

THE JOHN CURTIN CENTRE

news...

OCTOBER 1994

Message from the Vice- Chancellor

It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity in the inaugural John Curtin Centre News to publicly acknowledge the many who have so generously supported The John Curtin Centre and helped make it a reality.

It is fitting, that at a time when Australia is striving to position itself in the Asia Pacific Indian Ocean region, tribute be paid to John Curtin. It was Curtin, as prime minister, who initiated the transition in the nation's focus away from Europe to its more immediate regional neighbours.

Today, almost fifty years after his death, The John Curtin Centre will honour his contribution by continuing to forge and strengthen links with countries in our region.

The groundbreaking ceremony at the site of The John Curtin Centre on the campus of Curtin University should be looked upon with a great sense of achievement.

Funding for this first stage of the project—the Prime Ministerial Library and Gallery—has been raised from government, corporations and individuals in Australia, the United States and South East Asia.

Key local, national and international business people have given of their time to ensure the establishment of the Centre. Without their help the project would not have gone ahead.

There is strong national and international support for The John Curtin Centre.

For my own part, I have been working with the Chairman of the U.S. Committee of The John Curtin Centre, Mr Ray Johnson

Update...

The John Curtin Centre groundbreaking ceremony at Curtin University on October 21 is the culmination of five years' detailed planning. Executive Director of The John Curtin Centre, Mr David Waddell, has worked on the project since its inception and has seen it grow to become a reality.

"The successful detailed planning and activity of The John Curtin Centre provides a strong base upon which to build a centre of national and international importance, a centre whose origins commemorate the past—but focus strongly on the future," Mr Waddell said.

"Significant progress has been made towards the establishment of the Centre with a whole series of initiatives having been undertaken within the Library and the International Institute," he said.

These include the appointment of a project officer and the establishment of a collections policy within the Library. Work has commenced on the cataloguing of books from Mr Curtin's personal collection and shortly archival material will be sought. Discussions with the architects are progressing and the final detailed plan for the Prime Ministerial archives will soon be available.

The John Curtin International Institute has also made considerable progress in strengthening links with countries of the region and ensuring recognition of the needs of the region as a whole. The focus of activity will now turn to raising financial support for the Institute. A detailed business plan has been developed.

It is planned to have the John Curtin International Institute permanently endowed within the next five years.

"Given the strong support received to date and the imminent construction of the Centre, I'm confident that financial support for the John Curtin International Institute will be forthcoming", Mr Waddell said.

AO, retired Chairman of Caltex. We have made important contacts with major American corporations and foundations and established or reinforced links with educational institutions.

Efforts have been aimed at gaining financial support for the Centre both in terms of direct donations for buildings or in the provision of scholarships which will promote cross-cultural exchange.

These activities have resulted in welcome spin-offs for the University, with support received for joint study tours involving Australian and American students in Asia. Already two such tours have been successfully completed. Further submissions for joint initiatives have recently been received.

Earlier this year I attended a John Curtin Centre consultation in Washington. Representatives from the United States, Asia and the Pacific region took part, providing useful guidelines for the structure and programs of what will be the educational heart of the John Curtin Centre, the International Institute.

Efforts will now continue in earnest, within Australia and overseas, to develop the Institute which will aim to attract future leaders of the countries in our region. This facility is based on the belief that cooperation and collaboration between the regional nations must be maintained and strengthened if all communities are to prosper. It will be a place where Australians and people from across the world will work and learn together.

We look forward to your continuing support for The John Curtin Centre as the project shifts into this second stage of its development and beyond.

John E Maloney

John E Maloney

Where is Australia?



Chairman of the Australia-Indonesia Institute, Mr Richard Woolcott (right) and Major General Moinul Hussain Choudhury, High Commissioner, People's Republic of Bangladesh at the Canberra consultation.

Universities have an important role to play in removing misconceptions in the wider community about Australia in Asia and about Asian countries in Australia, according to a senior international diplomat.

Former Secretary to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Richard Woolcott AO, was addressing a recent consultation held in Canberra to raise the profile of the John Curtin Centre International Institute and seek advice on its future direction.

Mr Woolcott said that Australians must acknowledge the nation's future would be largely determined by the success and speed of our adjustment to the Asia Pacific Indian Ocean region.

Mr Woolcott, currently Chairman of The Australia-Indonesia Institute, is a widely respected international figure, having served as Ambassador to Indonesia, the Philippines, and the United Nations. He has held senior diplomatic posts in Malaysia and Singapore and been an Australian delegate to the ASEAN and APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation) forums.

Mr Woolcott said the argument about whether Australia is part of Asia or not was something of a red

herring—socially, culturally and historically Australia is the odd man out.

"The real issue is that Australia is comprehensively engaged with Asia politically, economically, in security terms and really in every way," Mr Woolcott said.

"The question we have to ask is how do we engage ourselves more actively, more regularly and more substantially with our neighbours—and education is an important link in that chain."

"Some Asian neighbours continued to see Australians as moralising, self-righteous and perhaps even lazy," he said.

Mr Woolcott said Australia needed to convince its Asian neighbours that despite obvious cultural and historical differences it was genuine in its policy thrust for regional cooperation.

He said there were political, economic, strategic, development assistance and cultural dimensions associated with Australia's shift towards regional cooperation.

Over the past 10 years, Australia had established important political and economic ties with the region through frequent ministerial exchange visits and forums, bilateral trade agreements, development aid programs, involvement with APEC and other initiatives.

"Asia accounts for well over half Australia's trade, and trade with the six ASEAN countries is now larger than our trade with the European community," Mr Woolcott said.

"Strategically Australia's security is absolutely tied up with the Asian region," he said. In recent years there's been a major shift in Australia's defence policy, which will see our defence as a cooperative arrangement in and with Asia."

Mr Woolcott pointed to the increasing number of students from South East or Northern Asia attending Australian universities as an obvious and dramatic change from past decades.

Mr Woolcott said Australia could learn from and had much to offer the countries of the Region and it

was appropriate that an important element of The John Curtin Centre project was the establishment of the International Institute.

Executive Director of The John Curtin Centre, Mr David Waddell, said Mr Woolcott's comments had prompted frank and open

discussion among the range of Ambassadors, High Commissioners and government delegates who attended the consultation.

"The exchange of ideas identified future directions for The John Curtin Centre and emphasised its continuing focus on cross cultural activities to promote mutual understanding in the region," Mr Waddell said.

Another consultation, involving business, government and Curtin Alumni representatives, is planned to take place in Singapore in December.

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Leading the Nation-The Prime Ministerial Library and Gallery

The John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library and Gallery will open to the public in 1997.

Architectural details are being finalised and site works for the Library and Gallery complex are scheduled to begin almost immediately.

It is envisaged that the Library, comprising archival and memorabilia collections, will provide a focus for scholarship and research. The collections will focus on John Curtin, his life and times and those themes in Australian history which he exemplifies.

The Gallery will be used to promote cultural and educational awareness of the arts within the University and the wider community.

Associate Professor John Teschendorff, representing the Artworks Management Committee, said the Gallery will house the University's extensive art collection.

"The Gallery will enable more of this collection to be displayed than has previously been possible," Professor Teschendorff said.

"It will also act as host to visiting historical and art exhibitions. School parties will be welcome, and study materials will be prepared based on the library and art collections," he said.

The University Librarian, Ms Vicki Williamson, who will be responsible for the John Curtin Centre Library believes the facility goes beyond a model of the United States' presidential libraries.

"We're taking a clearly successful idea and modifying and adapting it to create something uniquely Australian," she said.

"It is a fresh concept that pulls together a number of themes and encompasses the preservation and collection of our cultural heritage, making it available to the public for recreational and educational purposes."

The Library will offer sophisticated research facilities, electronic access to other collections and the hosting of meetings and conferences relating to the collections.

Innovative technology will be used to package and distribute materials to potential users worldwide.

"In terms of our proposed use of modern information technology to make materials more accessible, the John Curtin Centre Library will be exploring new territory," said Ms Williamson.

In an exciting development, an arrangement is nearing completion with the Australian Archives, which would see the John Curtin Centre Library involved with a national exhibition about the former prime minister, at the old Parliament house in Canberra next year, the 50th anniversary of his death. It is hoped to unveil The John Curtin Centre Foundation stone at the launch of the exhibition.

Work will begin soon to catalogue materials which currently form the John Curtin Collection, temporarily housed in the University's TL Robertson Library.

This material includes books from John Curtin's personal collection

and a run of the Westralian Worker newspaper from the period of Curtin's editorship.

As well as archival exhibits of historical significance, Ms Williamson is keen to gather material which commemorates John Curtin.

To this end the collection was boosted recently with the presentation of a set of framed stamps, first day cover and postcard

commemorating the five prime ministers of Australia who held office during World War II—and features John Curtin.

The stamps issue was timely because an approach will soon be made to the public for memorabilia associated with John Curtin.

"John Curtin is a relatively poorly represented Australian prime minister as far as non official papers and other memorabilia are concerned," Ms Williamson said.

"It's hoped that publicity about the establishment of the Library will lead to the identification of more material which is currently privately owned," she said.

A professional archival service is also planned to encourage members of the public to come forward.

The John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library and Gallery will open to the public in 1997



Australia Post's Richard Scriven (right) presents Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lance Twomey with a set of framed stamps honouring Australia's wartime prime minister John Curtin.

Proposed Structure of The John Curtin Centre

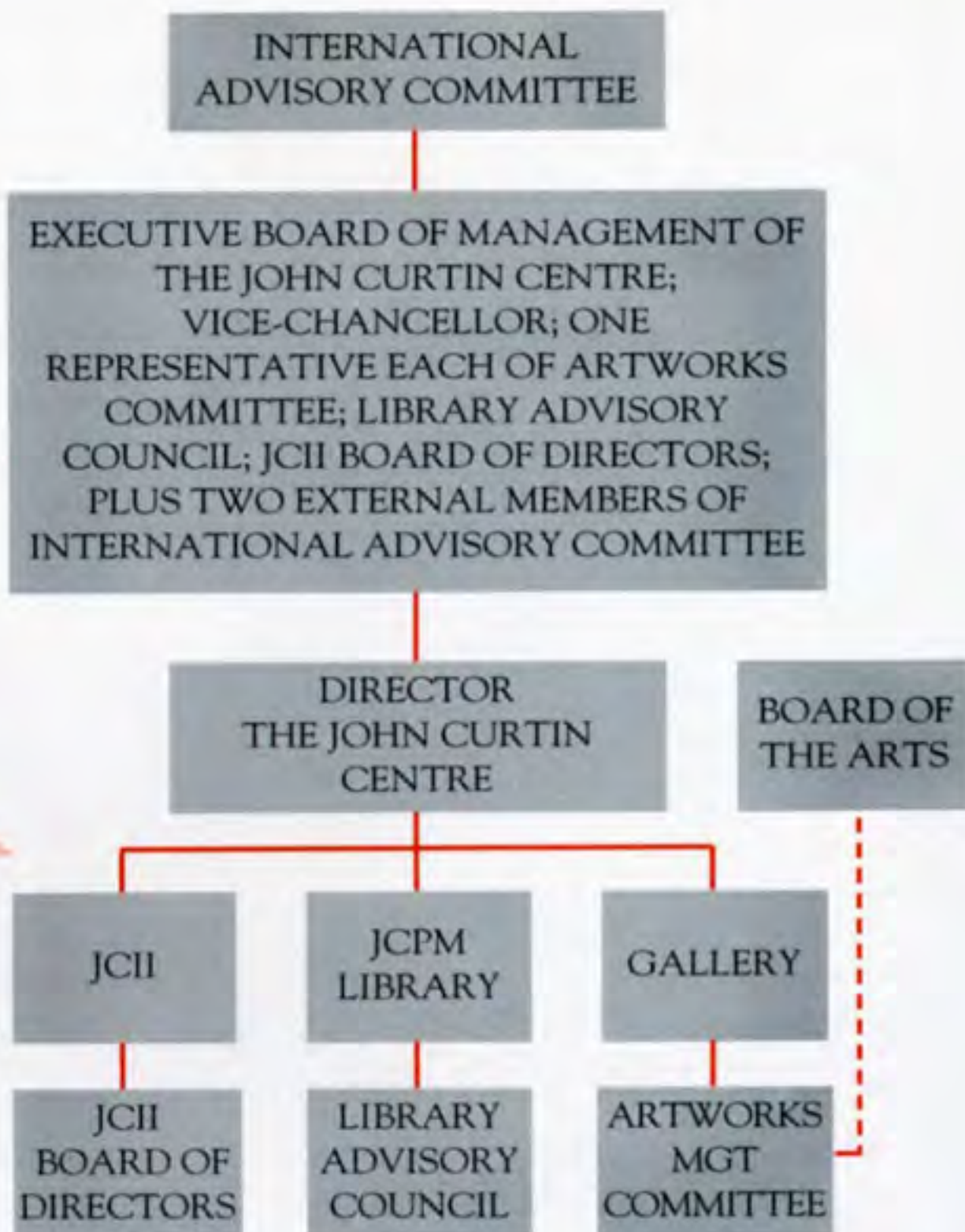
The organisational chart opposite sets out the proposed structure of The John Curtin Centre.

The Director will be a prominent international figure, appointed at Deputy Vice-Chancellor level, and will have overall management responsibility for The John Curtin Centre.

The Director will be assisted in the management and activities of the International Institute by the Dean of Programs to be appointed early next year.

An International Advisory Committee of prominent figures from government, industry and academia, and an Executive Board of Management with community and professional expertise, will be formed to provide guidance and advice on the overall conduct of The John Curtin Centre.

The Directors of each of the affiliated organisations forming the initial consortium from within the University, together with the Director and Dean of Programs will form the Board of Directors of the Institute.



Latest plans of The John Curtin Centre

Ensuring Our Future

The John Curtin Centre with its imposing facade and sweeping boulevard entrance will not only transform the face of Curtin University, but it is hoped will impact on the education of future leaders of Australia and its regional neighbours.

Through the International Institute, The John Curtin Centre aims to become a major centre for the development of educational and research programs in the Asia Pacific Indian Ocean Region.

Under the stewardship of Interim Director, Professor Joanna Barker, who took up her position in January this year, work has concentrated on developing programs which will meet the needs of the region and foster interaction and exchange.

As a result of consultations involving key international representatives from government, business and academia, and widespread discussion within the University, the International Institute has been structured to maximise expertise available within the University. Organisations from each Division and Branch will form the nucleus of the Institute's activities.



Architectural Perspective of The John Curtin Centre

Those organisations forming the initial consortium offering programs through the International Institute are—

- Institute for Research into International Competitiveness (with input from Agribusiness at Muresk)
- Centre for Cultural Heritage Studies
- Centre for International Health
- New and Emerging Technologies Group
- Western Australian School of Mines.

The emphasis of the Institute will be on providing cross cultural, interdisciplinary and internationally focused, relevant programs in the following fields—

- International Business and Economics
- International Relations
- International Education
- International Health
- New and Emerging Technologies
- Cross-Cultural Studies
- Minerals and Energy
- Agribusiness.

The University's extensive teaching resources will be involved in developing further programs specifically for the International Institute. These programs will reflect the needs of the wider region.

The first graduate program, a Masters of Leadership and Management, will commence on 1 January 1995. A range of short courses, seminars, research activities, internships and exchanges, fellowships and conferences is also planned to commence next year. These include—

- a major conference on International Business Leadership
- an Indonesian/Australian collaborative project in industrial and community health
- a Regional WHO conference
- industry forums on mining and international business
- a United Nations Peace Keeping Conference
- preparations for a bicentennial commemoration of the visit to Western Australia by French explorer, Nicholas Baudin
- an Australian agribusiness project focusing on the APEC region
- short courses on geographic information systems, computer vision, pattern recognition and machine learning
- a collaborative research project in science and mathematics education with Taiwan
- and a teaching and learning in science and mathematics institute to be held in Brunei.

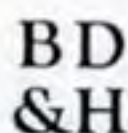
"The applied nature of the proposed programs will combine to make the International Institute a unique facility," Professor Barker said.

"Committed to the maintenance of harmonious international relations and working towards the resolution of global issues, the International Institute will be of benefit to us all," she said.

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University Librarian

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