

Curtin

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY



Into the new millennium

2001 marks a turning point for the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library (JCPML). After four solid years of work, we are moving from a period of successful initiation and development of Australia's first prime ministerial library, to one of consolidation in which our professionalism and reputation for delivery of excellence is being recognized nationally and overseas.

Successes this year include the Anniversary Lecture given by the Hon. Kim Beazley, the commencement of an exciting new partnership with software developer Ex Libris, the publication of *'Friendship is a Sheltering Tree'* written by Professor David Black, JCPML Historical Consultant, and winning the WA State Arts Sponsorship Scheme Prestige Award for *Best Industry Initiative Patron for 2000/2001*.

In October the University Librarian and JCPML's Foundation Director, Dr Vicki Williamson, left Curtin University of Technology to take up a new appointment in Victoria. Vicki's leadership and vision have been integral to the successful development of JCPML. We will miss Vicki greatly, but wish her well in her new position and thank her for her amazing contribution to building a strong foundation for the JCPML.

I would like to thank the JCPML team and Library and Information Service staff for their commitment to JCPML. I would also like to thank our supporters for their continued interest and encouragement.

Sue White
Acting University Librarian



JOHN CURTIN PRIME MINISTERIAL LIBRARY

JCPML



BACKGROUND

The John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library (JCPML) operates as an integral part of the Library and Information Service and is also part of the John Curtin Centre. During 2001 the JCPML extended the reach of its unique learning and research collection of archival materials relating to the life and times of John Curtin and the office of the prime minister. As Australia's first prime ministerial library the JCPML contributes to the University's prestige both locally, nationally and internationally and raises the profile of the 'John Curtin' name.

DIGITIZATION PROGRESS

The JCPML Electronic Research Archive (ERA) has been further developed this year with a new advance in collection access pioneered by the JCPML and National Archives of Australia (NAA). 'Deeplinking' from the ERA database to the NAA RecordSearch database enables researchers to link directly to the item and view that record from ERA, allowing a seamless interface. This method of linking will greatly increase convenience for researchers.

In 2001 the JCPML commenced digitization of its video holdings and although these holdings are not extensive they add a new dimension for researchers.

At the end of the year the JCPML commenced a partnership with software developer Ex Libris to work collaboratively on developing scholarly information systems for the 21st century. The establishment of the partnership recognizes the JCPML's early adoption of a digitization strategy which has staff well-placed to make a significant contribution to Ex Libris' developmental work on Digitool – a new product that will include all the tools required to build and manage the JCPML collection and the Electronic Research Archive.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENTS

A range of new online resources were developed during the year. These include 'John Curtin: From revolutionary firebrand to journalist in spirit' which explores Curtin's relationship with journalism and the press; digitization of our very popular exhibition 'John Curtin: A man of peace, a time of war' to make it available online; 'Understanding society through its documents' which is part of the JCPML's ongoing endeavour to contribute to the development and promotion of archives; and development of an online tutorial for ERA.

An exciting addition to the website was the use of panoramas which allow users to 'walk through' the JCPML premises or the online exhibition. As part of its commitment to education, the JCPML undertook an ambitious project to develop a series of user-friendly interactive guides and quizzes to add to our digital projects.



EXHIBITIONS

During 2001 the JCPML hosted a travelling exhibition from the Australian War Memorial, *Soldier for a crisis: Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey*. The exhibition was opened on 8 October by the Governor of WA, Lieutenant General John Sanderson, and provided a look at the remarkable career of Australia's most prominent military figure of WWII. Nearly 2000 people visited the exhibition during the month it was on display at the JCPML.

The JCPML's major exhibition was aimed at helping celebrate the centenary of Federation during 2001 and was an exploration through the eyes of John Curtin of what it means to be a nation. The exhibition served as a showcase for material in the JCPML collection and was widely used in conjunction with school visits.

LECTURES

The JCPML Anniversary Lecture commemorating the death of John Curtin was given to a capacity audience by the Hon. Kim Beazley. His lecture 'John Curtin's abiding vision' was a tribute to Curtin's leadership, highlighting Curtin's strengths as a strategist and tactician and his plans for postwar Australia. Calling John Curtin 'Australia's most

complex prime minister' Mr Beazley explored the ways in which his abiding legacy remains relevant and important in the 21st century.

Two other lectures were given by JCPML Visiting Scholars Dr John Edwards and Professor Peter Edwards. In April John Edwards gave a lecture exploring the way certain major events in the first six months of Curtin's prime ministership define our thinking about him.

2001 marked the 60th anniversary of John Curtin's assumption of the prime ministership of Australia and as part of the celebrations recognizing John Curtin Day, Professor Peter Edwards gave a lecture entitled 'From Curtin to Beazley: Labor leaders and the American alliance.'

RESEARCH

As part of the major upgrade and revamp of research software, the JCPML installed a new version of Archive Manager to manage the collection and created an improved version of the Collections Information spreadsheet to keep track of material that has been identified as being relevant to the JCPML collection. This information is held in both institutional collections and private hands and the spreadsheet tracks what actions have been taken for future reference.

Material which has been added to the collection during the year includes a significant selection of material from the Arthur Calwell papers held by the National Library of Australia and relating to John Curtin; the addition of the weekly articles written by journalist Ross Gollan for the *Sydney*

Morning Herald between 1941 and 1945, the years of John Curtin's prime ministership; and all the articles and editorials identified as being written by John Curtin in the *Daily News*, *West Australian* and *Timber Worker* newspapers.

Significant research assistance and collaboration was provided for publications being authored by JCPML Visiting Scholars, Professor David Black, Dr John Edwards and Professor Peter Edwards. Collaboration this year with the Division of Humanities and the new Australian Studies centre offers significant developmental opportunities in a number of areas, including continued involvement in the Sir Charles Court Young Leaders Program.

PUBLICATIONS

A new *Program Statement* incorporating our collection development policy and collection focus was published.

David Black's book *'Friendship is a Sheltering Tree': John Curtin's Letters 1907 to 1945* was launched in February by Professor Tom Stannage. This is the first time the letters chronicling Curtin's relationship with his wife Elsie have been published in full. The book garnered considerable publicity and was featured in *Hindsight*, a program broadcast by ABC Radio National. It has been a very successful publication for the JCPML.

In July the JCPML sponsored a special edition of the *Australian Journal of International Affairs* to mark the 50th anniversary of the ANZUS Security Treaty. The close

association between the US and Australia is generally regarded as having been initiated by John Curtin during World War Two and this relationship is one of the focus areas for the JCPML collection. This edition was edited by Professor Peter Edwards, 2001 JCPML Visiting Scholar, and includes an article written by him examining the strong relationship between Curtin and General Douglas MacArthur.

AWARDS

The JCPML was presented with a WA State Arts Sponsorship Scheme Prestige Award for *Best Industry Initiative Patron for 2000/2001*. The awards give recognition to corporate sector sponsorship of the arts and over 100 nominations were received for the six Prestige Awards. The JCPML was acknowledged for its pro-active partnership with the Perth Theatre Company to develop a play about the relationship between John Curtin and Douglas MacArthur.

The JCPML's Archivist, Kandy-Jane Henderson, was appointed by the Governor as a member of the newly established State Records Commission which will report directly to Parliament on the performance of government agencies' recordkeeping.

SPONSORSHIP

In 2001 the JCPML was fortunate to receive generous sponsorship for two diverse projects. With sponsorship from MRG International, a promotional video of the JCPML was created for use at conferences, exhibitions and other events. The video gives an overview of the facilities and activities of Australia's

first prime ministerial library and is important in explaining the role of a prime ministerial library in Australia.

Thanks to sponsorship from the Water Corporation the JCPML has undertaken to produce a digital project, tentatively titled 'War & Peace, Rationing & Rebuilding' about life in suburban WA during the 1940s.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

A significant development in the education program for 2001 was taking the program to remote sites. With a grant from the Public Education Endowment Trust a Treasure Box was designed as a travelling learning centre for students in years 5 to 7. The Treasure Box was booked out almost continually during 2001. The Education Officer also trialed the first of her country visits, taking the high school program to the Albany district. A new roleplay on postwar reconstruction was also piloted for full development in 2002.

In association with the History Teachers' Association of WA (HTAWA), the JCPML hosted and participated in the judging of the WA entries for the National History Challenge. The theme for 2001 was 'Making our nation in Australian history' and the JCPML sponsored a special award for the life and times of John Curtin. The JCPML also hosted the Professional Development Day for HTAWA.

Once again JCPML staff contributed to the success of the annual Sir Charles Court Young Leaders program by

serving on the management and planning committees and providing a role play activity for the students.

PAPERS PRESENTED

In March the Archivist presented a session on meeting researchers' needs in a digital environment for the 2001 National Archives of Australia/ Council of Federal State and Territory Archives Residential School held in the ACT.

In May JCPML's Public Programs Coordinator attended the EDUCAUSE Conference in Brisbane to deliver a paper on 'No Discernable Difference: Technology takes borderless education outback'.

The JCPML Archivist and University Librarian presented a paper on 'Collaborative partnerships: Developing ERA and public programs at the JCPML' at the Society of American Archivists 6th Annual Meeting in Washington DC.

In August Archives Technician David Wylie attended the ALIA National Library Technicians Conference in Hobart to present his paper, 'What to do with the fish tank? Practical storage solutions for archives and special libraries'.

Dr Vicki Williamson presented a paper at the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library Conference, 'Someone special: Issues in the development of person specific libraries, archives and collections', in October.

Statistics for 2001

Visitors to JCPML exhibition	13 565*
Visitors to JCPML Reading Room	462
Participation in education program	1 540
Research Enquiries	2 008
Website hits	19 930
ERA usage	3 251

*Gallery closed January and for 10 days during every six week exhibition period

Calendar of events 2002

- July 5 Anniversary Lecture by the Hon. Paul Keating
- July 7-10 Sir Charles Court Leadership Program in conjunction with HTAWA
- September 26 Opening of JCPML exhibition 'John Curtin's Legacy' and JCPML/JCG joint exhibition 'Without Classification: Hazel Hawke and the 1980s'

JCPML Publications

'Friendship is a Sheltering Tree': John Curtin's Letters 1907 to 1945 by David Black RRP: \$29.70

For Australia and Labor: Prime Minister John Curtin by Geoffrey Serle RRP: \$11

John Curtin's Legacy: A series of public lectures from the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library RRP: \$11

John Curtin and International Relations during World War II: JCPML Education Series Resource RRP: \$38.50



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