

LATE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

In recent times death has claimed several good friends and benefactors when Miss Julie Tomlinson of Nelson, Mr. John Houston of Hawera, Mr. T. L. Seddon of Feilding, Mr. Alan Mulgan and Mr. Eric Ramsden passed away.

Miss Tomlinson, well known in Nelson for her good work in the community, had a particular interest in the library, and apart from being a life member, paid life memberships for her friends. But because of a childhood memory of her pleasant association with New Zealand born Hugh Walpole in the few years when he resided with his parents in Auckland, she presented to "The Friends of the Turnbull Library" a small fund for the development of the Library's collection of books and manuscripts by the writer Sir Hugh Walpole.

I think I can now tell what she said she would prefer not to be published in her lifetime, something of the relationship with Hugh Walpole. Years after his departure from New Zealand, he came to the fore as a successful novelist, and Miss Tomlinson recognised him as her childhood playmate. She wrote and there was an occasional exchange of letter over the years. She was now in Nelson, a cathedral city, and her letters tended to carry some of the Nelson gossip, which, she says, Walpole drew upon for his later books in the cathedral series.

It was in pursuance of this interest that Miss Tomlinson set up this fund, and also made occasional and generous contributions to enable the Library to acquire MSS. by Walpole as they came on the market.

Mr. John Houston of Hawera has been a member since the founding of the Friends, and has sent us occasional publications and items of information as he has encountered them. He was an authority on the Maori history of southern Taranaki, and was indeed an accepted member of the Maori community, a high honour for a Pakeha. As well as being a leader in his community, he was a president of the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture and a member of the Polynesian Society, whose journal had published several of his articles. He was awarded an O.B.E. last year, and leaves a book on South Taranaki ready for the printer.