Introducing Divine Word University Libraries

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This is a short paper to introduce Divine Word University libraries in general but with special emphasis on the University collections of archives and manuscripts.

Divine Word University is a Catholic University with its main campus in Madang, Papua New Guinea. Divine Word University was established as a University in 1996 so it is now in its second decade of growth and commitment to higher education in Papua New Guinea. The university has 5 main Faculties namely, Arts, Business and Informatics, Health Sciences, Education and Flexible Learning. The University community including staff, full-time and flexible learning students counts over 2000 people.

The University library at the Madang Campus is called the Friendship Library and it was inaugurated in 2004. The library was built as part of an AUSAID Incentive fund project and the name expresses the friendship between Australia and Papua New Guinea.

The Friendship library building houses in its ground floor the general undergraduate collection of over 40000 volumes, over 50 computers for students and staff use, the Information and Circulation desk, the printing and photocopying service and scanning
facilities as well as access to Internet, online library catalogue and external online databases.
In the first floor there is the Gordon Howell room that houses the periodicals section as well as another 50 computers for students use. The first floor also houses the Cataloguing Department and most important, what is known as the Noser Memorial Library.

The main objective of the Friendship library general collection is to represent the teaching and research programs of Divine Word University, as such, the library is currently undergoing an intensive plan to update and expand the collection according to new courses and demands.

Issues and problems related to our acquisitions program are no different to any other library except that perhaps the time lag between ordering a book and actually receiving the item in the library may be a bit longer than usual. Another intensive project during 2008 has been the reduction of the backlog of cataloguing material as well as giving priority to all new material so it is made available as soon as practicable.

The University is currently introducing a policy of reducing the use of paper as far as possible and in view of this, students are given a flash drive which they can use to download material and reading later at their leisure. This is working to a certain extent but the library still provides the printing and photocopying service. This service is outsourced to Remington, so issues and problems generated by the use of machines and the quality and availability of paper are minimized or rather they do not become a library problem.

However, the most important and the reason of this presentation is The Archbishop A. Noser Memorial Library. This is a reference library dedicated to Papua New Guinea studies and is located in the first floor of the Friendship Library building. This library was named after Archbishop Adolph Alexander Noser, SVD (Societatis Verbi divini) who came as a missionary to Madang in 1953 and became the first Archbishop of Madang from 1966 to 1975.

The initiative of founding the Noser Memorial Library came from the late Fr. Michael Morrison who worked closely with Archbishop Noser for almost 30 years and particularly in the field of Education. It is this long association that inspired Fr. Morrison to conceive the idea of a library of New Guineana.

The Noser Memorial Library collection contains:

Published material related to Papua New Guinea. Approximately 8000 items
Unpublished archival and manuscript material such as:
- Correspondence between mission Superiors and Society headquarters in Europe as well as between mission Superiors and the Government officials of the day;
- Historical material from the time of World War I and World War II;
- A complete set of all Madang diocesan and pastoral directives written by Archbishop Noser between 1956 and 1976;
• Log books of mission flagships “Stella Maris” and “Marova”;
• Manuscripts on or about “Tok Pisin” and different “Tok Ples” of Papua New Guinea including word lists and unpublished dictionaries.
• Correspondence, notes and diaries of three SVD priests: Fr. James Noss (from 1943/44), Fr. Reinhard Stefanski (from 1947) and Fr. Heinrich Aufenanger (from about 1935);
• The Fr. John J. Tschauder collection containing manuscripts and documents dating as far back as 1844. Subjects include the history of the Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea, correspondence regarding the History and aspects of the Colonialism and the social development of Papua New Guinea. Many relevant articles are in English or in German but translated into English by Fr. Tschauder.
• The Z'ggragen collection containing manuscripts, unpublished and published material relating to Melanesian studies and in particular to Austronesian, Melanesian and Papua New Guinean languages. A substantial number of word-lists, dictionaries and comparative wordlists (manuscripts)

The current acquisition policy of the Noser Memorial Library is to collect as comprehensible as possible material on the following areas:

• Historical material concerned with what is presently known as Papua New Guinea.
• Any history of the work and practices of Christian missions that have operated on main land New Guinea
• Papua New Guinea literature
• Books published in Tok Pisin as well as professional linguistic material concerning Tok Pisin, Pidgin and Creole languages in general.
• All published material that concerns traditional religions in Papua New Guinea including new documentation on new religious movements.
• Photographs, unpublished manuscripts, music and oral history recordings.

Most archive items are included in the library catalogue and an effort is made to provide a good description of the items.

It is expected that the library online catalogue will be made available on the Internet as soon as PNG ARNET is running.

Currently there is no digitizing project however; much of the manuscript and archival material has already been microfilmed as part of a PAMBU initiative.

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