Welcome to the New Year, new Friends and old

On Sunday 23 November, the Friends of the National Library's annual Celebration recognised the achievements of David Williamson, Australia's renowned and most widely performed playwright. Incessant rain didn't prevent 200 people from turning up to hear the great man speak, and they were not disappointed. Jenny Gleeson, Acting Chair of the Friends, presided over the event, introducing the afternoon's surprise guest speaker, veteran of stage and screen, Angela Punch McGregor. A consummate professional, Angela delivered a testimony to David's career that was moving, thought-provoking and hilarious. David then took the stage and it was inspiring to listen to someone of his stature speak with such humility. He responded to some challenging questions from the audience with the vigour, humour and social conscience for which his work is famous. This was indeed a wonderful afternoon.

Members who could not attend on the day will have received by mail their complimentary copy of the beautiful commemorative volume David Williamson: A Celebration. Hold on to this one: it will become a collector's item.

The final item, Affectionate Transports (produced between 1856 and 1876), is a very rare broadsheet about transportation to Western Australia, and is the Library's first transportation broadsheet on this subject.

These items constitute a tangible and significant donation to the Library's Collection, one with which the entire membership can feel proud to be associated. Jan Fullerton, Director-General of the National Library, thanked the Friends for their generous gift which had enabled the Library to purchase these important items.

Stay tuned next month for upcoming events and an introduction to your new committee.

JAMES HALLIGAN
Executive Officer