



Curtin University

JOHN CURTIN PRIME MINISTERIAL LIBRARY PROGRAM STATEMENT 2011

CURTIN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

JCPML programs support the University's commitment to innovation and excellence in teaching and research for the benefit of Curtin staff and students and the wider community.

This statement supersedes the JCPML Program Statement 2001.

The John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library (JCPML) recognises the contribution to Australian society of wartime prime minister and international statesman, John Curtin (1885-1945). It is Australia's first prime ministerial library and is situated on the Bentley campus of Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia. The JCPML aims to advance knowledge and enrich culture by providing a focus for research and educational programs which engage Curtin staff and students and the wider community.

The JCPML develops and manages a unique collection of scholarly resources focussing on the life and times of John Curtin. It provides modern facilities and services to support researchers and runs an outreach program providing enjoyable and educational experiences to enrich the life of the University campus and the community.

The JCPML operates within the framework of the University and Library strategic plans.

Overall management responsibility for the JCPML and its policies rests with the University Librarian who is the JCPML Director. The Manager, Research Services, is responsible for the day to-day management of the JCPML and implementation of its policies.



JCPML Programs

The JCPML is sustained by its research and outreach programs. The research collection is the integral core resource for the JCPML and is at the heart of its programs.

Through its programs the JCPML:

- Develops and manages the archival collection, including original records and copies, according to archival principles;
- Acquires and maintains a collection of items suitable for exhibition;
- Preserves the collection and makes it accessible to researchers in the JCPML and online via the Electronic Research Archive (ERA) and federated search services such as the National Library of Australia's *Trove*;
- Offers specialist reference services to clients making use of the archival collection;
- Provides a range of educational programs including onsite, online and travelling programs targeting primary, secondary and tertiary students as well as groups and individuals within the wider community;
- Maintains a major exhibition with a focus on John Curtin;
- Develops small temporary displays and travelling exhibitions showcasing the JCPML collection;
- Brings travelling exhibitions which support the JCPML's purpose onto the University campuses;
- Markets and promotes JCPML activities to donors, supporters, the University and wider community (eg via a regular newsletter distributed in print and electronically);
- Publishes, predominantly in electronic format, research output and resources connected to the JCPML collection and programs (eg public lectures, educational resources, online versions of exhibitions, web resources);
- Develops a content-rich website providing access to ERA, information about events and programs, and a mix of scholarly and popular online resources;
- Promotes a high profile speaker for the JCPML Anniversary Lecture series and organises other public events as appropriate;
- Conducts a Visiting Scholars program;
- Hosts meetings and activities connected with the JCPML collection.

The JCPML Historical Consultant, Patron and Foundation Patron provide invaluable support to the JCPML and its programs.



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JCPML Relationships

The JCPML has developed partnerships and cooperative arrangements with a number of key institutions and individuals. In particular, these benefit collection development, the digitisation program, the education program and public programs around visiting scholars, exhibitions and events. The most significant of these relationships is with the National Archives of Australia (NAA).

The JCPML is part of a larger network of Australian institutions with prime ministerial collections, including the Australian Prime Ministers Centre at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, the National Library of Australia, the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library, the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library, the Whitlam Institute, Noel Butlin and ANU Archives, the National Film and Sound Archive, the Chifley Home and the University of Melbourne Archives (which holds the Malcolm Fraser Collection).

The JCPML co-operates with other archival institutions in the acquisition of original records, only collecting archival material relating to its collection focus and respecting the archival principle that collections should not be split. Original records in the JCPML collection are private records, not Commonwealth or State records. Where records more properly belong in another recognised archival institution, the potential donor is informed, thus allowing an opportunity for the institution concerned, the JCPML and the potential donor to jointly consider an appropriate location for the collection.



Clients

The JCPML's research facilities and services are available to all clients who wish to make use of the research collection. JCPML staff offer individual orientation sessions to assist researchers to make the best use of the collection onsite and provide phone and email services to those using the electronic archive online. Clients include:

- Researchers for whom the JCPML offers a comprehensive collection of sources, e.g. biographers, historians;
- Members of the public who have an interest in the collections, e.g. professional writers, journalists, political analysts, filmmakers and playwrights;
- JCPML Visiting Scholars.

The JCPML's outreach programs engage with a larger group of clients including:

- Visitors to the public exhibition areas of the JCPML;
- Participants in the onsite, online or travelling education programs run by the JCPML;
- People attending the JCPML's public events;
- People visiting the JCPML web pages.



Research Collection

The primary focus of the research collection is on John Curtin and the events and people most closely connected to his life and work.

The JCPML develops and manages a unique archival collection which includes personal records of the Curtin family, published items, ephemera, objects, photographs, oral histories, audio-visual material, and copies of unpublished official records.

Prior to 2010, collection development also occurred around a range of related themes including the Australian-American relationship, post-war reconstruction, Australia's foreign policy, and the prime ministership as an office (relating to the lives and contribution of the spouses and families of prime ministers). In line with this latter theme, the JCPML holds the records of Hazel Hawke, with a particular focus on her time at the Lodge (1983-1991) and her work in the community.

The Electronic Research Archive (ERA)

Building the collection more than 50 years after Prime Minister Curtin's death posed particular challenges, with materials dispersed amongst private individuals, organisations, and state, national and overseas archival institutions. The JCPML provides electronic access to these records, as well as to records held in the JCPML, in a seamless manner via ERA.

ERA was developed to provide access to as many records as possible, not just selected key items. Records are accessible online as images (photographs, documents), text (contents of documents), audio or video (oral histories, sound recordings, motion pictures) or as finding aids.

In particular, the JCPML acknowledges the very significant contribution of the NAA in digitising Curtin related Commonwealth records held in its collections and in facilitating access via ERA to the digitised items on the NAA's online catalogue RecordSearch.



Acquisition

Published materials relating to John Curtin are purchased for the JCPML reference collection and listed in the Curtin University Library catalogue. These works provide background information to assist in accessing the primary records in the collection e.g. biographies, contemporary directories, statistics. The majority of secondary sources is housed in the Robertson Library.

Donations

The JCPML actively seeks records from potential donors on an ongoing basis. Every reasonable effort is made to secure original records within the JCPML collection guidelines.

The JCPML has the right to reject records on the basis of its collection development guidelines. Where a donation is offered and it falls outside the guidelines, the JCPML will provide advice as to an appropriate location for the records and may assist in communicating and negotiating with the institution if appropriate.

The JCPML is an approved institution under the Commonwealth Government's Cultural Gifts Program.

Purchases

As a matter of usual practice, the JCPML will not pay for original records. It holds to the principle that it will not enter bidding wars with other collectors which will drive up the price of archival records and lead to fewer records being preserved for public use. Potential vendors are informed that the processing and preservation of archives involves the JCPML in expense. If they donate records, donors can feel confident that records will be stored in secure and environmentally stable facilities to preserve and make them accessible for future use.

Deeds of Gift

All original records acquired are accompanied by appropriate deeds of gift. Conditions of such gifts are clearly stated and the rights of all parties are protected. Any conditions take account of current legislation, including that concerned with privacy and freedom of information.

Conditions of acceptance for donations are:

- The depositor must be authorised to transfer title to the records;
- The records must undergo archival appraisal and be recommended for inclusion in the JCPML collection in accordance with JCPML guidelines;
- The records must be free of legal encumbrances or access restrictions which will diminish their research potential;
- The records become the property of the JCPML, to be administered as it sees fit.

Loans

Indefinite loan and other forms of long-term transfer of records to the JCPML collection will be discouraged. In such cases copying of records for the collection is the preferred option.

Copying

Records which are important to the JCPML collection, but which are held by, or properly belong in, other archival collections, are acquired, where appropriate, in the form of copies, or accessed via links in ERA to the digitised records on the holding institution's website.

Copying of records is undertaken using a variety of formats depending on what is most appropriate e.g. photocopying, microfilm, electronic scanning.

The copying process is undertaken co-operatively. In return for access to collections and assistance with the copying process, the co-operating institution may receive copies for its own collection. In addition, if the JCPML undertakes extra listing and indexing of the collection, copies of such lists and indexes are provided to the originating institution.

Preservation

The JCPML collection is housed in a purpose built repository which meets the environmental, storage and security standards required for an archives repository in Australia. The JCPML has access to specialist conservators who can undertake work on a contract basis.

De-Accessioning

De-accessioning will only occur when records have been re-appraised and found to be unsuitable for the JCPML collection.

Records recommended for de-accessioning will be offered to other public institutions. The decision will be fully documented and the outcome will be officially recorded. In the unlikely event that an item is sold, the money will be spent on JCPML collection development.

Valuation

The JCPML collection was valued for insurance purposes in 2004 and this has provided a base figure for subsequent updating related to the growth of the collection since. Significant collections donated under the Cultural Gifts for the Arts program are separately valued and artworks in the collection are valued along with the University's art collection on a periodic basis.

