

CHEW WING FOONG
PRESIDENT PPM 1993-1997

It is my pleasure to congratulate Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM) on the occasion of its 60th Anniversary (1955-2015). PPM, as a professional association, has indeed come a long way. Thanks to the current Council presided by Dr. Nor Edzan, PPM has been able to commemorate the occasion with many events that included the 60th Anniversary Dinner in Kuala Lumpur on 14th September 2015.

From 1993 to 1997, there were two major events – the 10th CONSAL Conference and PPM's participation in IFLA – that came to mind. I was privileged to be the chairperson of the 10th CONSAL Executive Board.

In 1996, Malaysia was the host of the 10th CONSAL Conference from May 21-25. Spearheaded by Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (PNM) under Director General Datin Mariam Tan Sri Abdul Kadir, PPM, with the contribution of libraries and librarians in the country, organised and hosted the five-day Conference which was attended by 600 participants from Malaysia, ASEAN, and countries around the world. It is the biggest conference-to-date organized by PPM.

It was also during this time that PPM made a concerted effort to play a more active role in IFLA which culminated in latter PPM President Rashidah Begum Fazal Mohamed chairing the IFLA Regional Section of Asia and Oceania (RSAO) from 2001-2003.

I am pleased to note that PPM-LAS (Library Association of Singapore) relationship has remained strong until today, as both associations have their root in the Malayan Library Group that was established in 1955.

On a personal note, I have been a member of PPM since 1972 (the year that Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia was legally established), and had been a council member between 1978 and 1999. In the earlier days, apart from library advocacy, PPM contributed to professional training by preparing students for the professional examinations of the British and Australian Library Associations. Having been a beneficiary, I was the PPM Course Coordinator from 1977 to 1980, after which the exams were phased out.

On technology, my generation of librarians have seen the 3x5 catalogue cards, manual typewriters, computer punch cards and programming languages, and hard copy audio-visual materials transferred to the digital age of today, accessible at computer terminals. It is indeed a digital revolution, when those equipment and hard copy materials seem like yesterday.

I particularly miss the late Mohd Sharif Mohd Saad who was PPM President a couple of years ago. He was my vice President and a gentleman who contributed much to the PPM and the librarian profession.

It would not be a fitting conclusion if I fail to thank all my mentors, the librarians who came before us to establish the Library Association and libraries, all my fellow librarians who contributed to the activities and progress of PPM, and the librarians who willing volunteer to carry on the torch of librarianship in PPM. I would encourage all librarians to support PPM as the association is as good as you are.