

Laurie Brown's farewell



Twenty of his colleagues braved the cold winter's night of June 20 in Hobart, to attend the LAA's Cocktail Party to farewell the retiring (one sense only) Tasmanian State Librarian, Laurie Brown.

While outside all was frosty, inside the warm, wood-panelled University Club the champagne flowed. As at all such functions, one had to sing for their Canapes and Devils-Horseback. John Levett's official task was to give 'an appreciation' of Laurie — however secret sealed orders were to amuse the audience and to embarrass Laurie. John verily over-achieved in carrying out his commission, having the assembled crowd in mirthful fits throughout — the strict laws in Australia relating to the publication of the truth prevent the repeating of his address! Laurie exercised his (limited) right of retaliation and expressed his appreciation to the Branch for honouring him with this function.

We were very grateful that Ian McCallum was able to attend, and he read the citation and presented the H.C.L. Anderson Award. Laurie is one of only 11 recipients of this award and was previously honoured by being made a Fellow of the LAA.

The formalities of the evening came to an end when I had the pleasure of presenting Laurie and Cecily with a watercolour called 'Rocky Track' by Nigel Lazenby on behalf of the Library Association of Australia.

The LAA extends its best wishes to Laurie and Cecily. Having done time in Van Dieman's land, they are released on ticket-of-leave and are being permitted to settle in the Colony of New South Wales, where they will be engaged labouring on a book.

Peter Cohen
President
Tasmanian Branch

CITATION

WILBY LAURENCE BROWN, ALA, FLAA.

Wilby Laurence Brown has rendered outstanding service to librarianship and to the library profession in Australia, to the Library Association of Australia and to the theory and practice of librarianship.

Mr Brown had a distinguished career as a public librarian, prior to his appointment as State Librarian of Tasmania in 1973. He was successively Chief Librarian of the Sutherland Shire Library (1953-54), the Lithgow Municipal Library (1954-58), the Fairfield Library (1959-64) and the Essendon/Broadmeadows Regional Library (1966-73). In his public librarianship he was always forthright and forward thinking, and was conspicuously successful in directing the application of computer technologies to public library processes while at the Essendon/Broadmeadows Library Service. This was beyond doubt the most automated public library service in Australia at the time.

In the last thirteen years the State Library of Tasmania and Tasmanian public library services have been marked by unprecedented growth under his leadership. This is demonstrated in the dynamic progress in development of the regional library program and the Cartland Report on Archives which he instigated and which led to the Archives Act of 1979. His strong interest in formal planning and his ability to see long range developments culminated in the landmark 1984 Libraries Act, which was a total rewriting of legislation for libraries in Tasmania and for which credit is almost solely due to him.

Mr Brown has made a distinguished contribution to the work of the Library Association of Australia. He was President in 1975-76, President of the New South Wales Branch in 1964, General Councillor for the Public Libraries Section in 1968-69 and for Victoria from 1970-72. He edited the *Australian Library Journal* from 1971-74, was an associate examiner for the Registration

Examination from 1963-69, and his continued interest in the Association is exemplified in his recent membership of the Public Libraries Standards Review Committee.

Mr Brown has an outstanding record of active participation in wider professional activities. He was the nominee for the Victorian Branch Council on the Library Council of Victoria from 1969-73, served on the AACOBS Council from 1972-82 and was an elected member of its standing committee from 1974-82. He was a member of the 1975 Commonwealth Committee of Enquiry into Public Libraries (the Horton Report) and has served as Chairman of the State Librarians' Council for the last six years. He has been a member of the Australian Libraries and Information Council since its inception in 1982, and its Chairman from May 1984 to June 1986. To all these appointments Mr Brown has brought his usual vigour, forthrightness and intellectual clarity. He has been particularly active in the deliberations of ALIC, and the recently released ALIC Plan for library and related information services is in large part his work.

Mr Brown has been a steady contributor to the professional literature throughout his working life. This has included many feature articles in the *Australian Library Journal*, the series of *Australian Library Pamphlets* which he initiated and edited in 1965-67 and which filled a notable gap in detailed documentation of Australian libraries and libraries practice, and his pungent book reviews. He was a particularly vigorous editor of the *Australian Library Journal* during his term of office, and did much to build the present high reputation of that publication.

Mr Brown's career has been characterised by a record of outstanding service to the profession, and adherence to the highest principles of librarianship. He is a most worthy recipient of the H.C.L. Anderson Award.

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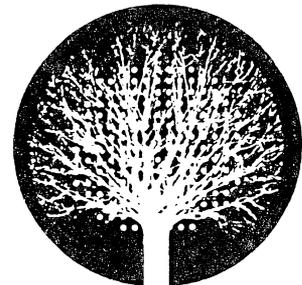
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