



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
**CENTENARY**  
香港大學百周年

1912 1914 1919 1923 1926 1928 1932 1933 1935 1937 1938 1939 1943 1948 1950 1951 1952 1954 1955 1956 1958 1959 1960 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012



The University of Hong Kong  
**Libraries**  
*Centenary*

## Vision

As a central player in the intellectual environment at the University of Hong Kong, the Libraries will be recognized on campus, regionally and internationally for its outstanding collections, client-centred services and innovative approaches that contribute to the teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange pursuits of the University.

## Mission

As the intellectual heart of the University, the University of Hong Kong Libraries shares with the University its aspiration to attain international distinction. To achieve this we build, preserve and facilitate access to resources required to support the full academic programme. We complement these resources with services that enable their discovery and application, and we provide diverse physical and virtual environments that support the teaching, learning and research needs of our University. We do all of this: (i) to help prepare our students to be successful in their chosen careers and personal lives as well as to be responsible global citizens; and, (ii) to enable our University staff to contribute to the growth and development of our society.

## Our Values

- Excellence in customer service with a focus on user-centred approaches
- Collaboration, innovation and creativity
- Accountability in our resource management, actions and decisions
- High degree of flexibility to serve a diverse community of users
- Caring, friendly and helpful
- Timely and efficient service
- Dedication to our organization and society
- Self awareness and initiative for continuous improvement





# Message

The University of Hong Kong Libraries, as the oldest and largest family of academic libraries in Hong Kong, have been instrumental in helping the University fulfill its mission over the years, by bringing knowledge and learning to generations of students and scholars. The Libraries have been an integral part of the University, providing world-class collections, and the right resources, services, facilities and environment for learning, research and knowledge exchange to take place.

The year 2012 is a historically important one for the Libraries, as it marks the 100th year of serving the University community. As the Libraries begin their second century of service, there will be new opportunities and challenges to face. A globalised economy, fast-moving IT developments, and greater connectivity and interdependence than ever – these factors mean that the way we all live and learn will be continually changing, and that the definition of knowledge and learning will also be transformed in new and exciting ways.

I am confident that the Libraries will rise to these challenges, and that future generations of students and scholars at HKU will continue to regard the Libraries as 'their learning place'.



Professor Lap-Chee Tsui  
Vice Chancellor and President

# From the Librarian

2000 2001 2003 1997 1994  
2008 2002 1986 1999  
2009 2011 2005 1995 1999  
2012



From humble beginnings in 1912, located in two rooms in The University of Hong Kong's Main Building plus a small Medical Section in the Pathology Building, the collections of The University of Hong Kong Libraries are now housed in seven libraries all dedicated to serving the University in fulfillment of its mission.

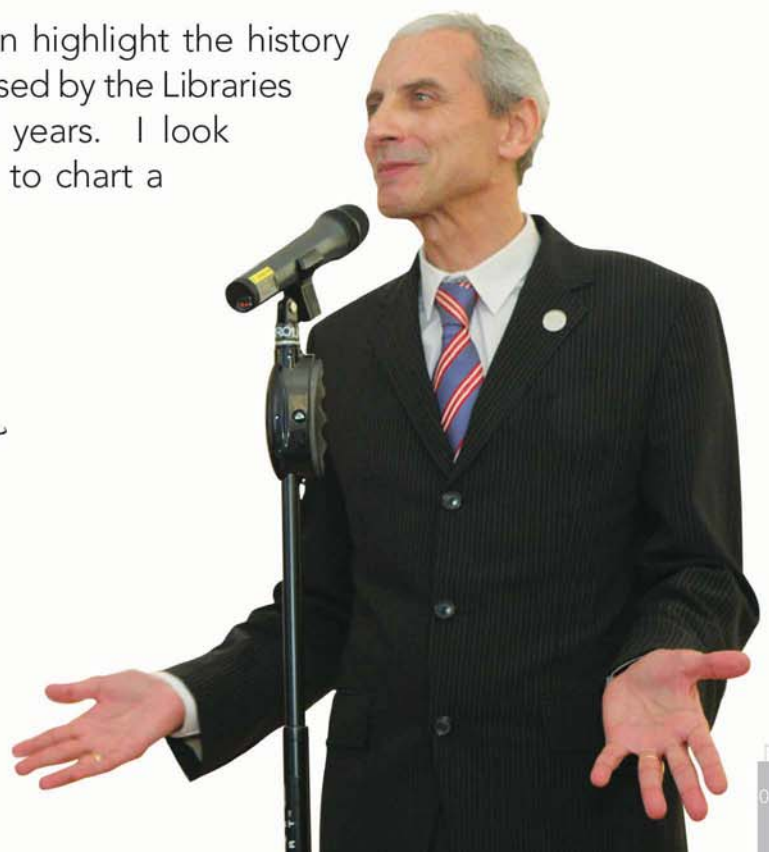
Over the course of these one hundred years, dramatic changes have occurred in the way academic libraries are structured: their collections have moved strongly towards digital as the preferred format; technology now truly enables mobility which facilitates access anytime and anywhere; the physical structure of the library now better serves a rich, diverse and evolving curriculum; and, skill sets of librarians have evolved and now highlight an expanded range that includes technology, project management, evaluation, negotiation, communication, teaching and marketing.

The University of Hong Kong Libraries has embraced these changes and, on occasion, has led the way setting new standards in innovation and excellence locally, regionally and globally. As we take the time to celebrate these achievements, many highlighted in this publication, it is also important that we take time to consider our future. What will the next 100 years bring for the University and the Libraries? It is impossible to speculate the future with any certainty but, as technological and social developments continue to impact on the way we learn, the Libraries will continue to evolve to tackle the challenges and exploit the opportunities that arise in order to continue to serve the University in the best ways that the future will make possible.

The pages of this publication highlight the history and many achievements realised by the Libraries over the past one hundred years. I look forward to working with you to chart a course for the next hundred.



Peter E. Sidorko  
University Librarian







HKU 1912

The Formative Years

1912-1961



The University of Hong Kong Libraries was conceived in 1908 as part of the plan to set up the first university in Hong Kong. Little information is available on the date when the library was open but most likely it has been providing services since the University of Hong Kong opened its first session in October 1912. Located on Main Building ground floor was the Main Library. It had a floor area of about 288 square metres and comprised two rooms, one on each side of the Great Hall (known as Loke Yew Hall now). Also available was a Medical Section, which was housed apart from the Main Library in the Pathology Building of the Faculty of Medicine.

The library collection was small in the early days. Some 25,000 volumes were available in 1926, which in many ways were not sufficient even for a student population of 283. Book lending was restricted to term time and during the year 1926, 1,384 volumes were borrowed by members of the University. The Library was staffed by three full-time employees, including a librarian, a clerk and a coolie.

The Fung Ping Shan (馮平山) Chinese Library was open on 14 December 1932 after Mr Fung Ping Shan donated a library building along Bonham Road and an endowment fund of \$50,000 for the building's maintenance. Accordingly the Main Library moved its Chinese collection, including a copy of the 1,628-volume *Gu jin tu shu ji cheng* (古今圖書集成) donated in April 1912 by Sir Cecil Clementi (金文泰), then Colonial Secretary of Hong Kong, to the newly-found library.

Still, the collection was painfully inadequate even with the increase of the annual book grant from \$3,500 (1926) to \$100,000 (1933), and the purchase of the 'China' section of the Hankow Club Library, a unique collection of some 3,000 volumes of books on China and things Chinese, for \$25,000 in 1932. The accommodation was equally inadequate: its reading rooms were overcrowded for a student population of 516 in 1939/40. Some 500 students of Lingnan University, driven from Guangzhou by the war, could also use the Library for evening work from 1938.

The Japanese invaded Hong Kong on 8 December 1941. The only university buildings which escaped serious damage during the course of hostilities were the main floor of the Main Building housing the Main Library, the Fung Ping Shan Library Building and the Tang Chi Ngong Building. The Japanese took over the Library and the Librarian was interned.

In 1942 the Japanese started confiscating private and institutional libraries and centralizing the resultant collections at the Fung Ping Shan Library. Some 240,000 volumes were received from libraries all over Hong Kong. Library staff took up the responsibility for preserving these books during the war. The Fung Ping Shan Library also became the Library of the Government of the Occupied Territory (香港佔領地總督部立圖書館) in September 1944.

The war ended in August 1945. The Library suffered little damage during the periods of hostilities and occupation. In October 1946 it opened again for the use by staff and students to correspond with the inauguration of the first postwar university session. In the meantime, staff members were busy checking library holdings to determine the loss of books during the occupation and returning books collected during the occupation to their rightful owners. By 1950, the Main Library included ten large rooms and four smaller rooms, all connecting with each other, and situated on the ground floor of the Main Building. It occupied some 1,000 square metres and could accommodate 118 readers. Size of the collection grew from 98,000 in 1941 to 180,000 in 1955. Despite additional space allocated to the Main Library, the problem of housing new acquisitions was getting serious in the mid-1950s and resulted in a diminishing of seats available for an increasing number of staff and students. Planning for a new library building started in 1956 and approval for construction was given in October 1959.

The 1950s was a decade of unprecedented development for the Library. Its bookstock grew from 110,000 volumes to 233,000 volumes, whilst the number of professional Librarian posts increased from one in 1950 to eleven by 1960.



A book returned from Japan



## Growth of the Libraries

# 1961-1991

In September 1961, the Library celebrated the move to its first library building (now Main Library Old Wing) dedicated to curriculum, research and discovery. Sir Robert Black, then Hong Kong Governor, toured the building and officiated the grand opening of the new Library.

In January 1962, the Fung Ping Shan Library (East Asian Collection) was consolidated and moved into the new Library. At the same time, the Main Library collection experienced rapid growth and soon outgrew the building. In a short period of 5 years, two floors (5/F & 6/F) were added to the original library building, fortunately designed with future expansion in mind. A half-floor at mezzanine level was also built in 1969 where the Hung On-To Memorial Library (Hong Kong Collection) was housed with some of the remarkable treasures from the Library's special collections.



1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1979





Hung On-To Memorial Library (Hong Kong Collection) with mezzanine floor, ca. 1970.

## The ensuing years witnessed the Library's further expansion and the establishment of branch libraries:

- Medical Library was founded in December 1965 and located in the Patrick Manson Building, a pre-clinical site of the Faculty of Medicine. In January 2002, it was relocated to a new Library in the Faculty of Medicine Building, a state-of-the-art facility well equipped with sophisticated information technology to provide a virtual learning environment conducive to study and research.
- Law Library was set up in September 1969 in a temporary accommodation of the Faculty of Law at Caine Road and later moved to the fifth floor of the Knowles Building in July 1973 and again relocated to K.K. Leung Building in 1989.
- Education Library was started in January 1978 on the sixth floor of the Main Library Old Wing and moved to Runme Shaw Building in 1984.
- Dental Library was opened in 1981 in the Prince Philip Dental Hospital and extended with an additional floor in 1988.
- Music Library was founded in 1982 on the second floor of the Main Building and relocated to the first floor of the Hung Hing Ying Building, another historical site, in 1996.



Law Library, early 1970s

## Print and electronic resources

From 1960s to 1990s, both print and electronic resources were expanded. In August 1974, the total number of current journal titles exceeded 4,000. In August 1976, the collection increased to 500,000 volumes and the number of new titles catalogued a year exceeded 10,000. The collection reached 1 million volumes in June 1991.

On electronic resources, the Library was quick to learn the new technology and position itself as early adopters of computing resources. In 1980, for the first time, Online Information Service was offered using the ORBIT system of SDC Search Service, Santa Monica, California, with a satellite link arranged by Cable & Wireless (now PCCW). Later in 1988, CD-ROM based information services were introduced. The new compact, cheap and robust mass data storage medium made available convenient and economical access to the fast growing electronic information sources.



Lee Hysan Medical Library at Patrick Manson Building, ca. 1998

## Library automation - from in-house systems to integrated library management systems

The decade from 1970s to 1980s saw gradual transition from systems built by libraries in-house to integrated library management systems created by third party vendors. The University of Hong Kong Libraries' first automation efforts began in 1978 with the development of a Machine-Readable Cataloguing (MARC) database. Local in-house systems were also created for acquisitions, serials control, cataloguing and circulation. Automation for cataloguing and circulation started in 1981 and serials control in 1985. The serials control system was capable of compiling a complete list of holdings of western language serials as well as handling the financial aspects of serials management. Automated book acquisitions system also went live in April 1986. For the East Asian materials, an in-house microcomputer system was developed in December 1986 for book ordering and accessioning in the Fung Ping Shan Library. The first online public catalogue was available in January 1986, allowing online access to a short form catalogue containing much of the Main Library's active stock.

In 1989, the great leap forward took place when the Library implemented the DRA integrated library system with all major library applications - acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation, and serials; replacing the in-house system designed in the 1980s. Subsequently, the online public access catalogue was named DRAGON - acronym for DRA GO ONLINE.

As the Library's collections, services, and programmes continued to grow, it was obvious that more space was needed to increase stack area and to provide an inviting environment for reading and study. To accommodate these, another major expansion was initiated - to build a new library extension (now Main Library New Wing) on the site of the old Student Union Building. With the approval of the UPGC (now UGC), the Library New Wing was constructed and became fully operational on 1 July 1991. The official opening ceremony was held on 19 December 1991, when Sir David Wilson, then Hong Kong Governor, unveiled a plaque commemorating the event and toured the new library building - this again earmarked another significant era for the University of Hong Kong Libraries.



## 1991-2011

The period from 1991 to 2011 was underscored by major changes in many different aspects of the Libraries. Many of these changes were a result of the advancements in computing, networking and information technology that occurred during the period.

### Moving on to the Web era: 1991-2001

The developments and improvements in the last twenty years in database design, data storage and access might be incomprehensible for those of us who did not witness them. In April 1993, the library took what was then a major step forward from restrictive access at designated workstations of CD-ROM databases, with the installation of its first CD-ROM towers. This gave users networked access from multiple locations in the library to a growing collection of indexing and even full-text databases on CD-ROM.

The transformation was sped up with the introduction of the Internet and World Wide Web in the mid-1990s, as the Libraries launched the HKU Libraries Web site in 1995. This served both as a portal to information about library services, and a gateway to databases that had become accessible not just on the local area network, but remotely through the Web.

And parallel to the revolution in database access was the replacement in 1996 of the library's integrated library system with one called INNOPAC, which comprises both the public catalogue (the new Dragon) with a Web interface and the other backend modules which are still in use today. No longer a novelty, the integration of records in Western and Asian languages that came with the new system was a hallmark at the time. Also innovative was that the new Dragon allowed users to view their own circulation records, and manage book requests and renewals. For the first time, users could cross-search multiple local library catalogues simultaneously.

In the years that followed, the potential of the Web was fully realized with the many online services that the Libraries introduced: Book Recommendations Online, Subject guides to Internet Resources, Electronic Reserve Collection, to name a few. Perhaps one of the most notable achievements was the creation of ExamBase, a database of HKU's past examination papers, which previously had to be borrowed at the circulation counter. This was the Libraries' first of many Digital Initiatives of special materials, digitized for ease of searching and access. Other special projects that made available online valuable local collections included the Last Governor Online, Hong Kong Journals Online, Historical Law of Hong Kong Online, etc.





## Makeovers in infrastructure and information literacy

With the Web and ensuing changes in learning and teaching came demands for a corresponding upgrade in the Libraries' physical premises and information technology infrastructure. In 1996, the entire Libraries system was re-cabled to Fast Ethernet, which was replaced by a Gigabit Ethernet backbone several years later. 1996 also saw the Main Library open an Electronic Information Centre, later named Knowledge Navigation Centre, which was continuously expanded to provide users with the latest hardware and software to integrate learning, research and digital publishing.

In 1999, the Libraries participated in the university's Digital Campus Initiative, installing over 400 network access nodes so that users could connect their notebooks to the campus network from anywhere in the library. This was followed by another project in April 2001 that made available Wi-Fi connection, a relatively new technology at the time, in the Main Library. There were only 4 access points then, now there are 62 and the communication speed, at 100Mbps, is ten times faster.

As network speed improved and the different barriers to data access were broken down, the need for space changed from one for physical books and shelves to that for users. What followed was the establishment of the Hing Wai Storage, comprising the Libraries' bindery and a compact storage facility for less frequently used materials, many beginning to have electronic equivalents online as the Libraries' e-collection began to grow. The relocation freed up much needed space for more user seating and workstations.

For many, be they freshmen or alumni, the move from the familiar library of printed materials to one of computers, electronic information and the Web had meant not so much convenience but challenge. Information literacy is not just a buzzword but a survival skill in these times of relentless change. As a result in September 1998 the Libraries cooperated with the Department of Computer Science and Information Systems, and the Computer Centre to introduce a new three-credit General Education Course, Foundations to Information Technology (FIT), for first year students. This was developed in conjunction with many new short courses on the use of databases and information searching.



## The next level: the decade from 2001

Innovation and user-centered services were the key as the Libraries stepped into the new millennium. Many new projects ensued to take service excellence to the next level in support of the university's teaching and research activities.

### *Better access to electronic resources:*

To improve remote access, EZProxy authentication was introduced in 2002, which subsequently developed to allow single sign-on with the university's Portal service. This was followed by MetaFind (now called ResearchPro), a federated search engine which allows one-stop cross-searching of multiple databases, and also WebBridge, a link resolver which connects article records to their corresponding full-text.

### *Better access to print resources:*

An inter-branch delivery service was launched in 2005 to allow all borrowers to request books to be collected at other pickup locations. The program was expanded in 2007 to allow inter-branch electronic article delivery for teaching staff.

### *Better access to local materials:*

To promote the visibility of HKU research and provide a one-stop search point, the HKU Scholars Hub, an institutional repository of HKU's research and publications was launched in 2006. The popular e-Video Web site, which provides access to digitized video content of local TV programs and HKU materials, was revamped in 2010 with a YouTube-like interface.

### *Better access to other libraries' materials:*

In 2003, the Libraries implemented a comprehensive online interlibrary loan system, ILLIAD, replacing the paper system. The system enabled online requesting of materials held in other local and overseas libraries as well as electronic delivery of articles and other documents.

### *More i-services:*

Library users began receiving library messages, including overdue, recall and pickup notices, in SMS via mobile phones in 2004. Another service, MyLibrary/MyAlerts, which allowed users to create personalized Web pages of favorite resources and receive email alerts of new library books and tables of contents of preferred journals, was launched around the same time. In 2007, Wiki@HKUL was created. This knowledgebase of the Libraries' services and resources made use of the Wiki technology, allowing users to share their knowledge and experience in the familiar Wiki environment. The following year, the Dragon catalogue was further enhanced with a next generation interface and many Web2.0 community features such as tagging and sharing. The Libraries also upgraded over one million printed volumes with radio frequency identification (RFID) tags, allowing users to check-in and out these items using self-check stations.

### *Better facilities:*

In 2004 the Libraries opened the Student Learning Centre, a 7/24 study facility, which was the only such service on campus. Since 2008, the Main Library has been open around the clock during Revision Week and Assessment Period.

### *Better support for learning and teaching:*

The Libraries introduced the plagiarism detection software Turnitin and the bibliographic management software Endnote in 2004 and 2006 respectively. In addition to regular courses at all levels, extensive help and support is also provided on the use of the software.





## Collections and service collaboration

The twenty years from 1991 onward witnessed the Libraries' collection expand at an unprecedented rate. By 2002, the number of printed volumes was at two million, twice the size it was 10 years ago. The number of e-books also rose from the initial two thousand ebooks in 2000 to over one million in 2006 and 2.9 million in 2011. But more importantly, during the same period the Libraries initiated and joined many collaborative efforts that would leverage on other libraries' resources and take it to the forefront in the community of academic libraries and service provision.



- 2000  
Became the mirror site outside China for China Journal Net, the first and foremost full-text database of Mainland Chinese journals. The Libraries subsequently became the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) Databases Exchange Centre in 2002.
- 2002  
Joined OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) and participated in record sharing with the world's largest consortium of libraries. The Libraries was the world's largest contributor of original cataloguing records in 2006, 2009 and 2010.
- 2005  
Became the first member, outside of North America, of the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), giving users access to over 4 million publications within the CRL collections through interlibrary loan and electronic delivery.
- 2005  
Following a pilot 2-year experiment with two local university libraries, took a leading role in establishing the Hong Kong Academic Library Link (HKALL), a union catalogue and inter-university service which allowed students and staff of the eight UGC-funded libraries to search and make direct requests for items in the combined collection of over 9 million books.
- 2007  
Partnered with the Hong Kong Central Library to launch the first referral service for public library readers to apply for a temporary pass to an academic library in Hong Kong.

## Into the future

On 1 January 2011, Mr Peter Sidorko became the sixth university librarian. The last twenty years have seen the HKU Libraries transform itself as technology advanced. This is likely to continue as computing and data technology companies, the publishing industry and academe strive to outperform other players in meeting and anticipating the needs of their clients and users. There will be many challenges amidst the waves of changes. The university curriculum will change to a four-year curriculum in 2012 and budget constraints loom. Nothing seems certain, but with a solid foundation built over the years and spanning the entire history of the university, the HKU Libraries will be able to stay true to its mission in supporting HKU as a preeminent university.



# First and Foremost

1. The library was open in October 1912. It is the first and the oldest academic library in Hong Kong.
2. Mr Fung Ping Shan donated a library building to the University for setting a Chinese library. Opened by Sir William Peel in December 1932, the Fung Ping Shan Library is the first library in Hong Kong provided with a purpose-built library building.
3. During the Japanese Occupation, the library helped preserve 240,000 volumes that were transferred to the library from private and institutional libraries in Hong Kong. These books were returned to their owners after the war.
4. The library produced a computer print-out of the catalogue of materials in its Reserved Book Room in October 1973. This marked the beginning of library automation in Hong Kong and over the past years, the library has made great strides in applying information technology to improve library services and create a digital library.
5. In 2003 the library initiated the HKU Libraries Leadership Institute to provide library directors and senior librarians from the East Asia region with an opportunity to develop new management and leadership skills. This annual professional development programme, now in its ninth year, is the first of its kind ever held by a Hong Kong library.
6. It became the first member, outside of North America, of the Centre for Research Libraries (CRL) in 2005, giving users access to over 4 million publications within the CRL collections through interlibrary loan and electronic delivery.
7. The library submitted 75,912 original cataloguing records to the OCLC WorldCat database in 2006, making it the largest contributor among the Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC) libraries. It remained the largest contributor in original cataloguing records to the OCLC in 2009 and 2010.
8. As at 30 June 2011, the number of registered library users amounted to 112,470. Its user population is the largest of any UGC-funded institution.
9. By July 2011, the library installed some 1.8 million radio frequency identification (RFID) tags into its books and audio-visual materials, making it the first in Hong Kong to have done almost the entire circulating stock. This enables users to check-out and check-in library materials in a user-friendly manner as well as increase staff productivity and work ergonomics.
10. Its library collections are the largest of any UGC-funded institution. Users can access a myriad of library materials, including 2.85 million bound volumes and 2.9 million e-books.



## HKU Libraries @2011

Collection	
Bound volumes	2.85 million
Serial titles, print (subscriptions)	50,644
Electronic databases	820
e-Journals	73,930
e-Books	2.9 million
e-News	2,830
Number of registered users	112,470
Print materials use	
Items checked out	1.09 million
Items read in-house	299,882
E-resources use	
Access to Libraries Homepage (hits)	198.72 million
Access to e-resources (times)	3.6 million
Interlibrary loan transactions	
Items loaned	43,813
Items borrowed	37,456
Total floor area (square metres)	24,311
No. of reading places	2,834
No. of public PCs	382
No. of staff	
Professional staff	32
Support staff	197

Note: figures as of June 2011



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