

# University of Sydney Library celebrates

Around 300 guests joined acting vice-chancellor Professor Ken Eltis and university librarian John Shipp in a festive occasion in the MacLaurin Hall on 17 October to mark the sesquicentenary of the University of Sydney Library. MacLaurin Hall had formerly been the reading room of the old Fisher Library. Among the happy throng were two former university librarians, Harrison Bryan and Neil Radford, many supporters of the library, and former members of the library staff.

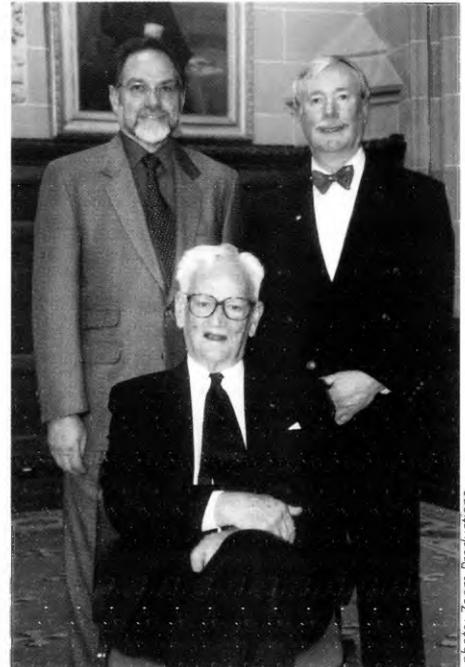
Meredith Burgmann (president of the Legislative Council of NSW) spoke on the library's role in her life as a student activist and Jill Hickson reminisced about her delight in securing a job in Fisher Library. Neil Radford acknowledged the contributions of former university librarians and library staff and stressed the significance of benefactors to the development of the library.

The Library's 5 millionth acquisition *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) was launched by Professor Eltis. The purchase of EEBO was made possible by an allocation from university research

infrastructure funds and several bequests to the library. Through this generosity, scholars at the university will have access at the desktop to rare works which are available only in a few research libraries across the world. The database, which contains the entire published record of the English speaking world between 1473 and 1700, opens up rich opportunities for research and makes accessible primary resources which have never before been available to students at the university.

A few of these works are held in the Fisher rare book collection and the Library holds one volume which is not yet in EEBO. ProQuest, publisher of EEBO, sponsored the event and Simon Beale, vice-president (sales and marketing) flew from the United Kingdom to attend the occasion.

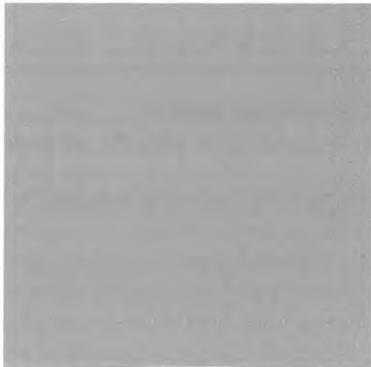
John Shipp has announced that the Library has joined an international partnership of major research libraries, led by Michigan and Oxford, to create fully searchable texts of the works in EEBO. Production has begun on the first 25 000 volumes of the



University librarians: Standing: (l) John Shipp, (r) Neil Radford, seated: Harrison Bryan

project.

For a brief history of the University of Sydney Library see the library website at <http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/uslhistory/>. ■



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