

Farewell David Barron, ACTLS 1977-93

A splendid eulogy from his boss was a feature of a most enjoyable function

John Turner, Secretary of the ACT Department of Urban Services, recalled high points from David Barron's career at a crowded function on 14 October to mark David's retirement. David graduated from Durham University in 1958, coming to Australia five years later and to Canberra in 1965 as a National Library trainee. He worked with the Parliamentary Library as chief reference librarian until 1966, and then transferred to the NLA in the same capacity in 1970. In 1972 he went back to the UK for three years as the NLA's European Liaison Officer, where he nursed the repair and rebinding of Captain Cook's *Endeavour* journal.

He duly returned to Australia and in 1977 went over to manage the Canberra Public Library Service for three months. Except for a brief period, he remained there for fifteen years. In that time he saw the CPLS (now the ACTLS) open

five new branches and grow to become the second largest municipal library in Australia.

John recalled some whimsical events along the road: David restoring Enid Blyton to the shelves—as a member of the Commonwealth Literary Review Board, reviewing appeals from publishers of soft core pornography—time out from the Library as Commissioner for Housing, and becoming involved in the first eviction of government tenants—David as Assistant Secretary Arts and Recreation, then as General Manager Cultural Activities, where he planned the first Canberra Birthday Ball—upstaging snappy dresser Minister Michael Hodgman by wearing a larger carnation...

David's most human face appeared in the garb of a Chinese story-teller in the NLA Annual Report, and disappeared in Santa Claus disguise at various children's

parties. He developed a strong children's service at the ACTLS, and frequently took part in readings, storytelling and dressing up in plays. He was also concerned to help the handicapped, who now have in the ACTLS one of the most extensive services being offered anywhere in Australia.

Canberra, said John, is fortunate to have public servants of David's calibre, a 'quiet achiever'. The ACTLS is his monument. We all thank him for that and wish him a long and energetic retirement. ■



A reflective moment at the farewell

TDK Australia Audio Book Award

Pat Stracey, the Award Coordinator, announces this year's winners

When Shakespeare in *King Lear* said 'look with thine ears', he was obviously referring to audio books. Audio books open the world of literature to a wide and varied group of Australians who, for various reasons, do not 'read with their eyes'. The TDK Australian Audio Book Award encourages and rewards technical excellence in Australian audio book production and promotes audio books as an alternative reading medium to the printed word.

The 1993 TDK Australian Audio Book Award was presented by Senator the Hon. Graham Richardson at a reception at the National Library of Australia on 19 October, attended by leaders in the Australian audio book publishing industry and the book trade.

The winner of the 1993 TDK Australian Audio Book Award is



Hazel Hawke (left) narrated (and wrote) and won an award for *My Own Life*; she is seen here with publisher Di Gribble

Louis Braille Books for their Adult Literature Category winning entry *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje, narrated by Stanley McGeagh. The Abridged Material Category prize (awarded for the first

time this year) was won by The Text Publishing Company for their production of Hazel Hawke's *My Own Life*, narrated by Hazel Hawke. The Royal Blind Society won the Children's Literature Category prize for their production of John Marsden's *Letters From the Inside*, narrated by Denise Kirby and Sher Guhl. The winners of the Resource & Reference Material Category prize were TAFE Publication and the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind for their joint production of *Massage and Myotherapy* by Brian Tritton, narrated by Dr Meg Smith.

The TDK Australian Audio Book Award is sponsored by TDK (Australia) Pty Ltd and administered by the National Library of Australia. For details on entering the 1994 Award contact the Library on (06) 262 1207. ■