

ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY

REPORT BY THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN, A. G. BAGNALL, TO NATIONAL LIBRARIAN

The fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Library to the public (on 28 June 1920) was marked by a number of functions in June and July which are noted later. It may be said that the Library commences its second half-century not merely as a division of the National Library with safeguards to ensure its continuing identity but with a clearly defined role and purpose. By concentrating on the development of its Pacific and New Zealand collections over the full range of Library materials with some support for its rare book programme its holdings will represent the National Library collections in the subject areas covered sectionally in this report.

The solution to the accommodation problem in a National Library building is still some way off but in the short term the occupation of the Free Lance building, probably early in 1972, should offer some opportunity for a more functional organisation even within its limited area.

The Trustees Committee for the Library met on four occasions during the year. Sir John Illott announced his resignation as Chairman at the May meeting and appropriate recognition of his outstanding service to the Library and his donations to it were placed on record. Mr A. D. McIntosh, CMG, the newly appointed Chairman of Trustees of the National Library was appointed Chairman of the Committee at the December meeting.

In earlier reports and elsewhere reference has been made to the need for a Library liaison officer in London. At a time when economy is necessary in various directions it must still be said that the need for a senior qualified person to be able to negotiate on the Library's behalf is paramount and is not made unnecessary by the splendid assistance given by New Zealand House together with the occasional brief services able to be rendered by members of the Library staff coincidentally in London. Failing such an appointment in the immediate future a regular annual visit of at least three months' duration would pay for itself in the equivalent value of material located and acquired.

The appointment in August 1970 of Mr W. J. H. Baillie as the National Library's first Conservation Officer is a most important step for the future preservation of the priceless materials in the collections. The urgent measures necessary to ensure that the manuscripts, paintings, photographs and rare books now in the Library will be available for future generations are overdue.

Acquisitions

Acquisition in the Library's basic subject areas has continued satis-