

# “FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS COME GREAT THINGS”

## Small beginnings...

The Law Library of the University of Hong Kong came into being in September 1969 with the establishment of the Department of Law under the Faculty of Social Sciences. At the time there was no room on campus, and both the Law Library and the Department of Law were housed in temporary accommodation at 154-158 Caine Road, in a three-storey block of flats previously used as police officers' married quarters. This remained their home until commissioning of the Knowles Building on the main campus around three years later.

## Assembling a good library...

An urgent task in the early days was the acquisition of books and periodicals, which was accomplished using an initial basic list of materials covering English Legal System, Legal History, Constitutional and Administrative Law, Contract, Tort, Property, and Criminal Law. The plan of acquisition also included using one publisher for all English material, an American dealer for American items, and active searches for large second-hand sets. Additionally, around 1,000 law books were transferred to the new Law Library from the Main Library and from the Department of Extra-mural Studies, which then offered part-time evening courses leading to the external Bachelor of Laws (LLB) of the University of London.

## Opening just in time...

The Department opened in September 1969 with three academic staff and an initial intake of 40 students. The Law Library, with its stock in place, opened for student use at the end of September with about 1,500 volumes and places for 28 readers.

### The Law Library in September 1969

Location: 154-158 Caine Road, Hong Kong

Collections: About 1,500 volumes

Number of Seats: 28

Opening Hours: 9 am - 10 pm, weekdays; 9 am - 7 pm, Saturdays

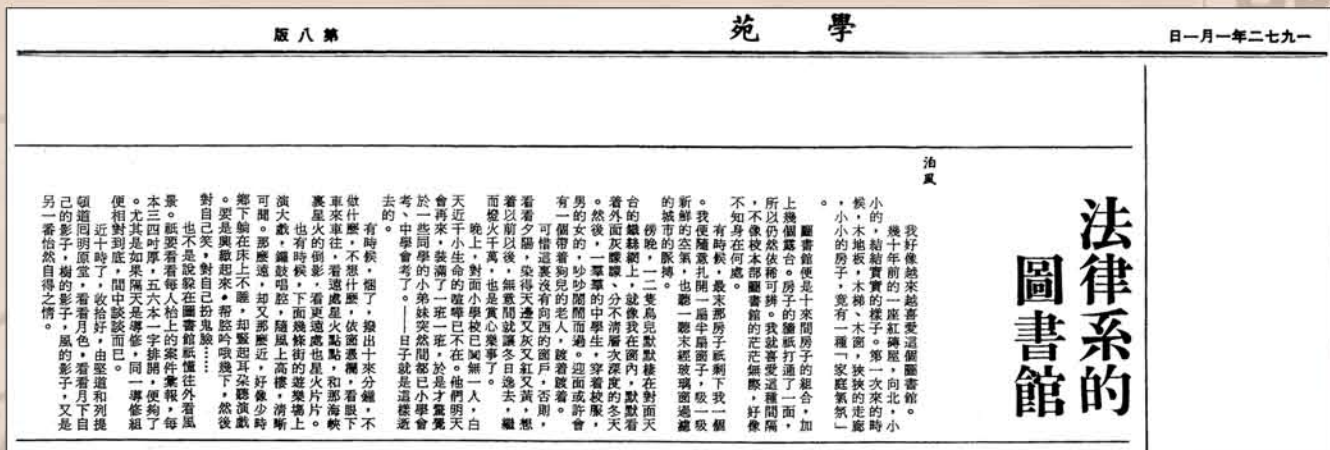
Library Staff: Law Librarian and 7 supporting staff

Services: Reference & lending services; photocopying; reserve book scheme



# A home away from home

Before the age of electronic databases, remote access and mobile learning, for most law students the Law Library was truly a home away from home, where much learning took place after lectures and outside of tutorials. A glance through early issues of the University's Students' Association publication *Undergrad* (學苑) and the Annual Magazine of the HKUSU Law Association shows many articles by law students who had much to say about the Law Library at the time.



"The library of the Law Department" in *Undergrad*, No. 12, p. 8, 1 January 1972.



"XX's Law Library" in *Undergrad*, p. 10, 1 March 1972.

英文水平須高  
入學試之規定，凡大學生入學試者，須具備良好之英文水平，方能入學。此項規定，旨在確保學生能理解及掌握法律課程之內容。入學試之科目包括法律常識、英文閱讀及寫作等。學生須在入學試中表現優異，方能獲准入學。此項規定，旨在確保學生能理解及掌握法律課程之內容。

香港大學將試辦法律  
試辦期不超過五年  
為港大成立完整法律系

【本報訊】香港大學昨日宣佈，該校將於短期間試辦法律系。

該項計劃的目的，是使讀法科的學生能在出現時較佳的期間內獲得法律學位，而又不致大妨礙他們日間的學習。最近政府經已同意資助該計劃的費用，並供給其他實質的幫助。

亞利打打大律師於一九六一年港大金融學教授與中致詞時，曾首先公開發表港大法律系將試辦法律課程的意見。其後律師公會的主席又在年會中指出：香港缺乏法學院的設立，因此與英國的學生比較，此間學生欲從事律師的工作極不方便。

目前該項試辦式的計劃正展開辦理，將是港大成立完整法學院編制的先聲。

在與倫敦大學的特別安排下，港大校外課程部將於十月間根據倫敦大學法律系的課程而設法去學系的課程。畢業者可獲倫敦大學

港系畢業生  
港執業律師

【本報訊】香港大學法律系公會及公會之會員，已定於本週一（即今日）下午二時，在該會辦事處舉行工作會議。

該會主席表示，該會將與法律系合作，共同推動法律系之發展。他呼籲法律系師生積極參與該會之各項活動，以促進法律系之學術及專業發展。

此外，該會亦將舉辦多項法律講座及研討會，以加強法律系師生之聯繫及交流。該會表示，將繼續致力於提高法律系之教學質素及學術水平。

定今年九月開課

大港設法律系

畢業後有資格成為律師公會會員

首屆招生40名七月底截止申請

BE A DONOR  
Blood donor  
6th of June, F  
Luk Yew H  
9:30 a.m. - 3  
SAVE A  
LIFE

Law Dept. - Good Engl

Application for admission to the Department is now open. The intake is limited.

The admission of the new law students will be held on the 6th of June, 1972, at the Law Department, University of Hong Kong. The new law students will be admitted to the law department in the autumn of 1972. The new law students will be admitted to the law department in the autumn of 1972.



# A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

1969-1973

154-158 Caine Road

The Department of Law and the Law Library were initially housed off-campus at 154-158 Caine Road, in a three storey block of flats built in 1921 as police officers' married quarters.



The Law Library was housed on the top floor, with 28 readers' seats. As the building had not been designed as a library, there were fears that the floor weighting would prove insufficient to support the books as the collection grew. On this account there were no free standing bookcases: all bookcases were placed directly against load-bearing walls and staff paid careful attention to spacing and arrangement of stock on the shelves so as to spread the load as evenly as possible.



In 1971 the verandahs of the building were enclosed to provide more reader places, so as to keep to the agreed ratio of one place for every two students.

After the Law Department and Library moved to the main campus in 1973, the Caine Road buildings were demolished and the entire site was transformed into a children's playground and park.



Caine Road Garden (堅道花園), next to Hop Yat Church (Hong Kong) (合一堂(香港堂)),  
source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/old-hk/4008081435/>.



1973-1989

## Knowles Building

In July, 1973 the Law Department and Library moved onto the main campus, sharing the fifth floor of the newly completed Knowles Building with the Centre of Asian Studies. Occupying a total area of 366 sq. m. on the fifth floor of Knowles Building, the Library provided accommodation for 68 readers and about 14,000 volumes. Alteration work carried out in 1976 and 1982 extended the library and brought reader spaces up to 140, but these gains were soon offset by rising student numbers and rapid growth of the book stock.



(Man standing) Dean Peter Wesley-Smith, then a law student.



Library staff handling enquiries at the loan counter, 1976.



Behind the library staff, the Hong Kong Bar Association Mooting Competition trophy proudly sits on the catalogue cabinets. (The catalogue, formerly an important finding aid, fell rapidly into disuse after installation of the first online public access catalogue terminal in August, 1989.) With mooting now well integrated into the curriculum, trophies carried home by students and displayed in the library have increased greatly in number.



Party to celebrate completion of Law Library alterations, 1976. Ray Faulkner, Susan Kneebone, Library staff K.K. Li, K.K. Wong, K.S. Leung, and Law Librarian Felicity Shaw.



1989-2012

## K.K. Leung Building

The long-awaited move from Knowles Building to K.K. Leung Building substantially increased the library area to over 1,500 sq. m., providing 265 study places for readers, almost double what could be provided in the Knowles Building premises. With new shelving and furniture, and large windows on all sides, the new environment provided a major upgrade and was much appreciated by all.



Two major renovation projects took place while the Library was in the K.K. Leung Building. In summer, 1996 the library furnishings were improved, a new circulation counter was installed, the computer network was upgraded and additional online public access catalogue terminals were installed.

In a further major renovation during summer, 2001 lighting and ventilation were enhanced and a new compact storage system (the first of its kind for the HKU libraries) was installed on the first floor to accommodate the serials collection.



Emptying the book shelves → Dismantling → Lighting → Laying the groundwork



Building a base → Taking shape → More rows, bays, & shelves

2012-

## 1/F & 2/F, Law Building, Centennial Campus

With continuous expansion, both the Faculty and the Library have once again outgrown their accommodation. The University's Centennial Campus initiative presents a timely, or long-awaited, opportunity for both the Faculty and the Library to move on, this time to a separate 10 storey Law Building, where facilities will include Library facilities, Faculty offices, conference rooms, teaching facilities and a 400-seat Moot Court.



Architects' impressions of new Law Building and Law Library



### NEW LAW LIBRARY AT A GLANCE

Area:	1,941 m <sup>2</sup>
Free standing shelving:	518 bays
Compact shelving:	714 bays
Collaborative workstations:	24
Group instruction lab:	27
Research/Postgraduate double-or triple- sharing study carrels:	24
RPG study carrels in open area:	14
Group study rooms:	1 x 10-person room 5 x 5-person room
Reading tables:	71
Microform room:	1





# COLLECTIONS

## The early years

The rapid building-up period was characterized by a mix of active purchase, scouting around for large second-hand back sets, and the initial transfer of law books from the Main Library and the University's Department of Extra-Mural Studies. The Library also benefited from donations from various sources.

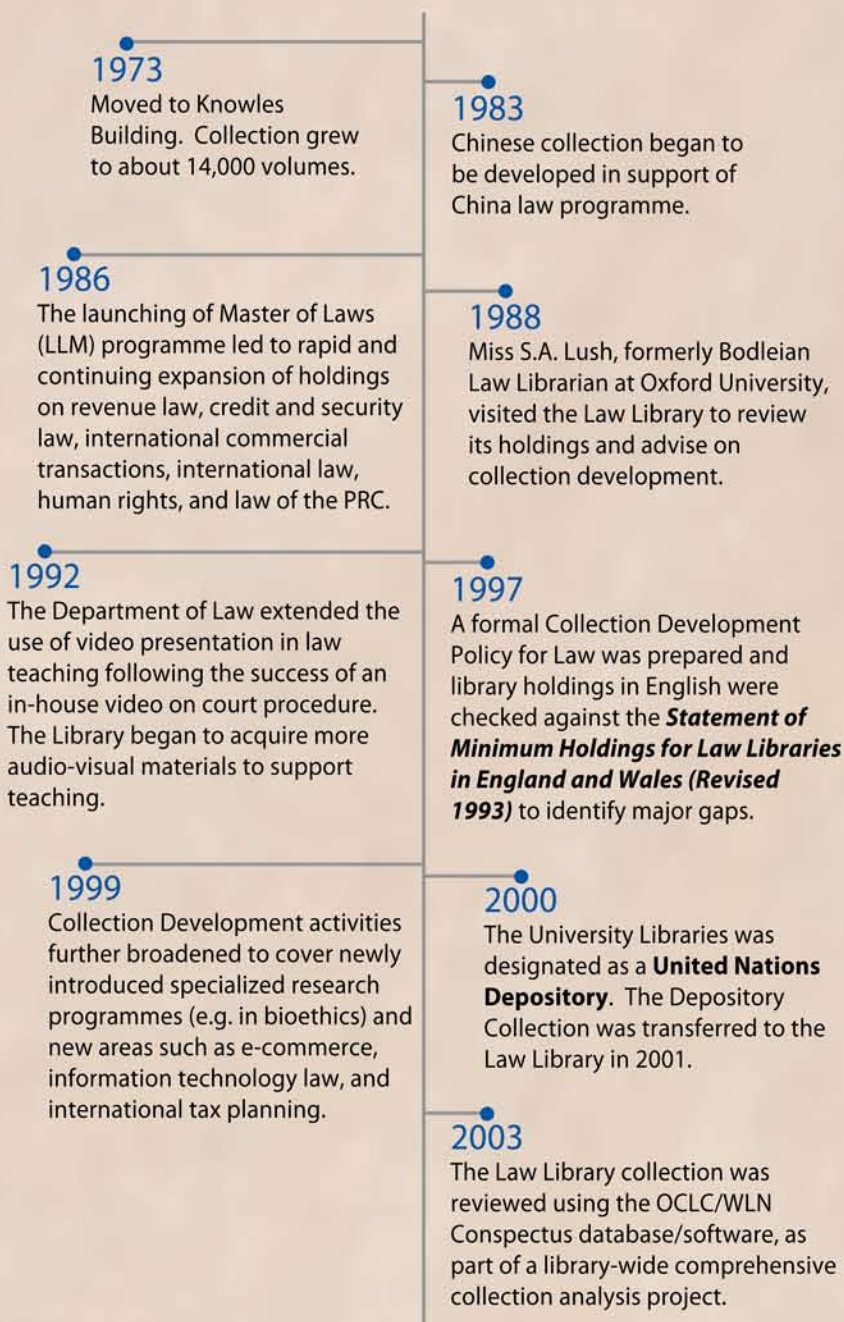
### Major benefactors: past and present

<i>Baker &amp; McKenzie, Hong Kong</i>	<i>Charles Ching, Q.C.</i>
<i>Canadian Government</i>	<i>Fong Shu Chuen</i>
<i>Commonwealth Secretariat</i>	<i>Dr. B. C. Shaw</i>
<i>Law Society of Hong Kong</i>	<i>Sir Run Run Shaw</i>
<i>M. K. Lam &amp; Co.</i>	
<i>Oak Steamship Co. Ltd.</i>	<i>Dr. Lui Che Woo,</i>
<i>Robert H. Wang &amp; Co.</i>	<i>after whom the Law Library was named since</i>
<i>Russ &amp; Co.</i>	<i>1997 and whose generous pledge in 2011</i>
<i>Vivien Chan &amp; Co.</i>	<i>once again ensures the library's continuous</i>
<i>Woo Kwan Lee &amp; Lo</i>	<i>growth in the Centennial Campus.</i>

Total Volumes:	130,096
Serials (journals, services issues, Law reports, legislations):	over 2,300 (titles)
Current subscriptions:	448 (titles)
Microforms:	183,000 (reels/sheets)
Volumes added*	4,798
*vary annually	
Law related E-resources*	
Databases:	over 290
E-books:	over 48,000
E-journals:	over 3,400
#see HKU Libraries Annual Report for overall figures <a href="http://lib.hku.hk/annualreport/201011.pdf">http://lib.hku.hk/annualreport/201011.pdf</a>	

## Collection timeline

September 1969 – The Library opened with about 1,500 volumes of books, law reports, and other periodicals. The collection was essentially in English, and covered core subjects.



## Building the Chinese law collection

Legal education in Hong Kong had been based essentially on the common law system of England and Wales. Chinese law came onto the scene as a subject of study only in the mid-1980s, when the Faculty of Law introduced a Diploma course on Chinese law and efforts began to be channeled to building up a Chinese law collection. Hong Kong's approaching change of sovereignty scheduled for 1997, signed and sealed under the 1984 Joint Declaration, and the consequent need to gain a fuller understanding of both Chinese law and the 'One-country-two-systems' principle also provided impetus for development.

Legal publishing in China was still underdeveloped at that time, and the Library initially faced many difficulties in building up a collection. There were few established avenues for acquiring Chinese law books or even finding out what had been published. Early efforts in building the collection included an exchange programme initiated with the Department of Law, Nankai University, Tianjin. Rapid growth was made possible by courtesy of funding support from the Eric Au Memorial Fund. Chinese law materials already held in the Chinese collection in the Fung Ping Shan Library were also transferred to enrich the Law Library's collection and to support the expanding teaching programme.

As China's legal system and business infrastructure rapidly developed in the late 1990s to cope with WTO entry, so too were the study and research activities on Chinese law intensifying.

The decade from 1997 to 2007 was a period of rapid expansion for the collection. A special task force was set up to monitor and help implement collection growth. Along the way, the Library has also benefited greatly from the advice and enthusiasm of Chinese law teachers including Professor Albert Chen, Professor Zhan Xianchu, Mr Moses Chan, Dr Yu Guanghua, Dr Peter Feng and Dr Liu Nanping.

### Chinese law collections at a glance

(figures up to March, 2012)

Books:	36,049 volumes
Journals:	483 titles/4,658 volumes
Primary materials & reference books:	4,457 volumes
Electronic databases:	11

*The collection is focused mainly on PRC law but it also includes Chinese language materials on the laws of Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau.*



## From print to digital

Over the years the Law Library has been transformed from a traditional specialist book collection to an information centre offering access to a wide range of printed materials and also the best in electronic research. Landmark developments include:

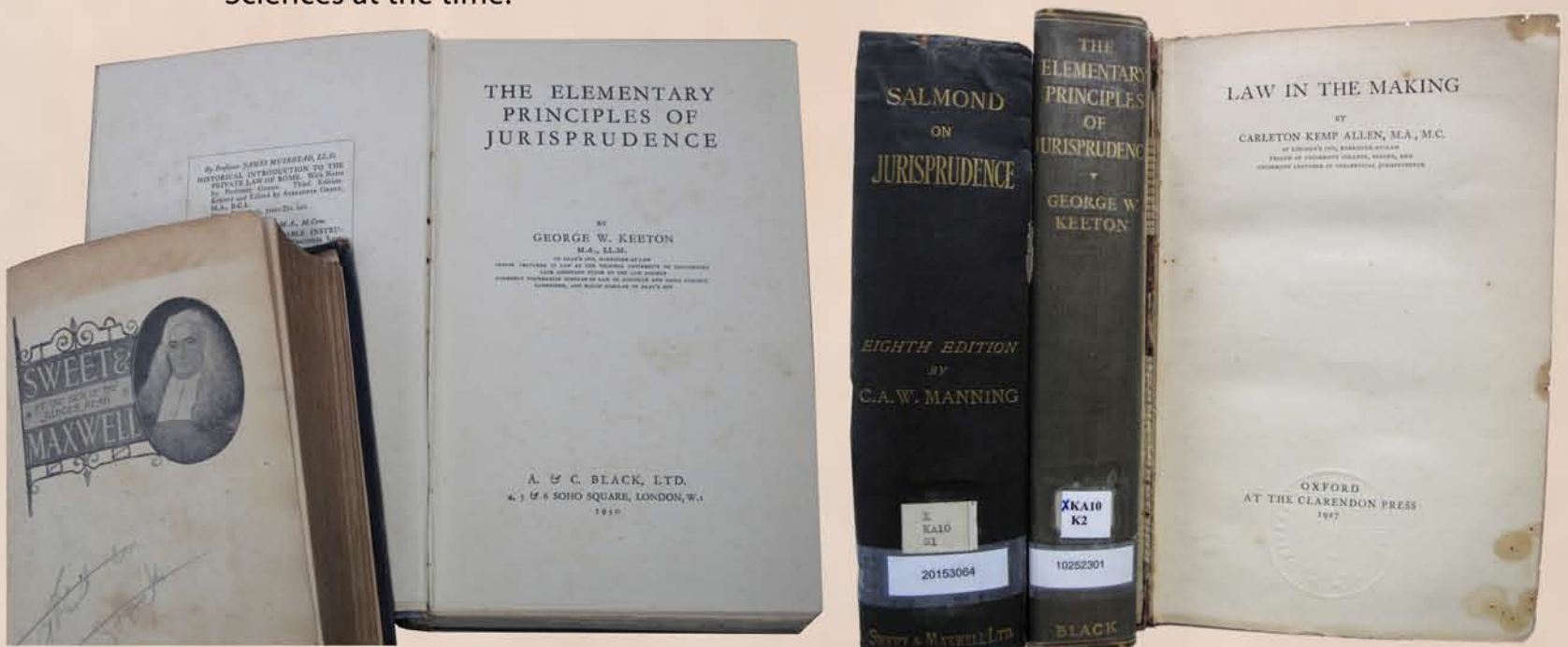




# DID YOU KNOW?

## First law books in the collection

Although the University instituted the first full time local law degree course only in 1969, the Libraries probably contained some law books as early as 1926, as jurisprudence and commercial law were offered as elective subjects in the Departments of Commerce and Social Sciences at the time.



## “Reclaim” ... Book recall as early as 1969

An early model of the recall system was introduced in the Law Library as early as 1969. The Library functioned initially as a normal reference and lending library, but because of the frequent need to use reference and not for loan works for preparing teaching material, teaching staff were permitted to borrow these and keep them in their rooms (but not elsewhere), both for convenience and as an extension to the library where study space was very limited.

Staff could retain such materials for a maximum of one month but individual loans could be reclaimed subject to demand. The Law Librarian was supplied with a pass key to the academic offices so that wanted books could be reclaimed speedily even when those who had borrowed them were absent. Unthinkable to privacy proponents in the twenty-first century? Yes, but certainly an innovative way to facilitate efficient circulation of library stock.

## Noting up ... filing, cutting, pasting, annotating ...

Prior to the age of electronic publications, the maintenance of looseleaf publications was one of the major duties of library staff. Upkeep of the *Laws of Hong Kong* was also a continuing responsibility. Legislation was updated regularly by means of noter-up sheets issued by the Government Printer. Staff cut out and pasted the updates into the volumes according to accompanying instructions, which might also include handwritten amendments to be made to the main text. Each staff member was assigned one set to update, with a standard style for making deletions, insertions, etc. to ensure consistency in noting up the sets. The job was dull but mentally demanding, and had to be done both accurately and neatly. It was also extremely time-consuming.



A volume from the 1964 edition of the *Laws of Hong Kong* under updating.