

# NLA Director celebrates ten years

On 29 July 1995, Warren Horton celebrated ten years as Director General of the National Library of Australia (NLA). A year after his appointment Warren outlined to the LAA's Biennial Conference in Darwin a strong leadership role for the National Library. In so doing, this meant a strong leadership role for the Director General.

Looking through the National Library's Annual reports for this ten year period bears testimony to Warren's national leadership and the role that the NLA has played in the development of Australian libraries and information services.

Some of the achievements are: 1988 the Australian Libraries Summit; 1990 establishment of Friends of the National Library and the publication of the *Library's collection development policy*; 1991 *Towards Federation 2001: Linking Australians and their Heritage*; 1992 the Heads of Agreement between the National Library and AIMA; 1993 the establishment of the National Preservation Office; 1994 the opening of the National Portrait Gallery and the Distributed National Collection Office, the launching of the Community Heritage Grants Scheme and in 1995 the signing of the Systems Integration Contract for the National Document and Information Service Project, between the National Libraries of Australia and New Zealand.

While many people are always involved in such achievements, the leader's role of both personal commitment and commitment of resources is essential. To me, Warren's most outstanding characteristic has always been this personal commitment to the development of the Australian system of libraries and information services, irrespective of type of

library or service, and when it has been in his power, the commitment of resources to that end. This has not always been easy in the economic climate which has prevailed nor when there is 'serious questioning of the appropriateness of philosophies and operations in the public sector which were once taken as an article of faith' (W Horton, 1991).

Under Warren's leadership the NLA has utilised a broader and more detailed planning process as evident in its two published Strategic Plans 1990-1995 and 1993-1998. The NLA has become more focussed with realistic goals which relate to available resources and to the changed environmental conditions. The NLA has a stronger public profile provided through a commitment to major public programs of travelling exhibitions, publications and to two journals, *National Library news* and *Voices*. The NLA has enhanced its national role of working in co-operation with other libraries through its continued support of ACLIS and its regional role through in-country assistance in training programs and technical advice.

Warren has continued his active involvement in professional forums of ALIA, the Conference of Directors of National Libraries and IFLA, being the first Australian to be elected to the IFLA's Executive Board since IFLA's foundation in 1927.

Warren has been honoured with the HCL Anderson Award of ALIA in 1988, with Membership of the Order of Australia, AM, in 1992, and with an Hon D Lit from LaTrobe University, Victoria in 1994.

*Margaret Trask*



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