

## EDITORIAL

Through the memoirs of former Library staff, this issue of the journal focuses on the history of State Library Victoria. The period covered by these memoirs is around two-thirds of the Library's history of more than 160 years.

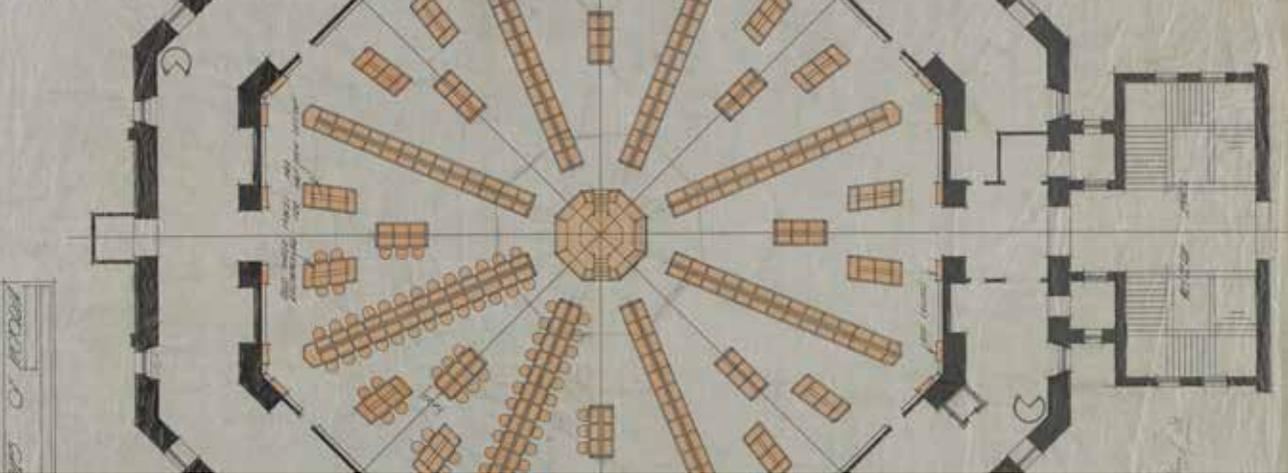
By the time Edmund La Touche Armstrong retired in 1925, he had been Chief Librarian of the then Public Library of Victoria for almost three decades. His memoir, 'Fifty years of the Public Library', was written in his retirement and is here introduced and edited by Kevin Molloy, the Manuscripts Collection Manager at the State Library.

Leigh Scott worked at the Public Library of Victoria from 1908 until 1926 when he took up the position of Chief Librarian at the University of Melbourne, a position he held with distinction until his retirement in 1953. His 'Mainly from memory' has been edited by Philip G Kent, one of Scott's successors at the University of Melbourne and now Director of Libraries at the University of Bristol.

Colin McCallum joined the Public Library as a junior Assistant in 1919. He rose to become a widely respected Chief Librarian, retiring in 1960. His memoir, written in two periods over 1960 and 1962, is edited and introduced by Shona Dewar, a previous contributor to the journal, and a long-time member of the Library's manuscripts staff.

Dianne Reilly commenced her long and distinguished career at the Library as a 16-year-old junior assistant in early 1959 and rose to be the La Trobe Librarian. She was awarded the AM before she retired in 2008 for her 'service as a contributor to the research, recording and preservation of historic records relating to Charles La Trobe, to promoting relations between France and Australia, and to librarianship'. Her memoir of her near-50 years at the Library has been written especially for this issue.

One of Dianne's long-term work colleagues was Peg Anthony, who commenced at the Library in 1949. Anthony then worked in England for a few years before returning to the Public Library in 1953 where she then spent



30 years, including almost 25 in charge of printed acquisitions. She died in October 2017. Walter Struve, another long-time library employee, provides an affectionate obituary of ‘Miss Anthony’, as she was known to most of the staff.

The memoirs of La Touche Armstrong, Scott and McCallum were not written specifically for publication. Obvious spelling errors have been corrected and titles capitalised as appropriate. The Scott and McCallum texts have had some cutting for reasons of space and to avoid repetition across the three memoirs. The original Armstrong memoir is some 30,000 words long and the condensed version published here omits a long section on the National Gallery of Victoria.

One of Armstrong’s and Scott’s contemporaries at the Public Library was E Morris Miller, who later became Chief Librarian and Vice-Chancellor at the University of Tasmania. Miller’s memoir of his 14 years (1900–13) at the Public Library was published in the *La Trobe Journal* in 1985 (issue no. 35, available online at [latrobejournal.slv.vic.gov.au/latrobejournal/issue/latrobe-35/t1-g-t1.html](http://latrobejournal.slv.vic.gov.au/latrobejournal/issue/latrobe-35/t1-g-t1.html)).

Other former Library staff whose memoirs are known to be held in the Library’s Manuscripts Collection, include Ursula O’Connor, one of the first women employed at the Library; George Swain, the last live-in Caretaker; and Leone Mills, who ran the Library photography department for many years.

The memoirs in this issue refer to many library staff and Trustees. To avoid repetition in the endnotes, a ‘Select Biographical Register’, compiled by Shona Dewar and John Arnold, provides biographical details on many library staff mentioned throughout the text.

*John Arnold*

EDITOR

Bates Peebles & Smart, architects, Public Library, Museums, and National Galleries of Victoria. Fittings in New Reading Room [desks and chairs in Domed Reading Room] (detail), 1912, Pictures Collection, H2010.69/64