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Library
Authority



70
YEARS

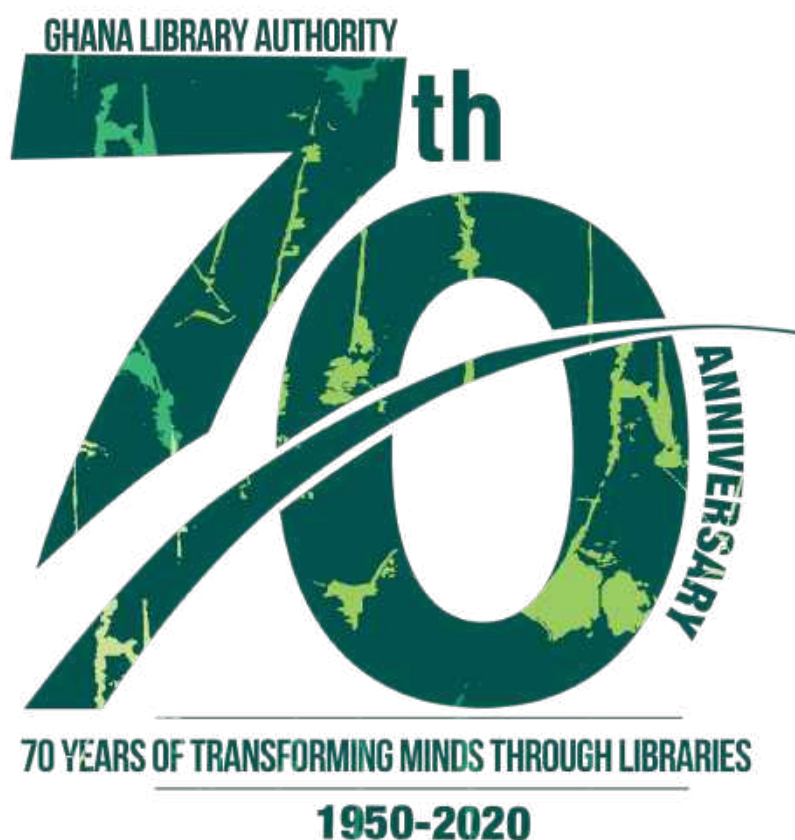
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GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY



— BROCHURE —

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GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY



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FOREWORD

When the Ghana Library Board (now Ghana Library Authority) was established in 1950 to manage and have oversight responsibility of public libraries in the country, it was all joy as there was a general desire and hunger for knowledge to be acquired from the books in the library. Thus, having the opportunity to read and being able to read was a great achievement as most people were not avid readers. The Ghana Library Board in 1967 found out that one of the reasons why many Ghanaians had not cultivated the reading habit was due to the absence of good libraries in the schools. Even where there were school libraries, they were usually, with a few exceptions, very poorly organised.

Gradually, the library structure was put in place. Board members of the library were appointed, staff were recruited and trained, conditions of service were made available, and various donations of books and money were received from partners and well-wishers, to be used to help in building up the collection of the library services.

There have been monumental changes in the library space for the past 70 years in order to meet the needs of patrons as well as keeping pace with modernization. The library continues to do more to support and promote literacy activities in the country.

The Purpose of this 70th Anniversary brochure is to highlight the journey of the Authority with an emphasis on its achievements, not forgetting its various phases of transition. The future holds great prospects, as indicated in the GhLA projections.

The management set up a committee to plan and facilitate the 70th Anniversary celebration. The year of celebration was started in January this year, with a thanksgiving service which was attended by a fair representation of both management and staff of the Authority. The opportunity was used to recount the remarkable impact that the Authority had had on the country over the past years.

The celebration will take off after an official launch of the 70th Anniversary.

On behalf of management we wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to anyone who has contributed to the successful production of this brochure.

To our stakeholders, we remain hopeful that you find this brochure interesting and get to understand clearly our transformational drive.

CONTENTS

A. <i>Preface</i>	<i>xi</i>
1. The History of Ghana Library Authority.....	1
2. Library Services Before 1950.....	2
3. Early Activities of the Ghana Library Authority 1950 - 1955.....	9
4. The Authority's Second Phase, 1956 - 1965.....	21
5. The Authority's Third Phase, 1966 - 1975.....	33
6. Key Milestones 1976 - 2016.....	37
7. Significant achievements 2017 - 2020.....	40
B. Regional Profiles.....	54
C. Newly Created Departments.....	57
D. School and College Libraries Department.....	58
E. George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs.....	59
F. Projections for Future Development.....	60
G. Appendix.....	61
H. Congratulatory Messages from Development Partners.....	63
I. Nationwide Libraries and their Location.....	68

PREFACE

As the second oldest government institution, the Ghana Library Authority (GhLA) has gone through several transformational phases from 1950 to 2020. The Authority at 70 this year, has had its glorious days in the 1950s though subsequent years were not that pleasant, development wise. In a space of three years from 2017 – 2020, the Library Authority has become the beckon of hope to those that did not appreciate the relevance of public libraries in this age.

There was a call to action in 2017 to carry forth the beam and ultimately transform public libraries in the country and make it better than the last 50 years. As part of its transformational drive, the Authority laid down specific objectives in the quest of connecting patrons to its library services.

There has been a conscious effort to promote literacy and life-long learning, and it is essential in this technological era that we employ technology in our service delivery to patrons. While materials are made readily available, the library spaces have now been transformed due to the various renovations done in several public libraries. More structures are being put in place to achieve these objectives.

Our recent transformation drive could not have been possible without the ardent support of the Minister of Education, the Governing Board, Staff, and our corporate partners. It is our hope that Ghanaians continuously promote and patronise public library in Ghana, not forgetting that the library has been set up for every Ghanaian.

On behalf of the Ghana Library Authority I congratulate all librarians in the country who are doing everything possible to sustain the library development in the country. We say ayekoo, and as we celebrate our platinum jubilee, may this be a symbol of rebirth to do more for the libraries in the country and the people of Ghana. Let's have a great 70 years celebration.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the Ghana Library Authority is to connect every Ghanaian to knowledge resources.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission is to be a leading knowledge services hub in the sub region by connecting all citizenry to knowledge resources to radically improve literacy and development outcomes which transform lives and communities.

MANDATE

The mandate of the Authority as stated in the Ghana Library Board Act, 1970 (Act 327) is to:

- Establish, equip, manage and maintain public libraries in Ghana.

THE HISTORY OF GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY



The Ghana Library Authority (formerly Ghana Library Board) was established out of a generous contribution of £1,000 donated by the late RT. Rev. John Orfeur Aglionby, the then Anglican Bishop of Accra. In 1946, the Aglionby Library Management Committee worked with the British Council Advisory Committee towards library development in the then Gold Coast. The work of the Committee resulted in the passing of the Gold Coast Library Board Ordinance, Cap 118, in December 1949, which became operational on January 1, 1950.

The British Council handed over its Librarian, Miss E. J. A. Evans, and a stock of 27,000 books to start the public library service. The Ordinance was later re-enacted as the Ghana Library Board Act 1970, Act 327. The Act charged the then Ghana Library Board (GLB) with the responsibility of establishing, equipping and managing public libraries throughout the country, and since its inception in 1950, the Ghana Library Authority (GhLA), formerly GLB, has been providing a nationwide public library service.

Currently, there is a network of libraries comprising ten (10) Regional Libraries and seventy-five (75) Branch Libraries in the country. Also, the George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs,

Mobile Library Services and the School and College Libraries Department form an integral part of the Public Library System under the auspices of the GhLA. It was projected that by the year 2000, libraries would have been established in all district capitals, as well as some of the towns in the districts. However, Ghana's economic challenges over the years have made it difficult for the GhLA to accomplish this notable objective.

OUR SERVICES

- Library materials lending
- Research support services
- Mobile library services
- Book box services
- Cataloguing and processing of books
- Bindery services
- Acquisition and distribution of books
- Digital library services
- Children's library services
- Extension services
- Technology support services
- Consultancy services
- Issuance of International Standard Book Number (ISBN), International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and International Standard Music Number (ISMN)
- Facility rental for meetings, workshops and conferences

LIBRARY SERVICES BEFORE 1950

Before 1950, reading either for profit or pleasure was a satisfaction enjoyed by a small percentage of the people in the Gold Coast. At that time reading material mainly consisted of text books, religious or devotional literature and newspapers.

The records however have it that in the year 1800 the Reverend Jacob Ulrich Hansen Grundtvig, Chaplain at the Danish Castle at Christianborg, Osu, and teacher of the Castle School for mulatto children established a small lending library for his pupils but this service ceased as Mr. Grundtvig died shortly afterwards.

It is a truism that formal education and literacy go together with the study and reading of books. As more schools were later established mainly by missionary effort and to a lesser extent by the government, reading ability and reading material accordingly increased.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the modern Accra Central Library on May 17, 1956, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the then Prime Minister of the Gold Coast said – “When I compare the days of my youth with those of the youth today, I wonder to myself how it is possible that so many changes have taken place in the short space of twenty five years. Education was not common in the remote villages.....When I was lucky enough to go to Achimota College I took with me my library. This consisted of three books: The Bible, Shakespeare’s Works and Alcock’s Grammar.”

As a matter of fact, private or personal libraries in those years meant a few former school text books and exercise books possessed by school leavers who added a few odd books as they grew as workers earning a living.

Such books were highly treasured and neatly arranged on a small book-shelf or on top of one’s



Bishop Aglionby visits the Aglionby Library, 1951

meat-safe or cupboard in one’s hall, this indirectly advertising one’s literacy and scholarship. However a few schools, colleges, public institutions and private citizens – mainly doctors, lawyers and clergymen kept specialized libraries or text books. Earlier in 1928 some attempts were made by few public spirited citizens, notably among them, the Anglican bishop of the Accra diocese to establish a form of public library. But nothing much came out of this. The Bishop, the Rt. Rev. John Orfeur Aglionby, D.D.MC. 1924 – 51 however succeeded in building a small library at the Bishop’s House, Accra, with books donated by church people in England for reading and borrowing by members of the public who felt the need for reading. It must be observed that the Bishop’s House library was patronized daily by numerous students for study and reference; the main reference books being Chambers Encyclopedia and the Cambridge Modern History. A selection of periodicals covering various subjects was provided as well as copies of local newspapers. In addition, air mail editions of the London Daily Telegraph and the Times of London were bought for the Library.

Until then, the readership picture which emerged was of a country of 92,000 square miles with about 5,000,000 people of whom only a few thousands were able to enjoy the benefits of varying reading skills and ability whilst the great majority of the citizens lived in a thick darkness of illiteracy.

John Aglionby

In July 1933, when the Executive Council (cabinet of the Colonial Government, as opposed to the Legislative Council, both councils dominated by white officials and traders) first raised the question of public libraries in Ghana, it discussed two points seriously: whether provision should be made for a library building or provision be made for the annual maintenance of buildings, salary of clerk, cost of periodicals and of replacements, etc.

Ultimately, the Council decided that “if an unencumbered government building was available it would be justified in lending it for a library, provided Government took no financial responsibility for its maintenance or annual charges.”

Unfortunately, no suitable building was found and nothing came out of the Executive Council debate. Two years later, during the literacy and political awakening of the period engendered by the two local newspapers, *The Times of West Africa* and *The African Morning Post* edited by Dr. J. B. Danquah and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, respectively, the Lord Bishop of Accra was encouraged to use the platform to the popular Press to espouse the establishment of a Public Library in a powerful letter he wrote to *The African Morning Post* in December 1935.

For their literacy excellence and political nationalism, both the Times and the Post captured while they lasted, the patronage of the majority of readers in this country as well as other readers far and near.

Bishop John Aglionby revealed in his letter to the Post that he had already opened an account at the Accra Barclays Bank with the sum of £600, (no small amount in those halcyonic days) as first contribution to start the building of an edifice for a public library in Accra and added that he would add another £400 if the public contributed generously towards it and government too provided a site for the project.

The Bishop envisaged a main library, a club room

and a silent room for students. If the praise for the creation of Achimota School, Korle Bu Hospital and the Takoradi Harbour is given to Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg, the bouquet for the beginnings of a public library in the Gold Coast must be placed round the neck of the Rt. Rev. John Orfeur Aglionby. The Government accepted its part of the challenge. In a letter to the Bishop in 1935, the Governor Sir Arnold Hodson informed the Bishop that Government was going to build a fitting edifice in commemoration of His Majesty King George V's silver jubilee and in response to the Bishop's appeal, Government would include in the composite King George V Memorial Hall, a public library. The Bishop gladly associated himself with the suggestion and in January 1938 his Barclays bank account of £1,000 was handed over to the Government with the suggestion that: “it be used in any way that His Excellency may consider will best further the scheme for a good library.”

Maintaining his keen interest in the library project, Sir Arnold Hodson appointed a Committee in April, 1938 to confer with the Bishop regarding the management, general organisation and equipment of the public library in the memorial hall.

Later in the year, the Committee published its recommendations:-

- That the Library should be free for all, but a deposit should be left for any books taken away.
 - A committee for management be appointed by His Excellency the Governor and given sole and complete control of the Library.
 - There should be a consultative committee.
 - The library should cater for students and general readers.
 - An African should be sent for library training – the cost being borne by Government.
 - The Carnegie Corporation be approached for a grant to provide books.
 - The Town Council should give an annual grant.
- In December 1938 another Committee was appointed by the Governor to submit recommendations for the inauguration of a public library. The Committee recommended that a reference and lending library be established for Accra residents only; that there should be a sum left for any books taken away.

Unfortunately there was no qualified librarian, indigenous or expatriate in the country to start

the library. But before any further progress could be made to implement the various suggestions for the establishment of a modern library in Accra, a severe earthquake destroyed many buildings in Accra in June 1939. The King George V. Memorial Hall was taken over by the Government as the old Government secretariat was badly damaged. For both this reason and the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939, plans and work on the library were suspended indefinitely and its funds, namely the Bishop's donation of £1,000 and a £227.7 grant from the 1937 King George VI Coronation Fund Trustees were invested for future appropriation.

In 1939 the Carnegie Corporation of New York appointed Mr. Hans Vischer (Joint Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Education in Colonies) and Miss Margaret Wrong (Secretary of the International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa) to report on the development and expansion of Library facilities in West Africa. Consequently, the Carnegie Corporation of New York made a grant of £6,250 to be spread over a period of three years to be used in developing a national circulating library and the purchase of a library van; to build an Accra Town Library with an off-shoot to serve the patients, nurses and dispensers of the Korle Bu Hospital. Part of the sum was to be given to the Education Department to strengthen libraries in teacher training colleges and secondary schools. It was also suggested that a centre for the training of librarians from the four British West African colonies be established in Achimota under a trained European librarian.

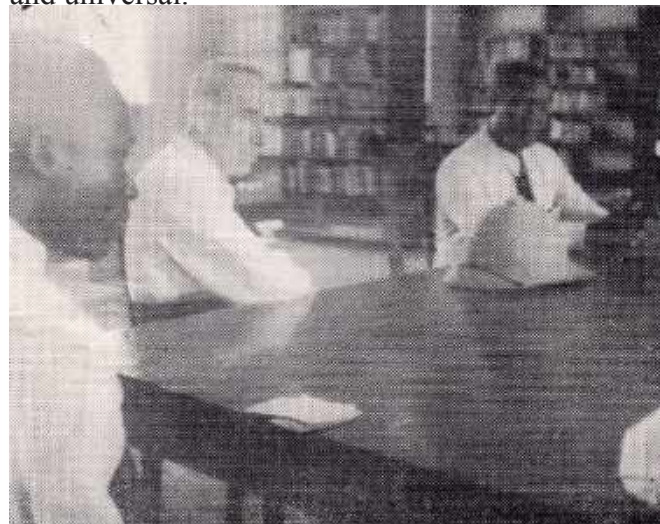
In September 1942 the Carnegie Corporation decided that owing to war conditions, no further grants would be given for work on the library. It was at this point that the British Council opened its first offices in the British West African colonies and in May 1943, the Council took over the plan of the Carnegie Corporation which included other projects in addition to library development. The British Council promptly appointed Miss Ethel Fegan, the first British woman to gain the F.L.A. in 1914 to conduct a research into the possible development of libraries in West Africa by the Carnegie Corporation.

It must be observed that the British Government, for the duration of the War, made the Gold Coast the

central co-ordinating point for the total war effort and other West African development projects. The British Resident Minister, Lord Swinton established his headquarters, O.F.W.A.C – Office of the West African Council in Accra. Also the General Officer Commanding British West African Forces had his headquarters in Accra. The 37 General Hospital for all West African troops was built in Accra and the Military Academy for training West and East African soldiers for commission was established in Teshie, a suburb of Accra.

Miss Ethel Fegan's plans for library services in the Gold Coast which were relevant and opportune for the establishment of a British Council lending library in Accra in 1944 coincided with a serious and keen awakening on the need for a public library in the country.

The war had begun to change many things. The causes of the war, its course and conclusion brought in their train a chain of events which began to change the life and attitude of both the rulers and the subject in the European colonial empires. The war became a catalyst which caused a loosening of the chains of colonialism and imperialism. It also evoked a lot of hard thinking by combatants on the war-front as well as by civilians at home especially on the aftermath of the war. It was supposed to be a war fought to make democracy and freedom safe and universal.



Bishop Aglionby at a Library Committee Meeting

Flowing from these hopes and ideals the war-time British coalition government established the Colonial Development and Welfare fund, which worked out to be a financial grant of one pound



Lady Arden-Clarke wife of the Governor Sir Charles Arden-Clarke chats with Miss Ofori Atta of the Children's Library.

sterling per head to each colonial subject in the British Colonial Empire for various development and welfare projects.

By 1950 the effects of such war-time and post war development projects were beginning to be seen: there was a general stirring of political consciousness throughout the country; there was a gradual shifting of power from colonial to home rule; scholarships were awarded to deserving scholars to train abroad to take over from the expatriate officers; not least was the vital role played by elementary school leavers in the nationalist agitation for self-government and general progress in the country.

Emerging from the need to create a new world and a new image of the British way and purpose was the setting up of the British Council in West Africa. The activities of the British Council as an organisation in the colonies must be seen as part of the change in Britain's attitude to its Colonial territories. It was therefore acting as an arm of British Colonial administration in the cultural sphere. Two decades before the war, under the wise leadership of the Governor of the Gold Coast, Brigadier-General Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg. K.C.M.G.D.S.O.RE from 1919 to 1927, the country had achieved great strides in the field of education, among others.

One of his successors in office, Sir Arnold Hodson, K.C.M.G., 1935 – 1941 known as the 'Sunshine Governor' improved the cultural life of the people with the introduction of wired radio transmission service and the building of the King George Memorial Hall of the Accra Town hall which became a pulsating cultural centre for musical and

dramatic performances. The Governor himself wrote, directed and produced some of these plays like Zachariah Fee and a few others.

Sir Arnold Hodson was followed by Sir Alan Burns K.C.M.G. 1941 – 1946 whose tenure of office coincided with the ferment of war-time and post war reforms in the colonies. He was a prolific author and an experienced colonial administrator who co-operated with the handful of Gold Coast African Intelligentsia led by Dr. J.B. Danquah and the big chiefs to exploit positively the relatively high level of local political sophistication and the long history of nationalist agitation. The result was that by 1946 the Gold Coast had an unofficial majority in the Legislative Council. The country was described by outside observers as having a number of advantages over its less fortunate neighbours. These they asserted were the advantages of wealth, educational attainment, administrative skill, an air of confidence and stability which made it the obvious pioneer of political advance and the touchstone of political competence in tropical Africa.

The Aglionby Library Management committee continued to work hand in hand with the British Council's library Advisory Committee whose terms of reference were to advise library organisers on library development in the Gold Coast.

The finances of the Aglionby Library Management in 1946 consisted of a capital of £1,220 out of which £1,000 and £30 were expended on books and insecticides respectively, leaving a capital balance of £190.

To collect revenue, the Committee decided that members should pay 2 shilling each, every six months, with an initial deposit of 5/- recoverable on cessation of membership. It was estimated by the Committee that in the first year 1,000 members would enroll increasing to 1,500 in the fifth year. By 1950 membership was 3,000. Government and the Accra Town Council eventually agreed to contribute £300 each per annum for 5 years.

Plans were also made by the Advisory Committee for the extension of library services to other municipalities outside Accra, and that the British Council circulating library offer its facilities to small libraries at the Native Authority level in the regions and districts outside the municipalities. Thus the foundations of a Central, Regional, Branch and



The Book Box Service and the Mobile Van Library are always welcome in the rural areas like lost friends.

school libraries were somehow laid. The Children's Section which was opened in May 1948 at the Accra Library proved immensely popular. In November 1947, Government promised financial and moral assistance to enable a nationwide library system to be put into operation. A sum of grant for Library Services was included by the Government Standing Finance Committee in the 1949-50. Estimates to take effect on 1st April, 1949.

In 1949 the Accra British Council which was then operating in prefabricated wooden sheds behind the then European Club, now occupied by the Ghana Arts Council, near the Accra beach, gave over its library and its librarian to the Central Government and the Accra Town Council. This proved a bold experiment in the joint management of a library service between the municipal authority and the Central Government. But before the British Council handed over its library book stock and librarian to the Aglionby Library Management Committee it gained considerable useful experience in planning and researching and travelling up and down the country to see how best to go about mounting a good library system for the Gold Coast.

Much travelling was done on miles of red dusty roads, through miles of what in the eyes of the newly arrived European officers were impenetrable forests, scattered villages with red swish huts and thatched roofs – not perhaps a fine place to start a book reading service for an illiterate people. But from their reports, they were definitely cheered in the heat and dust of their work by what they described as “being welcomed by waving, smiling people in gaily coloured cloth, sheep and chicken in every village.”

Their difficulties like those of many pioneers were varied. They had to be away from their homes in Accra for two or three weeks in a tropical country then devoid of hotels and with no petrol stations. Even where petrol was available war-time permits for petrol had to be obtained and then arrangements for drums of petrol had to be made available at various stopping places so that one was not stranded miles away from anywhere.

Accommodation at Government rest houses had

to be booked ahead and in those days of little refrigeration facilities, food had to be bought at each resting place. District commissioners if they were co-operative, had to make advance publicity that a mobile library and cinema unit would be in their districts.

The arrival of the library van and the cinema unit in many villages was always a great and memorable day for the village and hamlet folks. It was a shaft of light, education and enlightenment through which they saw the outside world, new ideas, other modes of life and reflection of their own way of life.

Libraries and books were comparatively unexciting except to the village school teachers, pastors and local authority officials. The British Council van travelled with a wide selection of books, not knowing what everyone wanted. The books were packed on shelves fitted outside the library van which carried also tinned food, campbeds and other travelling kit.

A hundred years earlier, missionary pioneers who worked in the Gold Coast churches and schools laboured in similar and even harsher conditions so that Ghanaians might enjoy the benefits of other cultures in addition to their own.

According to the New York Tribune (January 15, 1975) Ghana had 6,684 primary schools, 3,607 middle schools, 1149 secondary schools within the public educational system, 15 technical schools, 3 polytechnics, 59 teacher training colleges, 12 offering post-secondary courses and 3 universities. The British Council Library Service experiment became successful and encouraged the government to plan for a country-wide library service. As a result, the Aglionby Library Management Committee was dissolved and in December 1949 the government passed an ordinance which established the Gold Coast Library Board. It comprised several



On all types of roads and in all weathers the mobile library trudged its weary way to serve rural readers

members of the old Management Committee and was empowered to establish, equip, manage and maintain libraries in the country and to take all steps as might be necessary to carry out its duty.

The new Board went into operation on 1st January, 1950 and took over the bookstock of a little over 27,000 volumes from the Aglionby Library then housed in a wing of the King George V. Memorial Hall, popularly known as the Accra Town Hall, and now Parliament House.

Earlier in 1944, the British Government appointed the Colonel Walter Elliott Commission to enquire into the possibility establishing universities in British West Africa.

In 1947 the Oxford Extra Mural Delegacy established the Peoples Educational Association to help adults continue learning after completing formal school education.

The University of Ghana established in October 1948 has today one of the best libraries and the best bookshop in the country.

The Peoples Educational Association attached to the

University of Ghana since the former's inception in 1947 has provided facilities for extramural studies for many literate adults.

When the Library Board was officially established in 1950, and took over the books of the Aglionby library and the British Council Book Box Service for rural readers without which two donations the operations of the first stage of the Gold Coast Library Board could have been much delayed, it garnered in addition the fruits of many other pre-war, war-time and post-war educational and social development projects.

There was at the time a general thirst for information on current affairs, political education and political literature. Indeed the "penny press," i.e. the Accra Evening News started by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in 1948 on a broad-sheet written in simple English on relevant and topical political economic and social issues increased working class readership by leaps and bounds. The Ghana Library Board could not have been established at a more propitious time in our nation's history.

EARLY ACTIVITIES OF THE GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY 1950 - 1955

The year 1950 was a significant landmark in the history of public library service in the country. The Gold Coast Library Board Ordinance cap. 118 which was passed in the Legislative Council in December 1949 came into operation on 1st January 1950. This legislation made the Gold Coast Library Board, the second public corporation in the country after the cocoa marketing board, 1947. Membership of the first Ghana Library Board clearly reflected the prevailing spirit of corporation for change and progress among the government and the people, Europeans and Africans alike.

Three members were appointed by the Governor – in – council; four members were appointed by the 4 municipal Town Councils, three members represented the Traditional Council; a member represented the unofficial members of the Legislative Council; four members were elected by the board of Education, two of whom became later, President of the Republic of Ghana and wife of a Chief Justice respectively. Other members represented the British Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the South Togoland Council under United Kingdom Trusteeship.

As a statutory body, the Board's first efforts were devoted to the appointment of staff and the conditions of service with respect to staff and salary scales. A working Committee was appointed to make recommendations on these matters and later on a standing Committee was appointed to deal with ordinary matters, referring other matters to the full Board when necessary.

Since the successful running of a public library depended on efficient staff the Chief Librarian of the board, later designated the Director of Library Services, Miss Evelyn J. Evans, F.L.A who had worked earlier for many years as a Librarian in

Britain started to interview and recruit suitable candidate qualifying educational standard was the Cambridge School Certificate.

After appointment to the staff of the Board all library assistants were prepared through practical training on the job and lectures to take the examinations of the British Library Association.

To qualify to take the entrance examination of the British Library Association professional course candidates were required to have worked at least for one year with the Gold Coast Library Board or in a library approved by the Council of the Library Association of Great Britain.

The Accra Aglionby Library having been so approved, the few library assistants were given lectures by the expatriate senior members of staff covering the syllabus of the examination.

These courses and lectures were sandwiched in the week's normal professional activities.

Another grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York enabled the Board to start a scholarship scheme for its staff to train both locally and abroad. The earlier overseas courses were tenable at the library school at Loughborough, England in addition to practical training in libraries in various part of the United Kingdom. In 1950 one of the Board's first junior members of staff Mr. G. M. Pitcher a former prefect at Adisadel College, Cape Coast who was awarded a scholarship by the Board to the Loughborough Library school quickly obtained his first professional qualification of A.L.A., (Association of the Library Association of Great Britain). Mr. Pitcher is now the Chief Librarian at the University of Science and Technology at Kumasi.

In the same year, 1950, three Library Assistants on the Board successfully passed various library associations examinations for which they were presented.

Miss G. Ofori-Atta-Entrance

Mr A.F.Obeng-Registration, Group,
Sections 1& 3

Mr. Asante-Registration, Group B

Messrs. A. G. T. Ofori who had passed the Entrance Examination in 1949 and A. F. Obeng were awarded scholarships in 1951 to attend the Loughborough school for Librarianship. The Board suffered a serious disappointment in respect of Mr. Obeng when he failed to satisfy the medical officers in respect of the fitness requirements for proceeding to the United Kingdom.

Anyone who knew the amount of prestige and pride enjoyed by students who were awarded such scholarships in those days would sympathise very much with Mr. Obeng. But the Board recorded its greater pleasure at Mr. Obeng's successful passing of the examination taken locally and paid tribute to the way in which he continued to perform his duties both at headquarters and Kumasi where he took responsibility at the initial stage, of opening the temporary library.

In the following year 1951-52 the solid professional training given by the Board's senior members to the staff began to bear more fruit. Mr. Pitcher passed his Final part 1; Mr. A. F. Obeng passed Registration, Group A; Mr. David E. M. Oddoye and Mr. J. A. Boateng passed the entrance examination. Promotions followed. Mr. Pitcher, A. L. A. and chief Library Assistant was promoted to the senior staff in April 1951; Mr. David Oddoye having passed the Entrance Examination was also promoted Library Assistant in June 1952. More assistants-in-training were appointed. They were Mr. M. K. Ata-Caeser, Miss D. Oddoye and Mr G. Odamten-Sowah.

As could be expected there were some resignations and deaths. In 1951-52 Miss A.Asante, Miss A. Bulley and Mr. J. A. Boateng resigned. Mr. Boateng was appointed State Secretary of the Adansi Traditional Area.

The Board regretted the untimely death in January 1953 of Mr. S. G. K. Hodasi at his home in Peki. He had been sent to the school of Librarianship in Loughborough as a government scholar where he

successfully obtained his A.L.A. qualification. On his return home he was to have taken up a post with the library board but he was admitted to hospital before he could do this and was never actually appointed to the Board.

He had however worked at the Aglionby Library on secondment from the Ministry of Education.

Once more the Board reported the death in 1953 of Mr. Austen F. Obeng who was described as one of the most promising of the Library staff. He was working at the Aglionby Library when the Board took over the existing Library Service in January 1950 and was immediately offered permanent appointment. As a result of his efficiency and professional integrity the Board offered him a scholarship to attend a Library school in England in 1951. Unfortunately owing to ill health he was unable to accept it.

He continued to study by correspondence course and became the first West African and perhaps the first African to become a Chartered Librarian without visiting England. The Board reported in its 1953-54 report that he was very sadly missed both in his professional capacity and as a friend. His death was a great personal loss to his parents the Rev. and Mrs. S. E. Obeng of the Presbyterian Church, Manfe-Akwapim .

More assistants in training were appointed; F.Dadzie, D.S.K.Kanda, B.J.O.Reynolds, E. K. Koranteng, D. Cornelius, E. K. Awua, J. A. D. Cato, S. I. A. Kotei, C. B. K. Zwennes and Miss A. Agyeman. More in-service training was given and many passed their examinations. The extension of the Library service needed the engagement of more trained staff. Mr. M. O. Dobson deputy Chief Librarian resigned in March, 1953 and returned to England. Mr. K. Middlemast was promoted Deputy in his place. In February the same year Mr. J. T. Strickland joined the staff having previously held appointments as Chief Cataloguer in Bradford and Lambeth England. With an increasing number of trained staff, the Board began to consolidate its operation in Accra and to extend its activities to the Regions and to draw up plans and draft estimates covering development for the next five years.

ACCRA LIBRARIES

The work and development of a Library service can to an extent be gauged statistically in relation to its book stocks, readers and its issues.



The late A.F. (second from left) heads a Mobile Library Van into the rural areas,

The British Council's donation of 27,000 books without which the Aglionby Library could not have opened in 1946 was much appreciated by the new Board. Later at an informal meeting held in Accra and attended by General Sir Ronald Adam, Chairman of the British Council during a visit to the country the General congratulated the Board on the good organization of the Library service of the Gold Coast. More book donations came to the Board from the British Council and from individuals. On March 31st 1951 the Board had 49,923 books in stock.

To function efficiently the Library staff had to evolve a system of operation. This entailed the application of rules and regulations for the observance by the users of the Library Service. The Aglionby Library housed in a wing of the King George V. Memorial Hall in Accra attracted more visitors and readers than ever before in 1950. Issue of books for home reading increased and the library was patronized daily by numerous students for study purposes. The reference Library was gradually built up with standard works and copies of local and foreign newspapers.

Pleased with the successful experiment in the provision of children's books the Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust donated E3,000 for the building of the children's Library. Three children's library were opened in Accra Central, Kaneshie and Christianborg. Mrs. J. Brown, wife of the District Agent of the Commonwealth Trust Limited England, a quasi-British government trading opening ceremonies of the children's libraries.

The Accra Central Children's Library opened in February, 1951 was sited near the newly built Community Centre donated by the British firm, the United Africa Company whose trading activities in the Gold Coast started in 1657, when reading at night was done with the aid of candle-light and horse drawn coaches were the fastest mode of transport. Happily, the children's libraries proved so useful and popular that within a short time after their inauguration 1,400 juvenile readers had registered. In fact apart from the issuing of some books for children to take home to read, schools which were fortunate to be situated near these libraries sent their children to them for study and individual silent

reading. In 1952, the Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust gave a further donation of E1,000 in appreciation of the efficiency and popularity of the Accra Children's Libraries.

The initial successful response to, and use of the children's Libraries in Accra led to an obvious decision by the Board to start a special book service for Teachers. Consequently, a special Library was started for the teachers when the Board took over a Library of the then Educational Department.

Five hundred books were stocked in this section of the Library and a relevant catalogue was prepared. Such books for teachers were sent all over the country on request and in the first year of this service 185 teachers used the facilities regularly.

Mobile Vans

Nor were readers outside Accra forgotten. Following the precedent set by the British Council the Travelling Library and Book Box Service continued and expanded

Boxes of 50 books apiece were issued on an annual subscription of £2 and were changed at frequent intervals. In the first year of its operation in 1950-51 membership of this service rose to 182 patronised by individuals, schools, colleges, hospitals, mines, social centers and private individuals. Over 9,000 volumes of books were on loan at any moment during this period.

In October 1950 the Board put on the road a specially built new mobile Library. Prior to this the Aglionby Library used the British Council mobile van in conjunction with the Council's cinema unit. Thus opportunity for learning through the printed word and projected audio-visual information came to the people in the rural areas at least once a year.

The occasional mobile van visits to readers outside Accra were soon to be augmented among other provisions in the Board's first five year Development plan. As a first step the Board decided to build temporary Libraries in the regional capitals to prevent delay in the provision of books and also lay the foundation for the building of permanent Regional and Branch Libraries in various parts of the country.

Regional Development

Fortunately in Kumasi, the British Council was running a Library for 400 readers on behalf of the

Library Board with an average bookstock of 3,000 which were changed at frequent intervals.

Further north 237 miles away in Tamale, the Library Board had deposited 2,500 volumes in the Tamale Social and Cultural Institute for readers and others in search of literary and other forms of cultural recreation. Plans for libraries in Cape Coast and Sekondi along the central and western coast board were put in hand.

The Board got a friendly offer from the United Africa Company, in the form of accommodation in the old Swanzy Trading building on Royal Lane; as if to keep the royal connection since the original F. and A. Swanzy Ltd, situated in Cape Coast first obtained a royal Charter from King James II to trade on the West Coast of Africa. The offer consisted of two rooms which was gratefully accepted. One room was used by children and the other by adults. The original stock of books at Cape Coast was 3,500 and included a small collection of reference works, a selection of British papers and magazines, as well as local newspapers.

A local notary Chief Amissah-Sam performed the opening ceremony of the Cape Coast Library with an excellent speech in which he referred not only to the value of the Library to the present and future generation of Cape Coast, but also to the important place that family collections of books had in the past among many older educated Cape Coast families. The speech which was made in Fante was translated into English by Mr. F. L. Bartels, Headmaster of Mfantshipim Secondary School and a member of the Library Board. At the end of the first year, the Cape Coast Library had on its readers' roll 83 local adults, 17 Europeans, and 329 children members. Mr. D.E.M. Oddoye who was put in charge of the first Cape Coast Library made regular visits to the local schools, firms and government offices to publicise and explain the functions and facilities of the Library. His efforts were amply rewarded by the constant use made of the library by the many school within the Cape Coast township.

In Sekondi, the Sekondi Town Council gave accommodation in the Council's building for use as a library. Unfortunately, the condition of the building, obviously a last century rickety colonial wood and mud structure, made it unwise to risk the weight problems which would have resulted in placing book cases and books in the room made



Mrs. Doris Decker serving her customers at the Accra Children's Library.

available; to say nothing of the weight of the staff and users.

Nor were the reading needs of the Togoland Trust overlooked in the Board's considerations. Miss Evans the Chief Librarian visited the Region to find the most convenient centre to establish a library. Eventually Ho and Kpandu were selected for a regional and branch libraries respectively.

By 1953 four children's libraries had been established in the country by the Board; three in Accra and one at Cape Coast with an overall membership of 2,209. But the Board's facilities for children's reading were being overtaken by avid reading demands of the children. For example, The Accra Children's Library was usually so crowded that the Board was embarrassed by this problem in the first phase of its existence.

It accordingly set to work to solve the problem. Whilst recognizing that it could look for assistance from Central and local government sources, the Board also hoped that voluntary financial assistance would be forthcoming from philanthropic bodies and enlightened citizens.

In respect of the Accra Central children's library, the Board was encouraged by the interest shown

in this aspect of its work by the Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust to begin preliminary plans for improving its facilities.

The Board, the British Council and the Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust all realized that early training in reading was one of the means of making children potential adult readers and had no doubt at all that any effort to establish children's libraries would be very amply repaid in the future. The popularity of all the Board's children's libraries in Accra and the Regions including Tamale continued to grow. The Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust once again came to the help of the Board in its efforts to expand the children's section library to twice its size.

The extensions were carried out by the Accra Town Council in such a way that it was not necessary to close the library at all. Soon, a children's correspondence club was started at the Accra Children's Library with letters written to and received from other children's libraries in many parts of the world. Other donations received by the Board during its teething period came from the local United States Information Services which gave over 80 children's books to the Cape Coast

library. The Cape Coast Town Council also passed over the books in its library on the opening of the Cape Coast library.

The Secretary for Native Affairs' office gave a collection of books. Books from the Abbot collection were also gratefully received. Side by side with the physical consolidation and expansion of its programmes and developments the Board's senior staff continued to train the junior staff through 4 times a week lectures and by correspondence courses for junior staff stationed outside Accra. In addition to this the senior library staff performed their normal professional duties.

The Board had to buy a few rich materials for its Africana collection. As part of its acquisition exercise the Board decided to mark 1953 with an extended publicity programme.

The Library Board's service to the Sekondi Prisons proved very popular. A preliminary survey was conducted to find the number of literates and their standards. The results were interesting. There were 200 literates at that time of the survey and their standards ranged from middle form two to University. Special request from the prisoners included "African Glory," Plato's Republic, the Bible and books on tailoring, Greek and the Law on Evidence. Answers were supplied to such questions as, the date of the Crimean War, a single word for a tenth wedding anniversary, etc.

GROWTH AND CONSOLIDATION

In 1952 the Gold Coast made educational history, unique perhaps in all tropical Africa and other developing countries. This was the introduction of a fee-free compulsory state education for all children at the age of 6.

For nearly a century all formal education in the Gold Coast had been achieved at a cost nearly unbearable by most parents and guardians. The result was that the facilities and blessings of formal education became the privilege of a small percentage of the country's population.

The fee free primary school system enabled thousands of children who would otherwise never have the benefit of formal education to go to school. This new dispensation was the redemption of an electioneering promise given by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party during the first General Election campaign of 1951 which gave the CPP a landslide victory.

This led to internal self-rule and the first indigenous majority Cabinet. It included eight Ghanaians with Dr. Kwame Nkrumah the leader of the CPP as leader of Government Business. A year later he was appointed Prime Minister, the first such appointment in tropical Africa.

In spite of the inherent injustice and many negative aspects of the colonial system it is obvious that there were many positive achievements in the economic, social and political spheres during the colonial years.

Chief among these advantage were formal education and literacy, however limited, for which Ghanaians are grateful to the endeavours and sacrifices of successive generations of foreign missionaries and government officials.

In 1882 an Educational Ordinance was passed in the Gold Coast. A Board of Education, was set up and a Director of Education appointed. By 1887 there were only 2 government schools; 7 in 1902, 19 in 1919 and 22 in 1925. But before then the main task of providing formal education had been undertaken by Christian missionary and educational organizations; starting gradually from the Portuguese era of the 15th century under British rule.

Much progress was made during the governorship of Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg 1919-1927. He thought it important that the minds of the people should be cultivated towards modern needs. The whole objective of his economic policy was to improve education in the Gold Coast. He set up an education Committee on which people like Nana Sir Ofori Atta I. Hon. T. Hutton Mills, Dr. Quartey Papafio, missionary representatives and others served.

Achimota School, formerly the Prince of Wales College and School was the brain-child of Guggisberg, conceived to develop from Kindergarten to University. In effort therefore Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, K. A. Gbedemah, Kojo Botsio, members of the first African Government in 1951 and who were themselves educated at Achimota and came under the influence of Dr. J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey and Rev. A. G. Fraser were in effect continuing the aims and objectives of their former teachers and mentors to bring the benefits of education to as many of their



A Board Meeting in 1955

country men and women as possible by the fee-free educational system they introduced in 1952.

To find enough teachers to cope with the sudden increase among children of school going age, the new C. P. P. government established in 1952 a country wide system of two-year training colleges to equip teachers to teach the burgeoning primary school population. In addition to this many post-middle school pupil teachers were employed to teach children making use of many types of school accommodation, from open air classes to a shift system. Intensive in-service training courses were mounted for these untrained teachers by the Education Department.

To help equip trained teachers competently, students in training, pupil teachers and school children were given more books. The Education Department established a Division of the Department at Salt pond under the supervision of Miss Wilmar Gladstone, M.A., a Senior Education officer to direct the training of the untrained pupil teachers and to devise syllabi for primary and middle schools. The Division was also to recommend suitable text

books and relevant library books for all primary and middle schools.

In effect each school was given a nucleus of library books and each class had its own library books. Whenever Miss Gladstone went on leave in Europe she visited various publishing houses to select books for the schools. The school and class library system was a prevailing practice in British schools at the time; this meant the C.P.P government was keen to modernize our educational system in addition to putting as many children as possible in school.

Whilst book stocks, reading facilities and educational horizons were being increased and expanded by the Education Department, the Ghana Library Board was consolidating its foundation by increasing its book-stock and expanding its services and staff.

The Accra Central Library which is housed in one of the most beautiful buildings in Accra was officially opened by the Governor Sir Arden Clarke in 1956. The Ashanti Branch Library was opened in 1951 and a permanent Regional Library built in

1954 in Kumasi. The Sekondi Branch Library was opened in September 1952 assumed Regional status in 1955.

The Cape Coast Branch Library which was opened in 1951 was later to become a Regional Library in 1960. The Volta Region Branch Library opened in 1954 assumed Regional status in 1964 and the Northern Branch Library opened in 1954 became a Regional Library in 1964.

As each Branch Library developed into a Regional Library, new and modern buildings were put up to house the libraries with provision for adult lending and reference and also children's facilities and extension services. The lending libraries which were open to everyone over primary school age had two sections; the young people's section catering for adolescents and the adult main section.

The progress of a library and the interest shown in it by its readers are gauged by the use made of its various services. Often the first interest diminishes after the novelty of introduction or establishment has worn off but statistics kept for the first few years of the Board's operations show that there was no falling off in their attraction and services. In fact, the Board had reason to record that there was an exceedingly satisfactory increase all round."

In the Aglionby Library at Parliament House for instance the issue of books rose in one year 1950 -1951 from 42,591 to 77,892. This created consequently the need, especially for students, to obtain a properly equipped reference library where they could study in a really suitable atmosphere.

During this period of intense nationalism and general reawakening books on examination subjects, Current Affairs, Politics and Constitutional History, Local and Central government and Economics were popular. Also students keen on gaining government scholarships to British and other overseas universities and higher places of learning swotted and ploughed through library books which they could not afford to buy themselves. Also, the new member of Parliament, many of them middle school leavers found the library a reliable source for research for facts, figures and information useful for their ministerial and parliamentary work and debate.

But the Library had an obligation to the government, the people and to itself not to be myopic in its choice and acquisition of books but to provide for

a catholic taste in books and magazines. The Board would have erred if it had pandered only to the great demand for text books, because at first most of the book requests were for text books – mainly for examination purposes.

Gradually the increasing demand for textbooks by readers was challenged by the growing request for novels and fiction. Even there, the preference was limited to a few fiction authors like Rider Haggard, Marie Corelli and Somerset Maugham.

In the 1930s the most popular novels amongst students – both boys and girls - were the Bertha M Clay's series, Married for Her Beauty, etc. The Library authorities reported in the 1950s that little attention was paid by their fiction readers to contemporary fiction apart from detective stories by the master-craftsmen Sherlock Holmes (Arthur Conan Doyle) and Edgar Wallace.

A slight scanning of the bookstock of the libraries in Accra and also at the Regional and district levels clearly indicated that all the books were written in the English language. This of course was due to the obvious historical reason that formal education came to the Gold Coast through English political trade, cultural and social contacts.

The English language as a medium of instruction and communication conferred some notable advantages on a country which for centuries had neither national unity nor a common language. For its small size and population which is just under 10 million Ghanaians today speak over 200 different dialects.

The education of children at school in English therefore has created an educated class having a similarity of outlook howbeit foreign in culture and in some few aspects grotesque in their apeing and affectation. Some Ghanaian parents and their children communicate only in English at home.

However the English language in addition to the dominant local Akan dialect of Twi gives a degree of national unity. But the English language has also created a gulf between those educated at school in that language and others educated in the traditional or muslim way of life or not educated as such at all. It is to the credit principally of the Basel or Presbyterian Missionary Education Unit, and to a lesser extent the schools and churches of the



Conference of the Library Association of West Africa in Ibadan, 1953

Wesleyan or Methodist persuasions that as far back as the mid-19th century they taught both English and other dominant indigenous languages of Twi, Ga, Ewe and Fanti in their schools and encouraged these dialects for use in their churches.

To what extent the Ghana Library Board tries to bring books written in the local languages to its readers will depend on many factors: some are the availability of such books at various levels for their readers and the predilection of their readers. It is hoped that as more books and magazines become written in the local languages a need will surely increase for them by library users.

It is of course on record that in the 17th and 18th centuries there were Islamic literature and scholars in the northern part of the Gold Coast around Salaga and Yendi, among others. With the introduction of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the Gold Coast in the 1920s muslim education and literature steadily gained ground in this country. There are many muslim schools in towns and villages in the country and the Ghana Library Board is making

arrangements to get enough Arabic literature for its readers.

A few years back, in the 1960s, the Embassy of the United Arab Republic in Accra opened a cultural centre for the learning and reading of Arabic and Arabic Literature.

By 1955 the Ghana Library Board's activities, expanding facilities and services were becoming known outside the country and requests for information about it were received from distant countries like Thailand, Western Australia, Jamaica and the United States of America. The Colonial Office in London also asked for information on the building-up, running and cost of the Gold Coast Library services which they thought could be a blueprint and stimulus for other developing territories.

The work of the Library Board came also to the favourable notice of the UNESCO which asked the Board to host a seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Africa in the summer of 1953. Unfortunately, no suitable accommodation could

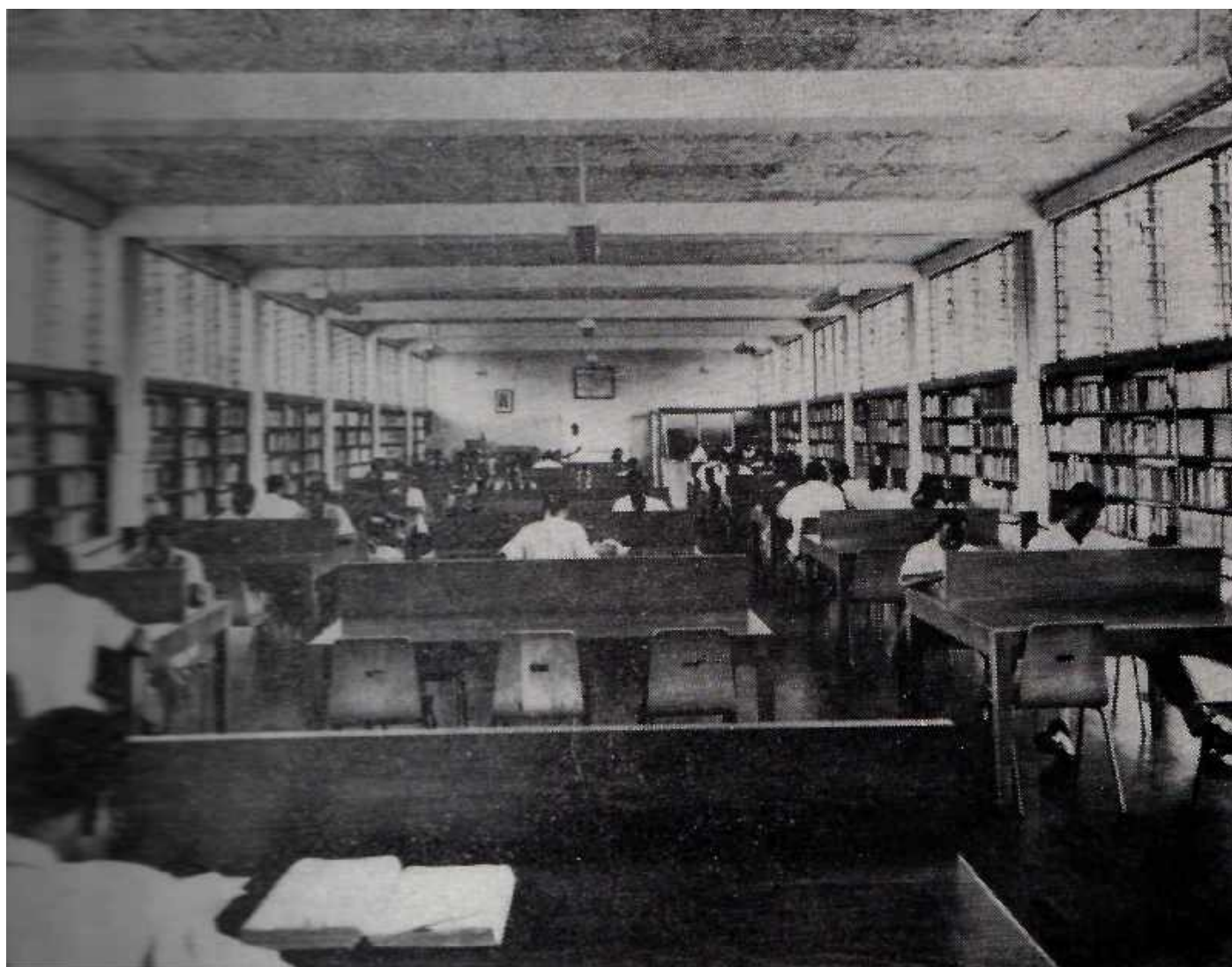
be found during the crowded summer period in the Gold Coast and so the venue was shifted to Ibadan, Nigeria.

The delegates to the Ibadan Conference were however advised to visit the Gold Coast on their way to the Ibadan seminar to see the excellent public library service operated by the Gold Coast Library Board in Accra and throughout the country. At the time it was only the Gold Coast which had a library service that covered the whole country and which was open for use by everyone. Many of the seminar participants did come to visit Accra to study the organization of the Gold Coast Library Board. In fact one of the participants, the Inspector General de Bibliothèques de France worked out a project for the establishment of Libraries in French African based entirely on the Gold Coast Library system which he liked.

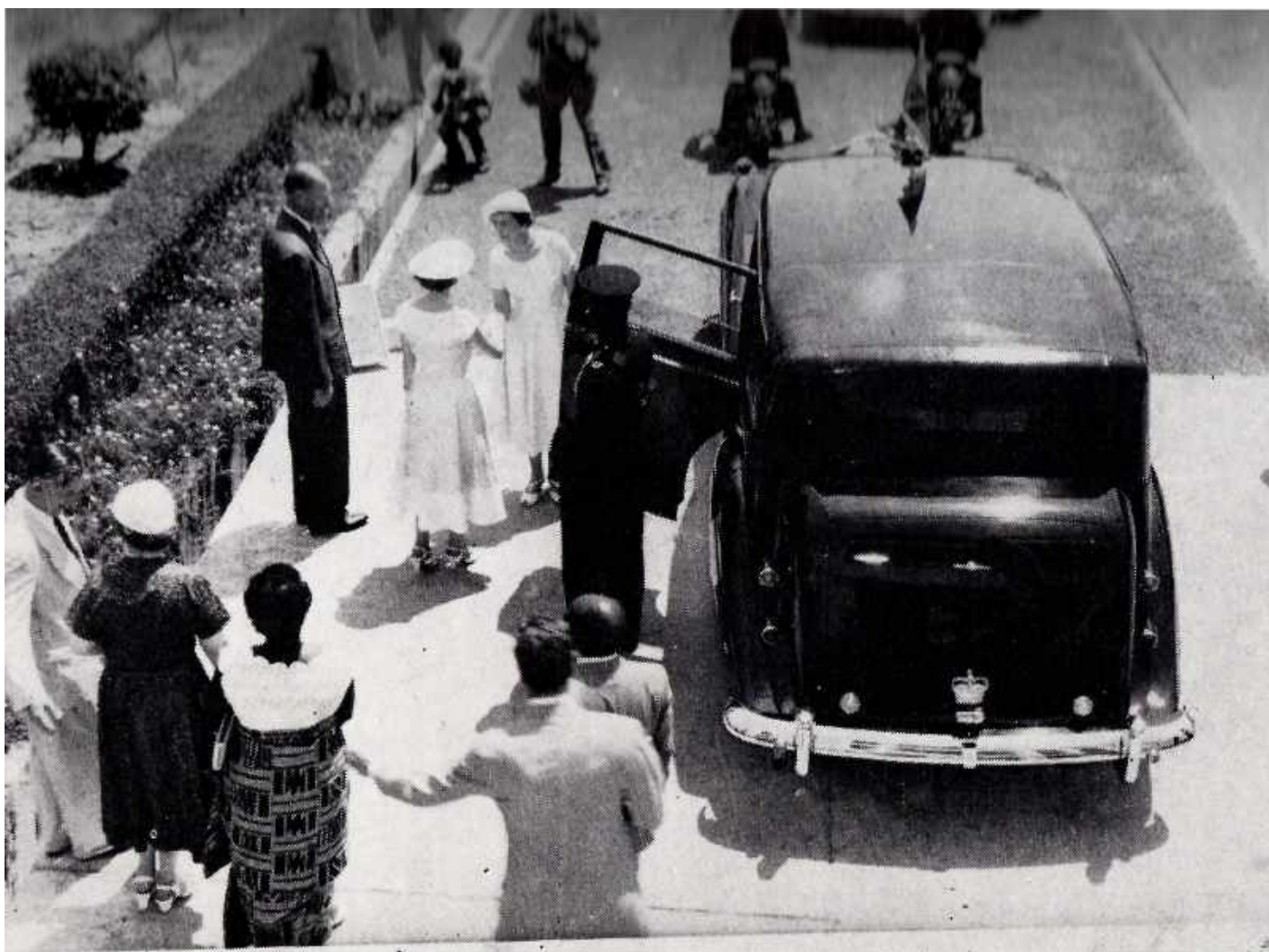
Topics discussed in groups at the seminar were: -

- Organization of public libraries on a Regional or National basis.
 - The provision, selection and use of publications and audio-visual materials in Africa public libraries
 - Professional training for public library services
- One direct result of the Ibadan seminar was the formation of a new Library Association.

Incidentally these library developments of the early 50s occurred at a time when the Social Welfare and Community activities and projects in the Gold Coast were widely acclaimed in many developing countries as worthy of emulation and adaptation. By the end of the first five years of the Board's existence its bookstock had increased from 27,000 volumes to 120,000 volumes; Library facilities and services were expanding and many enquiries were received for information on topics as the 'United Nations Charter' the "theory of the mechanism of helicopters" and the "results of the previous year's



Inside the Reference Library, Accra



Miss Evans welcomes the Duchess of Kent as she arrives to visit the Accra Library in March, 1957

cricket match between the Gold Coast and Nigeria.” The Cape Coast Library offered facilities to the prisons at Cape Coast and Ankaful twelve miles away.

The Library service began gradually to open to its reader’s new worlds and widening horizons of knowledge. At first, many Library users felt bewildered at the array of thousands of different books. They first looked not for new vistas and worlds of knowledge but for something specific they wanted or knew, or had heard about.

Gradually familiarity with the library resulted in more intimate search for more elation and enjoyment from reading through inspiration from knowledgeable men and women or some scientific knowledge that shed more light on some mystery of life itself or how to get new ideas about solving personal or occupational problems.

All this was the result of the planning, administrative and staff activities to provide if possible a library service, second to none in tropical Africa.

The Chief librarian reported in 1954 that more and more people came to the various libraries in search of information. In addition request letters were received for material on such topics as:-

- Evidence in support of Christmas Day as the anniversary of the birthday of Jesus Christ;
- A working drawing of a filtration plant for a swimming bath;
- The height of Johannesburg (of all places) above sea level;
- Some trade addresses of manufacturers of municipal dustcarts, and
- Published references on the activities of the Sudan Defence Force in the Second World War.

The Library staff’s ingenuity in using stands proved valuable and rewarding bringing to the notice of casual readers as serious-books which might otherwise have been unnoticed. Display captions include such heading as: “MAGIC IN THE KITCHEN; THE INSCRUTABLE EAST; TEACHING YOURSELF SERIES; KNOW YOUR GOD, HOBBIES AND ART. “

Some of these captions, increased book issue by about 40 volumes each week.

There were ups and downs. For example, even in Cape Coast, as in other library centres despite persistent efforts by librarians to interest women in the library only, it registered out of a total adult readership of 550 then deemed to be the highest percentage of African readers throughout the whole of the Gold Coast. The Librarians hoped that the numbers of women/mothers library users would increase with increasing readership among their children. The report did not indicate whether this hope was justified yet it is possible to hazard a guess that perhaps, there are more men library patrons in Ghana over women than it was in 1954 twenty-one years ago, despite a great increase in the number of children in schools.

In Kumasi where in 1954 the total membership of readers was 711 of which 206 were Europeans, the issue of books increased out of proportion, with the number of new readers indicating that individual readers were reading more.

The board's two travelling library vans and book box service toured in one year 22,000 miles, doing averagely two treks outside Accra each month. To keep each reader using the travelling book box service up to date the library posted a monthly list of recent additions to each member, due notice given them about the arrival of the travelling library in the district so that special book request could be made before hand.

Sometimes there were disappointments. After travelling many miles of bad roads to change books the mobile staff were not infrequently greeted at their destinations with a statement that no change was required or that the reader had travelled. Obviously the books had scarcely been opened or read only half way through.

In some cases readers had left the district without notifying the library and the mobile library had to go back many miles on its tracks to trace them.

The teacher book service showed a slow increase in the use made by teachers. Only 10 per cent teachers in the country became members. Why the 90 per cent were not interested was not indicated in the Board's annual report for 1955 even though with the help of the Education Department leaflets giving particulars of the teachers' book service had been widely distributed to teachers.

Whilst the teachers were not patronizing the services of the library their pupils, especially those in the primary schools aged between 6 and 13 were reading more and more books.

Librarians in Accra and in regional children's libraries asked for more books.

The Board was gratified that its judgement on the supply of children's reading materials had been amply supported by increased demand.

The Board needed greater funds to match the children's appetite for books. At the same time publishing firms in the United Kingdom were reinforcing the binding of juvenile books to ease the wastage problem with the lightly bound volumes. With the success chalked in primary children's libraries and increasing readership the Board decided to conduct a survey into the reading habits of Middle School pupils in the towns in which the Board was operating libraries. Several interesting facts came to light as a result of the Survey and the amount and work entailed proved worthwhile. The achievements of the Board's activities attracted much attention.

The Assistant Director General of UNESCO, Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah on a visit to the country raised the question of a School for Librarianship in West Africa and a memorandum on the needs for this was put up by the Library Board.

A second annual conference of the West African Library Association was held at the University College of the Gold Coast in December 1955. At the request of the newly formed Library Board of the Eastern Region of Nigeria the Director of the Cape Coast Library Board Services. Miss E. J. Evans, visited Enugu to advise on matters connected with the establishment of a library service in the Region. The work of the Board was recognized when Miss Evans, the Director was awarded the M.B.E in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 1955 – an honour which she shared with all members of her staff who had contributed to make her work successful.

Miss Evans was to work for ten more years on the Board's staff and during that period she was awarded the C.B.E., Commander of the British Empire. She richly deserved both awards for her earlier work for the British Council and also for the Ghana Library Board.

THE AUTHORITY'S SECOND PHASE, 1956 – 1965

1957 was Ghana's year of Independence. But the preceding two or three years were of wrath, strife political and constitutional bickering in the country. With independence a few months off 1956 was like what the song-writers have described as night being darkest just before the dawn.

The two political parties in the country, the Convention Peoples Party and the United Party did not see eye to eye on many constitutional, economic and social issues. Chief bone of contention was whether the country should be divided into federal regions or to be a unitary state. Despite these troubles library services continued to be dispensed; but library patronage diminished in some of the regions, especially Ashanti which was the centre of the political dissent. In Ashanti library attendance by both children and adults decreased and book issues also considerably decreased. Adult membership dropped by 100 and issues by 2000. But in Accra, by May 1956, the building of the new Accra Central Library was duly completed. It was a long awaited event. At last the library was suitably housed and not only was there space for all the work that had to be done but it was an attractive building which added immensely to the rapidly increasing examples of modern and cheerful tropical architecture which was changing the skyline and the face of the capital city, Accra.

May 17, 1956 is a date that will long be remembered by all who are interested in the development of libraries in Ghana. Despite the fact that May is one of the wettest months in Accra, the great day dawned fine and a bright sun shed its light and benediction on the proceedings. His Excellency the Governor Sir Charles Nobel Arden-Clark K.C.M.G. was invited to perform the official opening ceremony and the guest speakers were the Rt. Hon Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, MA, B.D, D.C.L., Prime Minister and Mr. Edward Sydney, President of the Library Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Speaking at the opening of the Accra Central Library on May 17, 1956, the Prime Minister, Dr. Nkrumah said that to a Gold Coast emerging on independence library facilities for all throughout the length and breadth of the country were an immense help to the people, and this could only be achieved by intelligent use of our educational facilities. In this respect, he said the country was indebted to the Gold Coast Library Board for the progress it had made.

Speaking at the same ceremony the representative of the library Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Mr. Edward Sydney said: "As a librarian with much theoretical and many years practical experience of the problems involved, I am persuaded that the Board has been unusually fortunate in the quality of its high leadership , professional and administrative skill."

Mr. Sydney endorsed favourably the Board's decision to earmark the Carnegie Corporation's grant for giving professional education and staff training, adding that a library of books without the skill of a trained librarian to organize and exploit them for reader's use, was very much like a carpenter's kit without a carpenter – wasted tools. Concluding his speech, the President of the Library Association of Great Britain and Ireland gave a few words of advice and encouragement to the young Gold Coast Library Board. He said: "the history of most of the leading countries of the Western world has demonstrated in the last fifty years that a public library service of books, periodicals, and other media information, is absolutely necessary for successful enterprise, democratic government and individual responsibility. Books freely made available to every citizen according to his need and capacity and of the right quality and quantity are essential. Leaving on one side the cultural necessities of a community, it is a stark, inescapable fact today, in the middle of the twentieth century that sane government,



Mr. Edward Sydney, President of the British Library Association is introduced to the Governor, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke at the opening of the new Accra Central Library on May 17, 1965

commercial progress, and industrial development demand books and information at all levels of a society. That the preservation of the dignity of the individual human being in the face of technological invention and application also demands the same service should not need emphasis to this audience.

In one's success it is well to remember one's friends, and I cannot conclude without remarking that today's ceremony must give real satisfaction to you, Sir, to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the British Council, Bishop John Aglionby, the Chairman and the Members of the Board and many others inside and outside this country who believe in, sponsored, and encouraged the idea of a public library service when there was much hope for, much to do, but little to show."

Then His Excellency the Governor, Sir Arden Noble Clarke untied the strip of kente cloth tied across the main doors and declared the Accra Central Library open. A large number of invited guests and members of the public looked round the library, browsing through and borrowing books on registration. The Aglionby library at this stage gave way to the Accra Central Library and became a small section of the latter.

When Her Royal Highness the late Duchess of Kent visited Ghana in March 1957 to hand over the Instrument of Independence on behalf of Queen Elizabeth II to the people and Government of the Gold Coast a visit to the library was included in her busy programme. On her return to England, the Duchess sent an appreciative letter to the Board. Independence, our politicians kept telling us before and after its achievement was to show what the African could do given the opportunity and also to make good the ills of colonialism.

A year after Ghana's independence the new Government outlined the country's second Development Plan. The first Development Plan was carried out under colonial rule; the second plan was to correct the mistakes of the first and to take a great leap forward. For the period July 1959 to June 1964, the Library Board was given 151,000 for its development projects. Judging by today's inflationary expenses it did not amount to much. But it was not unreasonable in those days.

The Library Board accordingly prepared its plans and proposals which were wholly accepted by the Development Committee of the Government. The Plan consisted of six areas:

- A Wing to the Accra Central Library to contain –
- Stackroom to hold 100,000 volumes
- Combined West African and Exhibition Room
- Central Children's library
- Store and binders rooms all estimated at.

Happily this wing was completed and opened in November 1961; the combined West Africans and Exhibition Room was altered to an Exhibition Hall. An Africana Library was later built elsewhere in Accra and the Exhibition Hall to this day has proved useful and suitable for various exhibitions mounted by foreign embassies, publishers, artistes and other organisations.

- A Scholarship Fund estimated at 10,000 was set up to cover the training cost overseas for Library Staff to qualify for the A.L.A and FLA.
- Book stacks to store new libraries and to expand the Africana library were to cost 25,000.
- were for library buildings at Cape Coast, Sunyani, Keta, Tarkwa and Bolgatanga.
- 6,000 were for the replacement of mobile libraries.



The Duchess of Kent escorted by Mr. A. C. Walker, Chairman of the Library Board and Miss Evans, Director of Library Services on the occasion of her visit to the Accra Central Library on 5th March 1957.

- A microfilm reader and equipment estimated at 2,000.

Unfortunately the Government's Second Development Plan was terminated at the end of the 1961-62 financial year to be replaced in 1963 by a new Seven year Development Plan, named "Work and Happiness."

The Government, however, decided that projects which had already been started under the 1959-64 plan should be continued. The Board therefore was able to procure 15,000 worth of books on book development, built and open a new library edifice at Cape Coast. Fortunately Messrs Elder Dempster Shipping Lines donated a microfilm reader to the Board. Between 1959 and 1962 the Board was able to provide for the 17 out of 3000 middle schools approved for lending library books.

With the opening of the new Accra Central Library, the Board intensified its activities and expanded its services and facilities. One result was that personal contact was now established between readers and library staff, and many readers who would have otherwise wandered round the shelves and gone away unsatisfied between they would not ask for help, now had their problems, queries and requests dealt with by the staff.

An increasingly number of people realized that the library was a mine of wealth and requests by telephone and letters became an increased daily occurrence.

Miss Ofori Atta publicised the usefulness of the Reference Library, through a radio programme entitled "Enquiries Please" in which she answered an infinite variety of questions and gave answers for

information on subjects like Tribal Marks, Tegare, Reading Habits of the Gold Coast People, Phases of the Moon in 1949; Population of the U.S.S.R., Mauritius and Estate Agents in Scotland.

All these developments called for more trained staff. Staff training and preparation for the Library Association Examinations continued, and a nine-month open course for the first Professional Examination was conducted in 1957 at the Accra Technical Institute but the experiment was not very successful, as although a number of outside students enrolled their lack of experience in library work proved a great handicap both to themselves and their tutors. Accordingly the course was discontinued.

During this period the Regional Development Committee began to take an interest in the work of the Library Board. The Eastern Regional

Development Committee funded the construction of a Regional Library at Koforidua in 1956.

The Trans-Volta Regional Development Committee was next to build three branch libraries at Jasikan, Kpandu and Ho. The Northern Territories Development Committee followed suit by building one at Tamale. The Ashanti Regional Development Committee built a library at Konongo-Odumase.

The Commonwealth Education and Welfare Trust promised to finance the Kumasi library with for every pound sterling given by the Kumasi Town Council. The K.T.C. promptly issued a cheque for 000 which the Trust doubled. A new branch library was opened in the Community Centre at Tarkwa in July 1957; the opening ceremony being performed by Chief Nana Ben Kofi of Simpa. Students at the Tarkwa Technical Institute proved staunch



Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent visits the Accra Central Library.



The late Ga Mantse, Nii Tackie Komey II gives an address at the opening of the extensions to the Accra Central Library in 1958.

supporters of the Library and more books were added to their bookstock. The librarian reported that great use was made of the library by women in Tarkwa. This was the only library up to 1957 where women readers were reported to be making satisfactory use of their local library. Elsewhere the response by women was very poor despite the fact that many girls in the community had been to school and also there were girls on the library staff. The small library at Koforidua which was built with money provided by the Eastern Region Development Committee on a site made available by the Local Council and the United Africa Company Ltd. Proved to be a leader as far as book issues were concerned. But in no time, the small library proved too small for its growing readership.

A new site was therefore chosen for a bigger library befitting the capital of the Eastern Region. As his farewell official activity in Koforidua, the retiring first Governor – General of the new independent state of Ghana, His Excellency Sir Charles Noble

Arden-Clarke, G.C.M.G. planted a pink cassia on the site of the new proposed library on his last tour to the region.

On completion of the new library the following year in 1958, it was officially opened by the new Governor-General, the Right Honourable Lord Listowel, P.C. who told the audience that he hoped that everyone who could share in the rich storehouse of knowledge would not allow their minds to be starved in the presence of such abundance of nourishment.

Despite the financial help given by such donors as Bishop Aglionby, Carnegie Corporation and the Commonwealth Trust, local authorities and a few others, it must be observed that much of the money for the development of the Library Board was given by the Government of Ghana. This policy of self-help and self-reliance was later to open new avenues for local initiatives in enhancing library facilities and other self-help projects. Years later,



The Section of the crowd at the opening of the extensions to the Accra Central Library, Seated from the front row, left to right are Mr. K. G. Konuah, Mrs. T Casely Hayford, Mr. Kojo Botsio, Mr. A. Casely Hayford and Sir Emmanuel Quist.

the “Operation Feed Yourself” by which Ghanaians were encouraged to produce as much food as possible from their own natural resources instead of begging for food – parcels from other countries became a great national asset which was copied and endorsed by other countries.

Revenue for the services of the Library Board continued to come from Central Government subventions, Local Council grants in aid, readers’ subscriptions and fines.

In 1958 the Board concentrated on the provision of smaller libraries in the regions. The Trans-Volta/Togoland Regional Development Committee offered to build five libraries for the Board within its Region but unfortunately, owing to lack of staff the Board was unable to accept all five but gratefully accepted the offer of three building. In all, small libraries were established in 1957 in Ho, Kpandu, Jasikan, Dunkwa. Konongo-Odumase, Hohoe and Takoradi.

The Board regretted the death on November 20, 1957 of Mr. K. Middlemast, Deputy Director after

a short illness. He had been on the staff of the Board since 1950; he was always a most loyal member of staff and with his quiet personality and interest in West Africa and its libraries soon became known not only in Ghana but also in Nigeria. His interest in the welfare of the staff was immense and his death robbed all the staff of a good valued friend and colleague. The Board extended its heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Middlemast and her children.

Mr. J. T. Stickland, Senior Cataloguer was promoted to the Post of Deputy Director, Miss G. Ofori Atta and Messrs, David Cornelius and Sam Kotei all Chartered Librarians were promoted to the Senior Service.

By 1960 the staff of the Library Board had risen from 18 in 1950 to 176; only three of these being expatriate. The policy of Africanisation on merit had paid off.

Three years after Ghana’s Independence the country was declared a Republic within the Commonwealth

of Nations of 1st July, 1960 under a President and a constitution for which the citizens had been wholly responsible.

In paying tribute to the work of the retiring and last Governor General, Lord Listowel, the President Elect explained on 30th June, 1960 why Ghana had chosen a republican constitution. Dr. Nkrumah said: "We have adopted a republican constitution because of our conviction that we need a form of government which will more truly interpret the aspiration and hopes of the people of Ghana and to give full expression to the African personality." On Republic Day, for the first time, a Ghanaian Sword of State, a Ghanaian Traditional Presidential Chair and a Ghanaian Presidential standard were used at such a high state event. All these represented some break with the colonial past and a revival to the country's traditional heritage.

For its part the Library Board was presented with the site of the only World War 2 air-raid shelter in the country by the Government of Dr. Nkrumah for Board for a month in Ghana to participate in the Jubilee Celebrations.

In the past 15 years, the Padmore Library or the African Research Library has become well known and well patronised by many people in various walks of life within and outside Ghana.

Between July 1961 and September 1962 the Board's main activities were in five main areas. These were the Public Libraries which continued to expand in bookstock, readership and expansion; school libraries and the School Mobile Library service which continued to be an unqualified success as was shown by the appreciation of school children and their teachers when the mobile vans arrived in their towns and villages and also by letters of complaint if the van were late for any reason.

We have already spoken about the African Research Library which with the establishment of the School for Librarians in Accra became the very first such institutions in tropical Africa. So was the Ghana Institute of Journalism founded in 1958, the first such institution in tropical Africa.

The formal opening of the Ghana School for Librarians in 1962 in its own modern buildings next to the Accra Central Library brought a

the development of an African Research Library or an African Library.

Collections for this Research Library came initially from the Accra Central Library and the private collections of Sir Leslie M'Carthy who showed a keen and constant interest in the project and a few from Miss Evans' collections.

Following the death of George Padmore the well-known West Indian Pan Africanist and life-long friend and adviser of President Nkrumah on African Affairs, the President officially opened the new library on June 30th 1961 and dedicated a plaque fixed in the wall of the African Library in memory of George Padmore. It was decided that the Padmore Memorial should take the form of a small self-contained library within this library, and that eventually expansion in the form of further accommodation for stacking, public and work rooms should be in a separate block. This separate block was completed in the Jubilee Year and was officially opened for use by the former Director of Library Services Miss Evelyn J. A. Evans, C.B.E.FLA., who was specially invited by the new development and dimension to the library profession in Ghana and West Africa as it created a new profession for those qualified and interested to be professional librarians.

Both university graduates and non-graduates were eligible for admission and the first batch of students included a few from Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The Principal of the Library School, Mr. R.C. Bengé M.C., F.L.A., assumed duty in September 1961. Other member of staff who later joined him



The Bolgatanga Regional Library



Inside the Regional Library at Bolgatanga.

were Messrs. J. Roe F.L.A., J. K. Villars A.L.A. and A.F. Johnson F.L.A.

During its four year existence 1961-1965 the School produced 48 students who are now engaged in various libraries inside and outside Ghana.

The School for Librarians was transferred in October, 1965 to the newly established Department of Library Studies in the University of Ghana Legon of which Mr. Sam Kotei, M.A., one of the library assistants who joined the Library Board, in 1954 is to day the acting Head.

In 1964 the Director of Library Services Miss Evans went on a six month world tour to see various library services. During her absence Mr. A.G.T. Ofori, F.L.A., Deputy Director and one of the first library assistants acted in her place. Later in 1966, six months after Miss Evans' departure from Ghana on retirement Mr. Ofori was promoted and appointed the first Ghanaian Director of Library Services.

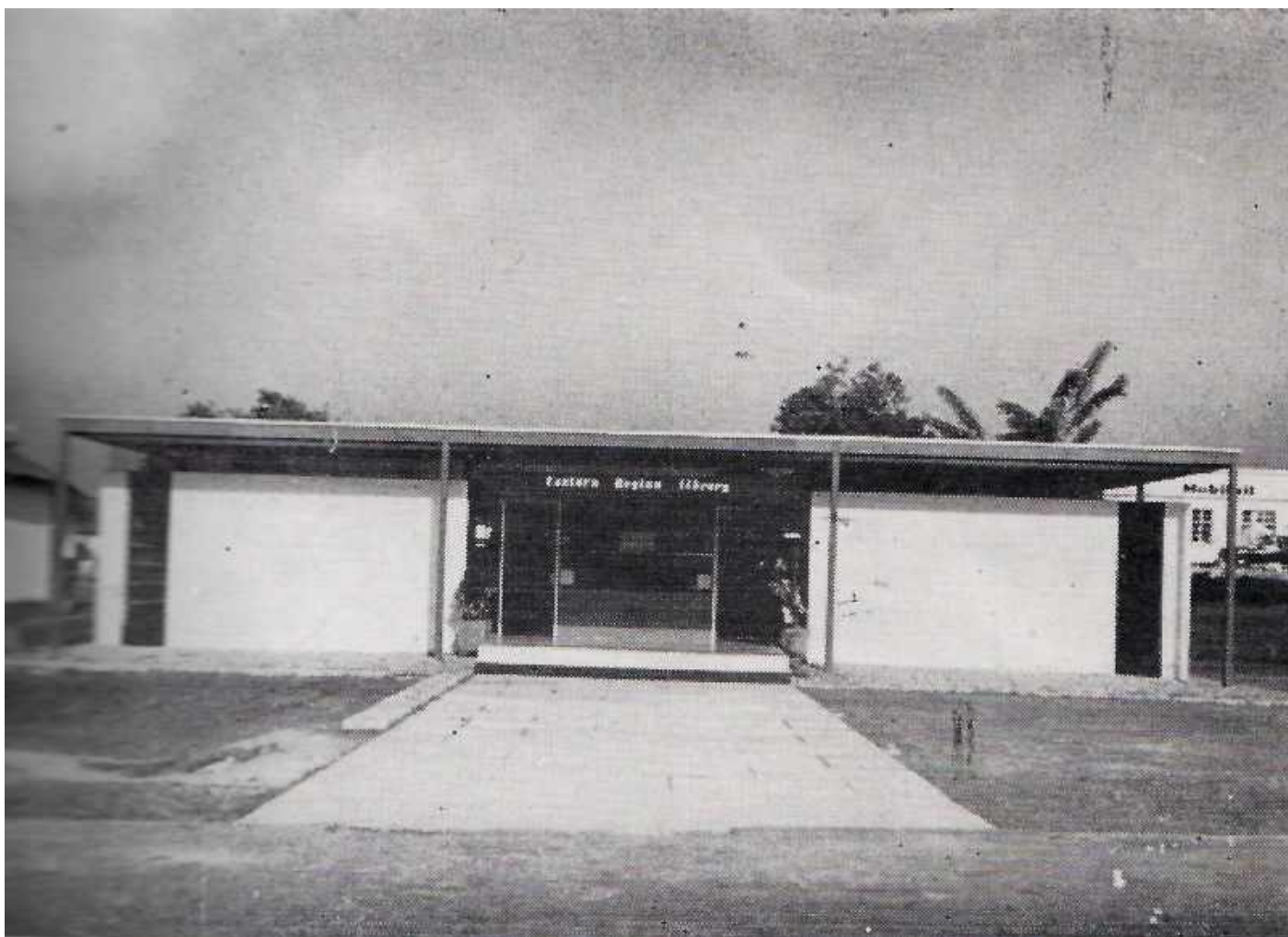
During the 1961-62 financial year the book issue rose above the 800,000 mark and the library membership rose to 56,000 readers. The only

unfortunate incident of the year was the destruction of the Library Centre at Axim by a fire which burned all the centre's books and records except books on issue.

Round about this time the wife of the late George Padmore, Mrs. Dorothy Padmore, a committed socialist with keen interest in trade unions as well as African affairs wrote a series of articles in radical local papers on the need for Socialist literature and books in our public, departmental and institutional libraries. Her point of view was supported by a section of the school, many of whom supported the socialist ideology as taught at the Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute at Winneba.

But Mr. Bengé the principal of the library board school was forward looking and adaptable so he sympathized with the students' desire to read more books on socialism.

At one time militant activists of the T.U.C marched on the Accra Central Library to ask the Library authorities to supply the libraries with a reasonable amount of books on socialism then the current



The Eastern Regional Library, Koforidua



Opening of the Branch Library at Kpandu

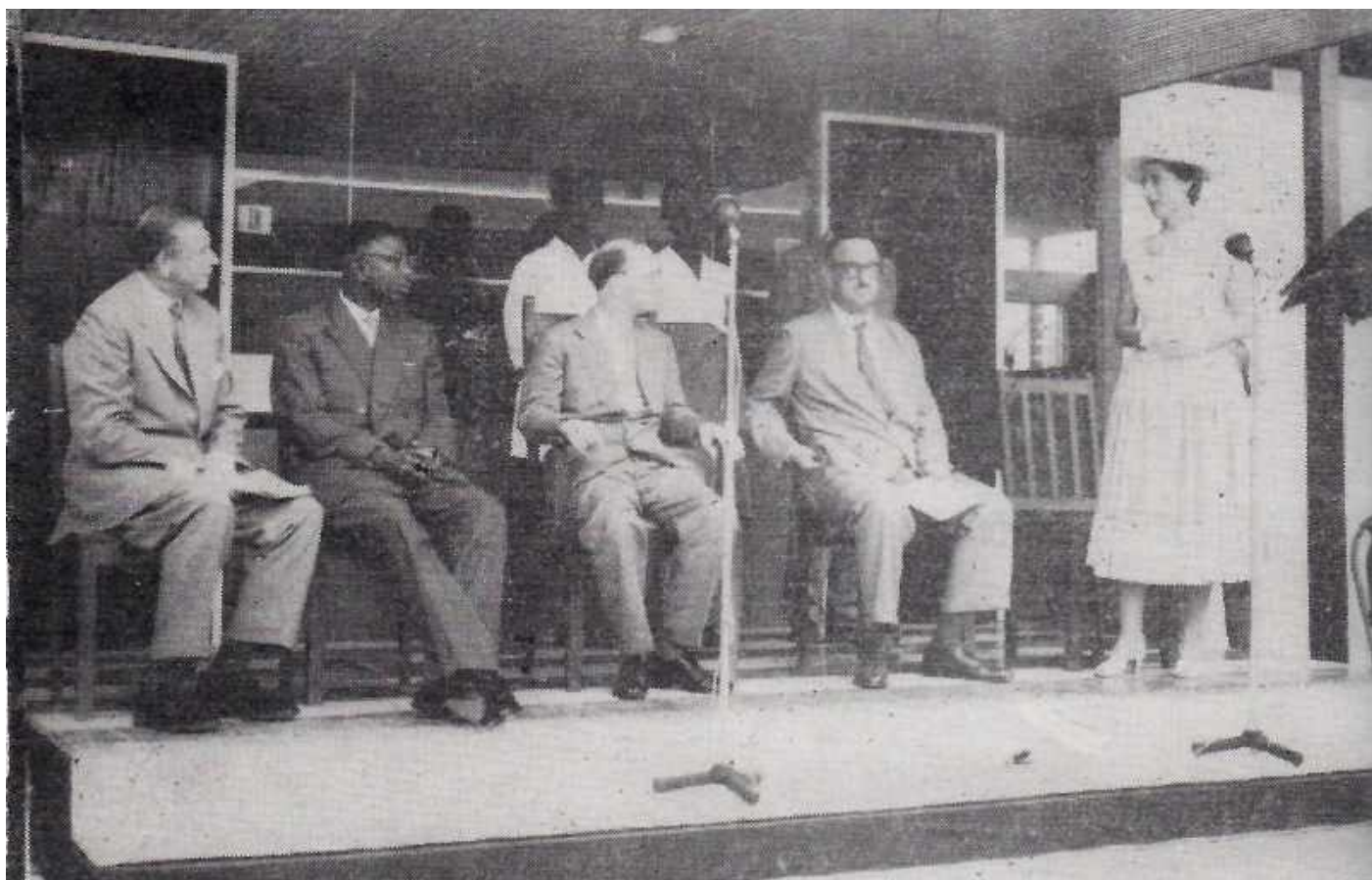
political ideology of the government and people of Ghana.

The library staff soon made good the lack of such books and thereby brought the library services promptly in line with the socialist revolution in the country.

This was at the expense of some of the general reading material: fiction, ballet dancing, sports, cinema and other English middle class reading material stocked earlier and diffuse the narrow concentration on text books and other examinations oriented literature.

More books on socialism, the Eastern European countries and Communist China appeared on the shelves of public and institutional libraries. Local foreign embassies supplied various colourful magazines on the great leaps forward and the successful socialist political, economic and social experiments in their home countries, to local libraries, workers and schools.

The establishment of the Organisation of African



Lord Listowel, Governor-General (third from left) being invited to open the Koforidua Regional Library



Freda, Countess of Listowel, mother of the Governor-General Lord Listowel chats with librarian Mrs. Cecilia Opoku.



President Nkrumah opens the African Research Library in memory of George Padmore, the Pan-Africanist in 1961.

Unity on May 25, 1963 at Addis Ababa became the tangible realization of the great dream of all Pan Africanists.

The continental preparations for this historical meeting of all heads of independent African states sparked off much writing in newspapers, magazines and books. The African Research Library became a busy hive for Africanists and other researchers.

In 1964 the rising cost of the nation's various development programmes led to the introduction of the Exchange Control Act aimed at conserving the country's resources. This affected the importation and expenditure on many essential commodities. It also affected many areas of consumer goods including the importation of books. For the first time in our history import license had to be obtained for the importation of books into the country. Coupled with the world wide rise in the cost of books acquisition of books for the Library Services became difficult and limited. This was in the face of increased demand by readers for more books.

The African Division of Chicago University invited the Padmore Memorial Africana Library in Accra to work in close co-operation with it in pooling and exchanging their Africana material and resources. Each library would contribute a sum of money to be used in acquiring rare documents for filming and circulation to its readers and others. Such materials were to include old newspapers, periodicals, colonial records, despatches, conference proceedings, historical records, and other archival material.



Farewell dinner for Miss Evans in 1965.



A parting gift of Kente Stole to Miss Evans from member of staff

The difficulties of the limitation of book importation and the decline, in bookstock which emerged in 1964 were made worse by a reduction of the Library Board's budget.

On June 23, 1965 the Director of Library Services Miss E. J. A. Evans retired and left for the United Kingdom.

She came to the Gold Coast in 1949 as the British Council's overseas Librarian for the Gold Coast and Gambia and later worked on the staff of the Ghana Library Board. Her departure could be said to mark the end of an era and a time for the Library Board to take a stock of the first 15 years of its existence and to plan relevantly for the future.

THE AUTHORITY'S THIRD PHASE, 1966 – 1975

The Government of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was overthrown on the 24th February 1966 after a continuous rule of 15 years having won a landslide election victory with his Convention People's Party in February 1946. He was overthrown by the joint action of the Ghana Armed Forces and the Police who thus brought an end to the first Republic of Ghana. On that day the T.U.C. made a huge bonfire of all the socialist books in their library.

The new regime dissolved all the boards of the various state corporations established by the previous government and dismissed their members. Consequently, the Library Board too was dissolved and management of the library services fell on the shoulders of the Acting Director, Mr. A.G.T. Ofori. In April 1967, fourteen months after the overthrow of government, the new regime, the National Liberation Council appointed a Management Committee for the Ghana Library Services under the Chairmanship of Professor L. H. Ofosu-Appiah of the University of Ghana who was also appointed Director of the Encyclopedia Africana, a huge research programme on African history and biographies started during the Nkrumah regime under the directorship of the great Pan Africanist and Scholar Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois the Afro-American who came back home to Africa to work and die in his 97th year. He was buried near Government House, Christianborg Castle, Osu.

Towards the end of 1967, the Library Board received a request from the Ministry of Education to conduct a survey on libraries in secondary schools and teacher training colleges to find out how they could be improved. The Ministry of Education and the British Council assisted in the survey by providing funds and advice.

In April 1967 a Commercial Library was established within the Accra Central Library on the second floor, to provide information from various sources

for easy reference by business houses, commercial journalists and business consultants.

The foreign exchange problem with regard to the acquisition of books persisted to the mid-seventies, but the Board was able to add 35,319 volumes to its stock by June 30, 1967; this was 10,000 volumes less than the 1965-66 period.

A picture of the acquisition problem becomes clear if we consider the fact that in the financial year 1962-63 the Board acquired 99,054 books but by year 1967-68 the figure had dropped to 30,433; the reason being that from 1965 the Board's annual subvention for acquisition of books was pegged at ₵40,000.

Paradoxically, the facilities of the Board were more in demand despite the shortage of books as students and others studying for specific examinations could not get their textbooks from booksellers who had also been hit by the foreign exchange and import license problems.

Fortunately the situation improved a bit towards the end of the N.L.C. period and the beginning of Dr. K. A. Busia's United Party's regime when in the 1969-70 financial year the total acquisition of books rose to 50,459 volumes. This was the highest figure since 1965. Of this 6,596 were fiction, 14,463 non-fiction and 29,400 volumes of children's books.

In 1970 the Library Board took some important decisions. Regional Advisory Committees on libraries were created to advise the Board on development services at the regional level and to encourage full use of the existing library facilities in the regions.

Meantime on January 13, 1972 the Progress Party Regime of Dr. Busia was replaced by the National Redemption Council in a bloodless coup.



Board Chairman Professor Ofori-Appiah (left) with local library patrons at the Kumasi Regional Library in 1968



Lt. Col. Nkegbe then Commissioner for Education addresses the Association of Ghana Writers in 1972.



The Queenmother of James Town, Accra, Naa Afipong visits a Book Exhibition at the Central Library Accra, 1958.

Reports from the survey conducted on conditions in the secondary school and training college libraries revealed poor library accommodation, insufficient book stock, lack of trained staff and indifferent selection of books.

Consequently Miss Ivy Hill a retired British Librarian was sent by the British Council to start a pilot project in the Ashanti Region on improving libraries in schools and colleges.

Consequently in 1972 the Ghana Library Board established a Schools and Colleges Library Unit within the Board's system with a grant of ₵400,000 to improve libraries in our schools and colleges.

In 1974 the Board approved conditions of service, lacking for a long time for employees of the Library Board. This was a great morale booster and gave a face lift in its own way to the library profession.

An Act of Parliament which was enacted on April 30, 1970 established the Ghana Library Board on a new basis. The 1949 Act gave the Board Omnibus responsibility to "establish, equip and maintain libraries in the country." The 1970 Act restricted the Board's responsibilities to public libraries only. However the new Local Government Decree of 1974 makes provision for the establishment of libraries in all local council areas. The Local Authorities will provide the necessary funds, and the Library Board will provide professional advice and the training of library assistants to man these local libraries.

This highlights the need for more trained librarians to cope with the Library Services envisaged to cover the whole country. With the number of students entering the Department of Library Studies, at the University of Ghana, Legon severely restricted by the lack of accommodation and funds the question

of shortage of trained librarians need serious consideration.

The Chairman of the Library Board organized a Writers' Workshop for local authors as part of a national campaign to encourage local authors. A Book Development Council may soon be established in the country to help limit reliance on imported books and also help to produce locally books of relevance to Ghanaian life.

As part of its Jubilee Celebrations the Library Board organized two competitions for the best published or manuscript piece of creative writing and the best locally technically produced book.

Many hopeful authors, writers, book publishers and printers have submitted works for adjudication.

There is today a great interest abroad in African writing and it is necessary that every encouragement should be given to local authors to enhance their writing and creative ability for the growth and enrichment of our literature which is a sort of history and mirror of the life of our people.

Too often outside publishers have profited from the works of our local writers. Our writers are also our

wealth. It is heartening that the State Publishing Corporation and other indigenous publishing houses are now giving practical encouragement and remuneration to local authors and writers. We must nurse our writers along. Just think how a writer like Shakespeare and many others have enriched the world's knowledge of their countries and their periods.

We look forward to the time when our own publishing houses can publish our foremost writers: when we can have our own literary magazines and literary critics; when promising writers can be offered grants and fellowship: when our writers will attract more local readers to patronize our libraries and books.

Books have become part and parcel of modern life. Over thousands of years of experience have proved that they will continue to play their essential part in man's intellectual life as far ahead in time as our mind's eye can see. Books will be augmented by modern visual gadgets which librarians will have to employ for enquiries after special knowledge. Together with books, gadgets and librarians, the future will be lit up for the reader as they have illuminated the past.

KEY MILESTONES 1976 - 2016

CONSTRUCTION OF THE HO AND SUNYANI REGIONAL LIBRARIES

In 2003 the Government of Ghana started the construction of ultra-modern Regional Library Complex in Ho and Sunyani with funding from GETFund.

The library buildings are at various stages of completion.

RE-INTRODUCTION OF THE MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

The mobile library service is the most popular acclaimed pro-poor, rural, outreach, public library service programme in Ghana. But it became defunct in the early 1980s due to lack of funding. It was however, reintroduced in August 2007.

The Government of Ghana, with the kind assistance of the Ghana National Commission for UNESCO, acquired a total of 10 mobile library vans for the Ghana Library Authority. The mobile library vans were duly inaugurated in August, 2007 in the forecourt of the Ghana Library Authority Head Office. Each Regional Library was allocated a van for the purpose of running the mobile library service.

20 Library Assistants /Officers (2 from each Regional Library) were appointed and trained to oversee the operations of the mobile library service. All the 20 officers underwent driver training course to enable them assist the drivers when the need arises and ensure the safety and regular maintenance. About 59,953 books were initially acquired, processed and distributed amongst the 10 Regional Libraries for the mobile library service.

A four member National Mobile Library Service Committee representing the Northern Zone, Middle Belt, Coastal Regions and Headquarters, was

formed to ensure the successful and sustainable implementation of the mobile library service.

A comprehensive, proactive strategic policy and budget were developed to guide the implementation of the mobile library service.

To ensure effective collaboration, citizens' participation and deepening of democracy, District Mobile Library Service Committees were constituted in each of the 20 pilot districts. The Committees comprised of representatives of the respective MMDAs, Traditional Authorities, Ghana Education Service and Ghana Library Authority. Stakeholders' sensitisation workshops were organised.

Massive, intensive and extensive publicity drive was carried out through the print and electronic media on the re-introduction of the mobile library service.

REFURBISHMENT OF SECTIONS OF THE ACCRA CENTRAL LIBRARY

Huawei Technologies (Ghana) Ltd. refurbished the ICT Centre, Lending, Reference and Children's Libraries as well as the Exhibition Hall at the Accra Central Library at a total cost of Nine Hundred Thousand Ghana Cedis (Gh¢900,000.00) as part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility.

Huawei Technologies (Ghana) S.A. Ltd. officially handed over refurbished sections of the Accra Central Library to the Ghana Library Authority on 17th December 2014. Present at the handing over ceremony were the Hon. Minister for Communication, the Chinese Ambassador to Ghana, a Board member, the Executive Director and the CEO of Huawei.

The refurbishment included re-painting, provision of some furniture, repair of ceiling, re-tiling of the

floors as well as provision of equipment for the ICT Centre including computers.

LIBRARY CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

The Library Connectivity Project aimed at ensuring that Ghana Library Authority provided Internet facility in all public libraries across the country for the use of clientele.

This project was a collaboration between Ghana Library Authority and Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communication (GIFEC).

GIFEC made immense contribution to the project by providing ICT equipment including computers, photocopiers, and scanners. GIFEC in collaboration with GhLA organized training for 21 staff on ICT, Psychology of learning and the organization of Reading Clinic from 23rd to 28th August 2015.

As part of the project, GIFEC donated 120 computers for distribution to the following libraries from 26th to 27th September 2015: Gwollu Library, Navrongo Library, Berekum Library, Sekyere Library, Axim Library, Odumase Library, Assin Nkran Library, Suhum Library, Peki Library, Tease Library, Senya Library and Accra Central Library.

DIGITIZATION PROJECT

The Ghana Library Authority collaborated with Omanfor Company Limited in 2014 to digitize some materials at the George Padmore Research Library. Omanfor donated digitization equipment including photocopiers and scanners to the Authority which was installed by experts from South Africa. Newspapers dating back to 1950 have been digitized.

MOBILE LIBRARY HANDS-ON COMPUTER CLASSES FOR 1,800 GHANAIAN CHILDREN PROJECT

Ghana Library Authority secured sponsorship to provide ICT training for 1,800 pupils in schools in remote areas that did not have computers for their practical work in four selected regions. The project was piloted in the Volta region and resulted in 212 children passing their ICT exams at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in 2014. As a result of the success story in the Volta region, Nokia/Global Giving through

the Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) provided sponsorship for the project to be extended to three more regions in 2015.

These include the Ashanti, Upper East and Western regions. EIFL donated 50 Low voltage ASUS laptop computers and accessories, solar power panel units (for the mobile library vans) and 100 e-books for the project. As part of the project, EIFL organised training programme for 25 teachers and 4 mobile library staff from the selected regions to equip them with practical computer teaching skills.

The equipment and materials for the project were officially handed over to the Ghana Library Authority on 20th November 2015. The project was launched in Sekondi, Kumasi and Wa on 23rd, 25th and 27th November 2015 respectively.

OPENING OF THE NEW UPPER WEST REGIONAL LIBRARY COMPLEX

The Ex-President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency John Dramani Mahama officially opened the new ultra-modern Upper West Regional Library in Wa on 7th July 2016. It is the largest Regional Library in Ghana with state-of-the-art furniture and equipment.

THE NATIONAL CHILDREN AND MOBILE LIBRARY PROJECT

The former Minister of Education, Prof. Naana Jane Opoku Agyeman, cut the sod for the official commencement of the National Children and Mobile Library project on 15th July 2016 at Plot no. A 26, Patrice Lumumba road, Airport Residential Area. The Social Security and National insurance Trust (SSNIT) funded the project as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility.

The library building is completed and yet to be handed over to the Ghana Library Authority.

CONSTRUCTION OF A CHILDREN'S LIBRARY AND STAFF BUNGALOWS AT FRAFRAHA IN THE GREATER ACCRA REGION.

The Ghana Library Authority initiated the construction of Children's Library and three staff bungalows at Frafraha in 2016.

The library buildings and the bungalows have been completed and yet to be officially commissioned.

**RENOVATION OF HEAD OFFICE
BUILDING AND THE GEORGE PADMORE
RESEARCH LIBRARY ON AFRICAN
AFFAIRS**

The Ghana Library Authority Head Office building was renovated, re-furnished and equipped with computers and other equipment in 2016.

The George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs was also given a facelift in 2016.

ACQUISITION OF LIBRARY BOOKS

The Ghana Library Authority with support from GETFund acquired 132,031 books of various titles between 2015 and 2016 to stock the libraries across the country.

SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS, 2017 - DATE

These are the major reforms at the Ghana Library Authority (GhLA) under the framework of the Education Strategic plan (2018-2030) from 2018-2020. During this period, the Authority has introduced key reforms, implemented policies and strategic initiatives that have improved learning outcomes. The Authority has set five major objectives which have been vital in connecting Ghanaians to knowledge resources. They are;

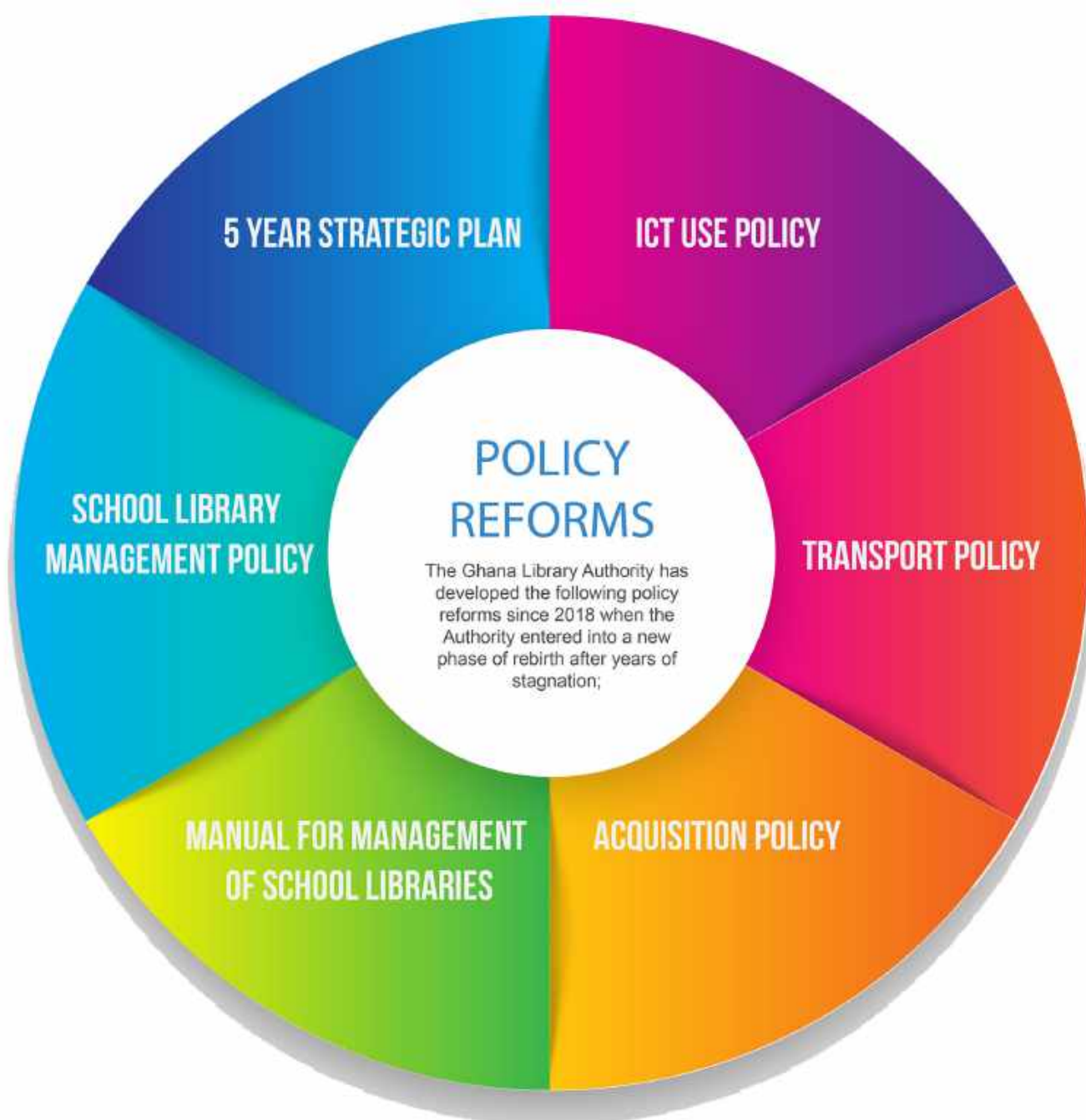
- Increase Access Points- the number of libraries under the management of the Library Authority have increased from 61 to 85 within 2019 and 2020.
- Renovations- 43 public libraries have been renovated to create and enable a more conducive environment for learning across physical library network.
- Improve the book collection – the total book collection has increased from 349,941 to 1,024,829 between 2016 to 2020.
- Technology- as part of our digital strategy, GhLA has created a digital library App, enrolled over 20,000 Ghanaians on MOOCs platforms, automated the issuance of ISBN and the compilation of the National Bibliography, established 7 technology hubs in libraries across the country and connected all regional libraries to the internet.

These have led to the increase in library visits from 393,430 in 2016 to 1,074,275 by the end of 2019 representing 173.1% rise.



Policy Reforms

The Ghana Library Authority has developed the following policy reforms since 2018 when the Authority entered into a new phase of rebirth after years of stagnation;



Strategic Initiatives

- Reestablishment of the School and College Libraries Department
- Review of the Scheme of Service
- Five-year audit of the organisational finances (2013-2017)
- Establishment of International Partnerships (Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL), Book Aid International, International Board on Books for the Young (IBBY).
- Financial Clearance for the Recruitment of 191 staff.

KEY PROJECTS

SHS Library Transformation Programme

- Training of SHS Librarians – 701 SHS Librarians have been trained



Library Books for SHS Libraries - 211,157 books have been procured by the Government of Ghana to SHS Libraries

Renovation of Senior High School Libraries

Twenty-one (21) SHS libraries renovated

Eastern Region: Asokore SHS, Akim Achiase SHS, New Juaben SHS, Akim Swedru SHS, Suhum SHS, Kwahu Ridge SHS.

Ashanti Region: Konongo Odumase SHS, Tweneboa Kodua SHS, Agona SHS, Kumasi SHS, Jachie Pramso SHS, Prempeh College.

Volta Region: St. Kizito SHS , Kpassa SHS

Upper West: Kaleo SHS , Daffiama SHS

Bono East: Busunya SHS

Northern: Yagaba SHS, Salaga SHS, Bimbilla SHS, Our Lady of Lourdes SHS





Integrated Library Management System for SHS Libraries (Koha)

 *koha*
LIBRARY SYSTEM

Public Library Improvement Programme

Renovation of existing libraries



Sunyani Children's Library



Accra Central Library



Cape Coast Children's Library

STEM Study Hubs



Technology and Innovation Hubs



Children's Corner project.



Provision of Books to equip public libraries

Integrated Library Management System for Public Libraries (Evergreen)

Automation of ISBN issuance

Digitalisation of Book Processing

Adopt-a-Library Concept

Connecting Public Libraries to internet

Annual Unique National Reading & Learning Engagement Programmes

► National Short Story Writing Challenge



► National Reading Competition



► Kidi fair



► Personality Reading



Reintroduction of the National Mobile Library Service

- School Outreach Services
- Prisons Mobile Library Service Project



➤ Digital Library App



➤ Read2Skill



Hosting of 3rd Ministerial Roundtable Meeting on Information Access



Automation of the Compilation of the Ghana National Bibliography.



LEGAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND REGULATION REFORMS

- Ongoing review of Scheme of Service
- Ongoing Library Bill amendment

Infrastructural Improvements

Renovations between the years 2017 to 2019, a total of 43 service points have been renovated.

2017: 2 libraries renovated. Ashanti Regional Library, Obuasi Library



Before



After

Obuasi Library



Before



After

Ashanti Regional Library

2018: 8 libraries renovated. Greater Accra Extension Services Unit, Acquisition and Distribution Unit, Processing and Cataloguing Unit, Human Resource Unit, Schools and Colleges Library Unit, Bongo Library and Sandema Library.



Before



After

Processing and Cataloguing unit

2019: 27 renovated libraries. Teshie, Dansoman, Dodowa, Akim Oda, Sunyani children's library, Sefwi Wiawso, Kpando, Hohoe, Tsito, Sekondi, Nkawkaw, Konongo , Accra Central Library, Tema, Koforidua, Tamale, Bolgatanga, Cape Coast, Effiduase, Adjumako, Abura Dunkwa, K-Effiduase, Asokore, Suhyen, Oyoko, Jumapo, Akim Swedru



Before



After

Konongo Odumasi Library



Nkawkaw Library

2020: 4 public libraries (Akim Oda, Sunyani Children's library, Accra Central and Sunyani Regional libraries)

Library Connectivity- All regional libraries have been connected to the internet.

New Libraries

2019: Nine (9) libraries added. The new libraries added in 2019 were in Akim Swedru, Krofrom, Bia, Effiduase, Asokore, Suhyen, Apeguso, Oyoko and Jumapo.

2020 (as at August): Twelve (12) libraries added. Kyebi, Kukurantumi, Suhum, Duadaso, Wenchi Municipal, Daffiama Bussie Issa, Essuekyir, Wonson, Ansaful, Atakyado, Gyangyanadze and Moree Libraries



Essuekyir Library



Akim Swedru Library



Moree Library



Gyangyanadze Library



Atakyado Library



Wenchi Library

Logistical Support.

- 20 Pick Up Vehicles ,1 E-Library Mobile Van
- Computers- 100 laptops, 496 desktop computers and 2 Mac computers have been added to the network of computers at the Library Authority.



B. REGIONAL PROFILES

BONO REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Bono Regional Library (formerly the Brong Ahafo Regional Library), was upgraded to Regional Library status from the Sunyani Branch Library in 1970. The Sunyani Branch Library was then under the auspices of the Ashanti Regional library until it attained an independent Regional library status.

The Regional Library building complex is located at Nkwabeng South opposite the Oti-Yeboah Guest House (formerly catering Guest House). It is around the Odomase old road. The GPS address is BS-0014-3468.



Picture of Bono Regional Library

ASHANTI REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Ashanti Regional Library was formally opened on 30th June, 1954. It formed part of the Ghana National Cultural Centre (now Center for National Culture –Kumasi). The Library is located at Bantama, Kumasi, and shares a piece of land with the National Archives, the Ghana Museum and Monument Board, the Ghana Tourist Board and the National Cultural Centre.

It was the first Regional Library to be built in the country by the Ghana Library Board (Evans, 1964-66). The Ashanti Regional Library, which is one of the Regional Branches of the Ghana Library Authority, was originally established as an ordinary branch library in July 1951. It was later opened as the first Regional Library of the Ghana Library Board in the country on 30th June 1954.



Picture of Ashanti Regional Library

CENTRAL REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Central Regional Library was established in 1951 as Plange Memorial Library, an Adult Branch Library of the Western Region which was situated at Kingsway in a building formerly known as SWANZY building. In 1953, the children's department was later added. The Plange Memorial Library was moved to its current location (CC-008-3164) at chapel square adjacent the Wesley Methodist Church in 1962.

After the population census in 1970, central region was carved out of the Western Region and as a result, the Plange Memorial library was elevated to a regional library with the name "Central Regional Library" on 1st July, 1971.



Picture of Central Regional Library

EASTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY

The foundation stone of the Eastern Regional Library was laid on 29th March, 1957 by Sir Charles Arden Clarke. The Library operated from a small room which was then located close to the New Juaben Municipal Assembly with only adults and children's sections and a room for the Regional Librarian.

The Library was funded by the Eastern Regional Development Committee in 1956 to serve the purpose of the regional library. It was relocated to a befitting and bigger structure in 2008 which currently serves as the regional library.



Picture of Eastern Regional Library

NORTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Northern Regional Library was initially established as a Branch Library on the 4th August 1955 and later got upgraded to the Regional Library Status. It was officially commissioned on 21st August 1964.

The Regional Library moved to its current location on the 5th of January 2009, due to lack of space to accommodate the growing patronage of the library and the required offices, both the Regional Administration and the circulation desks of the Adult and Children's departments.



Picture of Northern Regional Library

UPPER EAST REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Upper East Regional Library was constructed in 1968 and formally opened and commissioned on 27th June 1969. The library gained a regional status in 1969. It is located at Bukere community near the regional health insurance office and opposite St. John's JHS in Bolgatanga.

The Regional Library has four branches at Bongo, Sandema, Navrongo and Bawku. It has also taken over four community libraries at Ve, Sherigu, Sumburungu and Gowire Kunkua.



Picture of Upper East Regional Library



UPPER WEST REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Upper West Regional Library was a branch library in 1977 and gained its autonomy in the year 2005 commissioned by then Director of Library Service, Mrs. Sarah Karda.

The library which was formally located at the premises of the present regional high court was moved to the Wa Community Centre in the year 1987. It was later moved to a Guest House in collaboration with the Ghana National Commission on Children to create an ambit of study for children. The present location of the Regional Library was commissioned and handed over to Ghana Library Authority on the 16th of July, 2016.



Picture of Upper West Regional Library

VOLTA REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Regional library in Ho started as a branch library in 1954 and was granted regional status in May 1963. It operated in temporal premises until a permanent building was put up for it at the civic center. The permanent library was however damaged in 1970 by a lorry accident, pushing back the library into a hired premises until 1973 when it was moved to club Voltana (a building used by the region as a canteen).

In 2003, the library was again sent to a temporal building at the premises of Bankoe E.P Junior High School to make room for a new library complex earmarked for the club Voltana site. The current library is located along the Ho to Accra main road, a few kilometers from civic centre.



Picture of Volta Regional Library

WESTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Western Regional Library was started in 1952 in a single room at Sekondi Town council, high patronage and later relocation to the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan office (STMA) then Shama District.

Government later acquired land for establishment of a regional library and on 8th July 1955 it was established at its present site by the Gold Coast ordinance CAP 118. The Regional library in Sekondi opens at 9:00am to 6:00pm from Monday to Friday and 9:00am to 2:00 pm on Saturday.



Picture of Western Regional Library

GREATER ACCRA REGIONAL LIBRARY

The Accra Central Library formerly known as the Aglionby library was built in 1956 by His Excellency Sir Charles Arden Clarke, the Governor of the Gold Coast at the time. It has the following sections: Lending, Reference, Children's Library, Extension Services Department and the Cataloguing Department. It is located on the High Street, Thorpe Road, in-between the Supreme Court, the GCB Bank, Headquarters and the SIC Mall, with Digital address GA-183-1723.



Picture of Greater Accra Regional Library

C. NEWLY CREATED DEPARTMENTS

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION DEPARTMENT

The Technology and Innovation Department has the core function to manage and develop software, systems and network administration as well as have the oversight responsibility of the ICT lab. In 2019, the department developed the Digital Mobile Library App for the Authority and also adapted the open-source Integrated Library Management System (ILS) to automate the core technical function performed by librarians to suit the demands and needs of the Authority.

ESTATES DEPARTMENT

The Estate Department is the facility and property manager of the Authority. The Department receives reports/complaints pertaining to facility utilization, oversees project sites inspection and interactions with the contractors (artisans on site) for progress of work among many other functions.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

The Human Resource Department plans, directs and coordinates the administrative activities of the organization specifically, employee relations, benefits and training.

DISPLAY ART / ART & ILLUSTRATION DEPARTMENT

The Display Art Department is responsible for carrying out technical work in exhibitions and displays. It is also responsible for the embossment of all assets and physical properties of the Authority.

It does all the sign writing, drawing and design artworks for the Authority.

ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION DEPARTMENT

The Acquisition and Distribution Department performs exigent functions to add up to the goals and missions of the Ghana Library Authority. The department seeks to work towards the realization of the 'Year of Learning' which has been marked as the objective of the library and its staff work assiduously to ensure targets are achieved.

CORPORATE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

Corporate Affairs provides the overall visibility for the organization. The department is responsible for the positive image building as well as the overall strategy for the brand. Corporate Affairs is also responsible for the implementation of the organization communications strategy, lead digital content development and oversee the monitoring of the Authority's media presence.

PROGRAMMES AND PARTNERSHIPS DEPARTMENT

The Programmes and Partnerships Department oversees both local and International partnerships while driving the strategic overview and tactical details of projects and programmes. The Department is also mandated to actively seek out partners and sponsors to supplement programmes and activities.

OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

The office of the Head of Technical Services was created in November 2019 at the Head Office. The Head of Technical Services has oversight

responsibility of the Acquisition & Distribution, Processing Departments as well as the School and College Libraries Department and the George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs.

D. SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT

Over the years, it has been realized that the largest group of users of Ghana Library Authority's services are students whose main interest is to use such books as would assist them directly to pass their examinations. There is evidence that many of these students, almost immediately after passing their examinations, cease to read serious books, except magazines and newspapers.

The Ghana Library Authority (GhLA), since the 1970s has found out that one of the reasons why many Ghanaians do not cultivate the reading habit was due to the absence of good libraries in the schools. Even where there are school libraries, they are usually, with a few exceptions, very poorly organized and therefore ineffective. Consequently, students are compelled to depend entirely on their textbooks with no knowledge of the other resources available for wider reading.

A committee set up to investigate and help address this problem in our schools way back in 1967 made a number of findings during its investigations, and these included -

- Unsuitable library facility: most libraries in the Basic, Senior High and Training Colleges (now, Colleges of Education), are too small, and are only capable of seating a very small fraction of their student population.
- Poor furniture: The furniture in the majority of libraries is poor, uneven and generally unsuitable for library purposes. In some cases, there are not enough chairs and tables to accommodate students.
- Racks for periodicals are conspicuously absent from all but a few libraries.
- Library provision in schools has evidently been haphazard and depended entirely on the interest and enthusiasm of the Headmaster or Principal.
- The greatest defect in each school or college was the lack of proper library organization.

Among the major recommendations submitted by the committee was that, the Ghana Library Authority, with its team of professional librarians be empowered and asked to help run these libraries in schools and colleges, and also that, the requisite funding be made available for the acquisition of books and services.

These revealing findings therefore led to the establishment of the "School and College Libraries Department" of the Ghana Library Authority (then, a Board) in June, 1972. This unit was charged with the responsibility for advising and assisting in the establishment of good and effective libraries in all our schools.

DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT (SCLD)

Among the duties of the School and College Libraries Department (SCLD) include the following:

- To arrange regular periodical visits to Schools and Colleges to advise and offer professional guidance and assistance in the reorganization of libraries in our public schools.
- To order and supply library books and periodicals to schools and colleges which would pay the library fees they collect to the Ghana Library Authority.
- To help in the cataloguing, classification and processing of all books ordered through the Department for onward dispatch to the schools.
- To produce booklists, reading lists, manuals and other publications suitable and of interest to schools.
- To conduct the necessary seminars, workshops and training courses for school Library Assistants and Tutor/Librarians across the country.
- To build up a standard book collection from which teachers can examine and make their own selection.

- To also act as the central clearing house for all local and international book donations for schools and colleges in Ghana.
- Assist schools and colleges in their quest to automate or introduce bits of information technology in their operations, vis-à-vis, e-books or digitized materials.
- Any other library-related need.

With the above synopsis on the School & College Libraries Department (SCLD), one can readily see the tremendous benefits that schools and colleges

stand to gain if they engage the Department for some of the outlined services. The office contact for SCLD is therefore provided below for any institution that may wish to enlist their services:

The Head
School & College Libraries Department (Ghana Library Authority)
P. O. Box GP 663, Accra - Ghana.
Tel: 0302 - 915 – 511 Mobile: +233 - 244 - 213487
E-mail: info@library.gov.gh

E. GEORGE PADMORE RESEARCH LIBRARY ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS

The George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs was established on June 30, 1961. The idea of a Research Library was conceived in 1959 immediately after the death of the notable African Affairs advisor to the then President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. It was to be a monument to the ideals of Pan-Africanism and a memorial to George Padmore.

The Ghana Library Authority, formerly Ghana Library Board supervised the construction of the building and after its completion, its administration and development was entrusted to it.

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The aim of the Library is to collect materials on Africa. A greater emphasis is placed on collecting materials on Ghana to build comprehensive national collection.

SECTIONS / DEPARTMENTS

The Library has two main sections/departments namely, the Ghana Collection Department and Africa Collection Department with an Administration Block.

GHANA COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

This houses the collection of all the books in the former Drama Studio but was transferred to Padmore Library to make way for the present National Theatre. It also houses various types of maps of Ghana, all works and speeches by the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah including photographs of all activities on Ghana from the colonial era to the 6th March 1957 when the nation attained

Independence. There are other photographs on all other past Heads of state. There are thesis brought from the Government Secretariat. There are also bound volumes of all state and private daily papers as well as journals from 1955 to date in the stack room attached to the building.

AFRICA COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

One can find materials on all African countries, general and quick reference materials. It is also responsible for issuing ISBN, ISSN and ISMN for Ghanaian publications.

THE ADMINISTRATION BLOCK

This houses the various offices of the library where performance of various administration functions take place. It also houses the GNB Department where compilation of the Ghana National Bibliography takes place.

SPECIAL COLLECTION

The library has six main special collections. These include;

- Local Language Publication
- Padmore's Personal Library
- Files of the Bureau of African Affairs
- Ghana Association of Writers (GAW)
- Noma collection
- Government publications

FUNCTIONS

Over the years Padmore Research Library has performed some of the essential functions of a National Library for the country as well as being an African Library with special emphasis on Ghana.

These include:

- Acquisition, processing, preservation, documentation, accumulation of materials on Africa in general and on Ghana in particular for public access.
- Collection of Legal Deposit. The library is a National Bibliographic Agency enshrined in the laws of Ghana under the Books and Newspaper Registration Act 1961, Act 73 and also as a center for Legal Deposit. It is the Centre for the collection of literature originating from the creative and fertile minds of Ghanaians.
- Management of ISBN, ISSN and ISMN systems.
- Cooperation with foreign libraries in the International exchange of materials.
- Guidance and support for library services and learning activities for the libraries
- Compilation of Ghana National Bibliography for research purposes

USERS

The general public, officials from government

departments, members of the diplomatic corps, students, workers, scholars, researchers and people from the Diaspora.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Stock of the Padmore Research Library is basically made up of printed materials in the form of books, periodicals, pamphlet with a few microfilm/ microfiche from some newspapers and journals.

- To cater for our illiterate clientele, the Library intends to acquire Audio Visuals like cassettes, tape recordings, etc.
- Oral literature, folk tales, local music, information on various aspects of our culture would be recorded and preserved for the present generation and for posterity.
- There are also plans to video tape festivals, ceremonies and rites from various parts of the country.

F. PROJECTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT (LOOKING AHEAD)

Strategic Plan Approach

The plan adopts a ground zero approach. This plan borrows from zero based thinking which enables the GhLA to leverage from its rich experience but most critically, use those as learnings to propel its growth into a desired target strategy, without adverse historical bias. This culminates in an Organizational Strategic Plan Approach supported by the following plans:



Rethinking how we do business is vital to our long-term sustainability. The following strategic objectives have therefore being set for the future development of the Ghana Library Authority.



Talks are ongoing to review the Ghana Library Authority Act 1970 ACT (327).

G. APPENDIX

PAST CHAIRMEN/CHAIRPERSONS OF THE GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY BOARD (FORMERLY GHANA LIBRARY BOARD)

• 1949 – 1950	W. A. Stewart Cole, Esquire	Chairman
• 1951 – 1952	Prof. L. J. Lewis	..
• 1953 – 1954	Mr. W. A. S. Cole	..
• 1955 – 1956	Mr. A. C. Walker	..
• 1957 – 1958	Mr. E. Akufo-Addo	..
• 1959 – 1960	Mr. H. Millar-Craig	..
• 1960 – 1961	Mr. C.T. Nylander, M.P.	..
• 1962 – 1965	Mrs. S. Al-Hassan, M.P.	..
• 1966 – 1972	Prof. L. H. Ofori-Appiah	..
• 1979 - 1979	Mrs. Frances Ademola	..
• 2001 – 2004	Prof. A. A. Alemna	..
• 2009 – 2016	Hon. Kosi Kedem	..

CURRENT GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS (2018 – DATE)

• Chairperson	Dr. Helena R. Asamaoh-Hassan
• Secretary	Mr. Hayford Siaw
• Member	Mr. Kofi Sakyiama Antiri
• Member	Mrs. Eva Haizel
• Member	Mrs. Olivia Opoku-Adomah
• Member	Ms. Lucy Amanda Asamoah
• Member	Mr. Nicholas Buabeng
• Member	Prof. Michael Ayitey Tagoe
• Member	Prof. Emmanuel Adjei
• Member	Rev. Dr. Kwabena Opuni-Frimpong
• Member	Rev. Fr. Michael Awuah-Ansah
• Member	Alhaji Mamah Gado Mohammed
• Member	Ms. Fati Lily Soale
• Member	Mr. Fred Sakyi Boafio

IMMEDIATE PAST GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS (2016)

• Chairman	Hon. Kosi Kedem
• Secretary	Mr. Kwaku Ofori-Tenkorang
• Member	Mrs. Matilda Amissah-Arthur
• Member	Mrs. Wilhelmina Asamoah
• Member	Dr. Musah Adams
• Member	Prof. Y. Oheneba-Sakyi
• Member	Mrs. Alice Sraha
• Member	Mr. Joseph Amuah
• Member	Mr. G.B. Siilo
• Member	Mr. Anthony Prosper Adzaho
• Member	Rev. Fr. Ziem Marciano Kogh
• Member	Alhaji Mamah Gado Mohammed
• Member	Mr. Michael H. Attipoe
• Member	Mrs. Naa Addoley Boye-Quaye

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF THE GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY (1950 – DATE)

• 1950 – 1965	Ms. Evelyn J. A. Evans
• 1966 – 1982	Mr. A. G. T. Ofori
• 1982 – 1992	Mr. David Cornelius
• 1992 – 1996	Ms. Juliana V. Sackey
• 1996 – 1999	Mrs. Sarah D. Kanda
• 1999 – 2000	Mrs. Rose B. Bofah
• 2001 – 2003	Mrs. Susannah Minyila
• 2004 – 2011	Mrs. Ekua Tachie-Menson
• 2011 – 2013	Mr. Omari Mensah Tenkorang
• 2013 – 2014	Mr. Adjei N. O. Apenten
• 2014 – 2016	Mr. Kwaku Ofori-Tenkorang, Esquire
• 2016 – 2018	Mrs. Rebecca Odua Akita
• 2018 – Date	Mr. Hayford Siaw

MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT

• Mr. Hayford Siaw	• Executive Director
• Mr. Sampson Osenda	• Head, School and College Libraries Department
• Mr. Edward Addo-Yobo	• Head, Technical Services
• Mr. Samuel Essuman	• Head, Finance Department
• Mr. Paul Ofori	• Head, Internal Audit Department
• Mrs. Sheila Bruce-Cathline	• Administrator
• Mr. James K. Naabah	• Head, Acquisition and Distribution Department
• Mr. Alikem Tamakloe	• Greater Accra Regional Director

CURRENT REGIONAL LIBRARIANS

• Ashanti Regional Library	Mrs. Elizabeth Arthur
• Greater Accra Regional Library	Mr. Alikem Tamakloe
• Volta Regional Library	Mr. Guy Amarteifio
• Bono Regional Library	Mr. Ofosu Frimpong
• Northern Regional Library	Mr. Aaron Kuwornu
• Upper West Regional Library	Mr. Votere Augustine Rogatus
• Upper East Regional Library	Mr. Leslie Kansanga
• Eastern Regional Library	Mr. Evans Kofi Korletey
• Central Regional Library	Mr. Harold Appiaku Boateng
• Western Regional Library	Mr. Philip Asamoah

HEADS OF DEPARTMENT AT HEAD OFFICE

• Administration	Mrs. Sheila Bruce-Cathline
• Human Resource	Mr. Osman Sibdoo Yakubu
• Finance	Mr. Samuel Essuman
• Internal Audit	Mr. Paul Ofori

• Technical Services	Mr. Edward Addo-Yobo
• Corporate Affairs	Ms. Angela Osei Gyan (Ag.)
• Estate	Ms. Yaa Ampomah Brobbey
• Programmes And Partnerships	Mrs. Yaa Agyemang Opare-Adu
• Transport	Mr. Emmanuel Avanu
• Acquisition And Distribution	Mr. James K. Naaba
• Processing And Cataloguing	Mrs. Bernice Kuttin-Nuamah
• Procurement	Mr. Isaac Asiedu
• Technology and Innovation	Ms. Janice Tagoe
• Art & Illustration	Ms. Abena Agyapomaa Sasu
• Security	Mr. Maxwell Annor
• George Padmore Research Library	Mr. Simon Teye

MEMBERS OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING COMMITTEE

• Mr. Kofi Sakyiama Antiri	Ghana Library Authority Board	Chairman
• Mrs. Olivia Opoku-Adomah	Ghana Library Authority Board	Member
• Mrs. Eva Haizel	Ghana Library Authority Board	Member
• Mr. Hayford Siaw	Ghana Library Authority	Member
• Mr. Edward Addo-Yobo	Ghana Library Authority	Member/Secretary
• Mrs. Comfort Asare	Ghana Library Association	Member
• Mr. Ben Tawiah	Ghana Publishers Association	Member
• Mr. D. N.F. Agyemang-Duah	Ghana Investment Fund for Electronic Communication	Member
• Mr. Edem Yemesor	Ministry of Information	Member

H. CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

BOOK AID INTERNATIONAL

Book Aid International is thrilled to congratulate Ghana Library Authority on their 70th Anniversary!

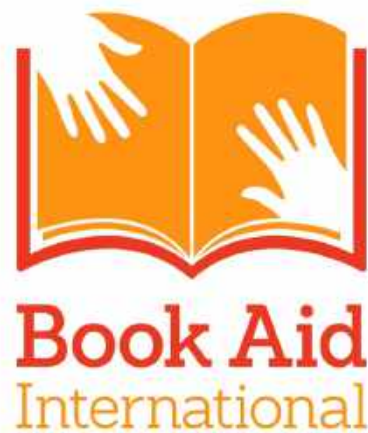
We are so proud of our long and fruitful partnership, which started in the early 1970s and was rekindled in 2018. Since then, we have sent over 109,000 brand-new books that have made their way to libraries all across the country and are contributing to the continued revitalisation of the library service.

Lord Paul Boateng, Chair of Book Aid International spent much of his childhood in Ghana, reading books in his local library. He shares the great value books hold: “I can’t stress sufficiently just how precious it is for a child in Jamestown, for a would-be businessman in Kumasi, upcountry in Ghana to have a book in their hands that’s identical to the one that would be held by an infinitely more privileged child or young entrepreneur in the UK or anywhere else in a developed economy.”

That’s why together we have refurbished *Children’s Corners* in six regional libraries and created STEM-focused *Study Hubs* for secondary school exam takers in two regional libraries and six secondary schools in Accra and Koforidua. Thousands of

children and young people across the country now have access to literature and information to help them develop and thrive at school and home.

It’s been a pleasure to watch the great strides Ghana Library Authority has made since 2018, overcoming many challenges and using technology to reach more readers than ever before. We are pleased to pledge our ongoing commitment in support of Ghana Library Authority and share in their ambitions to ensure that the upcoming generation of readers and learners have access to the books and information they need to flourish in the 21st Century.



GIFEC

On behalf of the entire team at Ghana Investment Fund For Electronic Communications (GIFEC), we will like to wish the Ghana Library Authority a Happy 70th Anniversary. It has been an utmost pleasure partnering with GhLA over the past few years. We consider partners like GhLA assets which we value dearly. On this day of your anniversary, we congratulate your team for all its hard work. Your creativity and dedication in ensuring that illiteracy is eradicated in Ghana through easy and innovative access to reading materials remains unmatched. You have achieved tremendous growth over the years and your persistence to keep evolving withstanding all challenges is worth emulating. We are particularly thrilled to have been able to partner with you on the mobile library project over these years.

With a common goal of reaching unserved communities in Ghana, we have effectively collaborated in bringing a sense of hope to underserved communities all over Ghana. Your mobile vans equipped with our ICT equipment have been a major source of education to these communities. We are thankful for your innovation and ingenuity. We wish you many more years of unparallel success and unrivaled corporate services. We look forward to more collaborative corporate success in the coming years. Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration.



VODAFONE

We extend our warm and sincere congratulations to the Ghana Library Authority on its 70th anniversary celebrations. The 70 years of outstanding service of creating a conducive reading environment has connected the Ghanaian citizenry to knowledge resources which have radically improved literacy and development outcomes as well as transform lives and communities. This impressive feat is one worth emulating and as project partners we are glad to be working together towards the vision of transforming minds through libraries.

The Ghanaian reading environment has undoubtedly become a favourable one today as a result of the active role the Library Authority plays by providing information services that seek to improve reading outcomes, increase public awareness and tackle illiteracy.

Vodafone Ghana Foundation and the Ghana Library Authority have worked on projects and continue to remain very good partners. Our recent joint initiative dubbed 'Year of Learning Project' will see to it that already existing libraries will be turned into ultra-modern ones through the donation of computers, projectors, projector screens, 3-In-1 printers, and 1 year free internet connection at these libraries. We have targeted a total of 16 libraries in regions across the country in the quest to digitally connect

the Ghanaian citizenry. Instant Schools programme - a zero rated web educational portal developed by Vodafone Ghana Foundation will be readily available to be used at these E-libraries and it will also be accessible on the Ghana Library Authority's Digital App. This partnership contributes towards our goal of connecting every Ghanaian to important knowledge resources through the development of libraries

Once again, we congratulate the Ghana Library Authority on this milestone, enjoy the blitz that come with the anniversary and have in mind that Ghana, our beloved country, needs your service NOW more than ever. It is our fervent wish that the Authority never relinquish on this life long journey. We also hope the Ghana Library Authority and Vodafone remain good partners for many years to come.



UNICEF

UNICEF warmly congratulates the Ghana Library Authority on its 70th Anniversary. The theme of this year's celebration - "70 Years of transforming Minds through Libraries" - is inspiring and speaks to the ability of libraries to stimulate all children through reading, irrespective of their background or ability.

Evidence has shown that most children in Ghana struggle to read. According to the 2017/18 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), in Ghana only one out of every five children between age 7-14 years has foundational reading skills and 59% of children live in households with no child-friendly books. Most often, children in rural communities without electricity, internet services, televisions, or even radios lack access to some of this valuable support that might otherwise enable them to learn. It is therefore our collective responsibility to motivate

children to read in the early years so they can grow into avid adult readers.

In February 2019, UNICEF partnered with the Ghana Library Authority to launch "Ghana's Reading Year." We have also been supporting the Community Library Project initiative, using library vans to promote reading in 47 districts from the six new regions, which will directly benefit about 5,000 to 10,000 children.

As we celebrate this 70th anniversary, UNICEF applauds the Ghana Library Authority for playing a proactive role in bridging the equity gap and ensuring that an increased number of children, including from remote communities, have a chance to hear or read stories, develop their cognitive skills and gain new knowledge.

We join the Ghana Library Authority in encouraging all stakeholders – ministries, parents, teachers, education practitioners, writers, publishers and the community - to support the transformation of minds and lives through Libraries. In doing so, our investment in children, especially in the early years, will be one of the most effective ways to improve a child's success in life.

UNICEF and the UN team assure the Ghana Library Authority of our continuous cooperation and support, so that the dreams and the rights of all children in Ghana are fulfilled.





STAFF GROUP PICTURE
GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY

OUR CONFERENCE FACILITIES

GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY HEAD OFFICE



I. NATIONWIDE LIBRARIES AND THEIR LOCATION

ASHANTI REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Ashanti Regional Library	Kumasi, Kejetia	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AK-034-1560
Obuasi Branch Library	Obuasi	P. O. Box 130 Obuasi	AO-17-1094
Konongo Odumase Branch Library	Konongo	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AC-0017-7413
Effiduase Branch Library	Effiduase- Asokore	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AR-0007-8563
Chirapatre Branch Library	Chirapatre	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AK-498-3898
Odumase/Ash Town Community Library	Kumasi	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AK-039-5028
Bantama Community Library	Kumasi	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AK-034-1857
Nana Yaw Baah Library	Krofrom	P.O. Box 824 Kumasi	AK-026-6368

BONO REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Brong Ahafo Regional Library	Sunyani	P.O. Box 124 Sunyani	BS-0014-3468
Sunyani Children's Library	Sunyani	P. O. Box 124 Sunyani	BS-0025-7355
Dormaa District Library	Dormaa Ahenkro	P.O. Box 579 Dormaa Ahenkro	BD-0003-9579
Jaman Branch Library	Duadaso		
Wenchi Branch Library			

AHAFO REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Goaso Branch Library	Goaso	P.O. Box 58 Sunyani	BU-0000-0997
Tano-North District Library	Duayaw-Nkwanta/Tano North	P. O. Box 124 Sunyani	B2-0000-7355

BONO EAST REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Kintampo Branch Library	Kintampo	Near Ghana Education Service Office/ Municipal Assembly	BK-00043-3417
Techiman Branch Library	Techiman	P. O. Box 716 Techiman	BT-0010-3699

CENTRAL REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Central Regional Library	Cape - Coast	P. O. Box 287 Cape - Coast	CC-008-3164
Agona Swedru Branch Library	Agona Swedru	P. O. Box 287	CO-0009-8006
Elmina Branch Library	Elmina Ahenkro	P.O. Box 287 Cape - Coast	CK-0011-4033
Apam Branch Library	Apam	P. O. Box 287 Cape - Coast	CI-0014-0016
Twifo Praso Branch Library	Twifo Praso	P. O. Box 287 Cape - Coast	CT-0001-4538
Abura Dunkwa Branch Library	Abura Dunkwa	P. O. Box 287	CA-0005-3137
Winneba Branch Library	Winneba	P. O. Box 221 Winneba	CA-000-7126
Ajumako Branch Library	Ajumako	P. O. Box 287	CJ-0341-9300
Dunkwa-on-Offin Branch Library	Dunkwa-on-Offin	P. O. Box 141 Dunkwa	CU-0015-8861
Atakyedo Library	Atakyedo, Effutu		CE – 250 - 5936

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Essuekyir Library	Essuekyir, Effutu		CE – 167 - 2134
Wonsom Library	Wonsom, Effutu		CE – 027 – 7579
Gyangyanadze Library	Gyangyanadze Effutu		CG – 1983 – 8753
Ansaful Library	Ansaful Effutu		CG – 1249 – 8769
Unipra ICT Centre/Library	Cape Coast		CE – 007 – 6169
Moree Library			

EASTERN REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Eastern Regional Library	Koforidua	P. O. Box 380 Koforidua	EN-001-5009
Koforidua Children's Library	Koforidua	P. O. Box 380 Koforidua	EN-010-5675
Abetifi Branch Library	Abetifi	P.O. Box 9 Abetifi	EH-0009-3920
Abiriw Branch Library	Abiriw	P. O. Box 7 Akropong Kwahu	E2-0004-1517
Nkawkaw Branch Library	Nkawkaw	P. O. Box 284 Nkawkaw	EJ-0021-4497
Akim Oda Branch Library	Oda	P. O. Box 400 Akim-Oda	EB-0007-6680
Ferguson Memorial Library	Apeguso	P. O. Box 380 Koforidua	EA-0782-2855
Effiduase Branch Library	Effiduase	P. O. Box 80 Effiduase	EN-057-4121
Asokore Branch Library	Asokore	P. O. Box 80 Effiduase	
Suhyen Branch Library	Suhyen	P. O. Box 80 Effiduase	
Oyoko Branch Library	Oyoko	P. O. Box 80 Effiduase	
Akim Swedru Branch Library	Akim-Swedru	P. O. Box 200 Akim-Swedru	EZ-0001-5223
Jumako Branch Library	Jumako	P. O. Box 80 Effiduase	EN-484-4584
Suhum Branch Library	Suhum		

GREATER ACCRA REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Greater Accra Regional Library	Accra Central	Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra	GA-183-1723
Teshie Branch Library	Teshie	c/o Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra	GA-183-1723
Tema Branch Library	Community 5	P. O. Box 324 Tema	GT-018-5391
Dodowa Branch Library	Dodowa	c/o Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra	GO-0000-0819
Dansoman Children's Library	Dansoman	c/o Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra	GA-563-65-16
Osu Children's Library	Osu Regal	c/o Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra	GA-15-8019
Lartebikorshie Branch Library	Lartebikorshie	c/o Accra Central Library P.O. Box 2362 Accra Lartebikorshie Branch	GA-364-1675
George Padmore Research Library on African Affairs.	Accra, Ridge Gamel Abdul Nasser Avenue	Near Ridge Church School	GA-078-0499

NORTHERN REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Northern Regional Library	Tamale	P. O. Box 145 Tamale	NT-0001-2090

NORTH EAST REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Gambaga Branch Library	Gambaga	P. O. Box 145 Tamale	NE-0000-0114

SAVANNAH REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Damongo Branch Library	Damongo	P. O. Box 145 Tamale	N5-00007-2058

UPPER EAST REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Upper East Regional Library	Bolgatanga	P. O. Box 117 Bolgatanga	UB-0014-4900
Navrongo Branch Library	Navrongo	P. O. Box 117 Bolgatanga	UK-0000-4275
Sandema Branch Library	Sandema	P. O. Box 3 Sandema	UR-000-8831
Builsa District Library	Builsa		
Bongo District Library	Bongo		UP-005-4744
Bawku Municipal Library			UB-0014-4900

UPPER WEST REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Upper West Regional Library	Wa	P. O. Box 294 Wa	XW-0022-7071
Daffiam Bussie Issa Library	Daffiam Bussie Issa		

VOLTA REGION REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Volta Regional Library	Ho	P. O. Box 86 Ho	VH-0003-0801
Hohoe Branch Library	Hohoe	P. O. Box 113 Hohoe	VC-0006-3279
Kpandu Branch Library	Kpandu	P. O. Box 91 Kpandu	VP-0006-8759
Keta Branch Library	Keta	P. O. Box 53 Keta	VK-0018-2634
Peki Branch Library	Peki	P. O. Box 51 Peki	VE-0929-7195
Agbozume Branch Library	Agbozume	P. O. Box 86 Ho	VZ-0898-3340
Tsito Branch Library	Tsito	P. O. Box 86 Ho	VI-1825-8870
Anloga Branch Library	Anglo Central	P. O. Box 86 Ho	VK-1621-3731

OTI REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Jasikan Branch Library	Jasikan	P. O. Box 65 Jasikan	VJ-0000-4520

WESTERN REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Western Regional Library	Sekondi	Adjacent to the Municipal Assemble old Axim Road	WS-000-1673
Takoradi Branch Library	Takoradi	P. O. Box 483 Takoradi	
Tarkwa Branch Library	Tarkwa	P. O. Box 348 Tarkwa	WT-0000-5206
Axim Branch Library	Axim		WN-000-7685
Bia Branch Library			

WESTERN NORTH REGION

LIBRARY	TOWN	POSTAL ADDRESS	GPS
Bibiani Branch Library	Bibiani	P. O. Box 174 Sekondi	WB-0001-2588
Sefwi-Wiawso Branch Library	Sefwi-Wiawso	P. O. Box 174 Sekondi	WG-0040-3211

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