

Jotello F Soga Library celebrates the centenary of the University's Department of Library Services

By SM/AL

Posted on 12 October 2012



Staff of the Jotello F Soga Library of the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Second from left is Ms Susan Marsh, Manager of the Library

The Jotello F Soga Library of the Faculty of Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort has a history of almost 40 years and is proud to be one of the branch libraries of the Department of Library Services celebrating its centenary in 2012

The Merensky Library had its humble beginnings as a small collection in Kya Rosa in 1908 after which the collection was transferred to the State Gymnasium in Proes Street in 1909 and finally to the first official library in the Old Arts Building in September 1911.

The history of the Jotello F Soga Library started a few years later. From 1920 when the Faculty of Veterinary Science was established, until 1973, staff and students of the Faculty used the library of the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute (OVI). In 1959 a collection of subject and leisure material was however made available by the Merensky Library for students in the Onderstepoort student residence.

It was only since 1974 that a Veterinary Science Library was established in a building on the Onderstepoort campus which today houses the Department of Production Animal Studies. Staff in the original library comprised the librarian, a library assistant and a messenger.

Due to a lack of space the library was moved to the Sir Arnold Theiler building in 1987.

On 5 May 2009 the Veterinary Science Library was officially named the Jotello F. Soga Library in honour of Dr Jotello Festiri Soga, the first South African to qualify as a veterinarian. Dr Soga qualified at the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, Scotland in 1886.

Today the library boasts a collection of print, audio-visual and electronic information sources and a service offering that is on par with the latest trends in international academic librarianship.