



JOHN CURTIN PRIME MINISTERIAL LIBRARY

PROGRAM STATEMENT



Introduction & Purpose

As Australia's first Prime Ministerial Library, the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library (JCPML) honours the contribution of our wartime prime minister and international statesman, John Curtin 1885 – 1945. It contributes to the advancement of knowledge and the enrichment of culture, and provides a gateway for the community to learn about its past in order to build a better future.

The role of the JCPML within the Library and Information Service (LIS) of Curtin University of Technology is to develop and manage a unique special collection of scholarly resources focusing on the life and times of John Curtin. As well as building a unique archival collection, the JCPML provides modern facilities and innovative services for researchers, and an enjoyable and educational experience for people through exhibitions and activities of wide appeal targeting the general community.

The JCPML is a research archive. It aims to provide a world-class collection of primary records in a variety of formats within its collection focus and subject coverage. It also identifies relevant records held in other institutions and provides electronic access to them through the JCPML Electronic Research Archive (ERA).

Use of technology

The JCPML actively implements new technologies for the capture, description and preservation of archival records and to provide enhanced access to them through its dynamic and extensive website. The JCPML has worked with various authors to digitally publish information from the collection for world-wide access by researchers, educationists and the general public.

Because a number of archival institutions already hold collections of records relevant to the JCPML collecting areas, the JCPML uses digitising technology to make copies where appropriate and also uses technology to 'deep link' to holdings accessible via the Internet from other institutions' web sites.

The JCPML improves access to original documents by providing fully searchable text, images of documents and digitised film and sound. The emphasis is on fast retrieval, acceptable quality and added functionality.

“Learning from the past

to build a better future.”



Management Structure

In the context of the University's Planning Framework and encompassing the University's overall strategy of productive partnerships, the LIS Plan spells out its approach to core activities, clients, organizational culture and financial and other resources. It sets out an ambitious vision and mission, and expression of the values underpinning the professional practice of staff as library and information specialists.

While the University Librarian has overall management responsibility for the JCPML and its Collection Development Policy, a senior professional (the Archivist) is responsible for the day to-day management of the JCPML and implementation of policies.

Views on a wide range of matters are regularly sought from stakeholder groups representing professional and community interests.

Activities and Responsibilities

The JCPML programs undertake to:

- Develop and manage the archival collection, including original records and copies, according to archival principles;
- Acquire and maintain a relevant collection of objects suitable for exhibition;
- Preserve the collections and make them accessible to researchers in the JCPML Challenge Bank Reading Room and across the world using the Electronic Research Archive;
- Offer specialist reference services to clients of the archival and objects collections, including electronic access to other collections;
- Provide 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.
- Host meetings and conferences connected with the collection of the JCPML;
- Mount exhibitions connected with the collection of the JCPML;
- Host travelling exhibitions linked to JCPML initiatives;
- Market and promote JCPML activities to potential visitors and clients.
- Conduct a Visiting Scholars program.
- Publish in print and online.
- Promote a high profile speaker for the JCPML Anniversary Lecture series and organise other public lectures as appropriate.



JCPML Relationships



The JCPML has developed special partnerships with key stakeholders to establish strong cooperative arrangements and responsibilities in a number of areas, in particular with the development and travelling of exhibitions, and the JCPML digitisation program.

The JCPML co-operates extensively with other archival institutions in the acquisition of original records and where necessary negotiates joint acquisition policies with selected institutions on the basis that a relatively new, professionally staffed archive with an interest in collecting non-government records, will enhance the future of our documentary heritage. The most significant of these relationships is the one existing between the National Archives of Australia and the JCPML.

The JCPML only collects archival material relating to its collection focus and respects the archival principle that collections should not be split. The archival collection of the JCPML is one where the collection of original records consists of private records, not Commonwealth or State records. Where records are identified to more properly belong in another recognised archival institution, the potential donor is informed immediately, thus allowing an opportunity for the institution concerned, the JCPML and the potential donor to jointly consider an appropriate location for the

collection.

The JCPML and John Curtin Gallery are housed in the same building and although their foci differ and they mount different types of exhibitions, they work in partnership to ensure effective use of resources and programs. For example, they:

- Share certain services and facilities;
- Use exhibition space in a flexible and cooperative manner, especially when either the Library or the Gallery is hosting a major exhibition or public event;
- Develop and conduct complementary educational programs.



<http://john.curtin.edu.au>

Clients

Clients of the JCPML may be divided into several different categories, depending on the use they make of the facilities, services or resources of the Library.

Onsite researchers using the collection and facilities in the Challenge Bank Reading Room include the following client groups:

- Scholars in areas within the JCPML's subject coverage for whom the JCPML offers a more easily accessed comprehensive collection of sources than is available in any one place elsewhere. These include biographers and historians.
- Members of the general public who have an interest in the collections. These include professional writers, journalists, political analysts, filmmakers and playwrights.
- JCPML Visiting Scholars.

All those who wish to use the collection onsite will be welcome but they will be asked to take part in an orientation interview and to formally register as a researcher under the terms of the LIS Statutes.

Other clients include:

- Online researchers using the Electronic Research Archive to access John Curtin related material from the collection of the JCPML and of other institutions.
- 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 such as Anniversary Lectures, book and exhibition launches, other public lectures, etc.
- Visitors to the JCPML web pages.



Collection Focus

The focus of the collection is actively being developed around those aspects of the history and politics of Australia which are most closely connected with the life and work of John Curtin.



The life, political career and family of John Curtin.

The JCPML collection contains personal records, published books associated with John Curtin, ephemera, objects, photographs, audio-visual records, published official records and copies of unpublished official records.

The prime ministership as an office, including a focus on the lives and contributions to the office of those directly associated with it such as the spouses and families of prime ministers.

A significant donation of records by Mrs Hazel Hawke, relating to her period in the Lodge has established this focal area within the JCPML.

Australian/American relations.

Australia and the Second World War.

The history of Australia during the Curtin era.

Little has been collected in these last three areas as they are seen to be long-term goals and while donations will be ongoing they may not be large. The primary focus here would be in developing research projects and public programs. Exhibitions will play a major role in public awareness and education, as will the development of teaching kits, a variety of publication formats, seminars and conferences. The JCPML website will play an important role in this regard.



Acquisition

The collection contains only published material which has John Curtin associations or is needed to access the primary records in the collection e.g. biographies, contemporary directories, statistics. The majority of secondary sources is housed in the University's Library and Information Service.

The JCPML actively seeks records from potential donors on an ongoing basis.

Donations

Every reasonable effort is made to secure original records within the JCPML collection guidelines.

The JCPML has the responsibility to determine collection development guidelines and has the right, therefore, to reject records on the basis of this policy. In cases where a donation is offered and it falls outside the policy, the JCPML will facilitate communication with an appropriate institution to assist negotiations.

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 appropriately drawn-up deed 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:

- that the depositor must be authorised to transfer title to the records.
- that records must undergo archival appraisal and be recommended for inclusion in the JCPML collection in accordance with JCPML policy.
- 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 JCPML collection is offered as an 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 possible, in the form of copies. 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 all of the environmental, storage and security standards required for an archives repository in Australia. The JCPML has access to specialist conservators who, on the basis of condition reports, undertake work on a contract basis.

De-Accessioning

The decision to de-accession requires very careful consideration and 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.

This Statement supersedes the JCPML Program Statement, 1997; Collection Development Policy, 1997; and Strategic and Information Plan 1997-2001.

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