

# Moore Library



“a world-class collection”

## Welcome

### Welcome from the Library Committee Chairman

Dear friends and supporters of Moore College Library: Welcome to the first edition of the Moore College Library newsletter! The aims of this newsletter are to keep you abreast of developments in the Library's collections and services, and to offer a small taste of selected parts of our collection. In this edition of the newsletter we sample Erasmus of Rotterdam, in anticipation of our 2007 Library Lecture by Professor Bruce Mansfield, to which you are all welcome.

**Dr George Athas**  
Chair, Library Committee

## The Challenge of Growing a Better Library

While the Library has been collecting books since 1856, the last four decades have seen it mature into a world-class collection. Our challenge today is not only to maintain and extend that growth, but to transform the way the collection is used both by our students and the wider scholarly community. During this year we will be revising all our collection development policies, and I would like to mention three key areas that will be affected.

**1. The Collection.** The current Collection Development Policy already ensures that we collect to the highest possible levels in our areas of focus, namely, biblical studies and allied disciplines; theology and church history; and Christian mission and ministry. Our aim is to support PhD-level research in these areas, and to this end we have worked hard to acquire primary source materials and major critical editions both in English and other languages. In biblical studies, for example, we have increased the priority of acquiring facsimiles and critical editions of the major texts and versions. At the time of writing, our most recent purchase is a rare facsimile of the Ambrosian Library of Milan's manuscript of the Syriac Bible—the basis for the major critical edition of the Peshitta, which we also hold. Our current challenge is to conduct systematic bibliographical surveys to identify areas of weakness.

**2. Access.** Every Library user ought to be able to find what they need from their desk at home, reserve desired items, search online databases, read online journals, download bibliographic information into their own database, print material that has been digitised from the collection, and receive support and assistance when needed. While we already provide all these services, we are working to improve and extend them, and our new policy must guide us through the next three years of technological innovation and new thinking about what a library should be.

**3. Community.** Our long-term challenge is to see the Library grow into a community of scholars, a nucleus for researchers to meet, exchange ideas, collaborate and thrive. The first step on that road is to make our library your library. The development of a great library can only succeed in partnership with its users, and we are anxious to hear anything you have to say, from a simple request for the librarian to purchase a new book, to thoughts on how your experience of using the Library could be improved. This year is the perfect time to have your say, as your insights could make a real difference to the sort of library we become. You could make contact through our website: <http://www.library.moore.edu.au/libcontacts>.

Our greatest challenge? Every Library user

LIBRARY LECTURE 2007:  
PROFESSOR BRUCE  
MANSFIELD WILL SPEAK ON:  
DESIDERIUS ERASMUS

# Desiderius Erasmus (1466 – 1536)

**THE LIBRARY HOLDS A  
LARGE NUMBER OF WORKS  
BY AND ABOUT ERASMUS.  
THE CATALOGUE LISTS  
35 SEPARATE TITLES BY  
ERASMUS AND ALMOST  
100 WORKS ABOUT HIM.**

Included in the works by him are the all the volumes in the critical edition in English translation of the Collected works of Erasmus. This edition was commenced in 1974 and has 48 volumes published so far.

In the original language the library has the standard collected works edition (Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami Opera omnia :bemendatiora et avctiora, ad optimas editiones praecipve quas ipse Erasmus postremo cvravit svmma fide exacta /stvdio et opera Joannis Clerici ... : in decem tomos distincta, quorum primo, in hac editione, praefixa sunt elogia & epitaphia Erasmi, à viris doctis conscripta, nec conjunctim unquam antea sic edita, cvm indicibvs totivs operis copiosissimis ...) published in Leiden by Petri Vander Aa, 1703-1706. This edition is held in the original and also in a reprint edition published in 1962.

There are many English translations of individual works including the three volumes of his Annotations on the New Testament and numerous editions of The Praise of Folly.

The work which brought him into conflict with Luther in 1524 (The Discourse on Free Will) is held in a number of editions, usually together with Luther's response (The Bondage of the Will).

The library continues to purchase new critical editions of his writings as they are published.

In the Rare Book collection are works other than the 1703-06 Leiden edition. The earliest edition held was published four years after his death. It is a copy of Des. Erasmi Rot. In Nouum Testamentum annotations (Basileae : In officina Frobeniana, 1540).

Desiderius Erasmus (1466? – 1536) was the most famous scholar of his time. He was an Augustinian monk but the patronage of the bishop of Cambrai ensured that Erasmus was not confined to the cloister. Indeed, he travelled extensively in Europe. He became a convinced humanist, believing that the best way to reform the church was by good scholarship, especially by studying the Bible in its original languages of Greek and Hebrew. To this end, he published a Greek edition of the New Testament in 1516. Erasmus was also keen to encourage translations of the Bible in vernacular languages: I strongly disagree with the people who do not want the Bible, after it has been translated into everyday language, to be read by the uneducated. Did Christ teach such complex doctrines that only a handful of theologians can understand them?...I want the lowliest woman to read the gospels and Paul's letters...I would like to hear a farmer sing scriptures as he ploughs, a weaver to keep time to his moving shuttle by humming the Bible, the traveller to make his journey better by such stories (Novum Instrumentum, 1516).

He travelled a number of times to England, where he was impressed by the level of scholarship: I have found there...so much common learning, not of the outworn, commonplace sort, but the profound, accurate ancient Greek and Latin learning... When I listen to my friend Colet...I seem to hear Plato himself...What has nature ever fashioned gentler...than the character of Thomas More? It is marvellous how thick upon the ground the harvest of ancient literature is here everywhere flourishing (Erasmus to Robert Fisher, 1499).

The strong connection with England and his friendship with John Fisher led Erasmus to accept a lectureship at Cambridge from 1511 to 1514.

Erasmus was a prolific writer and edited many works. Probably his best-known piece is Moriae Encomium (The Praise of Folly), which was written at the suggestion of Thomas More in 1509 and dedicated to him. It is a sharp satire directed against theologians, monks and others in the ecclesiastical establishment. Though he attacked many abuses within the Church, he was not sympathetic to Luther. In 1524 he wrote Diatribe de Libero Arbitrio (The Discourse on Free Will), which was an attack on Luther's teaching that the fallen human will is in bondage and unable to do any good. Although Erasmus never became a Protestant, an increasingly reactionary Church treated his writings with suspicion. In 1558, Pope Paul IV placed all of Erasmus' works on the index of forbidden books.

Dr Colin Bale  
Head, Dept of Church History

## Invitation to the LIBRARY LECTURE 2007

**Emeritus Professor Bruce Mansfield  
will speak on**

**Erasmus in the Twentieth Century**

**on  
Saturday, May 19th at 2pm**

**at DBK Centre, Moore College  
1 King St, Newtown**

**RSVP for afternoon tea catering  
Email [Librarylecture@moore.edu.au](mailto:Librarylecture@moore.edu.au) Or telephone Julie on 9577 9897**