

Information Update

Launch of Carmen Lawrence Collection

Thursday 13 November 2008



Dr Lawrence lodged her personal papers relating to her state parliamentary career with the Library in 2007.

This fascinating collection includes volumes of newspaper clippings and media summaries covering the years of the Lawrence Government, speeches, daily itineraries, electorate correspondence, circulars to ministers, memorabilia, media statements, and subject files on a wide variety of themes from the redevelopment of the Swan Brewery to good luck wishes for the 1993 election.

Some 300 photographs provide an extensive visual record of Dr Lawrence's life as a local member, minister and then Premier, revealing the multitude of events attended and duties undertaken.

Dr Lawrence was Premier of WA (1990-93) and federal MP for the electorate of Fremantle (1994-2007).

Carmen Lawrence as Education Minister addresses striking teachers in Perth, [1988?]. CUL00014/1/3

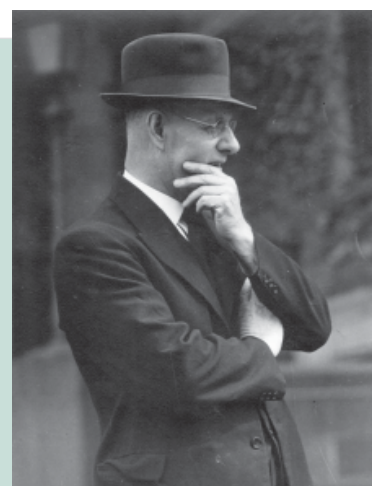
Why Inequality Matters

You are warmly welcomed to attend the launch of the Carmen Lawrence Collection on 13 November. At this event, Dr Lawrence will speak on *Why Inequality Matters*, arguing that the most important attribute of a civil society is equality between its citizens.

The Carmen Lawrence Collection is held by the Library and housed in the JCPML. Many of the items, including all the speeches, photographs, memorabilia, media statements and itineraries are available for viewing online at john.curtin.edu.au/lawrence.

National Portrait Gallery hangs portrait of John Curtin

A photograph of Prime Minister Curtin from the JCPML collection is on loan to the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra for inclusion in the Gallery's inaugural exhibition in its new building, scheduled to open on 3 December 2008. The exhibition will run until April 2009.



JCPML00376/138

Coming to a place near you ...?

The JCPML marked the 60th anniversary of the death of Prime Minister Curtin by creating a touring exhibition *The Art of the Possible: Creating an independent Australian foreign policy*.

The exhibition tells the story of John Curtin in the context of Australia's increasing independence in foreign policy over the period 1935 to 1950. The 9 free-standing panels in the exhibition form a colourful and informative backdrop for its centrepiece, three bronze figurines of John Curtin.

In 2005/6, the exhibition toured to Washington and various venues around Australia, including the National Archives and Old Parliament House in Canberra, John Curtin's birthplace of Creswick in Victoria, and the MacArthur Museum in Brisbane. After being displayed in the Robertson Library it is heading north on a tour of the University's partners in regional Western Australia.

Exhibition venues and dates:

Geraldton Learning & Resource Centre until 7 November 2008

Karratha Community Library from 17 November 2008 to 8 January 2009

South Hedland Library from 2 February to 12 March 2009



The travelling exhibition proved popular with Curtin students and staff when it was displayed in the Robertson Library at Curtin's Bentley campus earlier this year.

Conference paper focuses on Library digital collections

Lesley Wallace, Manager JCPML and Library Archives, presented a paper co-authored with Dr Gaby Haddow, then Faculty Librarian (Humanities), at the Australian Library and Information Association conference at Alice Springs in September.

The paper *Politics, literature, folklore and circumnavigating the world: the what, why and how of digital collections at Curtin Library* explores the journey Curtin Library has taken in providing digital access to recently acquired collections.

Available at john.curtin.edu.au/aboutus/papers/lwalia2008.html

Tomorrow's leaders learn from past prime ministers

JCPML Education Officer Ros Marshall developed a new program with a focus on leaders Robert Menzies and John Curtin and delivered it to this year's Sir Charles Court Young Leaders Program participants at Curtin in July.

Thirty year ten students enjoyed honing their critical thinking skills while investigating the wartime prime ministers' very different leadership styles through document investigation and cartoon interpretation.



Prime Minister John Curtin speaking at a press conference in London, May 1944. Imperial War Museum (JCPML00726/1)

Web resources a treasure trove for Curtin history



CURTIN AS AN ELECTION LEADER



What were the burning issues for voters in the Federal elections of 1937, 1940 and 1943? How did John Curtin as leader of the Opposition and then Prime Minister conduct the Labor Party campaigns? How did these campaigns differ from those held in more recent times?

In *Curtin as an Election Leader*, author Professor David Black explores the elections John Curtin fought as the Australian Labor Party parliamentary leader. All three elections were held in the context of looming or actual wartime conflict and their outcomes varied significantly. Only in 1943 did Curtin experience an unprecedented electoral triumph and this came only after many years of grappling both with internal party divisions and an extraordinarily challenging political environment.

Curtin as an election leader is available at john.curtin.edu.au/electionleader.



Labor Day procession 'Make Jack Curtin Prime Minister' banner, 1937. JCPML00568/10/2

Diary of a labour man 1917-1945 now complete

This web resource, researched and written by historian Heather Campbell, provides a day by day chronicle of John Curtin's life.

The first part of the diary, covering the years 1917 to 1928 when John Curtin was editor of WA's labour weekly, the *Westralian Worker*, went live in October 2007. The completed *Diary* follows Curtin's activities up until his death in July 1945 while serving the nation as Prime Minister.

For instance, if you wondered how Curtin spent his first Christmas as Prime Minister, the *Diary* notes:

*Thursday 25 December
The Lodge, Canberra*

Stays in bed until 11am.

Spends Christmas in Canberra, separated from his wife and family. Works on Christmas day, but entertains half a dozen West Australian airmen for lunch.

Thanking Curtin for his gesture, the airmen hailed him as 'The living voice of freedom' and wished him 'the very best health to sustain your robust mentality to meet the onerous trials of 1942.'

With extensive footnotes, many full text links and a wealth of images, the *Diary* is an engaging and informative new resource for scholars and the general public.

Explore the *Diary of a labour man* at john.curtin.edu.au/diary.



Telegram from John Curtin to Elsie Curtin, 23 December 1941. JCPML00402/39

Saving Australia's History

by David Wylie, Archives Technician

The Australian public has a long-lasting fascination with the nation's military history. Hardly a month goes by without a new book about our involvement in the wars of the past hundred years or so.

First hand accounts, such as diaries and correspondence from the warfront, give the best insight into what it was like to stare death in the face. Written at the time and by the participants, books based on these sources can draw the reader in and lead to an enhanced appreciation of the dangers faced by our armed services.

Often, military histories go over old ground and rarely reveal new or hitherto unpublished facts. Some, however, manage to reap an abundant crop from ground that has remained fallow for decades, and the best of these have been written by authors with the inquiring mind and dogged determination usually associated with journalists.

One such author and former journalist is Bob Wurth. With an abiding interest in the Asia Pacific region, Bob's career took him to Papua New Guinea and South Africa. He was one of the ABC's foreign correspondents in Asia, and retired as the Queensland State Manager for ABC radio and television in 1999.

Bob then turned to full time writing and, intrigued by David Day's account of John Curtin's friendship with the former Japanese Ambassador to Australia, Tatsuo Kawai, he was inspired to do further research into this aspect of Australia's wartime history.

Having gleaned a wealth of information from records held by institutional and private collections in Australia and elsewhere, Bob travelled to Japan to see what he could unearth there. His perseverance was rewarded when he visited Kawai's retreat house at Manazuru. Kawai's son, Masumi, allowed him access to correspondence, records and photographs that had not been seen or published by Australian researchers before. This work culminated in the publication of *Saving Australia: Curtin's secret peace with Japan* (Lothian Books 2006), which showed that Curtin and Kawai had discussed ways to prevent the looming war. The book was launched by the Japanese Consul-General in WA, Mr Hiroyuki Ariyoshi, and Bob gave a public lecture, *Saving Australia and the growing danger of revisionism* at the JCPML.

Realising the importance of saving his research papers and their value for future use by historians and the general public, Bob donated his collection to the JCPML under the Cultural Gifts for the Arts program. The papers have been arranged & described and the majority of them are digitised and available through the JCPML's Electronic Research Archive.

Spurred on by the reaction to *Saving Australia*, Bob commenced further investigations into whether or not Japan was planning to invade Australia in 1942. Was the Australian government truly expecting an invasion, or was the 'Battle for Australia' rhetoric just a means of rallying the country behind the war effort?

Bob Wurth's latest book, *1942: Australia's greatest peril* (Pan McMillan 2008) attempts to answer these questions and is the outcome of this further research.

Bob Wurth is the JCPML Visiting Scholar for 2009.



Tatsuo Kawai at Sassafras, Victoria, with Tamaye Tsutsumida (left), his private secretary and hostess, 1941. JCPML01224/23



Tatsuo Kawai in Nazi-occupied Europe, 1940. JCPML01224/59



Government Notice, Courier Mail, 1942. Courtesy of the NAA

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