

# Alexander Turnbull Library

*Report by the Chief Librarian for the Year 1978/79*

The Alexander Turnbull Library is responsible for developing, maintaining and encouraging the most appropriate use of, the National Library's research collections of materials relating to New Zealand, the Pacific, early printed books, John Milton and his times, English literature and the development of the art of printing. It is responsible for the long-term preservation of the national collection of library materials relating to New Zealand and for the production of the *New Zealand National Bibliography*.

## THE USE OF THE COLLECTIONS

The trend towards increased use of the collections by research workers has intensified in the past year. As well, the level of general public demand has increased.

The high level of use by the public of research material relating to New Zealand which the Library is obliged to preserve in perpetuity would be a cause for concern in normal circumstances; with the present staffing restrictions and increasingly inadequate accommodation it is a major worry. Proposals for organisational changes and modest increases in staffing made in the last few years to meet reasonable public demand have not been accepted, and the interim measures adopted to ration services have already provoked criticism of the Library.

A comprehensive range of proposals designed to give some short-term relief was agreed to by the Trustees Committee for the Turnbull Library and approved by the Trustees late in the year and forwarded to the Minister of Education.

The Alexander Turnbull Library Research Endowment Fund was registered during the year with the general objectives of advancing learning and the arts and sciences through the promotion and support of scholarly research and publication based on the Library's collections. The Fund is empowered to create fellowships and scholarships and to promote lectures, seminars, conferences and other meetings. Foundation grants to the Fund were made by the Sir John Illott Charitable Trust, the Sutherland Self-Help Trust and the Todd Foundation. The Fund's first grant was a substantial subsidy to the *New Zealand Journal of History* to publish the proceedings of the Turnbull Conference on New Zealand Social History sponsored by the Library and held in August 1978. The