



Present at the launch of the Australian Bibliography 1901 - 1950, left to right, Mr Gough Whitlam, Pam Gatenby (former ANB 1901 - 1950 Project Officer) and Mr Warren Horton, Director-General, National Library of Australia.

The *Australian National Bibliography 1901-1950* (ANB 1901-1950) was recently launched by Mr Gough Whitlam at the National Library of Australia. Publication of *ANB 1901-1950* represents the culmination of many years work by the National Library towards bridging the legendary 'Ferguson gap', the years between those covered by Sir John Ferguson's *Bibliography of Australia 1784-1900* and the beginning of comprehensive bibliographic coverage by the National Library's *Annual Catalogue of Australian Publications* which commenced in 1951.

In recognition of the historical and archival importance of compiling and publishing *ANB 1901-1950*, the bibliography became the major Australian Bicentennial project of the National Library. All subject areas are represented in *ANB 1901 - 1950*

as well as an accurate historical record of the concerns of Australians during the first half of this century.

Also, the scope of *ANB 1901-1950* reflects the criteria governing the content of the current Australian National Bibliography, as it was considered, desirable from the outset of the project that the two national bibliographies should complement each other. *ANB 1901-1950* lists books and pamphlets of five or more pages which were published in Australia during the 1901-1950 period. Overseas publications which have Australian authorship, Australian subject content or an Australian setting are also included. Serial publications, maps, sheet music, parliamentary publications; legislation; Australian standards; reprints or ephemera are excluded. Serials and non-text materials will be in future supplements to the main bibliography.

The bibliography was compiled using the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN) system. ABN made it possible for libraries with access to the system, ie major libraries and nearly all libraries with significant collections, to contribute entries to the bibliography. Some libraries catalogued their holdings directly onto the database, others provided records on tape for loading onto ABN. Various libraries made records available on ABN following conversion of their card catalogues to machine-readable form and many others contributed indirectly through their daily cataloguing activity on ABN.

Assistance was not limited to ABN libraries. For example, smaller municipal libraries sent photocopies of shelf-list cards or of bibliographies of their collections to the National Library for checking against ABN. The National Library's own holdings were mainly catalogued online from the item in hand but when it could not be sighted a record was created from other sources of information.

Of the 49,436 items listed about 20 percent were catalogued by libraries other than the National Library and 15 percent are not held by the National Library. It is not known how close the bibliography comes to achieving complete coverage of books and pamphlets published but it does include all eligible publications held by the National Library and the holdings of the country's major research libraries. To meet the publication target - the Bicentenary, it was necessary to cease compilation at the end of 1987. It is hoped that future supplements will capture any missing items.

ANB 1901 - 1950 comprises four bound volumes. Two of the volumes contain the Main Sequence; one the author/title/series index and the other the subject index. The Main Sequence is arranged alphabetically by author or by title when there is no known author and provides the fullest bibliographic description of publications listed. Access from the indexes to the Main Sequence is by running number. *ANB 1901 - 1950* costs \$500 and can be obtained from Sales and Subscriptions, National Library of Australia, Parkes, ACT, 2600.

Pam Gatenby

Robert Sharman retires

Robert Sharman, State Librarian of Western Australia, is retiring on 12 September after 40 years in Australian libraries and archives.

Bob began his library career in 1948 as a student library assistant at the University of Tasmania library. In 1949 he moved to the State Library of Tasmania and as the State's first archives officer established the Tasmanian State Archives and the Intermediate Records Repository buildings. In 1970 he moved to Canberra to head the Archives Unit in the Research School of Social Sciences of the Australian National University, and two years later was appointed Assistant State Librarian in the State Library of South Australia.

Appointed to his current position in July 1976, his achievements there have included overseeing the design and construction of the major Alexander Library building, co-ordi-

nating a complete restructure of the State Library service and taking prime responsibility for drafting new legislation for the service. He also initiated the establishment of the Westralian Library Foundation, a body which canvasses financial support from corporate bodies and others.

Bob's wider contribution to the professions of archives and librarianship has been outstanding, a fact recognised by the Australian Society of Archivists when it awarded him its first life membership. He was editor of *Archives and Manuscripts* from 1960 to 1975 and in the last 10 years has worked to develop the present cordial and productive relationship between archivists and librarians.

A member of the LAA all his working life, Bob was elected a foundation Fellow of the Association in 1963. He was President in 1971 and 1972; a member of the AACOBs Standing

Committee from 1976 until its abolition in June 1988, and its Chairman from 1981 to 1984; a member of the Western Australian Committee from 1976 and its elected Chairman in 1980-82 and 1986-88.

Everyone who has worked with Bob is aware of the broad national perspective he brings to major issues. His paper 'Our national heritage: the Australian librarians commitment to its preservation', given at the 1984 Brisbane LAA conference, is a magisterial survey of the problems of administering our national heritage and the need for a coherent national preservation policy. At the State Library of Western Australia he has worked to create a national statistical database for our libraries, allied as far as possible to the already well-established university libraries' database maintained by Curtin University.

Jacqui Ecclestone & Warren Horton