

The National Institute of Library & Information Sciences (NILIS), University of Colombo, organized a special ceremony on 28th January 2017, to name the NILIS auditorium as 'Professor Russell Bowden Auditorium, in memory and appreciation of Prof. Russel Bowden's services to NILIS, and to the library sector in Sri Lanka. The Chief Guest at the naming ceremony was His Excellency Mr James Dauris, British High Commissioner to Sri Lanka. The Vice Chancellor, University of Colombo, Senior Prof. Lakshman Dissanayake and other distinguished invitees attended the event. Dr. Pradeepa Wijetunge, Librarian, University of Colombo, delivered the Keynote address titled "**The Future of Libraries?**"

Brief introduction about Prof. Russell Bowden

Prof. Russell Bowden started his career as a working librarian at the British Council in Africa and Asia. In his early years in London, he was responsible for British Council libraries in Europe. After his senior role in the UK Library Association as Deputy Chief Executive, continued involvement in Library & Information Science education and regional library associations through International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).

He became IFLA's first Vice-President. Sri Lankan colleagues became close friends of Prof. Russell as he became a permanent resident in the country. He had previously enjoyed a four-year posting here during his British Council library work. Prof. Russell assisted in helping the restoration of Jaffna Public Library after the destruction. He also worked with the National Library, and helped in the post-tsunami library restoration activities.

Prof. Russell worked for IFLA voluntarily for more than 20 years. He served as the elected Secretary and Chairman of a large number of Committees of IFLA. He consulted and advised overseas for UNESCO, The British Council in more than 12 countries – including, Russia, Rumania, Poland, Canada, Brazil, West Indies, China, Vietnam, Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Kenya etc.

In Sri Lanka, he was a Life member of the Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA), Organization of Professional Associations(OPA) and the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka (RASSL). Prof Russell Bowden was deeply involved with the activities of National Institute of Library & Information Sciences (NILIS), since 2003 on an honorary basis. He served as a Member of the Board of

Management of NILIS nominated by the UGC, and as a Member of the Academic Committee of NILIS. He also served on the Higher Degrees Committee, Syllabus Review Committees, Ordinance Amendment Committee, and other related governing Boards and Committees of NILIS. He was a Visiting Professor of the NILIS Postgraduate programme, and served as a member of the organizing committees of the International and National conferences of NILIS.