

# Alexander Turnbull Library

*Report by the Chief Librarian for the Year 1977/78*

The Alexander Turnbull Library collects, maintains and makes available within the Library research materials on New Zealand, the Pacific, English literature, John Milton and his times, early printed books, and the development of the art of printing. It is responsible for the national collection of library materials relating to New Zealand and for the production of the *New Zealand National Bibliography*.

## BUILDING THE RESEARCH COLLECTIONS

Several major purchases and donations have strengthened the New Zealand, Pacific, and early printed books collections but the overall growth rate of the collections has steadied. The Library continues to receive under the compulsory deposit provisions of the Copyright Act administered by the General Assembly Library a comprehensive range of materials published in New Zealand. Fewer items have been purchased but total expenditure increased due to a number of expensive purchases by the Alexander Turnbull Library Endowment Trust. The number of donors declined from 672 to 484. Manuscript collections added during the year fell slightly in numbers.

The research collections on Pacific exploration were strengthened by the purchase in London of 131 drawings made by William Ellis on Captain Cook's third voyage in 1776-1779. The drawings are described and their importance for scholarly research assessed in a 32-page symposium in the *Turnbull Library Record* for October 1977. The purchase was made by the Endowment Trust aided by a generous grant from the Lottery Board of Control, a grant from the Macarthy Trust Board and a private donation. The Library also acquired, again through the Endowment Trust with substantial assistance from the Lottery Board of Control, two important early New Zealand watercolours. One, painted in 1827 or 1828 by Augustus Earle, is a view of the Bay of Islands looking across from near Paihia towards the site of Old Russell and the mouth of the Kawakawa River. The second by G. F. Angas, dated 1844, is a view of the Rev. Ashwell's mission station at Pepepe on the Waikato River.

The collection of early printed books was further strengthened by the deposit in the Library by the Bible Society in New Zealand of 166 volumes of Bibles and related works printed before 1801. With