



NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT 1998



enriching lives...



MISSION

TO EXPAND THE LEARNING CAPACITY OF THE NATION
SO AS TO ENHANCE NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS AND
TO PROMOTE A GRACIOUS SOCIETY.

PURPOSE

TO DELIVER A WORLD-CLASS LIBRARY SYSTEM
WHICH IS CONVENIENT, ACCESSIBLE AND USEFUL TO
THE PEOPLE OF SINGAPORE.

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ENRICHING LIVES...

An effective library system reaches out with a wealth of resources that enrich lives in society. By building world-class libraries, the National Library Board is dedicated towards cultivating a spirit of life-long learning and creating bastions of culture that preserve family, community and national values.



Establish an adaptive public library system consisting of a network of national reference libraries, a three-tier public library system of regional, community and neighbourhood libraries, assist in the setting up of school libraries and develop specialised libraries for specific sectors.



Create a network of borderless libraries linking all publicly funded libraries within Singapore to overseas libraries and information services through computer networking.



Put in place a coordinated national collection strategy.



Offer quality service through market orientation.



Create symbiotic linkages with government, business and the general public.



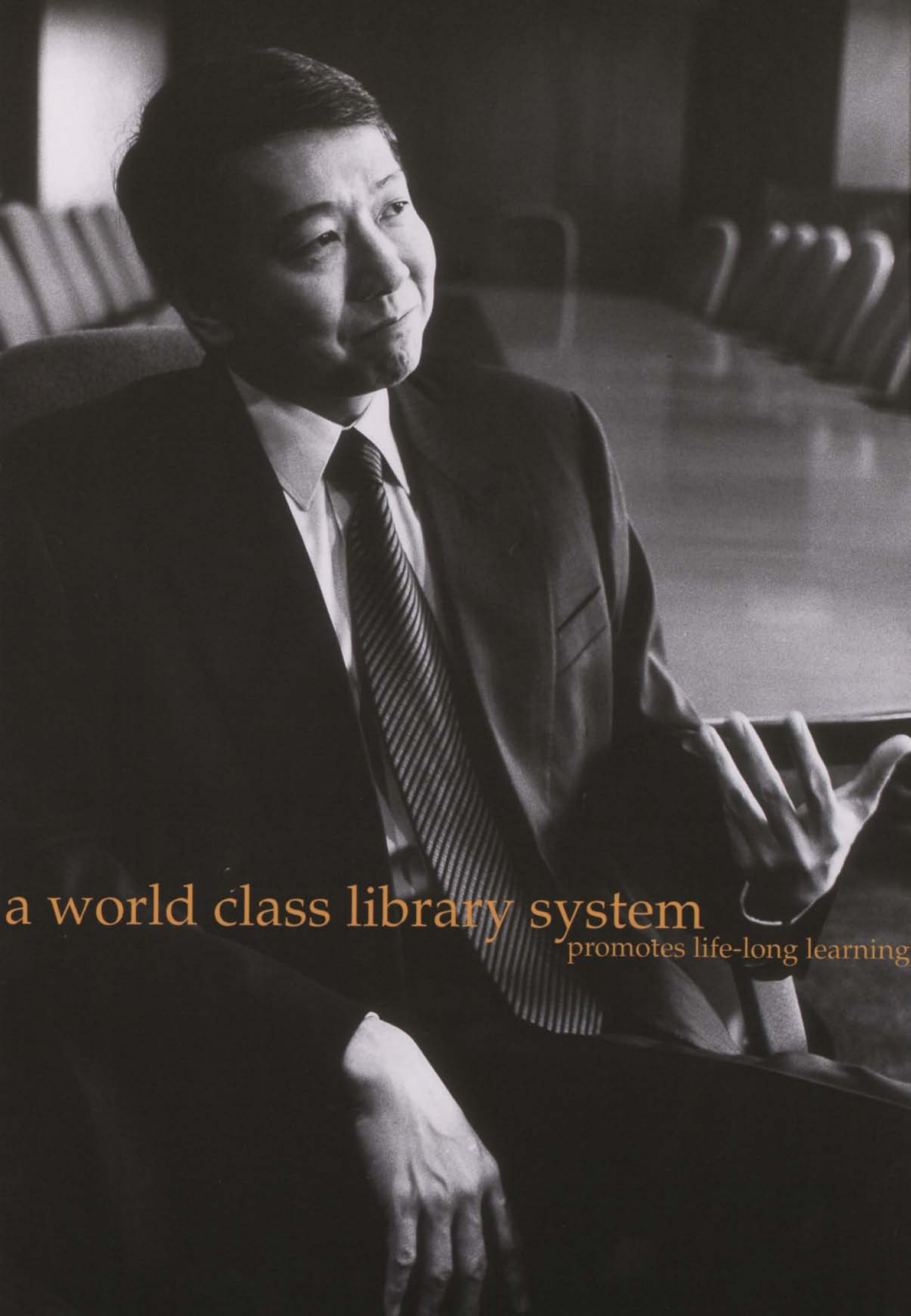
Help shape Singapore into a global knowledge hub offering information on regional business and culture.

FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD

- Establish and maintain libraries and provide library information services.
- Promote reading and encourage learning through the use of libraries and their services.
- Provide a repository for library materials published here.
- Acquire and maintain a comprehensive collection of library materials relating to Singapore.
- Establish standards for the training of library personnel.
- Provide advisory and consultancy services concerning libraries and library information services.
- Compile and maintain a national union catalogue and a national bibliography.
- Advise the government on national needs and policies in matters relating to publicly funded libraries, and library and information services.

The National Library Board's character and objectives are captured in the logo, which reflect modernity, dynamism and the spirit of innovation in its design. The stylised book with flipping pages points to the power of unlimited learning and the continuous search for knowledge. The transition from solid pages to pixels traces the evolution from print to electronic media. It further represents the Board's commitment to be on the cutting edge of technological development and to improve and expand its services. The three pages represent the library system's use of three-tier regional, community and neighbourhood libraries to bring information to the doors of every household.





a world class library system
promotes life-long learning

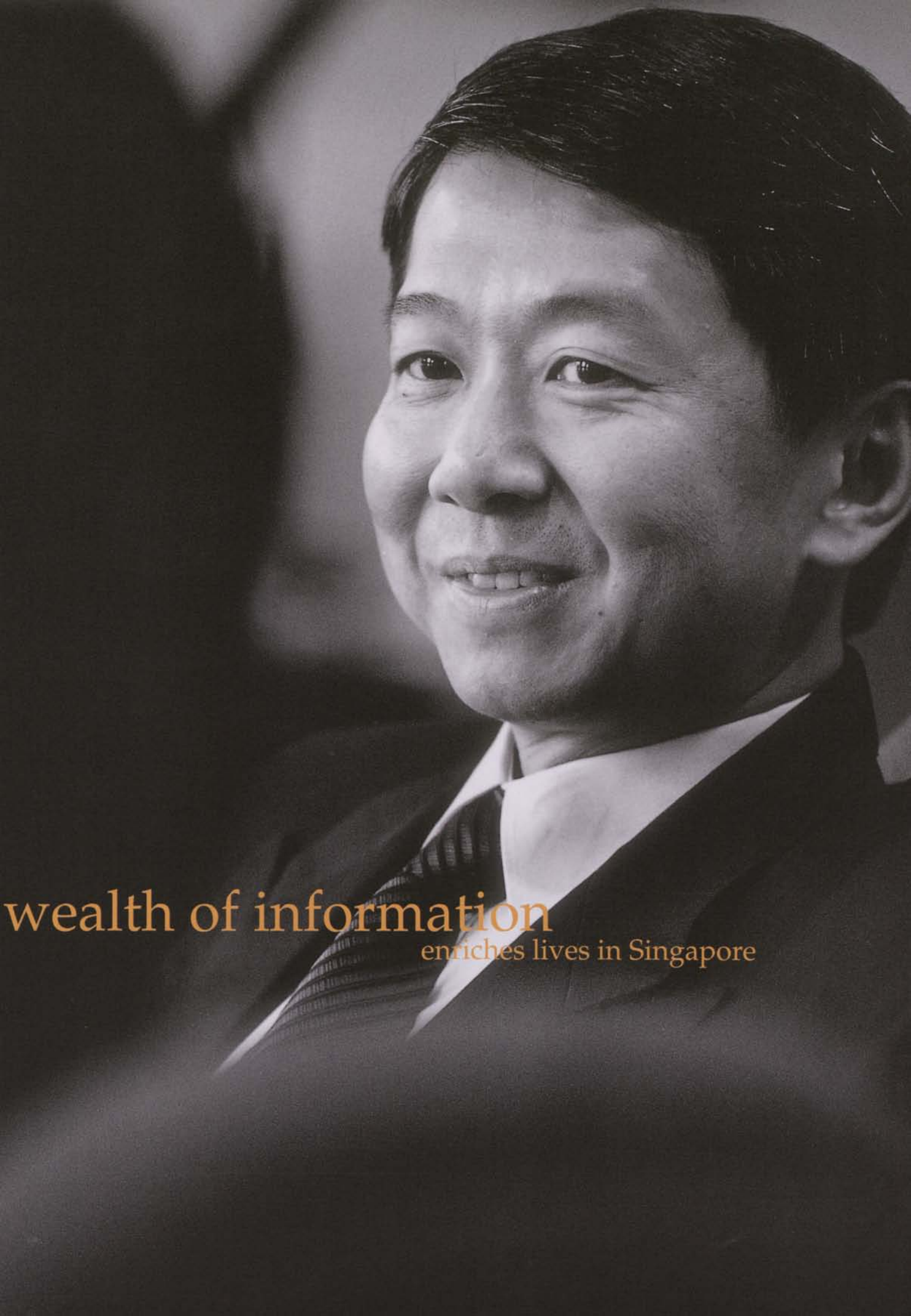
The past decade has witnessed an information revolution with advances in information and communication technology including the internet. This exciting trend has been changing the way we work and the way we live. Today, the effective use of information is the key to business success, creation of wealth and a better quality of life.

Recognising that nations compete on the strengths of knowledge and information, the Singapore government has outlined its visionary blueprint to develop our nation into a knowledge-based economy. The spirit of continuous learning is a cornerstone of this drive, with every Singaporean seeking to acquire and use knowledge effectively to innovate and build new capabilities. This will in turn carve a competitive niche for Singapore in the global marketplace and enrich lives for our people.

The national life-long learning system unveiled by Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong in February 1999 will provide a seamless learning infrastructure for Singaporeans throughout their lives. To ensure the success of this system, it is important to put knowledge into the hands of every Singaporean.

The National Library Board is dedicated to create a world-class library system which promotes the life-long learning process. The spirit of learning is thriving in Singapore. Two surveys held in December 1992 and October 1998 have shown tremendous improvements in local reading habits. In 1992, the average Singaporean read only 16 books a year, and only 12% of the population visited a public library at least once a year. The recent survey, however, showed that the average Singaporean now reads 24 books a year, and 82.6% of these readers borrow their reading materials from friends, schools or public libraries.

Visitorship to public libraries has seen a corresponding increase. A total of 18.2 million visits were made to the public libraries in 1998, marking an increase of 42% over the previous year. These accounted for an increase in loans of 10.9% to 24.6 million items of library materials in 1998. Total library membership grew by 17.2% to 1.59 million. Of this, 61.6% were adults, 19.1% were teenagers and 19.3% were children.

A black and white portrait of a middle-aged man with dark hair, smiling and looking slightly to his left. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a striped tie. The background is dark and out of focus.

wealth of information
enriches lives in Singapore

Singaporeans' reading interests have also widened to include leisure and practical reading to increase general knowledge and to keep in touch with latest developments. Indeed, we have made marked progress as a reading nation. While per capita expenditures on household computers have grown, some 45% of Singaporeans are today using IT-based library and information systems.

As library users become more computer savvy, a key challenge has been to exploit the latest in information technology to transform the library network. Through the innovative application of technology, the Board has been able to deliver new services, expand its reach and improve operational productivity. This effective use of information technology was recognised during the year when the National Library Board clinched the National IT Award 1998.

The National Library Board will continue to meet the needs of the nation in its quest to promote life-long learning. Firstly we will make information more accessible to users. We want most Singaporeans to be able to enjoy the convenience of a library within walking distance of their homes. At the same time, they will be able to access a wider scope of information as we continue to upgrade our book collections, digitise information and create virtual networks with other overseas libraries.

Ultimately, our efforts are directed at benefiting society and enriching lives. With this commitment, the National Library Board will facilitate the effective use of knowledge to help Singapore progress economically, socially and culturally. As a pillar of society, the library will continue to evolve with national goals, contributing to the building of a culture of life-long learning which is an essential part of the knowledge-intensive economy of the future.



Dr Tan Chin Nam
Chairman
National Library Board



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Left to right

Dr Tan Chin Nam (Chairman)

Mr Choo Whatt Bin (Deputy Chairman)

First row:

Dr Christopher Chia (Chief Executive)

Mr Stephen Yeo

Mr Barry Desker

Mr Sumardi Ali

Prof. Wang Gungwu

Mrs Lim Soon Tze

Assoc. Prof. Bernard Tan

Mr Arun Mahizhnan

Second row:

Assoc. Prof. Vivian Balakrishnan

Mr Simon S C Tay

Mr Patrick Daniel

Dr Paul Cheung

Mr Choy Fatt Cheong

Mr Loh Khum Yean



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Left to right

First row:

Mr Raymond Lim

Mr Rishpal Singh

Mr R. Ramachandran

Ms Tay Ai Cheng

Mr Lai Yeen Pong

Dr Christopher Chia (Chief Executive)

Second row:

Mr Ng Yew Kang

Mr Beh Chew Leng

Ms Ngian Lek Choh

Mr Lim Theam Siew

Ms Wong Poh Yee

Mr Chan Ping Wah

ORGANISATION CHART



DR CHRISTOPHER CHIA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE



CE'S OFFICE

R. RAMACHANDRAN
DIRECTOR
NATIONAL LIBRARY

LAI YEEN PONG
DIRECTOR
POLICY INTEGRATION RESEARCH

NG YEW KANG
DIRECTOR
CORPORATE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS



DEVELOPMENT

CHAN PING WAH
DIRECTOR
CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

WONG POH YEE
DIRECTOR
PROCESS DEVELOPMENT

RISHPAL SINGH
DIRECTOR
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



OPERATIONS

R. RAMACHANDRAN
DIRECTOR (COVERING)
NATIONAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

NGIAN LEK CHOH
DIRECTOR
PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES

NGIAN LEK CHOH
DIRECTOR (COVERING)
SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES



LOGISTICS

TAY AI CHENG
DIRECTOR
LIBRARY SUPPORT SERVICES

RAYMOND LIM
DIRECTOR
MANPOWER & CORPORATE SERVICES

LIM THEAM SIEW
DIRECTOR
PROPERTIES MANAGEMENT

BEH CHEW LENG
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
IT SYSTEMS & NETWORKS

HIGHLIGHTS



APRIL 1998

Bukit Panjang Community Library officially opened by Mr Teo Ho Pin, MP for Bukit Panjang.

Bishan-Toa Payoh North Community Children's Library officially opened by Encik Ibrahim bin Othman, MP for Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC.



MAY 1998

Sembawang Community Children's Library officially opened by Dr Tony Tan, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Defence and MP for Sembawang GRC.



JUNE 1998

First centralised Library Booksale of the Year held to sell 120,000 used library books to the public at the Entertainment Centre of Suntec City Mall.

Visit by APEC Ministers and delegates to the National Library.

Xpressions @ the Courtyard launched by Dr Christopher Chia, Chief Executive of the National Library Board.

Young Friends of the Library programme started at Bedok Community Library.



JULY 1998

School Library Services Division established to support the library and information needs of the educational sector.

Jalan Besar Community Children's Library opened by Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Manpower and MP for Jalan Besar GRC.



AUGUST 1998

Business Information Service soft-launched.



OCTOBER 1998

Collaborative agreement signed with the Singapore Confederation of Industries to promote the Business Information Service.



NOVEMBER 1998

National IT Award 1998 presented to the National Library Board for the innovative use of information technology in the public sector category.

Bukit Batok Community Library officially opened by BG (NS) Lee Hsien Loong, Deputy Prime Minister.

Electronic Library Management System (ELiMS) piloted at Bukit Batok Community Library, probably the world's first application of radio-frequency identification technology fully deployed in a library environment.

CD-ROM and Video Streaming services were made officially available through the Public Access Network System (PANS) at the libraries.

Pasir Ris Elias Community Children's Library officially opened by RAdm Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Education, Second Minister for Defence and MP for Pasir Ris GRC.

InfoXpress kiosks piloted at three libraries to offer quick reference resources about Singapore.

The National Library Board bagged a Gold Award from the Public Service 21 for its work-improvement projects.



DECEMBER 1998

The library went fully cashless with the implementation of CashCard payments for overdue fines and renewals, saving queue time at the Customer Services Counter to process these payments.



JANUARY 1999

Wellness @ the Courtyard, a series of talks on healthy living, launched by Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman of Wah Chang, Singapore Management University and Singapore Power.



MARCH 1999

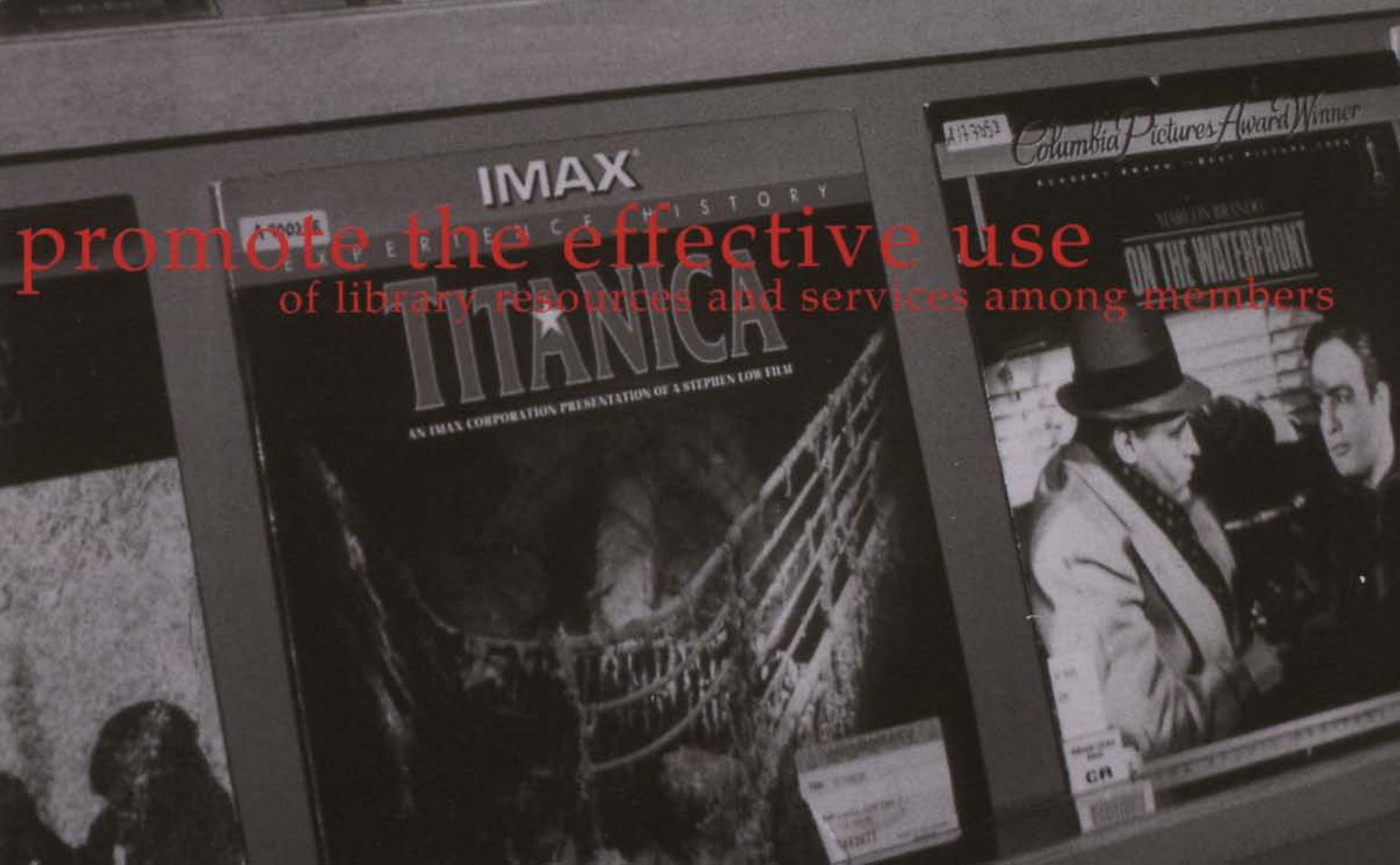
NLB Service Standards rolled out to establish targets for operations and customer service.

Memorandum of Understanding signed with Russian State Library on library cooperation.

'Planning Library Services for the New Millennium for Senior Librarians from ASEAN and Cambodia' programme held.

Nee Soon Central Community Children's Library officially opened by Mr Ong Ah Heng, MP for Nee Soon Central.

Tampines Central Community Children's Library officially opened by Mr Sin Boon Ann, MP for Tampines GRC.



promote the effective use
of library resources and services among members

By bringing libraries closer to the public, the National Library Board puts a wealth of knowledge and information within easy reach of all Singaporeans. Beyond just building and maintaining mere repositories of library materials, the Board also reaches out to expand its membership of library users and promote the effective use of library resources and services among members.



NATIONAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

As a vital link to global information, the National Reference Library provides a comprehensive range of research and reference materials and services to government departments, business and industry sectors and the general public. During the year, it served a visitorship of 1.2 million and responded to more than 1 million enquiries. On average, it handled 125 applications for materials each day, amounting to about 45,000 requests for the entire year.

PUBLIC LIBRARY NETWORK

Apart from the National Reference Library, the public library network expanded to cover one Regional Library, 15 Community Libraries and 40 Community Children's Libraries at the end of the financial year.

This included two new Community Libraries at Bukit Batok and Bukit Panjang, and six new Community Children's Libraries at Bishan-Toa Payoh North, Sembawang, Jalan Besar, Pasir Ris Elias, Nee Soon Central and Tampines Central. By 2003, the Board plans to have four Regional Libraries, 18 Community Libraries and 100 Community Children's Libraries.

Bukit Batok Community Library, which opened in November 1998, is probably the first library in the world to pioneer the full deployment of radio-frequency identification technology through its new Electronic Library Management System (ELiMS). By managing the tracking, distribution, circulation and flow in a library, the system allows books to be put back into circulation more quickly.



With this system, the loans are immediately cancelled as they are returned and the loan records of the users are updated instantaneously. Users can then immediately borrow new books unlike the previous system which took up to 15 minutes to update the loan record.

Bukit Panjang Community Library, which opened in April 1998, incorporated the learning experiences from previous library projects to improve the user-friendliness in the layout, lighting and shelving, thus creating a comfortable environment conducive to learning. Books at Bukit Panjang Community Library are also colour-coded and arranged by subject categories for easy retrieval. This feature enables library users and staff to access the books in a fast, efficient and effective manner.

LIBRARY USAGE

In the financial year, library membership grew by 234,525 to reach 1.6 million library members. Of these, 61.6% were adults, 19.1% teenagers and 19.3% children. A total of 18.2 million visitors went to the public libraries accounting for a loan increase of 10.9%. Over 24.6 million library materials were borrowed in 1998. Children's books made up 49% of total loans, with loans by adult and young people amounting to 50.9%.

A week-long membership drive was held in November 1998 to boost library membership. In addition, the library awareness programme continued throughout the public library network to educate potential users on how to utilise the library's services and facilities effectively. The National Reference Library alone conducted 62 such user education programmes and 39 school visits.

User education programmes were also organised for specialised library services. A new programme 'From Print to Pixels' was introduced in November 1998 to cover the National Library's electronic information resources. A TiARA Roadshow was held in March 1999 at Tampines Regional Library and three other Community Libraries (Ang Mo Kio, Jurong East and Central Community Libraries)

to promote the usage of TiARA. TiARA (Timely Information for All, Relevant and Affordable) is a global electronic information retrieval service accessing multiple sources, including libraries in Singapore, leading information providers and more than 200 databases worldwide. More than 1,500 new users were registered from this initiative

Webcasting technology was further used to promote library programmes over the internet. This programme was introduced at Tampines Regional Library which has since promoted seven programmes over Singapore ONE, the national broadband network.

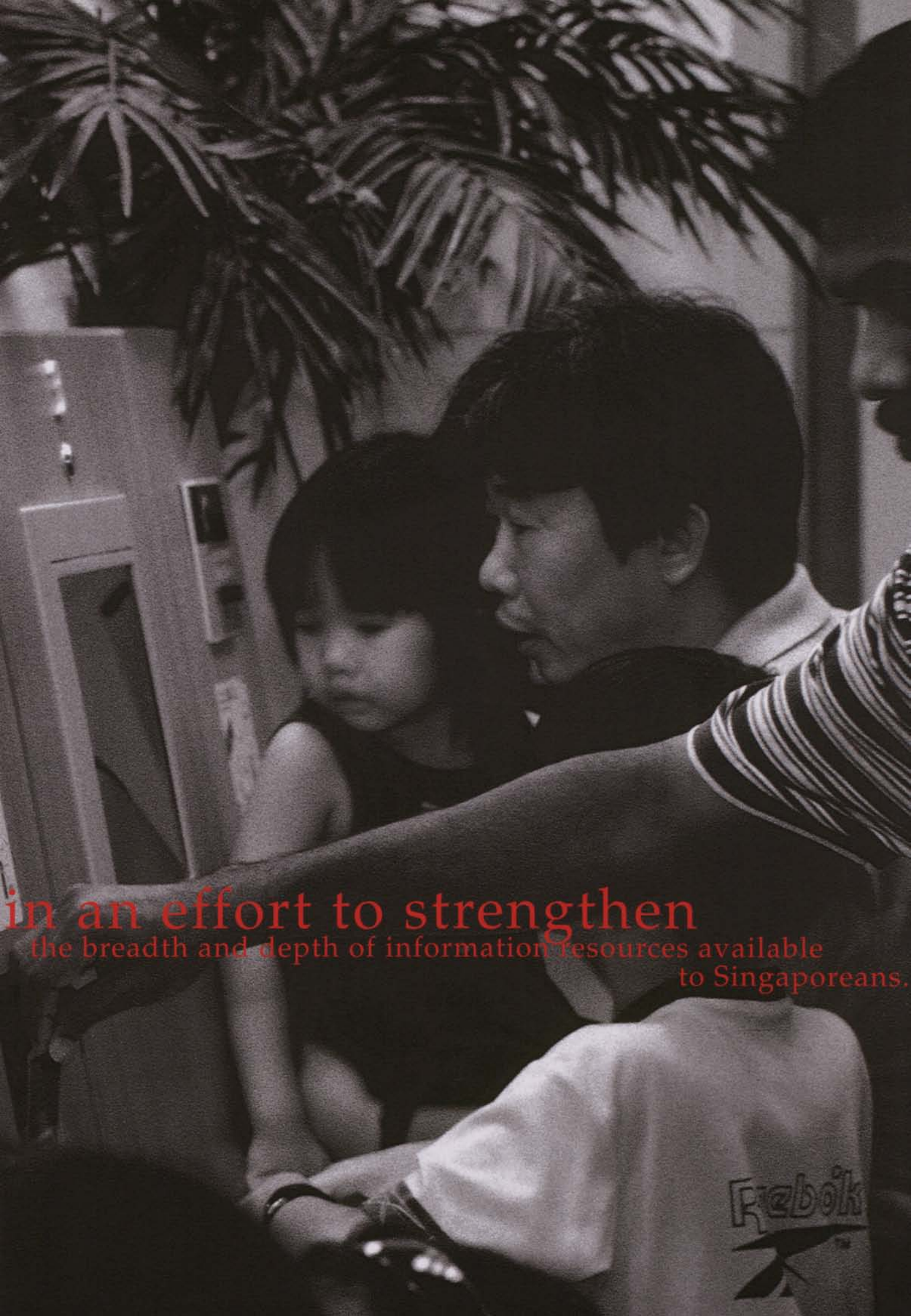
LIBRARY CONSULTANCY SERVICE

The National Library Board also provides the expertise to help schools and companies to establish and develop independent libraries or to upgrade existing ones.

In July 1998, the Board formed a School Library Services Division to plan and develop library and information services to meet the information needs of the educational professionals, teachers and students communities. The Division has already been actively addressing a variety of enquiries from schools, including library upgrades, collection development and librarian training. To promote collaboration efforts with the respective fields, the Board set up a Steering Committee with key personnel from the Ministry of Education to discuss areas of cooperation.

The National Library Board also provides fee-based consultancy services to help companies develop their libraries, catalogue materials and train staff. During the year, the Board handled six such projects, including projects for the Civil Defence Academy and Telecommunication Authority of Singapore.





in an effort to strengthen
the breadth and depth of information resources available
to Singaporeans.





The National Library Board continued to acquire and maintain a comprehensive collection of high-quality library materials, including books, multimedia and audio-visual materials. Its collections are regularly expanded, updated and kept relevant in an effort to strengthen the breadth and depth of information resources available to Singaporeans.

COLLECTION UPGRADING

Moving toward its goal of building a collection of 12 million books by 2003, the Board set aside a book budget of \$40.5 million for the financial year. This marked a significant increase compared with \$6.3 million in 1995. As a result of this collection upgrading process, Community Libraries received three to four times more new books in 1998 than in previous years, collectively growing the library collection to 5.7 million items by the end of the financial year.

The Board has appointed three advisory panels to help it expand the Chinese, Malay and Indian library services and collections. These panels, comprising prominent business and academic/education figures, seek to enlarge community involvement in enhancing library services. They will make recommendations to the Board on collection policies, develop strategies to promote reading among the public and recommend a system of collaboration with other libraries in Singapore and abroad.

MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

To keep pace with the information age, libraries have also been offering multimedia and on-line learning resources. Singapore ONE @ Libraries was introduced to nine Community Libraries and 15 Community Children's Libraries with success at the last financial year. By using this high-speed network, users can access entertainment, news-on-demand, distance learning, on-line shopping and other electronic-commerce services. Since November 1998, users of this service pay a nominal fee of \$2 for an hour's usage.



The Learning Centre at the Tampines Regional Library also offers a range of multimedia facilities under one roof, providing users with an interactive, self-paced learning environment for users to participate in on-line discussions, interact with subject specialists and browse through multimedia resources.

In 1998, the Audio Visual Lending Service was introduced for library users to access a range of videos and CD-ROMs apart from printed media. Through this service, users can borrow videos at Bukit Merah, Ang Mo Kio, Jurong East and Marine Parade Community Libraries. They can also borrow CD-ROMs at Bukit Merah Community Library.

OVERSEAS COLLABORATIONS

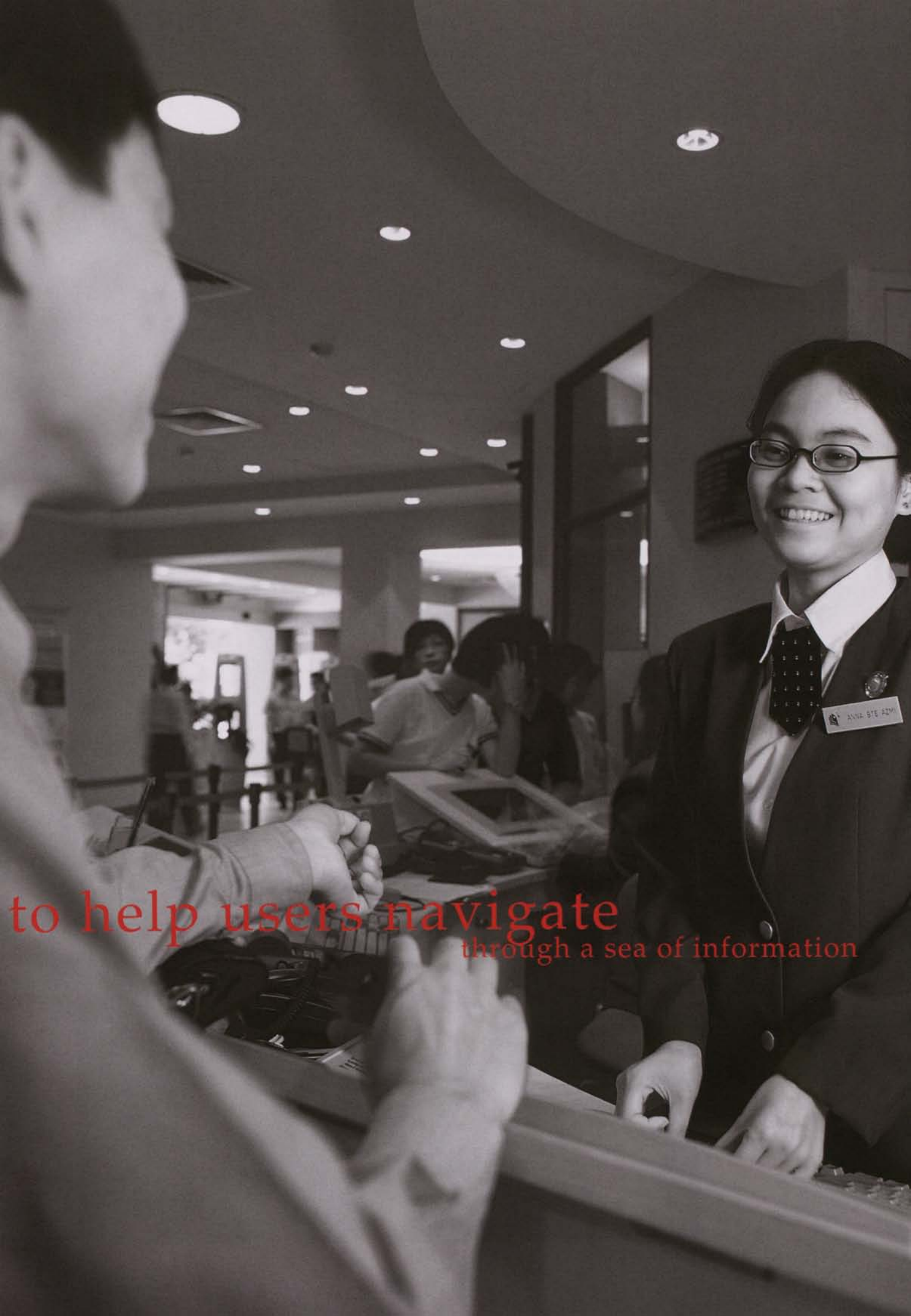
Information technology has also opened up opportunities for the National Library Board to expand its resources through collaborations with overseas libraries. Such collaborations seek to create a network of borderless libraries that contributes to greater understanding and interactions between countries.



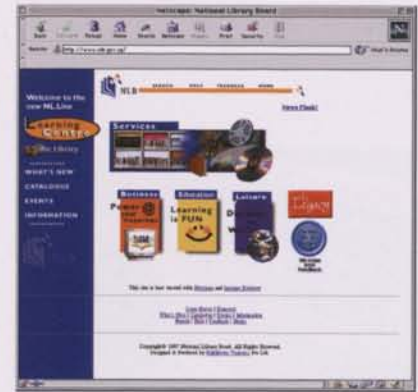
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with the Russian State Library in March 1999, the fourth of such collaborations established with an overseas library. The other three are MOUs with the National Library of China and the Shanghai Library in 1997 and the British Library in 1998. The areas of cooperation include knowledge exchange, microfilming and digitisation of materials and exchange of books, periodicals, CD-ROMs and other library materials and mutual access of databases. The Russian State Library is Europe's largest library and the second largest in the world, with a collection of 43 million books, magazines, journals, newspapers, music sheets and maps in 247 languages. It also boasts a strong Asian collection of 650,000 in 115 languages, including 95,000 in the Chinese collection, 60,000 in the Japanese collection and 35,000 in the Indian collection.

Further efforts will be made to explore collaborative efforts with other overseas libraries. To foster greater understanding and cooperation among national libraries in the region, the Board conducted a programme 'Planning Library Services for the New Millennium for Senior Librarians from ASEAN and Cambodia' in March 1999. The programme was held under the Singapore Cooperation Programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.





to help users navigate
through a sea of information



The National Library Board is committed to anticipating and meeting the needs of library users. New and improved services and systems are regularly introduced to enhance convenience for library users and to avail them with timely, affordable and useful information.

INFORMATION NAVIGATION

Recognising that library resources have increased through the years, a key challenge has been to help users navigate through a sea of information. Colour coding of books was introduced in 1998 to code books by subject categories to allow for easy retrieval by library users and staff. Colour coding was first used at Bukit Panjang Community Library in April 1998 and subsequently extended to Bukit Batok Community Library.

In April 1998, a new service was introduced at Bukit Merah Community Library to help users identify popular book titles. 'Pick of the Day' shelves were added to the library, featuring newly returned fiction and non-fiction titles. Following positive response on this service, these 'Pick of the Day' shelves were rolled-out to Marine Parade and Bukit Batok Community Libraries.

Information navigation services were also extended to specialised user needs. In November 1998, the Board embarked on planning for a provision of Customised Information Services (CIS) for government bodies, researchers, business professionals, working adults and arts professionals. The Ministry of Manpower became the first corporate client to engage the library to provide CIS to their officers. Users enjoy information packaging services, such as alerts, proactive and on-line demand searches as well as information literacy programmes.

Business Information Service is another value-added service soft-launched in August 1998. It provides business persons, professionals and tertiary students with the most up-to-date business information when they need it. Services include librarian search, document delivery and personal alert services.



Members can access a wide range of business books, periodicals, Singapore's largest collection of annual reports, on-line databases and CD-ROMs. To promote the use of this new service, the Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Singapore Confederation of Industries in October 1998.

USER CONVENIENCE

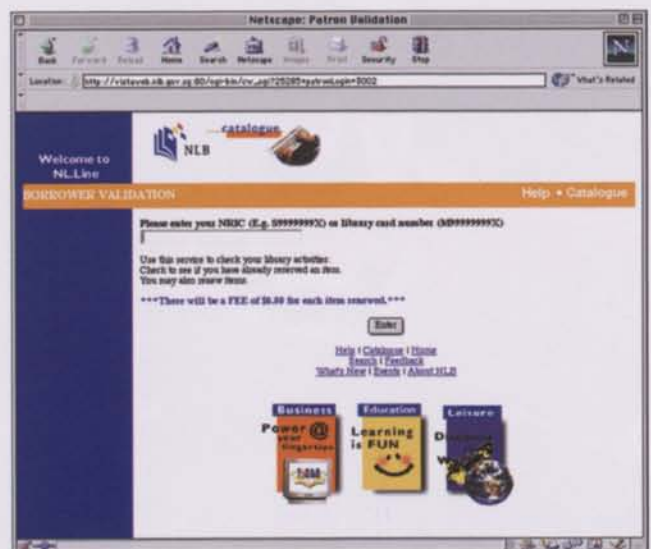
To cater to the growing number of library users, several new measures were initiated in 1998 to provide them with self-service and on-line convenience.

During the year, three more libraries were installed with self-check terminals for material loans, namely the Tampines Regional Library and the Marine Parade and Toa Payoh Community Libraries. This move has effectively reduced queue time from 45 minutes during peak period to under 12 minutes at these libraries.

For user convenience, books can now be returned at any library branch in Singapore from 1 April 1998. In addition, users can use the CashCard to pay for overdue fines and renewals at all Community Libraries since December 1998. This service automates the payment processing to allow customers to pay for fines and renewals using the CashCard instead of queuing at the counter.

Users to libraries often require quick references for a range of enquiries. In response to this need, the Board launched InfoXpress kiosks at the National Reference Library, Tampines Regional Library and Geylang East and Cheng San Community Libraries in November 1998. At these kiosks, walk-in users can view a quick reference resource about Singapore, access a database of frequently asked questions and post on-line enquiries to reference librarians for information that is not available. Responses to such enquiries may be retrieved from the kiosks or through other modes of communication, such the telephone, e-mail or fax.

On-line services were expanded during the year to enhance convenience for library users. From July 1998, Singaporeans can apply for library membership or report lost library card incidents via the Board's NL.Line website instead of making personal reports at the Customer Services Counter. Library members may also make reservations on-line through NL.Line or the library's on-line catalogue service. Hit rates for the NL.Line reached a peak of 250,000 per month.



A black and white photograph of three children sitting at a table, focused on reading books. The child on the left is a boy holding a book open. The child in the middle is a girl wearing glasses, also reading. The child on the right is a girl looking down at her book. Several other books are visible on the table in the foreground. The text 'to support community goals' is overlaid in red, with 'and enrich the lives of Singaporeans' in a smaller red font below it.

to support community goals
and enrich the lives of Singaporeans



To foster a strong sense of community spirit and a culture of continuous learning within society, the National Library Board also organises a spectrum of outreach activities to support community goals and enrich the lives of Singaporeans.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMES

Beyond just being a repository for books, the public library network acts as a social hub for Singaporeans to interact and exchange ideas. Throughout the network, 3,400 public programmes were organised for the public in 1998. These programmes, which covered storytelling, art and craft events, exhibitions, seminars, talks, workshops and user education sessions, attracted a total of 220,934 participants.

New programmes were introduced to meet specialised needs within the community. In June 1998, the Board began Xpressions @ the Courtyard, a series of artistic, cultural and literary programmes. Some 25 activities, including talks and readings, attracted almost 3,000 participants during the year.

Following this success, a similar programme on well-being was started in January 1999. Wellness @ the Courtyard is aimed at a holistic approach to well-being. Guest speakers were invited to deliver talks on topics including stress management, herbal remedies, organic farming and naturopathy. A total of 12 sessions were held during the year for 1,650 participants.

The first Library Booksale of the Year, held in July 1998 at the Entertainment Centre, Suntec City Mall, sold about 120,000 used library books in English, Chinese, Malay and Tamil to the public. By combining individual library sales of old books into a single annual event, the Library Booksale of the Year attracted some 30,000 members of the public.



SCHOOL PROGRAMMES

Several long-range activities are aimed at nurturing a culture of learning in the young. The Ministry of Education and the National Library Board have jointly initiated the Community Involvement Programme (CIP). They are required to commit six hours of community service a year at the library. This was well received by the schools. A total of 2,688 students participated and of these, 54 students continued to offer their service under the NLB's Library Enrichment and Attachment Programme (LEAP) which required longer commitment of 72 hours of community service a year at the libraries.



The Community Children's Libraries were also active in forming tie-ups with schools for the Community Involvement Programme (CIP). A total of 21 schools and 19 Community Children's Libraries participated in the programme in 1998, which included buddy reading, art and craft and storytelling sessions conducted by the CIP participants at their respective Community Children's Libraries.

A 'Young Friends of the Library' programme was started in June 1998 at Bedok Community Library which drew 150 students from 12 schools to contribute their time to libraries. Each student contributed 30 hours of service to the library per year, helping with storytelling sessions, simple user education programmes, book displays and shelving of books.





to upgrade skill levels,
enhance productivity and service excellence.



Today's growing literacy rate has led to a corresponding interest in the library and information services. With the resulting increase in library membership, visitorship and loan volumes comes the continuing challenge for the National Library Board to upgrade skill levels, enhance productivity and service excellence.

SKILLS UPGRADE

In line with government's quality service initiatives to create a forward-looking public sector, the Board is grooming a new generation of top-calibre librarians to support the library of the future. To this end, the Board invested about \$1.4 million in 1998 to further train, upgrade and equip staff with the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to deliver quality services.

The aim of the Board's training programmes is to develop new-age librarians who are no longer passive custodians of information, but are "knowledge navigators" adept with new technology and well-versed with sophisticated search, retrieval and research methods. They will also be customer-oriented professionals who will personalise and package information to meet users' needs.

During the year, emphasis was also placed on non-library-related skills necessary for staff to perform their jobs effectively. Training was held for frontline staff on first aid skills. In addition, fire drills were also conducted at Community Libraries and there were briefings held with the Singapore Police Force and Singapore Red Cross Society to ensure that the library staff have the ability to handle difficult or emergency situations.

SERVICE STANDARDS

The National Library Board rolled out its Service Standards in March 1999 to set new targets in operations and customer service for all branches. Service standards are now documented in a concise format for clearer communications to all staff.



WORK IMPROVEMENT

The Board continued to motivate its staff to drive productivity and work improvement initiatives. Efforts put in by work-improvement teams saved an estimated \$300,000 for the Board and drew many accolades during the financial year. The teams bagged one gold, seven silver and one bronze awards from the Ministry of Information and the Arts and went on to clinch one gold, two silver and three bronze awards from Public Service 21 for their projects.





Through the strategic application of Information Technology (IT), the National Library Board has transformed the public libraries in Singapore from one that was traditionally book-based to a modern, digital and networked environment. This has led to a radical change in the way the libraries service its customers. By making information readily available to all, anytime in the comfort of the homes and offices, the National Library Board has made the borderless library a reality.



For its success in exploiting IT to deliver convenient, timely and useful services to its customers, the National Library Board was awarded the 1998 National IT Award by the National Computer Board for its innovative use of IT in the Public Sector Category.

Leveraging on the prowess of IT, National Library Board has successfully improved existing services and introduced new ones to enhance the reading and learning experiences of its customers.

Customers who are too busy to visit the library can access the National Library Board's web site www.lib.gov.sg to view its catalogue of more than five million items available in the library network, make enquiries, reserve books, and a host of other services aimed at businessmen, students and families.

In addition, the Digital Library connected to the Singapore ONE infrastructure offers customers with a quick and easy access to high bandwidth services like CD-ROM and video on demand and virtual exhibition galleries. Such on-line services provide customers with a more convenient and cost effective means of access. Through IT, library services are brought to the people, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At the library, the National Library Board has also introduced a comprehensive range of services using IT. They include the self-service kiosks, borrowers' enquiry terminals, bookdrops, the Frequently

Asked Questions database InfoXpress, the remote librarian Reference Point and CashCard payments, all of which are aimed at making it easy and convenient for customers to enhance their library experiences. (Please refer to list of services appended.)

As a result of these improvements, customers benefit from timely and up-to-date information services, as well as the reduction in average peak queuing and waiting time to check out books from 45 minutes to ten minutes. For the library, these improvements translate into significant savings in time and manpower, allowing staff to provide more personalised value added services to the customers. All these help to bring the pleasures of learning and the excitement of the modern day library to its members.

As a result, library usage has increased significantly to 18.2 million visitors, with total loans exceeding 24.6 million last year. Today, one in three Singaporeans is a member of the library.

The innovative use of IT in National Library Board's business processes has today made the public library system more convenient, accessible and borderless to its customers. National Library Board will continue to seek ways to exploit IT to pursue its mission to expand the learning capacity of the nation. By making information available to all, anytime in the comfort of their nearest library, homes and offices, National Library Board aims to make lifelong learning an integral part of Singapore's preparation to transit to a knowledge-based economy.

NL.LINE (www.lib.gov.sg)

This electronic library offers on-line convenience to users who can register as library members, recommend books, make reservations and renewals, activate reminders to return borrowed materials, access the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and request for home-delivery service.

TiARA (www.tiara.com.sg)

TiARA (Timely Information for All, Relevant and Affordable) allows users to access the library catalogue and more than 200 databases in a cost-effective and convenient manner. "Ask TiARA" is an electronic librarian that handles requests for information and assistance via Web interface.

ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOGUE (OPAC)

This catalogue displays the library system's 5.7 million print collection and allows customers to check on their loan status. OPAC can also be accessed remotely using NL.Line.

PUBLIC ACCESS NETWORK SYSTEM (PANS)

Multimedia terminals located in the multimedia centre facilitates access to Singapore ONE, virtual communities and the VEGAS electronic archive of posters, photographs and local advertisements. Users can also view CDs.

BUSINESS INFORMATION SYSTEM (BIS)

This innovative service offers the business community access to 14 online business databases, a collection of 75,000 business publications and 30 business CD-ROMS.

DIGITAL LIBRARY

By exploiting the broadband Singapore ONE network, the Digital Library delivers rich multimedia content electronically to create a 24-hour cyber-library. Users can access learning packages, Librarian-on-Demand, webcasting and information on library events.

ELiMS (ELECTRONIC LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM)

Using radio-frequency identification, this system facilitates the faster turnaround of newly returned books. It features automated borrowing and bookdrop machines and a semi-automated sorting system.

VEGAS (VIRTUAL EXHIBITION GALLERY SYSTEM)

This digital text and image archive links users to a collection of literature and information resources on Singapore and Southeast Asia, including maps, photographs, paintings, advertisements, newspapers and manuscripts.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES (BUSINESS, CHINESE, STUDENT)

Users of virtual communities can access to information resources, make contact with each other, promote their interests and contribute to forum discussions from their homes, offices or schools via webcasting over the Singapore ONE network.

AUTOMATED SELF-HELP MACHINES

These include self-service check kiosks for quick borrowing and renewing of books; the Borrowers' Enquiry Terminal for quick access to information on loan status, fines and other charges, and a 24-hour book return service.

REFERENCE POINT & INFOXPRESS

Reference Point allows users to request information via telephone, e-mail, fax and "Ask TiARA". InfoXpress is a database designed to provide students with answers to frequently asked questions.



ELiMS – AN INNOVATIVE FIRST

The National Library Board is probably the first in the world to fully deploy the application of the radio-frequency identification technology in a library environment. Using this innovative technology, the ELiMS (Electronic Library Management System) was officially launched in November 1998 at the official opening of Bukit Batok Community Library by the Guest-of-Honour, Deputy Prime Minister, BG (NS) Lee Hsien Loong. This innovation facilitates the faster turnaround of newly returned books.

The ELiMS is an integrated system comprising self-check machines, automated book drops and sorting machines. The automated book drops allow the system to be updated real-time when a book is returned. Once the loan status has been updated, customers can immediately borrow a fresh set of books at the self-check machines. With the sorting machines, the books can also be put back into circulation quickly for other customers to borrow.

Customers have benefited with greater convenience and real time savings in the entire returning and borrowing process. For the library, the ELiMS has increased productivity and efficiency, allowing the Board to achieve its 15-minute book-to-shelf target. This means more books are now available for borrowing, and the utility of each book is maximised. There is no need for manual cancellation of loans and sorting of books.

With the success of the pilot project at Bukit Batok Community Library, the Board plans to implement the ELiMS at more libraries in the near future.



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Appendix 1 (a)

Name of Library	FY 97 (Actual)	FY 98 (Actual)
Ang Mo Kio Community Library	2,015,936	1,979,292
Bukit Batok Community Library	0	516,271
Bedok Community Library	1,716,880	1,497,949
Bukit Merah Community Library	1,176,277	1,169,485
Bukit Panjang Community Library	804	1,388,018
Choa Chu Kang Community Library	2,166,905	1,930,795
Cheng San Community Library	2,018,332	2,047,112
Central Community Library	334,199	2,058,315
Geylang East Community Library	1,325,715	1,145,404
Jurong East Community Library	1,974,653	1,909,511
Jurong West Community Library	1,428,019	1,484,237
Marine Parade Community Library	1,572,194	1,220,276
Queenstown Community Library	1,135,546	1,072,767
Toa Payoh Community Library	1,686,355	114,158
Tampines Regional Library	2,162,989	1,818,871
Yishun Community Library	142,600	1,548,814
Total	20,857,404	22,901,275
Community Children's Libraries	1,300,146	1,660,224
Others	48,345	67,351
TOTAL	22,205,895	24,628,850
PERCENTAGE	17.51%	10.91%

Appendix 1 (b)

Name of Library	Adult	Total Loan For Apr 98 - Mar 99		Total
		YP	Children	
Ang Mo Kio Community Library	848,973	216,552	913,767	1,979,292
Bukit Batok Community Library	217,090	60,069	239,112	516,271
Bedok Community Library	698,124	114,574	685,251	1,497,949
Bukit Merah Community Library	550,308	87,182	531,995	1,169,485
Bukit Panjang Community Library	539,541	104,402	744,075	1,388,018
Choa Chu Kang Community Library	919,957	161,154	849,684	1,930,795
Central Community Library	1,247,827	150,941	659,547	2,058,315
Cheng San Community Library	847,421	185,472	1,014,219	2,047,112
Geylang East Community Library	541,069	83,985	520,350	1,145,404
Jurong East Community Library	916,930	207,461	785,120	1,909,511
Jurong West Community Library	761,004	122,245	600,988	1,484,237
Marine Parade Community Library	489,013	94,045	637,218	1,220,276
Queenstown Community Library	480,975	86,167	505,625	1,072,767
Toa Payoh Community Library	52,516	7,912	53,730	114,158
Tampines Regional Library	779,278	137,315	902,278	1,818,871
Yishun Community Library	676,933	133,679	738,202	1,548,814
Total	10,566,959	1,953,155	10,381,161	22,901,275
Community Children's Libraries	0	0	1,660,224	1,660,224
Others	12,402	1,494	53,455	67,351
GRAND TOTAL	10,579,361	1,954,649	12,094,840	24,628,850
PERCENTAGE	42.96%	7.93%	49.11%	100%

Appendix 2 (a)

Name of Library	FY 97 (Actual)	FY 98 (Actual)
Ang Mo Kio Community Library	192,435	216,543
Bukit Batok Community Library	0	6,347
Bedok Community Library	183,976	206,993
Bukit Merah Community Library	84,942	94,591
Bukit Panjang Community Library	595	11,790
Choa Chu Kang Community Library	29,972	42,656
Cheng San Community Library	27,094	36,468
Central Community Library	126,221	145,777
Geylang East Community Library	60,121	67,579
Jurong East Community Library	194,677	214,703
Jurong West Community Library	25,823	34,005
Marine Parade Community Library	71,922	79,190
Queenstown Community Library	105,060	122,122
Toa Payoh Community Library	145,990	159,912
Tampines Regional Library	62,862	76,301
Yishun Community Library	7,483	19,978
Total	1,319,173	1,534,955
Community Children's Libraries	41,046	59,095
Others	461	1,155
GRAND TOTAL	1,360,680	1,595,205
PERCENTAGE	13.15%	17.24%

CUMULATIVE MEMBERSHIP AS AT MAR 99

Appendix 2 (b)

Name of Library	Cumulative Membership As At Mar 99			Total
	Adult	YP	Children	
Ang Mo Kio Community Library	127,605	55,914	33,024	216,543
Bukit Batok Community Library	4,102	258	1,987	6,347
Bedok Community Library	133,386	50,065	23,542	206,993
Bukit Merah Community Library	62,023	19,298	13,270	94,591
Bukit Panjang Community Library	6,913	647	4,230	11,790
Choa Chu Kang Community Library	24,538	3,571	14,547	42,656
Central Community Library	115,223	18,766	11,788	145,777
Cheng San Community Library	19,657	3,747	13,064	36,468
Geylang East Community Library	42,843	13,672	11,064	67,579
Jurong East Community Library	122,762	58,785	33,156	214,703
Jurong West Community Library	21,494	2,496	10,015	34,005
Marine Parade Community Library	50,871	14,805	13,514	79,190
Queenstown Community Library	92,735	19,270	10,117	122,122
Toa Payoh Community Library	110,774	31,789	17,349	159,912
Tampines Regional Library	37,101	9,730	29,470	76,301
Yishun Community Library	10,202	1,683	8,093	19,978
Total	982,229	304,496	248,230	1,534,955
Community Children's Libraries	0	0	59,095	59,095
Others	1,155	0	0	1,155
GRAND TOTAL	983,384	304,496	307,325	1,595,205
PERCENTAGE	61.64%	19.09%	19.27%	100%

Appendix 3

Name of Library	FY 97 (Actual)	FY 98 (Actual)
Ang Mo Kio Community Library	950,000	1,178,338
Bukit Badok Community Library	0	489,383
Bedok Community Library	1,100,000	1,018,051
Bukit Merah Community Library	650,000	1,323,992
Bukit Panjang Community Library	0	931,936
Choa Chu Kang Community Library	1,700,000	1,516,471
Cheng San Community Library	1,800,000	1,564,602
Central Community Library	284,000	1,668,483
Geylang East Community Library	620,000	737,445
Jurong East Community Library	1,200,000	1,227,365
Jurong West Community Library	710,000	741,724
Marine Parade Community Library	630,000	1,224,943
Queenstown Community Library	600,000	565,497
Toa Payoh Community Library	820,000	70,000
Tampines Regional Library	1,600,000	1,738,681
Yishun Community Library	120,000	1,048,804
SUB TOTAL	12,784,000	17,045,715
Community Children's Libraries	24, 866	1,123,035
GRAND TOTAL	12,808,866	18,168,750

Note:

- 1) The following branches were closed during FY 97 & FY 98

Branches	FY97	FY98
1. Ang Mo Kio Community Library	9/7/97 - 24/8/97	
2. Bukit Merah Community Library	1/1/98 - 5/4/98	
3. Central Community Library	1/4/97 - 18/1/98	
4. Jurong East Community Library	21/4/97 - 11/5/97	
5. Marine Parade Community Library		9/3/98 - 24/5/98
6. Queenstown Community Library	6/10/97 - 16/11/97	
7. Toa Payoh Community Library		9/5/98 - 10/5/99
8. Tampines Regional Library		9/2/98 - 30/4/98

- 2) The following branches were opened during FY 97 & FY 98

Branches	FY97	FY98
1. Bukit Batok Community Library		21/11/98
2. Bukit Panjang Community Library		4/4/98
3. Yishun Community Library	26/2/98	

Summary of Books Acquired (Volumes)

FY 96

	Purchase	Gift	PPA	Total
Malay	71,335	120	26	71,481
Chinese	319,985	638	649	321,272
Tamil	35,444	-	52	35,496
English	1,062,968	1,386	2,505	1,066,859
Total	1,489,732	2,144	3,232	1,495,108(284.5 %)

FY 97

Malay	40,585	46	147	40,778
Chinese	359,040	93	2,417	361,550
Tamil	40,538	32	88	40,658
English	1,093,150	2,500	3,828	1,099,478
Total	1,533,313	2,671	6,480	1,542,464 (3.2%)

FY 98

Malay	23,935	61	92	24,088
Chinese	387,614	476	2,565	390,655
Tamil	10,576	25	61	10,662
English	694,733	3,084	4,267	702,084
Total	1,116,858	3,646	6,985	1,127,489 (-26.9%)

Summary of New Titles Catalogued

FY 96

	Adult	Children's	Total
Malay	2,720	392	3,112
Chinese	7,497	1,334	8,831
Tamil	592	177	769
English	16,795	5,572	22,367
Total	27,604	7,475	35,079 (+26.8%)

FY 97

Malay	1,932	1,336	3,268
Chinese	8,259	1,115	9,374
Tamil	980	278	1,258
English	22,010	5,312	27,322
Total	33,181	8,041	41,222 (+17.5%)

FY 98

Malay	717	1,034	1,751
Chinese	15,312	1,906	17,218
Tamil	440	168	608
English	38,371	7,565	45,936
Total	54,840	10,673	65,513 (+58.9%)

Collection by Language, Age Group and Materials

FY 98	BOOKS		SERIALS	
	Titles	Items	Titles	Items
LANGUAGES				
Malay	37,694	404,138	502	17,259
Chinese	104,532	1,410,450	1,324	45,419
Tamil	14,243	138,122	47	8,404
English	381,557	3,159,277	15,527	364,199
Total	538,026	5,111,987	17,400	435,281
ADULTS				
Malay	20,028	119,246	491	14,043
Chinese	82,423	718,173	1,268	40,850
Tamil	9,745	75,567	44	6,883
English	289,826	1,442,453	15,177	349,310
Total	402,022	2,355,439	16,980	411,086
YOUNG PEOPLE				
Malay	2,936	37,513	3	455
Chinese	5,437	65,461	21	629
Tamil	971	4,592	1	1,287
English	26,641	255,829	293	9,002
Total	35,985	363,395	318	11,373
CHILDREN				
Malay	14,730	247,379	8	2,761
Chinese	16,672	626,816	35	3,940
Tamil	3,527	57,963	2	234
English	65,090	1,460,995	57	5,887
Total	100,019	2,393,153	102	12,822

Collection by Language, Age Group and Materials

	Titles	Items
SPECIAL MATERIALS*		
Braille	130	130
Compact disc	3,427	14,046
DVD	15	16
Filmstrip	468	899
Game	6	10
Kit	22	177
Music score	10,065	19,509
Map	69	86
Motion picture	112	124
Videocassette	12,899	101,040
Videodisc	739	4,054
Art print	221	343
Wall Chart	2	3
Flash card	15	54
Recorded disc	2,067	2,576
Tape recording	3,480	17,165
Tape slide	440	577
Microfiche	382	946
Microfilm	2,280	3,030
Talking books	171	410
Compact Disc Interactive	43	323
Computer File®	2045	25,974
Pic Collection	1	1
Total	39,099	191,493
Grand Total		594,525 titles
(Books, Serials and Special Materials)		5,738,761 items

* Excludes items not bar-coded

@ Includes CD Roms

We have audited the accompanying balance sheet of the National Library Board ("the Board") as at 31 March 1999, and the income and expenditure statement and cash flow statement for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Board. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Singapore Standards on Auditing. Those Standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the Board's management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion,

- (a) the financial statements are properly drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the National Library Board Act (Chapter 197) ("Act") and Statements of Accounting Standard and so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Board as at 31 March 1999 and of the results and cash flows of the Board for the year then ended on that date; and
- (b) the accounting and other records required by the Act to be kept by the Board have been properly kept in accordance with the provisions of the Act, including records of all assets of the Board whether purchased, donated or otherwise.

During the course of our audit, nothing came to our notice that caused us to believe that the receipt, expenditure and investment of monies and the acquisition and disposal of assets by the Board during the year have not been in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

PRICE WATERHOUSE

Certified Public Accountants

Singapore

30 June 1999

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 1999

	Note	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
CAPITAL ACCOUNT	3	10,334,137	10,334,137
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		3,693,943	(198,825)
DEFERRED CAPITAL GRANTS	4	43,718,390	27,821,625
		<u>57,746,470</u>	<u>37,956,937</u>
Represented by:			
FIXED ASSETS	5	43,803,004	28,619,910
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors, deposits and prepayments	6	6,387,682	9,158,379
Fixed deposits	7	828,935	679,713
Cash and bank balances	7	115,596,567	46,543,058
		122,813,184	56,381,150
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and accruals	8	14,736,629	6,940,033
Development grants received in advance	11	93,550,558	39,010,956
Library subscribers' deposits		247,195	269,795
Security and other deposits		159,870	133,448
Project advances		175,466	689,891
		108,869,718	47,044,123
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>13,943,466</u>	<u>9,337,027</u>
		<u>57,746,470</u>	<u>37,956,937</u>

The notes on pages 53 to 61 form an integral part of the accounts.



Tan Chin Nam
Chairman



Christopher Chia
Chief Executive Officer

30 June 1999

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1999

	Note	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
OPERATING INCOME			
Professional services	2(c)	4,678,468	4,559,240
Book fines	2(c)	1,544,223	1,463,252
Membership fees		368,115	301,270
Other income	2(c)	3,071,555	1,267,585
		9,662,361	7,591,347
Less:			
OPERATING EXPENDITURE			
Salaries		33,277,705	28,860,384
Books, periodicals and serials		26,180,936	28,442,928
Rental		13,158,559	10,769,537
Depreciation of fixed assets	5	8,887,069	6,754,520
Maintenance of buildings		5,806,710	3,612,190
Computer services		7,569,599	4,252,069
Manpower development and staff welfare		2,240,966	2,363,169
Public utilities		2,416,618	1,895,142
Telecommunication, transport and postage		2,565,362	1,623,737
Supplies and materials		1,163,787	1,185,076
Consultancy fees		914,449	1,002,975
Write-off of fixed assets		2,204,163	6,308,886
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		262,414	238,667
Maintenance of computer hardware		1,820,151	487,158
Other operating expenses	9	8,944,705	8,959,450
		117,413,193	106,755,888
OPERATING DEFICIT		(107,750,832)	(99,164,541)
NON-OPERATING INCOME			
Interest income	2(c)	237,824	316,182
DEFICIT BEFORE GRANTS		(107,513,008)	(98,848,359)
GRANTS			
Operating grants	10	80,324,981	73,563,571
Development grants	11	22,652,196	24,345,773
Deferred capital grants amortised	4	8,428,599	6,371,696
		111,405,776	104,281,040
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR		3,892,768	5,432,681
ACCUMULATED DEFICIT BROUGHT FORWARD			
		(198,825)	(5,631,506)
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) CARRIED FORWARD		3,693,943	(198,825)

The notes on pages 53 to 61 form an integral part of the accounts.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1999

	Note	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net deficit before grants		(107,513,008)	(98,848,359)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation of fixed assets	5	8,887,069	6,754,520
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		262,414	238,667
Interest income		(237,824)	(316,182)
Deficit before working capital changes		(98,601,349)	(92,171,354)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors, deposits and prepayments		2,770,696	(4,378,545)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		7,809,245	(2,698,473)
(Decrease)/increase in advances and deposits		(510,603)	275,849
Net cash used in operating activities		(88,532,011)	(98,972,523)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of fixed assets	5	(24,335,933)	(22,436,716)
Proceeds from disposal of fixed assets		3,356	3,804
Net cash used in investing activities		(24,332,577)	(22,432,912)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Government grants received		181,842,144	157,147,973
Interest income received		225,175	304,056
Net cash generated from financing activities		182,067,319	157,452,029
NET INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		69,202,731	36,046,594
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	7	47,222,771	11,176,177
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	7	116,425,502	47,222,771

The notes on pages 53 to 61 form an integral part of the accounts.

These notes form an integral part of and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying financial statements.

1 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

Under the National Library Board Act (Chapter 197), the National Library Board shall:

- (a) establish and maintain libraries, and provide library information services;
- (b) promote reading and encourage learning through the use of libraries and their services;
- (c) provide a repository for library materials published in Singapore;
- (d) acquire and maintain a comprehensive collection of library materials relating to Singapore and its people;
- (e) establish standards for the training of library personnel;
- (f) provide advisory and consultancy services concerning libraries and library information services;
- (g) compile and maintain a national union catalogue and a national bibliography; and
- (h) advise the Government on national needs and policies in respect of matters relating to publicly funded libraries and library information services in Singapore.

2 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Accounting convention

The financial statements, expressed in Singapore dollars, are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

(b) Grants

Government assets transferred for the establishment of the Board are taken into the Capital Account.

Government grants and contributions from other organisations utilised for the purchase of depreciable assets are taken to the Deferred Capital Grants account.

Deferred capital grants are recognised in the Income and Expenditure Statement over the periods necessary to match the depreciation of the assets purchased with the related grants. Upon disposal of fixed assets, the balance of the related deferred capital grants is recognised in the Income and Expenditure Statement to match the net book value of the assets written-off.

Government grants are accounted for on an accrual basis.

(c) Basis of recognising income

Professional library services are rendered to government ministries and statutory boards and fees charged are recognised when services are rendered. Fees are charged based on fixed rates approved by the Ministry of Finance.

Income from the rental of library facilities are recognised when services are rendered and charges are based on rates approved by the supervisory ministry.

Book fines are accounted for when received.

Interest income from bank account balances are recognised on the accrual basis.

(d) Fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is calculated on the straight-line basis to write off the cost or net book value of the assets over their estimated useful lives as follows:

	Years
Motor vehicles	5
Renovation	5
Office furniture, fittings and equipment	5
Computer hardware and operating system software	4

No depreciation is provided for Works of art and Projects-in-progress.

A full year's depreciation is charged in the year of acquisition and no depreciation is charged in the year of disposal. Fully depreciated assets are retained in the financial statements until they are no longer in use. Fixed assets costing less than S\$1,000 each are charged to the Income and Expenditure Statement in the year of purchase.

Movable fixed assets belonging to the National Library before its conversion to a statutory board were transferred at net book value to the Board when it was established and depreciated over their remaining useful lives.

(e) Expenditure on books, periodicals and serials

Expenditure on books, periodicals and serials are charged to the Income and Expenditure Statement in the year of purchase.

(f) Foreign currencies

Foreign currency assets and liabilities at balance sheet date are converted to Singapore dollars at the rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Foreign currency transactions during the year are converted into Singapore dollars at the rates of exchange ruling on the transaction dates. Differences on exchange are included in the Income and Expenditure Statement.

3 CAPITAL ACCOUNT

The Capital Account comprises the net book value of movable fixed assets, imprest floats and specific donations and miscellaneous project account balances held by the former National Library, which were transferred to the Board on its establishment, on 1 September 1995.

4 DEFERRED CAPITAL GRANTS

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Balance at the beginning of the year	27,821,625	11,756,605
Development grants utilised (Note 11)	21,638,745	19,997,407
Amount transferred from operating grants (Note 10)	<u>2,686,619</u>	<u>2,439,309</u>
	52,146,989	34,193,321
Less:		
Deferred capital grants amortised	<u>(8,428,599)</u>	<u>(6,371,696)</u>
Balance at the end of the year	<u>43,718,390</u>	<u>27,821,625</u>

5 FIXED ASSETS

	Motor Vehicles S\$	Renovation S\$	Furniture and fittings S\$
<u>1998/99</u>			
Net book value at 1 April 1998	36,655	6,569,012	1,147,193
Additions	66,589	2,091,718	403,398
Depreciation charge	(31,645)	(2,206,885)	(432,012)
Disposals	—	(6,400)	(16,283)
Net book value at 31 March 1999	71,599	6,447,445	1,102,296
Cost	158,227	11,034,427	2,160,060
Accumulated depreciation	(86,628)	(4,586,982)	(1,057,764)
	71,599	6,447,445	1,102,296
<u>1997/98</u>			
Net book value at 1 April 1997	54,983	1,813,362	774,971
Additions	—	4,600,848	779,848
Depreciation charge	(18,328)	(1,790,142)	(357,634)
Disposals	—	—	(49,992)
Transfer	—	1,944,944	—
Net book value at 31 March 1998	36,655	6,569,012	1,147,193
Cost	91,638	8,950,709	1,788,169
Accumulated depreciation	(54,983)	(2,381,697)	(640,976)
	36,655	6,569,012	1,147,193

Office equipment S\$	Computer hardware and software S\$	Works of art S\$	Projects-in- progress S\$	Total S\$
3,758,760	7,619,900	193,013	9,295,377	28,619,910
1,349,819	5,972,069	67,410	14,384,930	24,335,933
(1,428,844)	(4,787,683)	—	—	(8,887,069)
(24,547)	(218,540)	—	—	(265,770)
3,655,188	8,585,746	260,423	23,680,307	43,803,004
7,144,223	19,150,725	260,423	23,680,307	63,588,392
(3,489,035)	(10,564,979)	—	—	(19,785,388)
3,655,188	8,585,746	260,423	23,680,307	43,803,004
2,674,171	4,846,921	186,613	2,829,164	13,180,185
2,338,164	6,300,299	6,400	8,411,157	22,436,716
(1,167,736)	(3,420,680)	—	—	(6,754,520)
(85,839)	(106,640)	—	—	(242,471)
—	—	—	(1,944,944)	—
3,758,760	7,619,900	193,013	9,295,377	28,619,910
5,838,681	13,682,721	193,013	9,295,377	39,840,308
(2,079,921)	(6,062,821)	—	—	(11,220,398)
3,758,760	7,619,900	193,013	9,295,377	28,619,910

6 DEBTORS, DEPOSITS AND PREPAYMENTS

The balance comprises the following:

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Net GST recoverable	2,853,650	3,561,745
Accounts receivable	468,312	1,071,976
Sundry debtors	515,358	55,107
Accrued revenue	40,809	42,444
Deposits	1,439,057	1,158,191
Prepayments	1,070,496	3,268,916
	<u>6,387,682</u>	<u>9,158,379</u>

7 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash and bank balances and fixed deposits as follows:

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Fixed deposits	828,935	679,713
Cash and bank balances	115,596,567	46,543,058
	<u>116,425,502</u>	<u>47,222,771</u>

8 CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Creditors	12,744,906	4,725,623
Accruals and sundry creditors	1,991,723	2,214,410
	<u>14,736,629</u>	<u>6,940,033</u>

9 OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES

	1998/99	1997/98
	S\$	S\$
Advertising costs	73,715	162,790
Agency fees and commissions	151,629	181,139
Audit fees	65,180	61,000
Exchange programme	90,939	10,396
General supplies	103,713	110,770
Legal fees	124,347	32,112
Maintenance of library books	189,177	193,612
Miscellaneous	113,750	448,547
Nets charges	102,792	5,941
Other printing	409,034	198,441
Other professional services	3,861,104	6,447,784
Others	2,942,630	442,375
PWD fees	504,191	421,780
Security services	212,504	242,763
	<u>8,944,705</u>	<u>8,959,450</u>

10 OPERATING GRANTS

	1998/99	1997/98
	S\$	S\$
Operating grants received during the year	83,011,600	76,002,880
Less:		
Amount transferred to deferred capital grants (Note 4)	<u>(2,686,619)</u>	<u>(2,439,309)</u>
	<u>80,324,981</u>	<u>73,563,571</u>

11 DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Development grants received from the Government are used for implementing approved development projects. Except for capital expenditure on community children's libraries, all other capital-related expenditure costing S\$1,000 and above are capitalised as fixed assets. Other project costs and expenditure including books, are charged to the Income and Expenditure Statement in the year of purchase.

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Development grants received in advance brought forward	39,010,956	1,617,468
Development grants received during the year	<u>98,830,543</u>	<u>81,736,668</u>
	137,841,499	83,354,136
Less:		
Development grants received in advance	(93,550,558)	(39,010,956)
Amount transferred to deferred capital grants (Note 4)	<u>(21,638,745)</u>	<u>(19,997,407)</u>
	<u>(115,189,303)</u>	<u>(59,008,363)</u>
Development grants utilised as at 31 March (for the following expenditure)	<u>22,652,196</u>	<u>24,345,773</u>
Books and periodicals	8,127,734	10,721,447
Computer and other professional services	9,812,403	6,184,883
Disposal/ write-off of fixed assets	1,090,332	6,370,552
Salaries	666,993	548,993
Others	2,954,734	519,898

12 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

Capital expenditure approved by the Board during the year but not provided for in the accounts is as follows:

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Amount approved and contracted	11,114,013	5,458,132
Amount approved but not contracted	<u>49,085,815</u>	<u>94,516,917</u>

13 TOTAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Total grants received and utilised from Government since the establishment of the Board was S\$360,636,206.

	1998/99 S\$	1997/98 S\$
Capital account	10,334,137	10,334,137
Capital grants	61,925,864	37,600,500
Operating grants	217,058,202	136,733,221
Development grants	71,318,003	48,665,807
	<u>360,636,206</u>	<u>233,333,665</u>

14 COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the current year's presentation.

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