In Memoriam: Raymond David Lum 林希文
1944-2015

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IN MEMORIAM

Raymond David Lum 林希文
1944-2015

Raymond David Lum was born on January 29, 1944, and died on November 14, 2015, at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston of complications during treatment for Acute Myeloid Leukemia.

Ray was born in Springfield, Illinois, and as a young boy moved with his older brother Frank and their father, an immigrant from Xinhui County in Guangdong Province, to Chicago's Chinatown, where he attended St. Therese School, a Maryknoll missionary school for Chinese children. He received his B.A. in Chinese from Washington University, St. Louis in 1968. While an undergraduate, he spent a year in Taiwan studying Chinese and teaching English. From 1968 to 1970 he was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sarawak, Malaysia on the island of Borneo, where he worked with the Department of Education to improve instruction in rural schools, at the same time learning Malay. Before embarking for Sarawak, while in Peace Corps training in Hawaii, he met his future wife Susan McEnaney, and they were later married in Sarawak. Following his Peace Corps service, Ray attended Taiwan Normal University for ten months and then enrolled at Harvard, where he obtained an M.A. degree in East Asian Languages & Civilizations in 1973. He then moved on to the corresponding Ph.D. Program, at the same time working as a graduate student assistant at the Harvard-Yenching Library. There he met Dr. Kaiming Chiu, the retired head of the library, who encouraged Ray to take a leave from his Ph.D. studies and apply to the University of Michigan for a Masters of Library Science degree, which he received in 1975. Upon his return to Harvard in 1976, he was appointed Librarian for the Western Languages Collection at Harvard-Yenching Library and East Asian Specialist at Widener Library. This position was later renamed Asian Bibliographer with collection responsibility for East, South and Southeast Asia at Widener Library. In 1985 he received his Ph.D. in Chinese History from Harvard with a dissertation entitled “Philanthropy and Public Welfare in Late Imperial China,” in which he examined relief activities of the Chinese state and private philanthropies in the nineteenth century, with a focus on Canton.

In his role at the Harvard libraries Ray was responsible for the acquisition of Western-language publications from East, South, and Southeast Asia. Over the years he took on additional responsibilities such as overseeing the collections for Tibetan studies and Sanskrit studies and served as curator of the historic photograph collections at the Harvard-Yenching Library. He served as liaison for various departments and classes at the university and co-authored Harvard’s “Research Guide for East Asian Studies” (http://guides.library.harvard.edu/EAS). He worked to increase access to all types of resources and implement them in teaching regardless of format. These projects included initiatives to digitize, catalog and create finding aids for some of the photos and ephemera in the collection, allowing anyone in the world to view them. In January 1999 Ray successfully applied for Harvard Library’s first Library Digital Initiative Grant to catalog, digitize, and
make available online the nearly five thousand images in the albums of photographs taken by Hedda Hammer Morrison (1908-1991) while she was resident in Beijing from 1933-1946 and later bequeathed to Harvard. (An introduction to the contents of the album and the publications of Hedda Morrison in addition to access to all of the images can be found at http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/harvard-yenching/collections/morrison/.) Ray curated photography exhibits, wrote articles on using photos as historical documentation and encouraged the library to embrace technology to promote the collections of the Harvard-Yenching Library. His much-appreciated and used column “Asia Resources on the World Wide Web” appeared in the Asian Studies Newsletter of the Association for Asian Studies beginning in summer 1996, covering online resources such as journals, newspapers, dictionaries, videos, and diaspora topics for East Asia, South Asia, Southeast, and the Asian diaspora. Ray served in many leadership roles in the Committee on South Asian Libraries and Documentation (CONSALD) and the Committee on Research Materials on Southeast Asia (CORMOSEA), both affiliates of the Association for Asian Studies. He served on the Executive Committee of CONSALD from 1997-2000 and as Chair from 1992-1994 of the CONSALD Subcommittee on Revision of By-Laws. He was Chair of CORMOSEA from 1998-2004. For three decades he was engaged in significant projects related to the improvement of Southeast Asia librarianship in collection development, technical processes, production of research tools, and microfilming. Ray served as the Harvard representative to both the Southeast Asia Microform Project (SEAM) and the South Asia Microform Project (SAMP) of the Center for Research Libraries. He also served as the Harvard representative to the South Asia Consortium-East from 1995 until his retirement. He was a longtime member of the Council on East Asian Libraries and was the founder of the Asian Librarians Liaison Committee of AAS and served as its Chair from 1992-1995.

Ray retired from Harvard University in 2014 after forty-one years of service. During these years he worked under all three Librarians of the Harvard-Yenching Library: Kaiming Chiu, Eugene Wu, and James K. M. Cheng, and in 2007 he wrote the article, “East Meets East: A History of the Harvard-Yenching Library” (in Collecting Asia: East Asian Libraries in North America, 1868-2008. Ed. Peter X. Zhou. Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2010, pp. 32-53), which details the history of the library since the first Chinese books were donated to Harvard in 1879. In addition to his many contributions to the Harvard libraries, Ray also taught Chinese at the Harvard Extension School from 1976-2007. In 1999 he received the Carmen S. Bonanno Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Teaching from the Harvard Extension School. In 2004 he was awarded the Carol Ishimoto Award for Distinguished Service, Harvard College Library. Ray had a personal passion for documenting and researching the history of Chinese Americans. He sought out and researched all aspects of the Chinese experience and was in the process of writing a history of Chicago’s Chinatown where he grew up. In addition, he served as Reviews & Resources Editor for TransAsia Photography Review, which he co-founded, from its inaugural issue, and was a frequent contributor to China Insight. Most recently he was a co-author of The Chinese Photobook: From the 1900s to the Present (Martin Parr and Wassink Lundgren, compilers, New York, N.Y.: Aperture Press, 2015). His most recent publication was contributing to the catalog of an exhibition at the U.S. Embassy in

Ray was an active resident of Arlington, Massachusetts, served on the Arlington Historical Commission, and at the time of his death was the President of the Board of Directors of the Old Schwamb Mill. Ray was witty, loved art and music, especially jazz, gardening, summers on Cape Cod, and international travel.

Raymond David Lum is survived by his wife of 45 years, Susan, his son Christian and three grandchildren, his brothers Frank Lum and Glenn McGeath, a large extended family of nieces, nephews, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law and a community of friends and colleagues around the world. He was predeceased by his parents, a sister, and a brother, Tsiu Yean Lum. A memorial service honoring him will be held at 12:30 p.m. on March 12, 2016 at the Arlington Town Hall, 730 Mass Avenue, Arlington, MA. Donations can be made to The Old Schwamb Mill, 17 Mill Lane, Arlington, MA 02476 or the Maryknoll Sisters, P.O. Box 311, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0311.


![Ray Lum in his office at the Harvard-Yenching Library](image)