



1998 — Our first year in review

Our first year of operation has been a great success with some 13,000 people visiting our exhibition; hundreds of students participating in our education program; and our public lectures being packed by capacity audiences.

Our research collection has expanded to include personal papers, photographs, oral histories, copies of official records and other archival material relating to the life and times of John Curtin. During the year we developed our Electronic Research Archive (ERA) and digitised more than 90% of our research collection.

This *Review* celebrates what we have achieved during our first year of operation and gives me the opportunity to thank all our supporters who have helped us turn the vision into reality.

Vicki Williamson
JCPML Director

Annual Review

John Curtin Prime
Ministerial Library
Curtin University of
Technology
Kent Street Bentley 6102
GPO Box U1987
PERTH 6845
Telephone: 08 9266 4205
Facsimile: 08 9266 4185
email:
jcplml@boris.curtin.edu.au

Introduction

The JCPML operates as part of Curtin's Library & Information Service (LIS) and relies on LIS expertise, systems and infrastructures. It is also part of the John Curtin Centre (JCC) and participates in a range of JCC activities.

Research

On February 20 we opened the JCPML Challenge Bank Reading Room to the public. The reading room facilities include audiovisual, computing and microfilm facilities for researchers.

Projects this year included undertaking a program to preserve the JCPML's photographic collections and make them accessible to the public; instituting a review of the JCPML Oral History Program by the Centre of Western Australian History; and developing a plan to identify, copy and enhance access to John Curtin-related records held by other institutions.

Overseas, research was commissioned at the Churchill Archives at Cambridge University to identify relevant Curtin-related records which may be of future interest to researchers.

Digitization Progress

During the year we finished our investigations into state-of-the-art technology and systems and developed procedures relating to the creation and maintenance of the JCPML Electronic Research Archive (ERA).

Implementation of these procedures included developing scanning procedures which allowed us to commence digitization of the JCPML research collection material. Relevant Curtin-related documents were also identified at the National Archives of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the Roosevelt Presidential Library and MacArthur Memorial Archives & Library.

Copyright issues play an important role in the digitization process so the JCPML has been busy clarifying copyright issues and undertaking the necessary investigations related to material to be accessed via ERA.

The JCPML Web page was updated to include a new digital project—the *John Curtin Memorial Lectures*. This involved the digitization of part of the JCPML research collection. As well as this online project, development of a multi-media CD-ROM on John Curtin was completed to be included in the JCPML's major exhibition where it can be accessed by visitors.

Education Program

The JCPML launched a pilot year 12 education program: *An Extraordinary Allied Nations Summit meeting*, which received very good reviews from both teachers and students participating in the project. The success of this pilot project led to the development of two new programs to be launched in 1999 and further promotion to WA Education Department and schools.

During the year the JCPML cemented its relationship with the History Teachers' Association of Western Australia (HTAWA). JCPML staff participated in and played host to the HTAWA Professional Development seminar as well as being involved in the judging process of the National History Challenge. In October the JCPML hosted the awards presentation ceremony for the National History Challenge, including the Premier's Young Historian Award and an exhibition of students' museum displays.

Public Lectures

The JCPML continued its public lecture series with a talk by Dr David Day on February 20 entitled: *Gallipoli, embezzlement and a death in the bush: John Curtin's first war*. This was followed in April by Michelle Grattan's talk on *The Prime Minister and the Press: A Study in Intimacy*. Rounding off the public lecture series was the Inaugural Anniversary Lecture by the Hon. Gough Whitlam on July 5. Mr Whitlam spoke engagingly on *John Curtin: Party, Parliament, People*.

Exhibition

Installation of the JCPML's major exhibition, *John Curtin: A Man of Peace, A Time of War* was successfully completed in February and in April there was a formal opening of the exhibition by Michelle Grattan, well-known political journalist and commentator. This included a media conference resulting in extensive media coverage by local television, radio and newspapers.

Extensive tours of the exhibition have been undertaken by local groups, students and distinguished visitors to Curtin University, including members of the Curtin family and JCPML Patron, Gough Whitlam.

Publications

In conjunction with well-known historian and author, Dr Geoffrey Serle, the JCPML undertook the ambitious project of launching its first publication—*For Australia and Labor: Prime Minister John Curtin*—written by Dr Serle who was the JCPML's inaugural Visiting Scholar. In 1998 the JCPML also launched its Occasional Paper series with *The Prime Minister and the Press: A Study in Intimacy*—an adaptation of Michelle Grattan's exhibition opening speech.

Work is already underway to prepare a JCPML Education Resource Series. The first text of this series is aimed at year 12 history students and will be published in 1999.

People

Former Prime Minister, the Hon. Gough Whitlam, graciously accepted the JCPML's invitation to become Foundation Patron.

Associate Professor David Black, historian, lecturer, author and media commentator, became the JCPML Historical Consultant.

Distinguished historian and author, Dr David Day, was the JCPML Visiting Scholar for 1998.

Papers Presented

The JCPML Director and Archivist delivered a joint paper at the Australian Society of Archivists' 1998 Conference: Place, Interface and Cyberspace: Archives at the Edge.

The JCPML Director also presented a paper at the UWA Convocation: *The challenge of developing Australia's first prime ministerial library—the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library.*

Awards

The JCPML received a Certificate of Commendation from Museums Australia for one of its publications. Also, the JCPML Public Programs Coordinator was honoured with the prestigious 1999 VALA Travel Scholarship to investigate new and developing information technology, particularly relevant to archival use and access, including sound and video materials.

Statistics for 1998

Visitors to JCPML exhibition	12,952
Visitors to JCPML Reading Room	1,048
Research enquiries	881

Calendar of Events for 1999

February 9 Launch of ERA

February 9 Opening of refurbished exhibition—*John Curtin: A Man of Peace, A Time of War.*

March 6 History Teachers Association of Western Australia (HTAWA) Professional Development seminar.

July 5 Anniversary Lecture by Mrs Hazel Hawke with an introduction by the Hon. Gough Whitlam, QC AC.

July 5-7 Sir Charles Court Leadership School in conjunction with the JCPML and HTAWA.

July World wide launch of ERA

October 4 Opening of temporary exhibition—*Beginnings.*

1998 JCPML Publications

For Australia and Labor: Prime Minister John Curtin by Geoffrey Serle Cost: \$10

The Prime Minister and the Press: A Study in Intimacy by Michelle Grattan
Free on application