

# Allan Horton honoured by UNSW

Doctor of Letters for former University Librarian

**A**LLAN HORTON graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney in 1949 while working as a junior clerk in the Public Library of New South Wales, which he had joined at the age of 16. In 1953 he became the first Archives Officer in the Public Library of New South Wales and contributed significantly to the drafting of the NSW Archives Act which set up the State Archives Authority. In 1960 he became Associate Librarian at the University of New South Wales. Six years later he succeeded John Metcalfe as Librarian and continued in that post until his retirement in 1988.

Allan's eminence is largely based on the development of the UNSW Library from a small facility run by the Sydney Technical College, to the major, general library with teaching and research collections of almost one and a half million items and a staff of over 200 serving the needs of a large university. Under his guidance and leadership, the Library attained national recognition based on the strength of its collections and the important organisational, technological and service innovations which he introduced.

The structuring of the Library into a group of special libraries with their own staff and with special academic advisory committees was an imaginative initiative toward fulfilling a commitment of service to users. Allan also saw that information technology would increasingly be important in enabling the Library to respond to the University's needs. The UNSW Library remains one of the few major Australian university libraries with a technical infrastructure that will allow the great potential of information technology to be achieved as systems evolve.

The creation of a major university library may be considered an extraordinary achievement for one person. During the same time, however, Allan contributed a steady stream of scholarly and professional



articles and reports on librarianship, which provide a comprehensive view of problems and tasks confronting an evolving profession in Australia.

In 1976, Allan Horton made a major contribution to the formulation of government policy with respect to libraries when he chaired a committee which

compiled a landmark report, *Public Libraries in Australia*, known as 'The Horton Report' which has been the basis for all discussion since of the development of public library service in Australia.

Besides all this, Allan has been a publisher of books. His association with the University of NSW Press began in 1976. During his ten-year Chairmanship of the Press, it began to come of age as a scholarly publishing house, due in no small part to Allan's concern for excellence, his entrepreneurial spirit, and his healthy pragmatism.

He has done important work in the community for the support of government schools, on the Copyright Council, in the Library Association of Australia, the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographic Services, and as long-serving adviser to The International Development Program on the development of libraries and librarianship in South East Asia. In 1969 he was elected Fellow of the Library Association of Australia in recognition of his distinguished contributions to both the Association and librarianship. ■

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All known Australian database producers and online hosts are being asked to update information about their databases and to provide details of new databases with which they are associated.

The results will be published in a new edition of ADDA's *Directory of Australian*

*and New Zealand Databases*, which is planned for publication later in 1992. There is no charge for a listing in the Directory. The Directory itself is also an online database, available on AUSINET.

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