

2015 LAS Lifetime Contribution Award

Ch'ng Kim See

Ms Ch'ng Kim See is a visionary and charismatic leader who was a dedicated Librarian and an expert in Southeast Asia studies for nearly four decades. She specialized in the history and politics of Southeast Asia, authoring 40 articles, editing and indexing several books, and compiling several bibliographies.

Kim See earned an Honours degree from the University of Malaya, a Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship from University of New South Wales, Sydney, an MSc in Information Studies from the University of Sheffield and is working on her PhD dissertation.

Kim See began her career in Kuala Lumpur as a journalist with the Straits Times Press; switched to librarianship and made rapid leaps in her career as Head of Cataloguing and Classification Division, National Library of Malaysia; and Director/Chief Librarian of the U.S. Information Service Lincoln Cultural Centre, before becoming Head, Technical Services, Joint United Nations/International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Vienna International Centre Library.

From January 1988 through 2011, Kim See served as Head of the Library of the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS). She transformed the Library into one of the world's leading Southeast Asian collections. She oversaw the computerization process, launched the OPAC in 1993 and moved it onto the Web a decade later.

Kim See significantly enhanced the collection development programme by developing close ties with many prominent figures in Southeast Asia and dramatically increased the acquisition of rare materials and private papers. She also improved access to the collection while focusing on preservation, conservation, digitization, and exhibitions.

Kim See built a vast network of national, regional and international relationships and was invited to serve in leadership roles on many prestigious library-related boards and committees in Singapore and abroad. Kim See was a leader in both the Library Association of Singapore and Malaysia for over ten years each. She was the President of the Library Association of Malaysia, and Honorary Secretary, and served on the Executive Board of CONSAL V. After moving to Singapore in 1988, she served as Honourable Secretary, LAS Council Member and Chair of various important Committees and represented the LAS in the committee to study the feasibility of a postgraduate school (PRIM) and later lectured at NTU.

Kim See was the heart and soul of the ISEAS Library. Through her dynamic leadership, Kim See achieved her vision of making ISEAS one of Asia's most unique, relevant, and treasured libraries. For her devotion to the library profession in Singapore and abroad and her contribution to enhancing the understanding of Southeast Asia, LAS is privileged to honour Ch'ng Kim See with the 2015 LAS Lifetime Contribution Award.