

End of Year Party 2013 speech by Maria G N Musoke (Prof), University Librarian.

Our Guest of Honour, Dr Ernest Okello Ogwang, Deputy Vice-Chancellor-Academic Affairs, Representative of MUASA, PRO and all our invited Guests, Library Staff, Ladies & gentlemen.

First, on behalf of the University Library and my own behalf, I wish to congratulate you on being appointed the First Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic affairs, where the University library falls... Congratulations Sir! We pledge our support to you and wish you the Best in that busy office.

Thank you very much for honouring our invitation amidst many competing demands on your time and given the fact that you are very new in office – less than a month, but accepted to find time for us.

Library Management decided to invite you as our Guest of honour to give you an opportunity to get to know the Library a little more – I sent you various documents yesterday, and please let us know when you need other information; we also decided to invite you so that we cement the relationship between the library and the office of DVC-AA, where we report. We had a cordial relationship with the previous DVC and we trust that we shall continue to enjoy the same under your leadership.

We also invited some colleagues, who support us in various ways, to celebrate the end of year with them and we request for more support as, together, we will build for the future. We welcome you warmly to the library end of year party, please enjoy and have fun.

As you may be aware, Makerere University Library has automated most of its functions amidst challenges of limited bandwidth and unstable internet; challenges of a sustainability budget for equipment that will go obsolete after a few years – this is related to non-release of the Development fees which were taken over by some office; inadequate maintenance budget for equipment repair – many computer users, many users of lib facilities including toilets; inadequate budget for fuel to maintain lighting in the library (the rationing of fuel has disabled the function of the automatic generator switch as we do it manually), shortage of staff and delayed payments of staff weekend overtime and evening duty transport, etc. Amidst all these challenges, the Lib information system is up and running, unlike other info systems in the University. (Congratulations to Library staff and a big hug to you all).

We hope that as we celebrate the End of Year, we shall receive your wise guidance on how to address the various challenges affecting library service delivery.

Our Guests and dear colleagues, the past nine years in which I have been the Library – Head girl, driver of change, driver of lib bus system, name it... we have had many achievements, which are tangible and visible – even a blind person can touch and feel them; as well as many invisible outcomes – the list is very long.

I would like to thank the Library staff who have stood with me, who have supported me together we have had these many shared achievements amidst a lot of challenges – some human others institutional; but thank you colleagues for being there for the library and for our profession.

Just to mention a few, of the achievements

1) The new Library building: this was our first year of occupying the new extension. We have enjoyed the new and improved space, and library users have also commended our work. However, good things come with challenges particularly shortage of staff that has made it impossible to operationalise our 24/7 space during examination period. Did you read the newspaper story that University students come to the lib for toilet facilities?! We are serving more people, and hence we need a maintenance budget.

In 2011/12, we had planned that after the extension to the Main library, the next extension will be the Medical Library which we had put in our financial year's budget. The Principal of the CHS and Estates had prepared a drawing and cost estimates! However, the Lib Dev fees, which are expected to build the library are not yet released to the Library. We request the Guest of Honour to assist us on this matter.

2) Mak University Institutional Repository formerly, the Uganda Scholarly Digital library, that has provided the highest number of richfiles, which have enabled Mak University's webometric ranking to progressively improve to the 4th position in Africa as of Aug 2013. I thank all the librarians who have input records, and Miriam Kakai who is in charge of the I.R together with Andrew Mwesigwa and Luke Kiwanuka deserve a big clap. (This team has been joined by Mr. Walter Omona since he returned from study leave). – No wonder the Digitisation unit is the 2nd best Achiever of the year. Our guest of honour, you are an author, please give us your articles for archiving in the Mak IR.

3) Automation: The library catalogue is online and visible to the world. The acquisition module was fully implemented during the procurement of the Carnegie funded text books; while the circulation module is being implemented. Thanks to Carol Ilako who conducted training before she went for Maternity leave. Most importantly, is the new offline feature that allows you to continue circulating documents when the internet is off.

4) Carnegie Corporation project (Our Guest of honour, in 2006/7, Makerere University library competed with several University in East & West Africa & won a 2.5m US\$ grant aimed at turning the library into a model academic library in Sub-Sahara Africa. This project progressed very well and has finally come to an end on 30th Nov 2013. I thank all the project team members, particularly Liz State, Miriam Kakai and George Lusiba, for all the hard work and the librarians who have processed the books as well as the support staff who spine labeled, shelved and keep issuing the books for use.

Our guests, this project has added the following: the Research commons, the first such a facility in this country, has been furnished by Carnegie funding, with new IT facilities and controlled access doors – something we used to see abroad, is with us now. The

Graduate students and Researchers are enjoying the facility. The Learning commons for undergraduate students; Over 11,000 copies of new textbooks were procured for the entire University and they are shelved in IDA section of the Main Library. After one year of use, we conducted a survey to find out whether the books were being used, whether they were relevant, etc. The findings were presented at an International conf and the paper is being reviewed for publication. I would like to thank the librarians who participated in the data collection: Agnes Namaganda, Carol Ilako, Monica Naluwoza, Patrick Sekikome, Philliam Adoma, Rachel Nakalembe, Sylvia Munafu, Wilberforce Musoke and Andrew Mwesigwa.

Carnegie has also funded a Masters course in IT to save librarians from the many IT challenges we have been experiencing. Eight of our librarians (Monica Naluwoza, Philliam Adoma, Carol Ilako and Ferry Nalusse; Irene Mbawaki and Luke Kiwanuka; Patience Atim and Rachel Nabbosa) have been successful in getting a grant to attend the distant learning course based in Pretoria; Only one – Monica Naluwoza, has so far graduated; we look forward to seeing others graduate.

5) Sida SAREC project has also progressed well, and it has been extended for a year. Two librarians, Miriam & Liz are pursuing a PhD programme; while two other are at EASLIS for a Masters programme.
(I wish to congratulate Alison Kinengyere on her PhD graduation).

6) Collaboration with the University of Bergen Library in Norway has opened up many opportunities for the Library. We have been providing professional support to the University of Juba Library staff and several Universities in Southern Sudan. Four of our librarians Agnes, Irene, Philliam and Monica who attended a summer course on Learning and teaching in a digital age in Norway have spearhead the running of that course at Makerere University in June 2012 - that was the first time that course was held in Africa. In June this year, the course was conducted again. Thanks to the LATINA course. – We have benefitted from the Latina skills a lot e.g. in designing the invitation card for this event and in designing the Library calendar for 2014.

7) Collaboration with the Mortenson Center in the US: we have received training from this collaboration as I reported last year, and I would like to add that Fred Luggya has enrolled for a PhD programme at Illinois.

8) Human Resource

(a) Confirmation: Three librarian were confirmed in service: Sylvia Munafu, Patrick Sekikome and Andrew Mwesigwa. Over ten library assistants were also confirmed in service, and we congratulate them all.

b) Promotions: During the year, some ten library assistants were promoted to Senior Library assistants.

c) Appointment: Some eight library assistants were appointed after responding to an internal advert that enabled us to get rid of temporary staff. We thank the Directorate of HR for the support.

We expect more appointments as vacant positions have been advertised. As of now, the shortage of staff is making our work very difficult. I thank you colleagues for being understanding – please keep it up until we get more staff.

d) Retirement: Five of our long serving members retired during 2013. They attended last year's party and bid farewell to us. We are in touch with them.

e) Publications: I congratulate all the librarians who successfully presented papers at conferences as they keep the MakLib banner up and high at international level. They are: Andrew Mwesigwa, Agnes Namaganda, Monica Naluwoza, Fred Luggya, Alison Kinengyere, Lydia Namugera, Liz State and I.

f) International participation: This year, MakLib got four of its librarians on IFLA's Standing committees, namely on Ac and Research (Liz State), Law (Carol Ilako), Information Literacy (Andrew Mwesigwa) and Health and Biosciences (MM) - we all went through unopposed – Liz and I are serving our 2nd and last term on the committees. This is a great achievement, our Guests, as some countries don't have even a single representative on any of the IFLA organs.

Our Agric Librarian, Onan Mulumba, was nominated to the Council of Research 4 Life in June this year, and he attended an inaugural meeting in Rome. Congratulations to Onan, who unfortunately is unwell.

g) Exporting expertise: Our Guest of honour, in the process of automation, we have acquired knowledge and skills which we keep exporting to other University libraries in the region e.g. Sokoine University of Agric in Tanzania, 6 University libraries in Nigeria, Ghana and Southern Sudan. We have received many positive comments about the good work which Liz State, Carol Kobusingye, Agnes Namaganda, Miriam Kakai have been doing in supporting lib activities in the region. Thank you Liz once again.

h) College Libraries: when the University started implementing the College structure, the leaders – Library, Finance and Ac registrar were all named Team leaders – I saw a message on the staff listserve from somebody who seemed to imply that the Team leaders were only in the Library, please inform him and correct that misinformation.

Some Colleges have been very supportive, and we greatly appreciate.

I urge you librarians in colleges to be our good ambassadors and please do make your presence in the Colleges felt.

i) Xmas take home: I started this package, but unfortunately, due to budget cut, we are not able to provide this package – I started it, and it has gone with me by default! Please pick the calendars and Xmas card – that is all we were able to do and with a lot of difficulty.

Loss of relatives and friends of Staff: For all those who have lost parents, relatives and friends, May their souls rest in peace, and may you be comforted by God. We also join

the rest of the world to mourn **the African Icon of Reconciliation and Peace**, as he has been described, **Nelson Madiba Mandela and to pray for his soul and his family.**

Among the many words of wisdom by the late Mandela is a statement that 'if you are in harmony with yourself, you can beat a lion without fear' – I like this; we need harmony to be able to handle whatever situations and however difficult!

Lastly, in my nine years as University Lib, I have tried to make friends with everybody and I will continue to do so in the remaining one year of my last term. I would like to assure you once again that my remaining one year will be led by Faith and I will continue to do my work in an ethical and professional way – as Senator Edward Kennedy said.

So, let us work hard for the good of the Library, the good of Makerere University and our country at large.

I would like to congratulate all staff who got married, got babies, bought plots, cars, built houses and all those personal achievements; we thank God for all these material and spiritual gifts from him.

We thank the outgoing MULWA executive led by Ms Margaret Kalete for a job well done. Congratulations to our new executive of MULWA led by the very able team; we have a lot of hope in you. Thank you MULWA executive for fully sponsoring the party and organizing the party – our Welfare budget was cut and we could not organize the party; so please pay your membership subscription promptly to be able to have a party next year. I thank Lib Administration and my secretaries for all the support to the organising team – thank you for the hard work.

Finally, we thank God for the gift of life and wisdom which have enabled us to do all what we have achieved, and we continue to pray for this guidance, mercy and protection.

At this juncture, I take the honour and privilege to invite the Guest of Honour, Dr Ernest Okello Ogwang, the new DVC-AA to greet you.

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year full of good health, peace and joy.