



Director's Column

Have you visited the Donors Gallery? It is now opened for viewing at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library located at Level 10 of the National Library. As the national library of the nation, we collect materials on our local heritage in all formats, preserve and organise them, and make them accessible to researchers and the general public. Hence, we warmly welcome donations of literary materials relating to Singapore and Southeast Asia.

At Level 10 of the National Library, you will also find the KaalaChakra exhibition on the early Indian influences in Southeast Asia up to the 13th century. Come and discover how Sanskrit and Tamil languages as well as Hinduism and Buddhism had influenced the region in those days.

The National Library Board recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Utilities Board. This partnership would help add to the richness of the library's collection of water-related resources. An exhibition and bibliography were also launched to promote public awareness.

The National Library had the privilege to organise the 10th IFLA Interlending and Document Supply (ILDS) International Conference recently. During the 3-day Conference, the library played host to more than 200 international delegates from different parts of the world. Do look out for the IFLA International Newspaper Conference 2008, to be held from 1 - 3 April 2008. The theme would be "Old Issues, New Issues: Impact of Digital Technology upon Contemporary and Historic Newspapers".

In this issue, you will find an article written by one of our Research Fellows, Kuik Cheng-Chwee. The article analyses the different strategies adopted by Singapore and

Malaysia when faced with a stronger and rising China in international power relations. Since the launch of the Lee Kong Chian Research Fellowship in November 2005, we have received very encouraging response from researchers from all over the world. The closing date for the next Fellowship programme is 31 January 2008. The brochure and application form are available for download at <http://www.nlb.gov.sg>. Please send us an application if you are keen to make use of our reference and research collections to conduct your research.

Also in this issue, we bring you back in time to the 19th century. You will discover the challenges faced by the missionaries in the establishment of the Singapore Catholic Church in the 19th century as well as how photography in Singapore developed since the 19th century and survived World War II to become an art form today. Also learn about the valuable contributions made by Chan Kim Boon and Khoo Seok Wan, who were instrumental in setting the foundation for modernising and indigenising the old curricula for local use in those early days.

The National Library Board subscribes to more than 140 electronic databases and you can access a large number of these remotely from your home or office. From this issue, we will be introducing our electronic databases to you in BiblioAsia. In this first article, we feature databases beginning with the letter 'A'. Do look out for the other electronic resources in subsequent issues. Meanwhile, do keep your comments and feedback coming. We look forward to seeing you at the National Library.

Ms Ngian Lek Choh

Director

National Library