

media release

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Mosman's longest serving mayor honoured

The Mosman Library building has been re-named Barry O'Keefe Library in recognition of the area's longest serving mayor and one of its most prolific contributors to community and civic life.

Barry O'Keefe AM QC, who was a councillor for 23 years from 1968 to 1991, 10 years of which he served as mayor, was honoured during a moving ceremony and unveiling of a commemorative plaque at the building last night.

Mosman Mayor Cr Peter Abelson referred to Mark Twain's quote citing public libraries as "the most enduring of buildings" and described the naming as a fitting tribute to Mr O'Keefe.

"I'm honoured to be able to formally honour Mosman's longest serving mayor and such a great supporter of Mosman's cultural life," he said.

Representing the Prime Minister, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP, a family friend of the O'Keefes, described the vital role Mr O'Keefe and his wife Jan had played in Mosman's cultural life.

"He was a man with a vision about his community and also about larger ideas," she said. "He loved Mosman and wanted all the people of Mosman to be important in the life of the community. He also supported the arts and knew how important it is in the invigoration of society."

Son and television personality Andrew O'Keefe told how his father would have been "absolutely chuffed that his memory is being honoured in this way".

Barry O'Keefe, who passed away on 24 April last year, was a lawyer by profession, serving as Chief Judge of the Commercial Division of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (NSW) and on numerous boards as well as in various community roles.

In recognition of his community service, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia, received the Centenary Medal and, in recognition of his contribution to local government, was appointed Freeman of the City of London.