

Alexander Turnbull Library

Report by the Chief Librarian for the year 1982/83

The Alexander Turnbull Library is a specialised research institution within the National Library to which has been assigned the responsibility for the long-term preservation of the national collection of library material relating to New Zealand and the people of New Zealand. As a research library its primary objective is to contribute to the body of public knowledge by building on and preserving its research collections on New Zealand, the Pacific, early printed books, John Milton and his times, and the arts of the book, and by encouraging research and publication based on these collections.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite the problems created by the growth of public demand on the New Zealand collections of last resort in a time of restraints on staffing and expenditure, which have been outlined in previous reports, the Library has been able to take a number of initiatives to improve the availability of the collections to the public. With strong financial assistance from the Endowment Trust a significant expansion of the publications programme has been possible, and the Research Endowment Fund has increased its level of support for conferences and seminars and grants for research workers. The New Zealand Composers' Foundation has made substantial grants for the work of the Archive of New Zealand Music. The Friends of the Turnbull Library, through their support of the *Turnbull Library Record*, the promotion of the Turnbull Winter Lectures, and publicity on Access Radio and elsewhere, have made a significant contribution to public understanding of the Turnbull's special role as a national research institution.

Six exhibitions were mounted in the Library to display to the public some of its rich resources for research. 'Quenching a Thirst' presented a wide range of ephemeral materials, including posters, handbills and advertisements, on popular beverages; 'The Terrace, Past and Present' drew on photographs, maps, paintings and drawings of The Terrace in Wellington; 'Scores of Sounds' brought together a wide range of materials to illustrate aspects of musical composition in New Zealand from 1940, and a memorial exhibition for Frank Sargeson presented manuscript, printed, and visual resources available in the Library. 'Buildings on Paper' featured architectural drawings from the 1982 measured drawings competition, and a range of source materials from the history of science in New Zealand was displayed at the end of the year.

In addition a number of items were made available to other institutions for public display.