

April 2007

# Information Update

## Backyard Frontline

Australia under Attack 1942-1943



"Work, save, fight and so avenge the nurses!"

The Australian Government used the tragic loss of the *Centaur* for wartime propaganda. This dramatic poster shows that hospital ships were well-lit and clearly marked with red crosses to prevent them being mistaken for warships.

The John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library is currently hosting this travelling exhibition from the Australian War Memorial.

*Backyard Frontline* illustrates the nature of life in wartime Australia as the nation came together for the war effort.

The exhibition deals with a time when Australians believed their country was in imminent danger of invasion and depicts the reality of life in Australia when Japanese forces were on our doorstep.

*Backyard Frontline* features individual stories of love and loss, photographs, original objects, graphic display panels, and an audiovisual presentation.



Mr William Gaynor and students from Collier Primary School dressed as MacArthur, Menzies, Curtin and Churchill at the opening of *Backyard Frontline*.

**Mr William Gaynor**, the WA State President of the RSL, opened the exhibition on Wednesday 28th February with a tribute to the men and women whose lives are depicted in the display.

The exhibition will be on display at the JCPML until 27<sup>th</sup> April 2007. Open Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm. Closed on public holidays and Tuesday 10 April.

Entry is free.

The Australian War Memorial Travelling Exhibitions program is funded by *Saluting Their Service*, the Federal Government's commemorations program, honouring the contribution of Australia's servicemen and women.

  
JOHN CURTIN PRIME MINISTERIAL LIBRARY



# Foundation Archivist retires from the JCPML



Kandy-Jane Henderson took up the position of Archivist at the JCPML in 1996 and in the ten years since, has played a key part in establishing Australia's first prime ministerial library.

Under her inspirational leadership and due in no small part to her energy, ideas, whole-hearted commitment and professionalism, the JCPML has established a sound reputation as an innovator and model for best practice.

Kandy-Jane embraced new technologies to develop an academic research resource that is recognized within WA, nationally and internationally. She applied her professional expertise to the particular challenges posed in building the collection more than 50 years after the death of John Curtin, with materials dispersed amongst private individuals, organisations and state, national and overseas archival institutions. Kandy-Jane's approach was to pioneer a digitisation program, resulting in an electronic archive, ERA, which provides access to the

JCPML collection and to John Curtin related materials held in other institutions around the world.

Kandy-Jane has ensured that this unique research collection has been the focus of an impressive range of initiatives including publication of books and journal articles, scholarly lectures, Visiting Scholar and Research Fellowship appointments, onsite and touring exhibitions, and web publications.

Some highlights of Kandy-Jane's time at the JCPML include the

collaboration with Perth Theatre Company to produce the play *Shadow of the Eagle*, the Anniversary Lecture program, and the development of the schools' education program which promotes the teaching of history, politics, English and drama and brings metropolitan and country students onto campus.

The distinguished service Kandy-Jane has given to the archival profession and the community has been recognised in a number of awards.

## IN BRIEF

### Anniversary Lecture

The ninth JCPML Anniversary Lecture, marking the 62nd anniversary of John Curtin's death, will be presented by **Professor Larissa Behrendt**. The lecture will take place at 4pm on 5 July 2007 at Curtin University.

Professor Behrendt is Professor of Law and Director of Research at the Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning at the University of Technology, Sydney.

### Visiting Scholar

The JCPML Visiting Scholar for 2007 is **Dr Michael Fullilove**.

Dr Fullilove is the Program Director for Global Issues at the Lowy Institute for International Policy.

Dr Fullilove will focus on Australian progressives and the US alliance in his public lecture at 4 pm on 9 August 2007 at Curtin University.



# News from the collection with David Wylie

Amongst the many photographs donated to the JCPML by the Curtin family are a series of shots of John and Elsie Curtin on a trip to Brisbane for the launch of HMAS Fremantle in 1942.

One of the photographs has the caption "Mrs Curtin in Queensland for launching of HMAS Fremantle August 1942" but no details of the other people in the shot. Recent research to locate John Curtin related records at the National Library of Australia in Canberra turned up another copy of this photograph amongst the records of William Conelan, Federal ALP member for Griffith at the time. This copy has a detailed caption, not only naming all the people in it but also revealing that the photo was taken of the group under the South Brisbane railway station while they were sheltering from an air raid!

A city dairyman, he sold his milk to local families from his dairy in Canning Highway, Applecross, in the 1920s and '30s. The dairy no longer exists and the house is now, you guessed it, an Indian restaurant. And it transpired that Mr Groves' brother Percy still had the original print, complete with the original captions which show that the photo is not of the *Westralian Worker* board members, but of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board in 1934.



This was the first time any of the JCPML staff knew of Curtin's membership of this board and we were able to add this new information to the other photograph and alert the Battye Library to it. We also found that another very similar photograph in the collection that was donated by a member of the Stannard family was indeed taken on the same occasion.

Digital images of all these photographs are available for viewing through ERA.

Air raid shelter:  
JCPML00376/201  
JCPML01093/1

Metropolitan Whole Milk Board:  
JCPML00139/70  
JCPML00978/1  
JCPML01053/1

It is nearly 62 years since John Curtin's death and previously unknown facets of his life and work are still being revealed and new avenues for research opened up.



Some years ago the JCPML was alerted to another photograph of John Curtin that was hanging on the wall of an Indian restaurant in Applecross. A copy was obtained through the J. S. Battye Library of West Australian History.

The description of the photograph was that it was John Curtin with William Stannard and other members of the board of the *Westralian Worker*, taken during the time he was the editor of the paper.

Don Groves, a visitor to Curtin University's Open Day last year, called into the JCPML and related the story of his father being a member of the Metropolitan Whole Milk Board with John Curtin.



She was made a Laureate of the Australian Society of Archivists in 1996 for her commitment to the archives profession and archival education in Western Australia.

In 2001 she was one of four Commissioners appointed to the then newly-established State Records Commission of Western Australia, in which position she continues to serve.

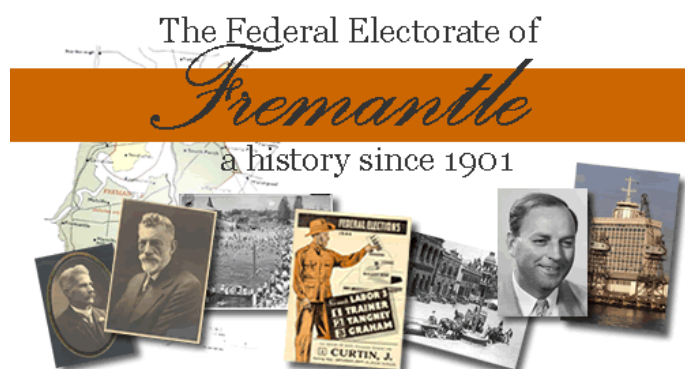
In 2002 Kandy-Jane was awarded a Centenary Medal in recognition of her services to the community as Archivist of the JCPML.

At a celebratory function held at the JCPML on 23 February, Professor Jane den Hollander, Deputy Vice Chancellor, and the Hon John Cowdell paid tribute to Kandy-Jane and her contribution to the University.

The foyer area of the JCPML was named in her honour as the *Kandy-Jane Henderson Foyer*, ensuring that she will be remembered in the building which houses the institution to which she gave so much.

New web resource!

# The Federal Electorate of Fremantle a history since 1901



A new and exciting online resource *The Federal Electorate of Fremantle: a history since 1901* is now available on the JCPML website.

Written by historian and political commentator David Black, this website provides an intriguing look at the changes that have taken place in the Federal Electorate of Fremantle.

The website includes short biographies of all Members for Fremantle. Some are well-known identities such as John Curtin, Kim Beazley Senior, John Dawkins and Dr Carmen Lawrence. Others from earlier times include Elias Solomon, Reginald Burchell and William Watson.

Maps illustrate the changing boundaries of the electorate and photographs provide a flavour of the port city over the last century.

For those interested in statistics, comprehensive voting figures for all Fremantle elections and by-elections are provided.

*The Federal Electorate of Fremantle: a history since 1901* is available at <http://john.curtin.edu.au/fremantle/>



Dr. Carmen Lawrence, the current Member for Fremantle, officially launched the web resource on 19 February 2007.

## A new format

This issue of Information Update is the last in the current format. However we'll still be keeping you informed about the JCPML over the coming year.

And a reminder that if you'd like to be added to the JCPML email list, please do let us know.  
Contact us by email: [jcpml@curtin.edu.au](mailto:jcpml@curtin.edu.au)

## Contributions and support since December 2006

Carmen Lawrence  
John F Curtin  
Barbara Davidson  
Edmund Hardman

## JCPML Challenge Bank Reading Room Visitors

Alison Bauer  
Kim E. Beazley  
Betty Beazley  
Marjorie Bly  
Jasmine Brown  
Julie Caddy  
Kay Clark  
David Clarke  
Jim Coulter  
Rita Coulter  
Bob Curtin  
Vida (Sue) Curtin  
Barbara Davidson  
Gary Davidson  
William Gaynor  
Joan Gaynor  
John Goode  
Kevin Hodges  
Chris Jeffery  
Tim Kennedy  
Carmen Lawrence  
Daniel McFadyen  
Kristi McNulty  
Harvey Pearce  
Otto Pelczar  
Harry Phillips  
Neville Thorpe  
Joan Tonkin  
Clarke Tufnell  
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