

## HISTORY OF QUEZON CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Quezon City Public Library started as a small unit, a joint venture of the National Library and the Quezon City government during the incumbency of the late Mayor Ponciano Bernardo and the first City Superintendent of Libraries, Atty. Felicidad Peralta by virtue of Public Law No. 1935 which provided for the *“consolidation of all libraries belonging to any branch of the Philippine Government for the creation of the Philippine Library,”* and for the maintenance of the same.

On June 19, 1949, Republic Act No. 411 otherwise known as the Municipal Libraries Law, authored by then Senator Geronimo T. Pecson, which is an act to *“provide for the establishment, operation and Maintenance of Municipal Libraries throughout the Philippines”* was approved.

Side by side with the physical and economical development of Quezon City, the City officials particularly the late Mayor Bernardo envisioned the needs of the people. Realizing that the achievements of the goals of a democratic society depends greatly on enlightened and educated citizenry, the Quezon City Public Library, was formally organized and was inaugurated on August 16, 1948, with Mrs. Aurora Quezon, as the guest of Honor and who cut the ceremonial ribbon. The Library started with 4,000 volumes of books donated by the National Library, with only four employees to serve the public. The library was housed next to the post office in a one – storey building at the near of the old City Hall in EDSA. Even at the start, this unit depended on the civic spirited members of the community who donated books, bookshelves and other reading materials.

As the city grew, the library services have to expand in order to cope with the needs of the increasing library patrons. The City Librarian requested the opening of more branches, so in 1993 under Mayor Ignacio – Santos Diaz, the Project 3 branch was established.

Upon the assumption to office of Mayor Norberto S. Amoranto, the development and progress of the Quezon City Public Library was hastened because of numerous requests from the people. Mayor Amoranto approved the establishment of eight (8) branch libraries

scattered in the different districts of Quezon City.

In 1957, the main office moved to a more spacious place at the second floor of the old City Hall. The City Council then approved Ordinance No. 3559, prescribing the powers and duties of the City Librarian promulgating the rules and regulations.

From the old City Hall building, the main library moved to the Lion's International Building in Bernardo Park in 1968. The space was donated by incumbent Lion's officials to the City government.

In 1969, the Law Research Center was organized to answer the needs and request of law students, law practitioners, City personnel and other researchers who were in dire need of law books and other related materials. When the QC Hall Building was constructed in January 1972, the Main Library was transferred to the ground floor of the new building in January 1972, still under the stewardship of Mayor Amoranto and stayed there for ten (10) years. In 1978, Atty. Peralta retired and Mrs. Paciencia J. Buendia took over as the second Superintendent of Libraries.

With the growth in collection of reading materials and personnel, the space became small. Fortunately in 1982, through the representation of Mrs. Paciencia J. Buendia, Mayor Adelina S. Rodriguez worked for the construction of the main library building right at the back of the City Hall. In less than a year, the building was finished to the delight of the reading public and it was inaugurated on August 6, 1983. The Quezon City Public Library (main) is the biggest public library maintained by a city government in Metro Manila. Presently, The reading area is composed of the Reference Section, Children's Section, Law Research Unit, Filipiniana and Local History Collections, the Periodical Section and the Multi Media and Internet Services. The former conference room was converted into a technical working area where books are processed for the use in the reading area, a binding section where back issues of important publications and worn – out books and other reading materials are bound for future reference and research, and the Administrative Services which include records and property and supplies and finance.

During the term of Mayor Adelina S. Rodriguez, two (2) branch libraries were opened

which increased the total number of branch libraries from eight (8) to ten (10) operating in the city.

In 1985, Mrs. Relinda A. Feliciano assumed the superintendency when Mrs. Paciencia J. Buendia retired. During her term three more branch libraries were added in the barangays Damayan, Krus na Ligas, and Camp Aguinaldo.

The administration of Mayor Brigido Simon, Jr. (1986 – 1991) provided the whole building with air conditioning units making it more conducive to learning. Also, more than one million (1,000,000.00) worth of books were purchased.

During the administration of Mayor Simon, Jr., three branch libraries were established, the Lagro Library (1991), Barangay Damayan Branch Library (1989) and Krus na Ligas Library (1989). Unfortunately in January 1990, Barangay Damayan was closed to the public

Upon the retirement of Mrs. Feliciano in 1988, her assistant Ms. Blanquita L. Del Barrio took over. During her term four (4) branch libraries were opened to the public. More activities and projects were intensified like book distribution, storytelling sessions, exhibits, declamation contests, etc.

Ms. Del Barrio organized the Friends of the Library in 1989. This group is composed of Civic Spirited Citizens and wives of City Councilors. They have been supporting the needs of the library financially and materially. Through this, the city library was able to acquire additional furnitures and equipment such as electric fans, reading tables, chairs, books and computers for students in all levels and others. The FOL serves or acts as the Library Board.

Upon the retirement of Ms. Del Barrio in December 1998, Mrs. Rosario R. Vicente took over. She was the City Librarian for two years and she had her compulsory retirement at age 65 on November 2000.

After her retirement, Mrs. Emelita L. Villanueva replaced her as the City Librarian by virtue of Resolution No. 1505 confirming her appointment as City Government Office Head of the Quezon City Public Library, which was adopted on January 23, 2001. She is an aggressive and the youngest City Librarian to assume the position.

The administration of Mayor Ismael A. Mathay, Jr. (1992 to June 30, 2001) has been

supportive to the needs of the library. Funds for the purchase of books, vehicle, repairs and other services for the library were approved and provided.

On June 17, 1994, the existence of Public Libraries was improved thru the approval of RA # 774, which is an Act for the establishment of Congressional, City and Municipal libraries and Barangay reading centers throughout the Philippines, appropriating the necessary funds.

On July 1, 2001, Hon. Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. became the 13<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Quezon City by a landslide vote of the Quezon City residents. It is in his administration that the Quezon City Public Library undergone remarkable changes. The building which was untouched for the past 21 years was fully renovated in 2003. It was repainted, tiles were installed, lightings and ventilations were improved, and baggage counter was fabricated to ensure that clienteles' belongings are properly secured. It is during this period that the vision of the Quezon City Public Library was formally realized, providing library users with the latest technologies using Internet and multi – media facilities for easy access and retrieval of relevant information. From year 2001 – 2003, budget for books was given on a yearly basis amounting of 1M in 2002 and 1.5M in 2004, not to mention that aside from the approved budget, Mayor Belmonte set aside additional funding from books from the Mayor's Office. Thus, for the first 3 years of the Belmonte administration, the City Library has updated its book collections by a total of 1089 volumes purchased. It was also during his administration that the vision of the Quezon City Public Library was fulfilled, which is "to provide the library users with facilities where they can use the latest technologies like internet and multi-media to enhance research and facilitate information access and retrieval.

The Multi-Media Section was opened to the Public on March 26, 2004, with internet access and use of multi-media facilities. Ten (10) computer units were being used by the users for the internet and three (3) units were used for the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), which serves the bibliographic search for library collections.