

April 2011

Information Update

National launch of *Curtin's Empire*

5 May 2011

James Curran will speak at the launch of his book *Curtin's Empire* at the JCPML on 5 May 2011.

'The book breathes new life into the Curtin story by revealing John Curtin's vision of Australia's place in the British Empire, a dimension of this leader that, until now, has been either ignored or played down,' Dr Curran said.

'It shows that Curtin's desire for closer cooperation with Britain and the Empire was no idle or frivolous scheme embraced merely to curry favour with the electorate.

'John Curtin had spent a great deal of time in the 1920s and 1930s outlining his ideas on the Commonwealth and as Prime Minister, he spent the better part of a year convincing his own party and the Australian people to endorse his vision of the future – an Empire that would better protect Australian interests.'

As the 2004 JCPML Visiting Scholar, Dr Curran presented a public lecture at Curtin University entitled 'A crisis of national meaning: Prime ministers and the dilemma of Australian nationalism'. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History and the US Studies Centre at Sydney University.

His book *The Power of Speech: Australian Prime Ministers Defining the National Image* (2004) was shortlisted for the 2005 NSW Premiers History Awards –



The Dominion Prime Ministers met in London in 1944. Left to Right: Peter Fraser (Prime Minister of New Zealand), John Curtin, Winston Churchill, the Maharajah of Kashmir, King George, Sir Godfrey Huggins (Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia), Mackenzie King (Prime Minister of Canada), Sir Firoz Khan Noon and General Smuts (Prime Minister of South Africa). JCPML00018/16.

Australian History Prize, and also for the Victorian Premier's 2004 Literary Award for a First Book in History. He is also co-author, with Stuart Ward, of *The Unknown Nation: Australia After Empire* (2010).

Your invitation to the launch of *Curtin's Empire* on Thursday 5 May is enclosed.



Right image: Prime Minister Curtin addressing the the British people via the BBC during his visit to the UK for the Dominion Prime Ministers Conference. JCPML00139/22.

Display features Jolley Collection treasures



Items from the Elizabeth Jolley Research Collection housed in the JCPML are featured in a small display in the JCPML foyer focusing on this significant Australian author's life and work.

The display includes German and Spanish language versions of Jolley's book *Miss Peabody's Inheritance*, a beautiful quilt inspired by one of her best known works, a 1967 article about the then unknown author winning a nationwide letter writing competition and a number of images of portraits of the novelist.

You can view the display at the JCPML weekdays from 9am to 5pm until 22 April.

Find out more about the collection and the Elizabeth Jolley online bibliography, created by Curtin University researchers Professor Barbara Milech and Professor Brian Dibble, at john.curtin.edu.au/jolley.

'The Pear Tree Dance' quilt was inspired by a passage from Jolley's novel *The Newspaper of Claremont Street* and created by Lesley Fitzpatrick. The 'dance around a pear tree' has great significance for women, especially migrant women in Australia. CUL00004/10/16.

Hazel Hawke Scholarship winner to study social work

Diane Welsh, who is studying at Curtin's Bentley campus, is the recipient of this year's Hazel Hawke Scholarship.

'Thank you for granting me this scholarship, it is an honour to be chosen for this award. It will help me in my continuing education to achieve my goals. I hope to graduate and put my skills and knowledge into a profession where my passion will be my work, striving only for success with each task I will undertake as a social worker,' Diane said.

The inaugural Hazel Hawke scholarship was awarded in 2000 and there have been seven recipients in total, studying in fields as diverse as education, fine arts and nursing. The annual scholarship has a particular focus on supporting education opportunities for mature age female students.

Invasion key issue for Visiting Scholar

The JCPML is pleased to announce that the Visiting Scholar for 2011 is Graham Freudenberg, journalist, author and political speechwriter to a succession of Labor leaders, including Gough Whitlam, Neville Wran and Bob Hawke.

His research will explore issues relating to the reality or otherwise of the threat of invasion to Australia in early 1942.

Anniversary Lecture by Jeffrey Bleich

The United States Ambassador to Australia, Jeffrey Bleich, will present this year's Anniversary Lecture on Monday 8 August. Invitations will be sent with the July newsletter.



Company records shed light on John Curtin's tenure as editor of the *Westralian Worker*

Established in 1910, the People's Printing and Publishing Company of WA was the publisher of the Labor weekly newspaper, the *Westralian Worker*.

The Company records, comprising Minutes of the Directors' Meetings (from 1910 to 1947) and Minutes of the Shareholders' Meetings (from 1915 to 1949), are held by the Noel Butlin Archives Centre at the Australian National University.

The JCPML has worked collaboratively with the centre to digitise the minutes and make them available online via the JCPML's Electronic Research Archive.



John Curtin was editor of the *Westralian Worker* from 1917 to 1928 and the Minutes of the Directors' Meeting of January 31 1917 show his appointment was almost unanimously supported.

'After being reduced to three that Mr John Curtin be appointed Editor – Carried – the voting being five for one against. The appointment was made subject to good conduct and satisfactory work. Weekly notice on either side to be given pending other arrangements.'

John Curtin was in WA in time to attend the meeting of 17 February where he was welcomed by MLA Peter O'Loghlen.

'There were 20 candidates from all parts of the Commonwealth and it was a tribute to his [Curtin's] previous work to receive the appointment,' Mr O'Loghlen noted.

'Mr Curtin returned thanks first for the appointment and for the encouragement given him by the Directors.

'He realised fully the many difficulties before him. It will be some time before I get my feet. I agree with the policy you put before me. The paper as the official organ is our chief means of attack.'

The minutes shed new light on a

range of aspects of John Curtin's editorship, even noting his salary at different stages.

At the Directors' meeting of 4 May 1924, for example: 'It was decided to increase the Editor's salary from £10 to £11.10.0.'

A focus of the Shareholders' Meetings was the ongoing planning for a Labor daily newspaper, a proposal which had the support of John Curtin.

At the meeting of 29 July 1921 he stated, 'If I were asked what particular aspect ... was the most important, I would say it was the resolutions in connection with the Chain of Labor Dailies.

'The proposition is now before us, we have all the rough and ready graft to get the money ... We must have a complete staff, we must have our own cable service. Newspaper organisation represents one complete form of specialised development.

'To have a newspaper in every sense of the word is difficult. The power of an up-to-date paper is wonderful ... We have to get busy, we have a big job ahead of us.

'This thing represents something indispensable in the lives of our people.'

Clockwise from top left:

Westralian Worker building, c1920. Records of the Australian Labor Party WA Branch. JCPML00379/1.

John Curtin aged 34, 1919. Records of the Curtin family. JCPML0004/5.

Westralian Worker staff, c1920. John Curtin is leaning on the veranda post. Records of the Australian Labor Party WA Branch. JCPML00379/2.

Cartoon: This anti-Hughes cartoon was published in the *Westralian Worker* of 4 May 1917, following John Curtin's arrival as editor. Curtin's predecessor had been a supporter of Billy Hughes.



Valuable collection finds a home at Curtin University

Internationally noted sexologist Dr Jules Black donated his collection to Curtin University Library last year.

The sexology collection comprises over 300 items, mainly books, journals and programs, and proceedings of various international and Australian conferences. It includes most of the significant textbooks and works written by post World War II sexologists from around the world, plus a few earlier publications.

Sexuality is an all-encompassing subject and the collection themes cover the theory and science of sexology, sexual behaviours, clinical and therapeutic sexology and erotica.

As Curtin University is now the Australian leader in the education of sexologists from a variety of disciplines, the Jules Black Sexology collection will continue to be consulted and enjoyed, ensuring a lasting legacy for Dr Black's work.

Speaking at the launch of the collection at the University on 4 March, Dr Black said, 'In life



Caption: Prof Jill Downie (Pro-Vice Chancellor, Health Sciences), Dr Jules Black, Prof Rosemary Coates (President of the World Association for Sexual Health) and Prof Linda Kristjanson (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research and Development) at the launch of the Jules Black Sexology Collection in the John Curtin Gallery.

few people are honoured eponymously in such a way. In the first instance I was merely content that I had found a welcoming, accepting, caring home for these precious books.

'Since I am aware of only two or three viable tertiary courses in

human sexuality in Australia, it did not take long to discover which university valued my collection more.'

Visit the Jules Black Sexology Collection website at john.curtin.edu.au/julesblack.