians like myself could not only work as librarians at various institutions in our country but we could also become members of an association where we could become professional members.

When I first started out as a member, I only attended the Annual General Meetings (AGMs), talks, short courses, and library seminars organised by PPM. Then in 1989, the then Director-General of the PNM and President of the PPM, Datin Mariam Abdul Kadir offered me the position of Honorary Secretary. Thereafter, I remained the Honorary Secretary for two subsequent terms from 1991 to 1995. After that, I became less active but continued as a regular member from 1996 to 2000 due to the increasing challenging tasks in my career. However, I became active once again by becoming a PPM Council member for the 2001/2003 and 2005/2007 terms, subsequently holding the position of President and Past President of PPM for the 2008/2010 and 2010/2012 terms respectively.

I was in awe of those who once held the position of PPM President while I was serving as PPM Honorary Secretary from 1989 to 1995. At that time, I was merely a young officer who had recently become aware of PPM and needed guidance from those who had experience in the library world. Among them were Datin Mariam Abdul Kadir, the late Puan Sri Rugayah Abdul Rashid, Mr Chew Wing Foong, and Mr R. Ramachandran (Library Association of Singapore). I wish to record a word of appreciation to all of them.

Armed with the knowledge and experience of being an active member in PPM for almost 20 years and my appointment as the Director-General, PNM in 2008, I began to feel confident to lead PPM. Coincidentally, that year was also election year for the 2008/2010 term of PPM Council members. I did not contest for the post and instead, was cordially offered the position by then PPM President Puan Putri Saniah Megat Abdul Rahman. This confidence was further strengthened by the support from my Department Head of Service and other librarians at the time.

When taking over the PPM leadership, my vision was to firstly, raise PPM's recognition especially among the government ministries like the Ministry of Unity, Culture, Arts and Heritage, which the PNM is part of. Secondly, I hoped to increase PPM cooperation with PNM in human capital development. Thirdly, I wanted to encourage the establishment of PPM branches by zone in order to attract more librarians to become members and increase branch activities. Lastly, it was to strengthen the existing relationship with the librarians' association in the ASEAN countries and CONSAL.

During my term, we successfully convinced the Ministry to provide a PPM Secretariat Office space in the National Library's building in 2008 for free where it still is today. We were able to hold a Digital Library Seminar in collaboration with PNM to expose Malaysian librarians to the concept of digital libraries that was first discussed at the Asia-Pacific level at that time. The PPM branches are now more established and has



become a platform for the librarians to mobilise activities in their respective zones. The good relationship has much improved via various activities planned and implemented through CONSAL.

During my terms as President and Past President of PPM from 2008 to 2012, I had the opportunity to attend a very interesting CONSAL Executive Board Annual Meeting. Usually, it is attended by the Director-General of libraries of every ASEAN country and/or the representatives and President of the ASEAN library associations. I had the opportunity to attend two CONSAL meetings that were held in Vietnam (2009) and in Bali, Indonesia (2012) respectively. During these sessions, the librarians had the opportunity to meet and discuss the development of libraries in their respective countries and to foster and strengthen their friendships and networking.

I enjoyed meeting various parties from within Malaysia and abroad through their courtesy visits to the office. We would discuss about library development, book publishing, and organising of joint activities, etc. Among them were visits from librarians of Taiwan, South Korea, Brunei, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, India, Bangladesh, and many others. My biggest disappointment was when PPM and PNM failed the bid to host IFLA conferences for the years 2010 and 2013 in Malaysia. These were years when I was Director-General of PNM, as well as PPM President and PPM Past President in 2010 and 2013 respectively.

Three essences of the association to me:

- Professionalism. A professional association that plays a specific role to advance the archetypes of the library profession as a whole;
- In Trend. Provide current trends in librarianship via its programmes and activities to its members; and
- Recognition. The association as a recognised organisation that will speak for the profession as a whole. The authority must be given by its large numbers of members who possess the common sets of ethics and thinking.

Recently, more experienced and knowledgeable librarians have retired. I believe there are more than 200 of them. Many retirees that still support PPM have become lifelong members and they have faithfully paid their annual fees since becoming members for eons. Does their librarianship knowledge stop when they retire or are they only invited once a year to attend the AGM to listen and review the reports presented? I would like to recommend for PPM and CONSAL to encourage our retired librarians to move into interest groups of their own choice, to be engaged in activities such as courses and talks, to be part of library establishment advisory services, as well as to collect and disseminate digital information according to their extensive experience. It is very important that they have the freedom to carry out these activities under the parasol of PPM.

The association exists due to the support of the members, so PPM needs to continue to convince the members that the association is very important and can actually help them. One of the benchmarks for the success of an association is the support of its members and ability to help them actively.



**Puspa Yeow**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2009-2011)*

I joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in the late 1990s. I remember attending an Annual General Meeting (AGM) where Mr Ramachandran did a rally call for librarians to step forward and to serve LAS, especially in taking up council appointments. I was relatively new to librarianship then and was awed by his dedication and passion.

As a new member, I mainly attended the AGMs. It was more exciting during the election years. My attitude at the time was that I would support my professional association by becoming a member and attending events. As a junior librarian then, there was not much networking and I hardly knew librarians from other institutions, unlike those in the senior positions who seemed to know each other so well. They were so cool!

My journey to becoming president started with a call one late morning from Ms Sylvia Yap, the then LAS president and NUS University Librarian. She planted the seed of LAS Council succession planning and the need for each of us to play our part and step up to contribute to our profession. I agreed to run for the Vice-President post and a term later, ran for President. During my term, I was always hopeful that we could make a difference and dare to take on a challenge to bring LAS to greater heights, sharing the same sentiments as my predecessors that we would continue to reinforce the positive image of librarians as valuable professionals.

My best memories during my presidency were of the challenges to deliver new initiatives such as programmes for the members, which brought a sense of achievement and satisfaction, and also served to bring the members closer. We were not short of volunteers to help at our conferences and events. The networking was alive and the bonding was strong. One of my sweetest memories was on 14 July 2010, when LAS made a commitment to partner National Library Board Singapore (NLB) to bid for the hosting of the 2013 WLIC 79th IFLA General Conference and Assembly which we won! That was a game changer.



*Puspa (right) with the late Dr Mohd Sharif Mohd Saad (President, PPM) at the 2010 LAS-PPM meet up in Kuala Lumpur, a three-day study trip from 8 to 10 Nov 2010 that included conference attendance, visit to three libraries and a meeting with the PPM to re-initiate LAS-PPM ties*



*At the Celebrating Libraries 2013 Dinner, dancing with the Temasek Polytechnic Library's librarians*



During my term with the Council, there were two people who inspired me to go the extra mile in serving LAS, and they were none other than Ms Sylvia Yap and Ms Ngian Lek Choh, my predecessors. They coached and mentored me as preparation to take on the leadership role as President of the LAS. They were encouraging and patient in giving me advice, despite their highly busy schedule. I learnt so much from them at council meetings.

Our Honorary Secretary Ms Wong Choy Ming also worked tirelessly to arrange for meetings and to ensure that all the minutes were ready for circulation and to get the all-important Annual Report compiled with the latest updates from the committees. Therefore, I would also like to pay tribute to the Honorary Secretaries who are the ones responsible for the smooth administration of the LAS Councils.

Having said that, everyone in the Council played a very important role and we worked well as a team. We deeply appreciated everyone's contribution especially since council work took up a lot of our personal time. I was deeply privileged and equally fortunate to have worked with a dedicated, enthusiastic, and passionate team of Council members where warm friendships and camaraderie were forged. We started off almost as strangers but at the end of the two-year term, we got to know each other better, developed camaraderie, and many of us have kept in touch.

To summarise the LAS in six words, we embody pride in our profession. Libraries are a close-knit community worldwide, including Singapore. I would like to see more networking, collaboration, and engagement in the future! We should excite the interest of all members, stand tall that we have much to offer in this digital world, and believe in our profession and ourselves. For future Presidents, do take on the leadership role and be committed to it. I can assure you that it will be a valuable and enriching experience that you will enjoy.



14 July 2010

IFLA Governing Board and Congress Advisory Committee  
International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)  
P.O. Box 95312  
2509 CH The Hague  
Netherlands

By Email and Post

Dear Governing Board and Congress Advisory Committee Members,

**SUPPORT OF SINGAPORE'S BID TO HOST 2013 WORLD LIBRARY AND CONGRESS (WLIC): 79<sup>TH</sup> IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE AND ASSEMBLY**

The Library Association of Singapore (LAS) was established more than fifty years ago to represent the library and information profession in Singapore. It has more than 470 members comprising largely of professionals and institutions and has a very active professional programme. Recently we launched the Professional Development Scheme (PDS) which provides for the recognition of continuing education among members. We have also organised several national and regional conferences with NLB.

LAS is pleased to partner National Library Board (NLB) Singapore to bid to host 2013 WLIC: 79<sup>TH</sup> IFLA General Conference and Assembly.

LAS strongly supports NLB and IFLA in their efforts to promote and further the interests of librarians and information professionals worldwide. Hosting the Congress will provide the opportunity for the Singapore library community to further contribute to and support this shared vision.

Furthermore, LAS and NLB work closely on several collaboration platforms and we are confident that our combined efforts will ensure a successful Congress should it be held in Singapore.

We look forward to the honour of welcoming the IFLA Congress to Singapore and greatly appreciate your favourable consideration of Singapore's bid.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Puspa Yeow  
President  
Library Association of Singapore

*Bid to host the 2013 WLIC: 79th IFLA General Conference and Assembly*



## **Gene Tan**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2011-2013)*

I joined the association rather late in my library career—more than a decade after I became a Librarian. The Library Association of Singapore (LAS) felt like a rarefied place to me with powerful librarians from libraries outside the National Library Board (NLB) system I was used to. Maybe I wanted to get closer to all these names that I have always heard of as a rookie librarian, and in the process, make something of myself. Even from day one, I had the strange feeling that I was always part of it. I think that is the magic of the librarians' community. No one is ever a stranger.

Someone who left a deep impression on me was Ms Sylvia Yap, the University Librarian from National University of Singapore (NUS). She is such a formidable character. I remember telling her that I was quite terrified of her. Somehow that motivated me to want to do better. When she eventually complimented me on my work, it felt like my most fearsome aunt had validated me in our yearly Chinese New Year meet-ups!

When I ran for President, my vision was to have debates and discourse in the community—to challenge the thinking that we were a sunset industry.

One of my best memories was when I invited representatives from Facebook (Ms Sunita Kaur), Google (Mr Goh Lih Shiun), as well as independent bookseller Mr Kenny Leck of Books Actually, filmmaker Ms Tan Pin Pin, and Straits Times journalist Mr Yeow Kai Chai for a panel to open the inaugural Librarians of Tomorrow conference in 2012. It was exhilarating to hear support and perspectives from such a diverse group and to have them laugh at silly things together with an auditorium full of librarians.

I really enjoyed meeting librarians from all over the world as President. For instance, our trip to Malacca in our joint LAS-PPM Conference in March 2012 was indeed a moving reunion of two pioneering associations.

To future Presidents—keep abreast of trends outside the industry and then work hard to make sure that they do



*With Tan Pin Pin, Sunita Kaur, Yeow Kai Chai, Goh Lih Shiun and Kenny Leck at the 2012 Librarians for Tomorrow Conference*



*With Sunita Kaur, Yeow Kai Chai and Kenny Leck at the 2012 Librarians for Tomorrow Conference*





*Dancing at the conference dinner with our PPM colleague in Malacca*

not even become threats to our community. We have to master them.

“Kindness, Solidarity, and Courage” pretty much sums up the essence of the association. I hope to see an association that continues to be one that is kind to all; people new to the community, people outside the community, and above all, people who have served all their lives in it and are now in the twilight of their lives.



**Maimunah binti Kadir**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2013-2014)*

I became a member of Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) in 1994. My boss at the time, Ms Norsham Muslim, who was then Deputy Chief Librarian of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Library, asked me to represent UKM in PPM's Standing Committee on Academic Libraries. As a new member representing UKM in the standing committee, I felt very welcomed by then Chair, Dato' Dr Zaiton Osman.

As a young librarian, I was inspired by Dato' Dr Zaiton's professionalism and our committee enjoyed the various activities that we organised. I fondly remember the first Internet training that we organised. I had volunteered to hold the training at UKM's computer lab and invited the then Director of the Computer Centre to conduct the course. The Internet was very new and I remember dialling up to United States to login. The computer lab consisted of workstations that were very bulky with crawling access speeds. However, being the first Internet course organised by PPM, it was considered a success. Dato' Dr Zaiton was a mentor to me and inspired me to be active in PPM under her leadership.

My term as a Council member started in 2001. The then President was Dato' Zawiyah Baba who was also the Director-General of the National Library at the time. Another who left a deep impression on me was the late Associate Professor Dr Mohd Sharif Mohd Saad. He was so passionate about his work. He was Vice-President II then and we collaborated well as he was a real team player. He had asked me to be the Secretary of the bidding committee to host IFLA WLIC in 2011 and 2013. He was very committed to bring IFLA WLIC to Kuala Lumpur because he had the vision that it will be beneficial to not only PPM and the library profession, but to Malaysia. When we finally won the bid to host IFLA WLIC 2018, I could not help but think of how happy Dr Sharif would have been with this result, had he still been around.

Dr Sharif passed away suddenly on 9 December 2013. I still remember how shocked I was when I received the news from one of the Council members. I thought it was







a bad joke. I was in my office when it was confirmed that we had lost our President. I started crying and could not concentrate at work that day. I was then Vice-President I and we had worked so closely. We would call each other after office hours to discuss matters regarding PPM. It was just a couple of days since he called to ask me to run for President as his second term was ending soon. He had expressed his support for me and wanted me to promise that I will stand for election. He was very persistent about it so I had to agree to his suggestion. It took me a week to overcome my grief of losing not only a dear friend but also a dedicated President. I had to take over the task of President immediately and continue to lead PPM as we had many activities to finish before the upcoming election in March/April 2014. My immediate task was to organise a special prayer for our late President at PPM's office a week after his passing. May he be rewarded in his hereafter for all the good deeds he had done for PPM.

As President, I had to ensure PPM's activities were carried out. The late President had pledged two high-level activities. The first was to host the IFLA-RSCAO meeting in Kuala Lumpur. The second was to publish a book *Esei-esei Memperingati Shahar Banun Jaafar dan Shahaneen Hanoum Dadameah: Cabaran Pembangunan Perpustakaan (Essays in memory of Shahar Banun Jaafar and Shahaneen Hanoum Dadameah: Challenges and development of libraries)*. Preparations to host IFLA-RSCAO went ahead and we had the meeting at the PETRONAS Petroleum Resource Centre from 17 to 18 February 2014, which was followed by the International Seminar on Library Consortia and Community Engagement on 19 February 2014 at Perdana Leadership Foundation.



The book was a compilation of articles in honour of the two late Presidents. Dato' Zawiyah Baba was appointed as Chair of the publication and we published and launched it in time for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 14 April 2014. It was deemed a success and became my best memory. We had Tan Sri Dato' Seri Utama Dr Arshad Ayub as the keynote speaker and to officiate the AGM. At the AGM, we also launched the book *Garis Panduan*



As my tenure was short (a few months) I was overwhelmed by the support given to me when I had to carry out the duties of the President when he passed away so suddenly. This enabled me to carry out activities successfully and have the AGM in 2014 to elect a new President and Council members. As the Immediate Past President, I was still on the Council and was able contribute to the new President and its new Council members.

Later, I took on the role of Secretary of the National Committee (NC) to host the 84<sup>th</sup> IFLA WLIC from 24 to 30 August 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which I enjoyed. This was my favourite time in my profession. Although it was a lot of hard work, I enjoyed the teamwork of the NC without which it would have been impossible to function as Secretary. The experience enriched my knowledge of the high standard set by IFLA in ensuring a successful congress. I developed a close working relationship with IFLA and K.I.T. staff and to this day, they have become my friends. It was also such an honour to get to know then IFLA President, Ms Glòria Pérez-Salmerón, and IFLA's Secretary General, Mr Gerald Leitner, while organising WLIC 2018. It is truly one of the most unforgettable experiences for me to this day.

Sadly, my mother passed away on 28 August 2018. I was at the NC room when my husband called to inform me that my mother had passed away at 11.00 am. I rushed home immediately. I was glad the main event such as the IFLA's Official Reception, the Opening Session, and the Cultural Evening was over by then. Even though I could not bring myself to be at the Convention Centre for the rest of the Congress due to my grief, I was pleased that everything had been executed well due to the support and teamwork of our NC members and especially the dedication of our Chair, Dato' Nafisah Ahmad and Co-Chair Dato' Dr Zaiton Osman who helped ensure that everything was smooth sailing. IFLA WLIC will always hold dear in my heart because of its association with my mother's passing during WLIC 2018.

The essence of PPM is professionalism, volunteerism, and teamwork. Future Presidents need to bring together all professional librarians to be PPM members under one umbrella and strive towards making the profession legally recognised in the country. I have faith that today's young librarians are dynamic and will aspire to bring up the status of PPM as a professional body in the country and on par with other professions in the near future.



## **Lee Cheng Ean**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2013-2015)*

I first joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in 1982 when I joined National University of Singapore (NUS) as a trainee librarian. I was inducted to LAS by a colleague. I felt that if I am joining the library profession, I would need to be a member to learn about the profession and how other libraries function.

As a newbie that first year, I recall attending the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and also a dinner by the poolside at one of the hotels. It was quite an experience for me as I was a *kampung* girl and had not been to a hotel before. My senior took my colleagues and me under her wing and took good care of us during that event.

I was very much impressed with Miss Wee Joo Gim who was the President of LAS from 1980 to 1982. Years later, I had the good fortune to work closely with Miss Wee at NUS. Since attending my first meeting, I made it a point to attend the LAS AGMs and major events to catch up with fellow librarians and to enjoy the networking.

Immediately after I completed my Masters in Library & Information Studies degree from the Loughborough University of Technology in 1984, I was immediately roped in to join the LAS Council. I took on the role of Assistant Honorary Secretary and was entrusted with membership administration. I recall updating members' information and storing it in a floppy disk. It was a painful process. I learnt a lot from Mr Ramachandran who was the President then. After that stint, I continued as a member and assisted in organising a number of major events, such as the Golden Jubilee in 2005, and Libraries for Tomorrow conference in 2014.

My desire to work with fellow librarians locally and abroad as well as to influence the library profession and how we can add value to the community we serve motivated me to run for President.

When I took over the role of LAS President from May 2013, my aim was to increase the membership of LAS and to provide opportunities for members' professional



*Getting ready for the boat cruise to launch the Love Your Librarian Day on 15 Feb 2014*



*Receiving a memento from a beneficiary at CPAS for a fun-filled entertainment and lunch treat*



*Dr Tony Tan with past LAS Presidents at the event Celebrating Librarians on 18 Aug 2013*



*Wee Joo Gim receiving the LAS Lifetime Contribution Award 2014 at the LAS 60th anniversary celebration on 18 April 2015*



development so as to enhance the status and role of library professionals in Singapore. My key focus was for members to develop themselves through attending talks, seminars, and enriching visits. As our roles are constantly evolving due to emerging technologies, learning behaviours, as well as publishing and business models, it is imperative that members keep learning to stay relevant and ahead of challenges.

The most memorable event was definitely the night of Presidents—*Celebrating Librarians: LAS Awards & Book Launch*. I was Vice-President from 2012 to 2013 working alongside Mr Gene Tan who is such a joy to work with. Together we organised the grand event graced by the former President of Singapore, Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam, when I was the LAS President from 2013 to 2015. Not only did we have the privilege of having the then President of Singapore as Guest of Honour to present the LAS awards and launch the commemorative book, *In 99 Words: Stories Librarians Tell*, but we also had the company of the President of IFLA, Dr Ingrid Parent and President-Elect Ms Sinikka Sipilä.

During my term, we organised two “librarians give-back” activities. One was to the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) and another to the Lighthouse School where members volunteered their time to work with those less fortunate. *Love Your Librarian Day* on a boat cruise was also another memorable fun-filled event.

How active the association is depends on the Council and members. You need the people to drive programmes and push for development. Active Council members and volunteers make things happen.

I always enjoyed the networking lunches after each AGM. When we get together, there is always plenty of food, chatter, and laughter. The library community is a very small one in Singapore. The more we get together, the more friends we make, hence making it easier for us to collaborate whenever we need to. The bond that we build over the years bring us closer to each other.

The essence of the association would be “enduring (and yet to) reach full potential.”

This is a voluntary role which requires time and commitment. Be passionate and ready to serve in order to bring the community together to raise the profile of librarians and the work we do.

I hope to see active participation from the younger librarians to drive transformation. Commitment from the Library Directors to encourage librarians to be more collaborative. Be the voice for the community to bring librarians from national, public, academic, and special libraries together to advocate barrier-free access to information. We need to work together to support Singapore in building a society that is built on life-long learning with strong information literacy and research skills.



**Dr Nor Edzan binti Che Nasir**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2014-2016)*

In 1983, I reported for duty at the Universiti Sains Malaysia Library as an Administrative Officer. Upon obtaining my library qualifications, my post was changed to Librarian in 1986. At the time, I had never heard of Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM). In 1991, I reported for duty as a Librarian at the University of Malaya Library. Though I was unfamiliar with PPM, I was a member of the Law Librarian Group then. It was much later on in my career that I found out that the Group was part of PPM, hence becoming my first introduction to PPM. I registered as a Professional Member in 1996 and in 2018, became a Life Member.

Throughout the years, I joined various PPM committees and finally stood for election as a Council member in 2005 and 2008, Vice-President II in 2011, and finally, as President in 2014. The decision to run for President was definitely not impulsive. I was sure of my commitment to PPM and how I could contribute to PPM in my capacity as President. My predecessor was the late Dr Mohd. Sharif Mohd. Saad and his commitment to PPM was unprecedented. When I ran for President, I felt that I had to continue the work of the past Presidents of PPM and continue to lead the profession into the future.

I held office from 2014 to 2016 and led the Association to the best of my ability. Our main challenge was how to recruit new members. We decided to organise roadshows to all our chapters—North, South, East, Sabah, and Sarawak. Known as *Sumbang Saran PPM*, it was held in all our chapters except for the South. I attended all the *Sumbang Saran* and was able to meet our members and hear their views about PPM. There were many takeaways from these roadshows. At the 2015 Annual General Meeting (AGM), we proposed to adopt 6 June to be Malaysia's Librarians' Day and this was well received by our members. From 2015 to 2020, librarians in Malaysia organised various events to mark our day. However, 2020 would be a memorable one for me because we were able to include the Minister for Tourism, Arts, and Culture on our special day.



*Delivering the President's opening address at the 60th Anniversary Dinner held in 2015*



*The PPM-LAS Meeting held in April 2015 at the National Library of Singapore*



*Sumbang Saran held in Kuching in 2016*



In 2015, we renewed our relationship with the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) by having our first PPM-LAS Joint Meeting in April 2015. We also celebrated PPM's 60th anniversary — *Celebrating PPM's Diamond Jubilee (1955-2015): 60 Years of Leadership and Commitment Towards Librarianship in Malaysia*. We held a workshop, a conference, and an anniversary dinner. These events held during my Presidency will forever hold a special meaning to me. Apart from that, I truly treasure the camaraderie of all the Council members who were with me during my various terms of office. They were a constant source of inspiration and were always there for me.

My advice to future Presidents of PPM is to keep encouraging members to participate in PPM's activities. All activities must address the members' needs. There is also a need to engage with our stakeholders and members, as that is key to the success of any association. The future of PPM not only lies in the hands of its Council members but most importantly, its members. All librarians and libraries in Malaysia should be members of PPM. All PPM members should be actively involved with PPM. Young librarians should be at the forefront while being mentored by senior members to bring PPM to greater heights. The essence of PPM can be summarised as LEADING THE PROFESSION.



*Sumbang Saran held in Kota Kinabalu in 2016*



*With PPM Council members at PPM's 2017 AGM*



**Judy Ng**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2015-2017)*

I joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) as a member soon after I joined the National Library around the mid-1980s. I subsequently signed up for a life membership.

I was new to the profession when I joined the LAS, and wanted to know what being a librarian entailed. I undertook the Diploma in Library Science organised by LAS and this was the start of getting qualified as a library professional.

During my term with the council, Mr Chan Thye Seng and Ms Sylvia Yap left deep impressions on me. Mr Chan was very passionate in international librarianship and often related to my colleagues and me about his experience in attending CONSAL, COMLA, and IFLA. Ms Yap was the President of LAS when I held the position of Vice-President. I could sense the passion of Ms Yap as President of LAS.

When I ran for President, I wanted to play a part in contributing back to the profession. Ex-Presidents, Mr Gene Tan and Mrs Lee Cheng Ean were also instrumental in recommending me to run. I hoped to strike collaborations with other library associations to bring about greater benefits to members and raise the profile of LAS on the international stage. As a result, we hosted a few IFLA events in Singapore and LAS represented our Singapore libraries in the IFLA Global Vision Regional Workshop in June 2017 organised by IFLA Headquarters. LAS also hosted librarians from other countries' library associations. I had a very dedicated team of Council members.

A significant development and one of my best memories was when the MOU between three Asia-Pacific associations, LIANZA, LAS, and ALIA was signed on 12 October 2016 to collaborate and promote the library and information sector across the three countries and represent the sector's work at an international level (IFLA). This was done in a very short timeframe. Through the collaboration, the first Asia Pacific Library & Information Conference (APLIC) jointly organised with ALIA and LIANZA, and was held in Gold Coast, Australia from 30 July to 3 August 2018.



*With the 2018 APLIC Organising Committee*



With emphasis on training and development, the Training and Development Committee organised relevant activities. The first Speed Mentoring Session (think “speed dating” but with senior/junior librarians on opposite sides) for LAS members was conducted in June 2018. Other interesting firsts included the first nature walk and the first webinar pioneered by the committee. The inaugural LAS webinar was held on 30 November 2018 with a total of 67 attendees. Through a collaboration with the Chinese American Librarians Association, this webinar attracted 12 overseas librarians.



*Giving the welcome speech at the Libraries for Tomorrow Conference 2016*

The Council also organised the Libraries for Tomorrow Conference 2016 with the theme of *Smart Libraries for Tomorrow: Disrupt and Innovate*, which was held on 20 September 2016 and attended by 320 librarians and information professionals.

What I enjoyed while in LAS was the networking with librarians from other institutions. Through my participation in LAS, I got to know many fellow librarians and the connections have made sharing and collaboration possible amongst libraries in Singapore. LAS to me, is a lean, collaborative, and steadfast association.

To future Presidents—be passionate and always have the interest of members in mind. To nurture a good team of young Council members who can continue to serve the LAS even after their term is up. I hope to see LAS take the lead in the professional development of its members and be recognised as the voice of the profession.



**Tan Chui Peng**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2019-2021)*

I joined the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) 20 years ago and even served a two-year term as treasurer in 2000. Being part of the Council, I had the opportunity to contribute to the profession, network with librarians from various libraries—academic libraries, special libraries, public libraries, and the National Library, giving me a better understanding of the library development in Singapore as a whole.

During my term, we faced an unexpected situation. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a remarkable shift towards digital usage with all the association activities held virtually. This induced the need for the Association's programme committee to learn and explore new tools to deliver programmes to members effectively. During this period, we held a few virtual professional sharing sessions and even explored member engagement events like the virtual escape room.

Library operations have also taken on new dimensions as we faced the need to engage library stakeholders through various channels, such as live chats, virtual video programmes, and livestreams. As always, it is essential for librarians to learn new digital skills in order to develop digital content of different formats for its users.

Overall, it has been an extraordinary experience for the profession as libraries push the boundaries to deliver services in a virtual world.



*Visit to "The Bicentennial Experience" Exhibition with LAS members in November 2019*



*At the LAS "Re-making Libraries" Conference 2019, sitting with our Malaysian delegates from PPM*



*With the LAS Conference 2019 organising committee*



*Group photo with LAS and PPM Council after LAS-PPM meeting in 2019*



**Biographies**



**Leonard M. Harrod**

*Chairman, Malayan Library Group (1955)*

Leonard Montague Harrod (L. M. Harrod) (1905-1984) was the President of the Malayan Library Group in 1955. He was appointed Librarian of the Raffles Library on 8 September 1954, and served as its director from January 1955 to December 1959. Harrod contributed greatly to the development of the library system and the planning and progress of the Raffles Library. During his career, he introduced the Browne System of issuing books and the usage of a combined receipt for subscriptions and deposits. Among his other achievements, Harrod was key in the promotion of local languages in the library's collection, initiated a comprehensive children's collection and publicised the library's facilities.

**Ernest H. Clark**

*Chairman, Malayan Library Group (1955-1956)*

Ernest Hayden Clark (1918-1971) was the Librarian at the University of Malaya, Singapore from 1952 to 1960, and served as the Chairman of the Malayan Library Group from 1955 to 1956. Born in Melbourne, Australia in 1918, Clark began his career at the University of Melbourne Library in 1936. Clark's career at the University saw the opening of a new million-dollar air-conditioned library in 1953, reported in the press to be one of the "most up-to-date libraries in South-East Asia" at that time. Clark went on several overseas library visits in 1955, having been awarded travel grants by the Carnegie Corporation and the Asia Foundation. During his travels, he studied library spaces, administration and microfilm services in the United States and visited libraries across the globe such as in Bangkok, Rome, Frankfurt, and London. In 1958, Clark oversaw the reconfiguration of the University's library floor space and seating capacity to accommodate almost double the number of users. He returned to his hometown, Melbourne, to continue his work as a Librarian at Monash University in 1960, after his tenure at the University of Malaya.

**P. G. M. G. Mahindasa**

*Chairman, Malayan Library Group (1956-1957)*

Pilane Godokandegai Michael George Mahindasa (1899-1966) was educated at Saint Francis Institution, Malacca and had joined the school as a teacher in 1916 where he remained in service for a large part of his career. He was a Committee Member of the Malacca Library (later renamed Henry Gurney Memorial Library) from 1938 to 1940. After World War II, he continued to be involved in the library as its Secretary and Treasurer for several years. When the Malayan Library Group was set up in 1955, he was elected a member of the group's inaugural committee, and later, served as its Vice-Chairman and Chairman for 1956 and 1957 respectively. He was also involved in various public organisations, including the Malacca Rotary Club, made a Justice of Peace in 1946, and was awarded the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 1950.



**Jean M. Waller**

*Chairman, Malayan Library Group (1957-1958)*

Jean Mary Waller (1914-1999) was the President of the Malayan Library Group from 1957 to 1958. Waller was one of the qualified expatriate librarians that the government brought in to Singapore in the 1950s and was instrumental in helping to mould the library profession in Singapore. She joined the then University of Malaya in 1953, where she subsequently served as the Deputy Chief Librarian, and then as its Chief Librarian. When Singapore became a self-ruling republic, she became Chief Librarian at what was eventually called the University of Singapore from 1960 to 1966. In 1966, she returned to Australia, where she became Deputy Librarian at the Australian National University, and served as its Chief Librarian from 1973 to 1974. She passed away in 1999 in Melbourne.

**Hedwig Anuar**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1958-1961; 1963-1965)*

Starting out as a Library Assistant in 1952, Hedwig Anuar (1928- ) built a lasting legacy that saw the library membership grow from 43,000 to more than 330,000 across nine libraries as the first Singaporean Director of the National Library (NL), a position that she held from 1965 until her retirement in 1988. Together with the University of Malaya librarians, she spearheaded the formation of the Library Association of Singapore's (LAS) precursor, the Malayan Library Group (MLG), at a time when there were very few homegrown career librarians. Their idea of forming a library association covering both Malaya and Singapore in 1954 won over close to 50 like-minded librarians and individuals from Singapore and Malaya. The MLG was formally registered in 1955 and Anuar took on various leadership roles within LAS before devoting her attention to establish the then-fledgling National Book Development Council of Singapore. As the NL director, she ignited a nation-wide interest in reading with the 'Read More Books' campaign in the late 1950s, and introduced the popular mobile library service in 1960, which brought the library to 35 schools in rural districts. The dame of Singapore's library network moulded the nation's library system from infancy and encouraged its early computerisation efforts, laying a firm foundation for our libraries to take flight in this age of digitalisation.

**Wilfred J. Plumbe**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (1960-1961)*

Wilfred John Plumbe (1915-2008) was an expatriate Librarian at the University of Malaya and a founding member of the Malayan Library Group (MLG) in the 1950s. Prior to 1956, he was the Assistant Librarian at the University of Malaya in Singapore, before being assigned to Nigeria. Plumbe returned to Malaya in 1959, taking up the post of Librarian, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. In 1960, he became President of the then Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (Library Association of Malaya), but left again for Nigeria in 1962. Plumbe was a strong advocate for establishing public libraries in various parts of Malaya, having written articles about the lack of libraries in Malaya in the newspapers and MLG newsletter. He was also a poet and artist, having contributed to the Singapore Art Society as well. At one point, he served as Editor of the magazine *Singapore Artists*.



**Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1961-1963; 1965-1966; 1969-1970)*

Wang-Chen Hsiu Chin (1922-1983) served several terms as President of the Library Association of Singapore (LAS). She was a law graduate from the National Chung Cheng University in China, before obtaining two Masters degrees in Political Science as well as in Librarianship from the University of Washington in 1951 and 1952 respectively. She returned to Singapore in 1955 to join the then University of Singapore as a Library Assistant, and was a University Librarian from 1967 until her retirement in 1978. In addition to expanding the library's collection and services, Wang-Chen was involved in the preliminary planning of the Central Library of the National University of Singapore at Kent Ridge. From 1980-1983, she also helped the Institute of Education reorganise its library.

**Charles J. Manuel**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (1961-1964)*

C. J. Manuel was the President of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (PPPTM) for three terms from 1961-1964. Prior to this, he had conducted a survey of library facilities in the Federation of Malaya, which was submitted to the Delhi International Seminar on Development of Public Libraries in Asia in 1955. In 1954, he played a leading role in the setting up of one of the first free public libraries in Malaya known as the Butterworth Free Library, within the premises of St Mark's Secondary School, Butterworth, the school where he was Assistant Headmaster at the time. He later became Headmaster of the school in 1960, as well as Vice-Chairman of the Penang Adult Education Association in 1958.

**Syed Ahmad bin Ali**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu/Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1964-1970)*

Syed Ahmad bin Ali was the Librarian at the United States Information Service (USIS) Library in Singapore in the early 1950s. In March 1955, he was reassigned to become the Librarian at the USIS Library in Penang. He later became the Chief Librarian of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (Institute of Language and Literature). As a librarian, he travelled overseas, going to the United States in 1951, and even to the National Library of New Zealand in 1969 in order to observe their library facilities and operations. He served a total of six terms as President of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (PPPTM) and later Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) when it was reconstituted to the latter, from 1965 to 1970.



**Khoo Oon Chor**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1966-1967)*

Khoo Oon Chor served as the President of the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) from 1966-1967, shortly after the independence of Singapore. Prior to that, he was active in the association as Secretary and committee member. Khoo studied librarianship in New Zealand for a year under the Colombo Plan and returned in 1961, taking on the role as in-charge of the Medical Library, University of Malaya in Singapore. He published several writings during his career as a Librarian at the University of Singapore Medical Library, including a study of medical libraries in Malaysia, and an introduction to the reference and bibliography service in the University of Singapore Medical Library. In 1965, as a member of LAS, he served on the Standing Committee on Special Libraries of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM). Khoo also groomed others in the library fraternity, having been one of the lecturers for librarian training classes. In 1966, he lectured on bibliographical control and service. Under his tenure as LAS President, the Association organised the “Workshop on the Problems of Book Production in Singapore” in 1966. The workshop brought together various stakeholders in the industry for the first time—educators, librarians, publishers, booksellers, printers, authors, and readers. One of the recommendations arising from the workshop was the establishment of a National Book Council in the country.

**Rosemary Yeap**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1967-1968)*

Rosemary Yeap is a pioneer in Singapore's library community. She oversaw the development of libraries on three campuses when she was the Chief Librarian of Singapore Polytechnic from 1961-1988. As a founder, leader, and active member of the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) from 1960-1991, she served LAS not only as President, but as Vice-President, Honorary Secretary, and Council member. She was also a member of numerous committees ranging from library education to library automation. Yeap was awarded the Public Administration Medal in 1995 for her work in the Ministry of Education committees, where she played a key role in influencing library-related government policies.

**J. S. Soosai**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1970-1972)*

Joseph S. Soosai, was the former Chief Librarian of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia, a post he held for 28 years. He was highly involved in regional activities as part of IFLA, and played a leading role in the establishment of the Working Group for Developing Countries when he made a statement during the 1971 IFLA General Conference calling for IFLA to identify and integrate the problems faced by Third World countries into its framework or activities. He subsequently served as the Working Group's first Chairman. Soosai also played a hand in establishing the Regional Development Fund at IFLA in the 1980s to provide financial support for Third World programmes. He served as President of Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) for two terms from 1970-1972.



### **Lim Hong Too**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1970-1972; 1988-1989)*

Lim Hong Too (1932- ) served as President of the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) from 1970-1972 and 1988-1989. Lim started his career in education before switching to librarianship, when he earned a scholarship to Columbia University in New York to study for his Master's Degree in Library Science. He became a senior library professional in the National University of Singapore (NUS) and was later invited to be the Founding University Librarian of the then Nanyang Technological Institute (NTI). He introduced the use of computers into the library and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Library became the first major university library in Singapore to have full automation right from the start. Lim retired from NTU in 1995 and professionally as a Librarian in 1999.

### **D. E. K. Wijasuriya**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1972-1974; 1975-1976)*

Donald Earlian Kingsley Wijasuriya (1934- ) was the Director-General of the Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (National Library of Malaysia) from 1983-1989. Prior to this, he was the Deputy Librarian at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur before being seconded to the National Library in 1972. Following his retirement as Director-General, Dr Wijasuriya became the Managing Director of Library and Information Development Consultants, Kuala Lumpur. He was also a former Member of the Professional Board of IFLA and served as Chairman to the 1992 IFLA Pre-session Seminar Planning Committee which addressed the status and image of librarians. Dr Wijasuriya devoted a lot of time into writing on library and librarian development in Malaysia, having published numerous books and articles on the subject. He received his doctorate in Philosophy in 1980 at the Loughborough University of Technology, also writing about library development for his thesis. He served three terms as President of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) between 1972 and 1976.

### **Koh Thong Ngee**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1973-1975)*

Koh Thong Ngee was the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) President from 1973 to 1975, and participated in LAS committees on censorship, constitution review, copyright, library education, library cooperation, and training from 1971 to 1987. He joined the Nanyang University Library service in February 1960 as a graduate assistant in the Chinese Department, and was appointed Head of Acquisitions soon after. He served as the Deputy Librarian after that and became the Librarian in 1973. When the University of Singapore and Nanyang University merged in August 1980, he was absorbed into the National University of Singapore (NUS) Library service and continued as Librarian. In 1983, Koh was concurrently appointed Head of the Chinese Library. In July 1991, he was appointed Acting Chief Librarian of NUS Libraries where he remained until his retirement. During his career, Koh was concerned with the development and welfare of support staff in the NUS Libraries. Improving physical library facilities was another area that he worked on tirelessly.



### **Syed Salim Agha**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1974-1975)*

Syed Salim Agha started out as an Assistant Librarian at the Ipoh Public Library in Perak, and later became its Head Librarian when its Director, Karl Reeh, a U.S. Peace Corps Librarian left for another appointment in June 1966. Prior to heading the library, he had trained with the National Library in Singapore under the supervision of Hedwig Anuar and took the British Library Association examinations. Later on, he became the Chief Librarian of the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (UPM) where he stayed till 1995. During his time at UPM, Syed Salim served as Vice-President (1990-1994) and later Senior Vice-President (1995-2000) of the International Association of Agricultural Librarians & Documentalists (IAALD) Executive Committee. In 1995, he moved to the International Islamic University Malaysia and was Chief Librarian there till 2007. Syed Salim was presented with the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia's (PPM) Outstanding Librarian Award in 2001, the same year he was nominated for CONSAL's Outstanding Librarian Award.

### **Wee Joo Gim**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1975-1978; 1980-1982)*

Wee Joo Gim is a pioneering Librarian and leader with an illustrious career spanning nearly 40 years. She embarked on her library career at Singapore Polytechnic Library in 1966 and later studied library science at the University of Wisconsin in the United States as a recipient of the Ford Foundation Scholarship. For over a decade, she created and led the Colombo Plan Staff College Library for Technician Education for participants from 26 Colombo Plan countries. As the Deputy Librarian of the National University of Singapore (NUS) Library System in charge of technical services, she fostered a culture of improvement and innovation which included introducing more IT-based programmes and services. Wee served tirelessly in the Library Association of Singapore (LAS), serving five terms as President, organising numerous events and representing LAS regionally on CONSAL's Executive Board and the COMLA Council. She advocated for progressive initiatives that included establishing a library school, funding the education and professional development of librarians, and creating a permanent LAS Secretariat. In 2014, she was presented the LAS Lifetime Contribution Award for her commitment and contributions to the library service.

### **Rohani binti Rustam**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1976-1977; 1981-1982)*

Rohani binti Rustam (1945- ) started as an Assistant Librarian at the Parliament of Malaysia and became Librarian at the National Library of Malaysia in August 1969. In 1973, she moved to Selangor Public Library and became its State Librarian. Subsequently, Rohani became the Librarian of the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia in 1975 and later, Chief Librarian of the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP) in 1977, where she stayed for over two decades. Rohani was a member of the Executive Board for CONSAL in 1977 and represented DBP in the National Book Development Council in 1981. She also represented the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) on the Board of Studies, Universiti Malaya to set up a post-graduate school of librarianship and archives in Malaysia from 1981-1982. Besides the PPM, Rohani served on committees for a number of national reading projects.



### **Ch'ng Kim See**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1977-1978)*

Ch'ng Kim See (1946- ) began her career in Kuala Lumpur as a journalist with *The Straits Times Press*. She switched to librarianship and proceeded to take on leading roles as Head of Cataloguing and Classification Division at the National Library of Malaysia, Director and Chief Librarian of the U.S. Information Service Lincoln Cultural Centre, and Head of Technical Services at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Library at the Vienna International Centre. In 1988, she moved to Singapore and served as Head of the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS) library until 2011, transforming the Library into one of the world's leading libraries for South East Asian collections. Ch'ng served as President of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) from 1977-1978. In 1981, she was the Secretary on the Executive Board for CONSAL V. After moving to Singapore, Ch'ng served in the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) in various capacities as Council member and Chair of various committees. She also represented LAS as part of the committee to study the feasibility of a postgraduate school (PRIM). In 2015, Ch'ng was presented the LAS Lifetime Contribution Award for her devotion to the library profession and her contribution to enhancing the understanding of Southeast Asia.

### **Foo Kok Pheow**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1978-1980)*

Foo Kok Pheow graduated from Nanyang University with a bachelor's degree in physics. He received his Master's in Library Science from the University of Michigan. Together with Lim Hong Too, Foo introduced automation to Nanyang Technological Institute Library and was one of the first to do so in Singapore. He shared the automation project at the Pacific Conference of the New Information Technology for Library & Information Professionals, Educational Media Specialists & Technologists in May 1989. He was appointed the University Librarian of the Nanyang Technological University in December 1995 and served until March 2003. Publications that he was involved in included the fourth edition of the *Directory of Libraries in Singapore* (1989) published by the Library Association of Singapore, and *Common Abbreviations and Acronyms in Singapore* (1990). Foo leads an active public life. He was a Grassroots leader and was once the Secretary-General of the Hainan Culture & Heritage Research Centre. He is currently a member of Pei Chun Public School Management Committee and is also a recipient of the BBM (Public Service Star) and PBM (Public Service Medal) National Day Awards.



**Edward Lim Huck Tee**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1978-1980)*

Edward Lim Huck Tee (1936- ) graduated from the University of Malaya, Singapore with a Bachelor of Arts and was the University Librarian at the University of Penang (later renamed Universiti Sains Malaysia) from 1969-1988, leading the start of the University's library when it was instituted. Prior to this, he was with the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. In 1988, he moved to Australia to head the Monash University Library, a post he held from 1989-2002. Lim was a regional leader in library development and became an important knowledge catalyst. A prolific writer, Lim is the author of the classic 1970 book, *Libraries in West Malaysia and Singapore: A Short History* published by the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, an updated reproduction of his 1962 thesis for his Graduate Diploma in Librarianship at the University of New South Wales. Lim also holds a Graduate Diploma in Information Systems from the University of Canberra, Australia and has written about the use of computer systems in knowledge information development.

**Ragayah binti Dato' Hj. Mohd Eusoff**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1980-1981)*

Datin Ragayah Dato' Haji Mohd. Eusoff (1937- ) graduated from the University of Malaya, Singapore in Economics and Philosophy and started as a Library Assistant at Bank Negara Malaysia. In 1962, she left for England with her husband, and completed a librarian course at the then College of Commerce, Liverpool while she was based there. When she returned in 1967, she became Bank Negara Malaysia's Librarian. In 1980, she moved to the Secretary's Department followed by the Operational Planning Department. During her time at the bank, she developed the library and set up the Archives and Money Museum as well as helped to establish the National Automated Clearing House. She was conferred the Ahli Mangku Negara (AMN) for her contributions to the nation's Central Bank, the first lady officer in the bank to receive the award. Besides the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) council, Datin Ragayah has also served on committees like the Asian Ceramic Society, the West Malaysian Chapter, and the sub-committee to establish the Library of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia among others. Upon retirement, Datin Ragayah became a freelance writer. Her notable works include *The Lord of Kinta: The Biography of Dato' Panglima Kinta Eusoff* and *The Merican Clan: A Story of Courage and Destiny*.



**Shahaneem Hanoum Dadameah (Shahaneem binti Mustafa)**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1982-1983)*

Datin Paduka Shahaneem Hanoum Dadameah (1949-2012) studied librarianship at Institute Teknologi Mara (ITM, presently known as UiTM) and worked there from 1969-1971. Later, she joined the Selangor Public Library Corporation (PPAS). In her 34 years tenure at PPAS, Datin Shahaneem Hanoum was an advocator of public libraries, especially for children's libraries to promote reading to young children. As a State Librarian, Datin Shahaneem Hanoum was reputedly known as the unofficial spokesperson to champion for funding and strategic networks in crafting five-year plans for public libraries in Selangor. Her advocacy work included presenting a joint conference paper *Reaching Children Through Libraries* at CONSAL VI in June 1983. She established the Malaysian Board on Books for Young Children (MBBY) in 2004, which aims to stimulate research and scholarly works in the field of children's literature and encourage publication and distribution of quality children's books in Malay and other languages, and also held position as Deputy President of the International Board of Books for Young People (IBBY) in 2005. Apart from her contribution to public librarianship in Malaysia, Datin Shahaneem Hanoum was also a writer of children's books, notably *Lazy Kik* and *Badak the Foolish Rhinoceros*.

**Peggy Wai-Chee Hochstadt**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1982-1984)*

Peggy Wai-Chee Hochstadt (1936-1991) started her career in 1960 as an Assistant Librarian in the University of Malaya (later University of Singapore) and became its Chief Librarian in 1978. When the university was renamed in 1980, Peggy became the first Chief Librarian of the National University of Singapore (NUS) library until she retired in 1991. During her time in the NUS library, it underwent growth and development, much of which was owed to her professional capabilities and leadership. She was instrumental in the library's early embrace of information technology, which made possible the many benefits enjoyed by the users of the library today. In 1980, Peggy was appointed a member of the then Ministry of Culture's advisory committee on national information systems and later as a member of the Copyright Tribunal when it was formed in 1988. As a recognition to her contributions, Peggy was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Silver) in 1985.



**R. Ramachandran**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1984-1988; 1991-1995)*

Rasu Ramachandran (1942- ) has been actively involved in the Library Association of Singapore, serving the council for 14 years, including roles as Honorary Secretary and President. He began his library career in 1969 at the National Library as a Library Officer and steadily progressed through the ranks to become Deputy Chief Executive of the National Library Board. Prior to this, he was a teacher in Malaysia. Throughout the span of his career, he spearheaded several initiatives such as training programmes for librarians and library assistants, drafting the National Library Board Act 1995, expanding the diverse services the National Library offered, and also enabled the hosting of the Asian Children's Festival and the World Library Summit. He was Chairman of the National Book Development Council of Singapore (currently known as the Singapore Book Council) and still serves on its Board. Beyond Singapore, Ramachandran's contributions to the development of libraries and librarianship include his past appointments as the first Secretary-General of CONSAL, the Secretary-General of IFLA, Vice-President of COMLA, and Chairman of CDNLAO. In recognition of his efforts in advocating and leading the development and recognition of librarianship, Ramachandran has been awarded CONSAL Outstanding Librarian Award, Singapore's Public Administration Medal (Silver), the LAS Professional Service Award, and the LAS Lifetime Contribution Award.

**Rugayah binti Abdul Rashid**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1986-1989)*

YBhg Puan Sri Datin Rugayah Abdul Rashid started her career as a Library Assistant at Singapore Polytechnic in 1959. In 1961, she was awarded a three-year scholarship for librarian training under the Colonial Development and Welfare Funds and took her library qualifications in Britain. While in the United Kingdom, she married the late Tan Sri Dr Ismail Hussein, former president of the Federation of National Writers Association of Malaysia (GAPENA), which led to her move to Malaysia. In 1967, Datin Rugayah became a founding member of Pertubuhan Tindakan Wanita Islam (PERTIWI), a project-oriented charitable organisation dedicated towards addressing the welfare and needs of women and children. She was also the Head of the Tun Abdul Razak Library, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) at one point, and was Dean of the Faculty of Information Management, UiTM between 1970 and 1973. During her time as President, she advocated the sharing of resources and information among its members as well as proposed collaboration with the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) for the same purpose.



**Mariam binti Abdul Kadir**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1989-1993)*

Datin Mariam Abdul Kadir was one of the earliest librarians to be recruited into the National Library Division of the National Archives in 1971. She worked her way up, eventually becoming the Director-General of the National Library of Malaysia (Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia) between 1990 and 1999. During her time as Director-General of the National Library, the National Preservation Policy was adopted, making the National Library a regional reference centre for the preservation of library materials. She also led the implementation of the digital library concept at the National Library in the 1990s, including the launch of a virtual library centre called the Connected Learning House in 1999 before she retired. She was Chairman of the organising committee for CONSAL X and served as President of the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) for three terms from 1989-1993.

**Chew Wing Foong**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1993-1997)*

Chew Wing Foong (1950- ) was a secondary school teacher before he became a professional librarian in 1976. In the same year, he joined the U.S. Embassy as the Audio-visual Librarian at the Lincoln Cultural Centre, and later became its cultural specialist and senior programme specialist until his retirement in 2013. Chew joined the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) in 1972 and served as Council member between 1978 and 1999, including two terms as President from 1993-1997. Between 1977 and 1980, Chew served as PPM's course coordinator to prepare Malaysians who wished to take the professional examinations by the British and Australian Library Associations. During his term as President, he was the Chairman of CONSAL X's Executive Board (1993-1996). At one point, he was also Chair of PPM's Library Services to Special Groups and helped to set up libraries in various welfare institutions. Besides library work, Chew's work at the Embassy brought him opportunities to serve on other committees such as Treasurer and Vice-President of the Malaysian Association of American Studies and as President of the American Embassy Malaysian Employees Association, the latter for 21 years.

**Isabel Yeo**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (1995-1997)*

Isabel Yeo served as Library Association of Singapore (LAS) President from 1995-1997, as part of an illustrious career in librarianship, and studied librarianship in New Zealand as a Colombo Plan scholar. Beginning her career in the National Library's (NL) Children's Service, she later headed NL's Microfilm Unit, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry's (MTI) library, before becoming the Chief Librarian of The Straits Times Editorial Library. Yeo served as the Head of Library Two at Nanyang Technological University, before being appointed as Head Librarian of the National Institute of Education until 2009. In addition to serving as LAS President, Yeo was also a Joint Standing Committee Member on Bibliographical and Library Cooperation, the Chairperson of the Programmes Committee and Special Libraries Committee, and represented LAS on the National Book Development Council of Singapore (NBDCS), among other roles serving Singapore's libraries. She was awarded the 2016 LAS Lifetime Contribution Award.



**Shahar Banun binti Jaafar**

*President, Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (1997-1999)*

Shahar Banun Jaafar (1946-2009) was trained in sociology and anthropology at Universiti Malaya before joining the library profession. Having her interest in librarianship sparked during a temporary job at Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Shahar Banun then pursued a Post-graduate Diploma in Librarianship from New South Wales in Australia, and later acquired a Masters in Library Science from Indiana University, USA in 1984. She specialised in library automation and became actively involved in implementing IT in libraries. One notable project she was involved in was the PERDANA National Digital Library System (Sistem Perpustakaan Digital Negara), which involved all the university libraries, special libraries, state public library corporations, and the National Library of Malaysia (PNM), in collaboration with Telekom Malaysia and the Multimedia Development Corporation (MDC). The project started in 1999, with the main objective of providing information to all Malaysians for lifelong learning through digital means. Shahar Banun also served as the Chairman of the National Research Committee on Library and Information Services as well as on the CONSAL Executive Board (1993; 1997; 1999-2000). She retired as the Director-General of the National Library in July 2001, and remained a Committee Member to Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia from 2001-2003.

**Rashidah Begum binti Fazal Mohamed**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (1999-2001)*

Rashidah Begum binti Fazal Mohamed began her library career in 1973 when she joined the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), eventually becoming its Chief Librarian from 1995-2001. During her time as the USM's Chief Librarian, Rashidah Begum headed the Automation Division and was coordinator of the Malaysian Machine Readable Cataloguing (Malmarc) system. Subsequently, she moved to DISTED College Library and served as its Chief Librarian and later as consultant. She was President of Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) from 1999-2001, Chair of IFLA RSCAO from 2001-2003, and was in charge of Marketing as part of the National Committee for IFLA WLIC 2018. In recognition of her work in the library field, Rashidah Begum was awarded the PPM Outstanding Librarian award (2010), as well as the Silver Prize CONSAL Outstanding Librarian Award (2015).

**Putri Saniah binti Megat Abd Rahman**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2005-2008)*

Putri Saniah binti Megat Abdul Rahman was the former Chief Librarian of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) from 2001-2006 and later became a Director at Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). She was the first Persidangan Pustakawan Universiti dan Negara (PERPUN) appointed Chairman from March 2000-April 2006 of the Commercial Database Sub-Committee (JKKPKD) established in 2000 under the National Digital Library System Project (PERDANA), before it was renamed as Malaysian Online E-Resources Consortium (MOLEC). She served two terms as President of Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) from 2005-2008 and has since retired.



**Mohd Sharif bin Mohd. Saad**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2010-2013)*

Dr Mohd Sharif Mohd Saad (1958-2013) joined the Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) council in 1993 and served as Vice-President (1997-2003) and President (2010-2013). Other than his contribution to PPM, Dr Mohd Sharif was also member of many other regional and international committees such as the IFLA-RSCAO since 2003, CONSAL Conference committee from 1994-1997, and CONSAL Executive Board from 2005-2012. He was also Chair of the Working Committee bidding for IFLA WLIC 2009 and 2013. A firm believer of professional cooperation, Dr Mohd Sharif also spearheaded the PPM-LAS Joint Conference in 2012 to foster professional networking among librarians across Malaysia and Singapore. After attaining his Bachelor in Library Science from University Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Dr Mohd Sharif went on to acquire the Masters of Library Science from Syracuse University in New York, and his Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Malaya. His last position was the Deputy Dean, Research and Linkages at UiTM. A prolific researcher, Dr Mohd Sharif had presented more than 30 conference papers, and published more than 30 articles and chapters. His area of teaching expertise included library management, school resource centre, library services for children and young adult, research methodology, and information literacy.

**Nafisah binti Ahmad**

*President, Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (2016-2020)*

Dato' Nafisah binti Ahmad was the Director-General of the National Library of Malaysia (NLM) from October 2014 until her retirement in June 2019. She served NLM for 34 years and the major projects she was involved in include the Malaysia Ubiquitous Library (u-Pustaka) Project, Malaysia National Union Catalogue, National Digital Library (PERDANA) Project, International Islamic Digital Library Project, and the National Data Dictionary for Public Sector. She was the President of Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) from 2016 until July 2020 and is now the Immediate Past President. Prior to this, she also served as PPM Vice-President I (2010-2012) and the Honorary Secretary (1999-2005). She was the Co-Chairman of the Malaysia National Committee for IFLA WLIC 2018, Kuala Lumpur, and is a Member of the IFLA Standing Committee on National Libraries (2017-2021), Executive Board Member of the XVI Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL), Committee Member of the UNESCO Kuala Lumpur World Book Capital (KLWBC) 2020, and a sponsor for The International Network of Emerging Library Innovators—Association of Southeast Asian Nations (INELI-ASEAN) Project. She was Board Member of Perbadanan Kota Buku (Book City Corporation) (2014-2018) and Standing Committee Member of IFLA Cataloguing Section (2003-2005). For her dedication and excellent contributions to Malaysian librarianship and library services, she was awarded the Excellent Service Award by the Government of Malaysia.



**Samantha Ang**

*President, Library Association of Singapore (2017-2019)*

Samantha Ang was the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) President from 2017-2019. During her term, LAS accomplished a few firsts—organised the first speed-mentoring programme and Webinar with speakers from USA, Hong Kong, and Singapore, as well as co-organised the first Asia-Pacific Library and Information Conference with ALIA and LIANZA. Another significant event was facilitating the IFLA Global Vision conversation with an online survey and two focus group discussions which had more than 100 information professionals participating. Before taking the helm, Samantha was the Training and Development Chair from 2015-2017 and was also the Chair of the LAS conference Libraries for Tomorrow in 2016. Samantha is currently heading the Digital Scholarship & Education Team at Nanyang Technological University Library. She oversees instruction and consultation service on the use of digital tools and methods for visualising information, namely, geospatial information and timelines. She spent her early years in Acquisitions and Serials before moving on to manage Circulation Services (also known as reader services) and later, she moved on to Scholarly Communication. She has been a Member of the ASEAN Citation Working Committee since 2015.



# Milestones



**LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE MILESTONES  
1955-2020**

YEAR	MILESTONE
1955	The Malayan Library Group (MLG) was inaugurated on 25 March and registered in Singapore on 6 June.
1956	MLG joined the Asian Federation of Library Associations in September.
1958	The MLG changed its name to Library Association of Malaya and Singapore.
1960	The Persatuan Perpustakaan Tanah Melayu (PPTM) (Library Association of Malaya) was inaugurated on 16 January. The Library Association of Singapore (LAS) was inaugurated on 27 February.
1965	LAS was reconstituted as the Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia, Chawangan Singapura (PPMCS) (Library Association of Malaya, Singapore Branch) on 16 January.
1966	The PPMCS was reconstituted as Persatuan Perpustakaan Singapore (PPS) (Library Association of Singapore) on 29 January.
1970	The first Conference of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL), jointly organised by PPM and PPS, was held in Singapore from 14 to 16 August.
1972	PPS was renamed as the Library Association of Singapore (LAS) on 25 March. LAS became a founder-member of the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA) in November.
1975	LAS joined the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).
1982	A part-time course for Post-Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Science was set up for librarians by LAS and the National Library.
2000	The notion of establishing a permanent CONSAL Secretariat in Singapore was initiated during the CONSAL XI Conference held from 26 to 28 April.
2002	The LAS Secretariat was established in October.
2007	LAS presented its first LAS Lifetime Contribution Award.
2008	LAS launched the LAS Professional Development Scheme (PDS) on 25 August.
2009	Launch of the inaugural LAS Library School Scholarship award.
2010	Launch of the LAS first entry-level training programme for para-professional staff, a competency-based programme for the WSQ Higher Certificate in Library and Information Services. LAS presented its first LAS Outstanding Newcomer Award and Special Librarian Passion Award.
2012	LAS participated in the PPM-LAS joint conference in Malacca from 16 to 17 March.
2013	"Celebrating Librarians: LAS Awards and Book Launch" was held on 18 August in conjunction with Singapore IFLA WLIC 2013.
2014	The LAS Executive Library Management Programme (ELMP) and the LAS WLIC Grant was launched on 3 May during the LAS AGM.
2016	LAS signed a MOU with the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and Library & Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA) on 12 October.
2018	Jointly organised the first Asia Pacific Library & Information Conference (APLIC) with ALIA & LIANZA held in Gold Coast, Australia from 30 July to 3 August.
2020	LAS celebrates its 65th anniversary (Blue Sapphire).



**PERSATUAN PUSTAKAWAN MALAYSIA  
(LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION OF MALAYSIA) MILESTONES  
1955-2020**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>MILESTONE</b>
1955	The Malayan Library Group (MLG) was inaugurated on 25 March and registered in Singapore on 6 June.
1960	The Persatuan Perpustakaan Tanah Melayu (PPTM) (Library Association of Malaya) was inaugurated on 16 January.
1964	The Library Association of Malaya was renamed as Persatuan Perpustakaan Malaysia (PPM) on 8 July.
1968	PPM became an institutional member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).
1981	PPM hosted the 5th Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) General Conference in Kuala Lumpur from 25 to 29 May.
1995	The professionalisation of PPM began with the PPM Constitutional amendment.
1996	PPM hosted the 10th Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL) General Conference in Kuala Lumpur from 21 to 25 May.
1998	The PPM Constitution was amended in 1998 to change the name to Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) or Librarians Association of Malaysia.
2004	PPM Library Excellence Award was launched.
2015	Hari Pustakawan Kebangsaan or the National Librarian's Day was recognised on 6 June of every year. PPM celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (1955-2015) in Kuala Lumpur from 14 to 15 September.
2018	PPM hosted the 84th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress (IFLA WLIC) 2018 in Kuala Lumpur from 24 to 30 August.
2020	PPM held its 64th Annual General Meeting for the first time through live streaming due to the COVID-19 Pandemic on 27 July.