

Kim Beazley pays tribute to John Curtin

On Thursday 5 July the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library (JCPML) commemorated the anniversary of our wartime prime minister's death with its prestigious John Curtin Anniversary Lecture. The Federal Leader of the Opposition, Hon. Kim Beazley, gave this year's lecture on the subject of "John Curtin's Abiding Vision".

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. He praised Curtin's ability to rise above his handicaps of alcoholism and depression during a time of grave national danger as "a magnificent achievement."

"The essential point about Curtin is that it was a vital thing for this nation that someone as courageous and clear-sighted, however wounded by self-doubt, was available for leadership during the darkest hours of the Pacific War, that came so soon after he assumed the prime ministership in 1941," said Mr Beazley.

He went on to outline Curtin's strengths as a strategist and tactician and in developing Australia's internationalism and regional alignments which expanded options for Australia. He spoke about the central part Curtin took in establishing economic mechanisms such as increasing the power of the

Commonwealth Bank and changes to income tax – two central planks of Australia's postwar development. Mr Beazley praised the work of the JCPML for undertaking such publications as *Friendship is a Sheltering Tree* by Professor David Black to add to the John Curtin scholarship and memorabilia.

Mr Beazley was introduced to a capacity audience of more than 220 people by JCPML Foundation Patron and former prime minister, Hon. Gough Whitlam. Mr Whitlam paid tribute to Mr Beazley and his father, Kim Beazley Sr, who took over the seat of Fremantle at Curtin's death in 1945 and was a minister in Mr Whitlam's Government.

For those who missed out a transcript of the lecture and video from the proceedings can be viewed from the JCPML's homepage <http://john.curtin.edu.au> under 'what's new'.



Hon. Kim Beazley, Federal Leader of the Opposition

Live Webcast

A live webcast of the lecture was produced and hosted by the API Network for the JCPML through Australian Studies, the Division of Humanities, in association with the School of Media and Information and the Centre for Educational Advancement. It was accessible from both the API and JCPML websites from 4pm that day.

More than 200 users linked to the live webcast with a maximum of 40 simultaneous viewers of the video stream during Mr Beazley's talk. User feedback on the quality and reliability of the system was very pleasing and most encouraging.

What people are saying about Understanding Society through its Records



The team involved in the successful launch of the JCPML's newest website, from l to r: David Wylie, Lesley Wallace and Sue Grey-Smith

“Congratulations on a clear and concise website, especially the selectively placed images and plain English definitions. I will certainly bookmark the site and use it as a reference to explain the underlying rationale for capturing and managing records and archives.”

“An excellent initiative and an outstanding site. Congratulations to all at the JCPML for providing this facility and for further promulgating to the world at large the importance of recordkeeping.”

“Very thought-provoking.”

“Congratulations – your site is truly educational AND entertaining with wonderful use of interactivity.”

“What a fantastic resource.”

Anniversary of the Australian-US connection

A special July edition of the *Australian Journal of International Affairs* (AJIA) has been sponsored by the JCPML to mark the anniversary of the Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) Security Treaty.

The close association enjoyed by the US and Australia is generally regarded as having been initiated by Prime Minister John Curtin during the Second World War when he famously declared that Australia was turning to America for help in the Pacific arena.

This special edition of AJIA is devoted to articles on the relationship between Australia and the US and is part of the strong interest the JCPML maintains in promoting study into Australian-American relations. This relationship has been ongoing in one form or another since 1942 when General Douglas MacArthur was appointed Supreme Allied Commander and based his headquarters in Brisbane. Peter Edwards, editor of the journal, has written an article which examines the relationship these two strong leaders developed, on both a professional and personal level.

Other contributors to the journal include US Ambassador Edward Gnehm, former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and Senator Natasha

Stott Despoja. US-Australian relations cover a broad range of diplomatic, economic, environmental, cultural and generational issues which have been addressed by the authors.

Part One explores the views of three Australian politicians, two of whom played a major role in creating the alliance in the 1940s and 50s – John Curtin and Percy Spender. Part Two offers an appraisal of ANZUS from the North-East and South-East Asian perspectives with Australia and Japan being described as the ‘two anchors’ of America’s security system in the western Pacific. The final part of the journal explores several key issues in what is now a complex and multi-faceted relationship, including trade relations and the economic interaction between the US and its Pacific allies.

Overall, the cultural underpinnings of the alliance remain strong, and all the contributors provide a perceptive and useful synopsis of the US-Australian alliance and the challenges that it faces in the 21st century.

Collaboration with Australian Studies

Australian Studies was established at Curtin University in the mid 1970s but the area underwent a significant transformation last year with the appointment of a new executive dean of humanities, Professor Tom Stannage, Western Australia’s foremost historian. Later in the same year Richard Nile was appointed as the first professor of Australian Studies and director of the area. Between them, Professors Stannage and Nile have developed arguably the most important concentration of Australian studies publications in partnership with the University of Queensland Press and Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

The Institute of Australian Studies is now home to several scholarly journals and book series as well as the portal for numerous other scholarly publications across a wide range of disciplines. Australian studies also hosts the Australian Public Intellectual Network (www.api-network.com) a gateway to Australian culture and educational resources.

As the JCPML is very active in producing good quality educational and scholarly publications, collaboration with Australian Studies in this area is in the best interests of both parties. As Professor Nile says, “In partnership with the JCPML, Australian Studies is expanding its print based and electronic presence as one of the premier intellectual centres in the country.”

Digital News

A new collaborative partnership between the JCPML and the National Library of Australia (NLA) will make available hundreds of documents from the Lloyd Ross collection to researchers through the internet.

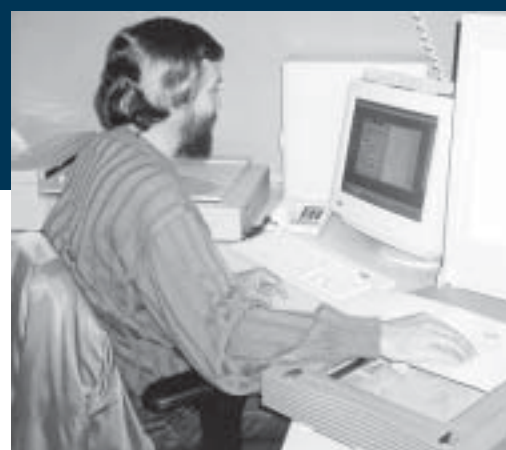
Lloyd Ross is a well-known Curtin biographer and the papers include research material drawn together by Ross during the writing of his biography, such as correspondence, diaries, messages, newspaper cuttings, photographs and early drafts of his book.

Altogether 67 folders of material from the MS 3939 series will be digitised. This is a major undertaking by both institutions which will enable researchers to electronically access material which was previously only available by visiting the NLA in Canberra.

Lloyd Ross was the son of R S Ross, one of Curtin's friends from his early Socialist days, and later became friendly with Curtin and a great supporter during his prime ministership.

Ross' biography of John Curtin commenced in the 1940s and much of his research includes correspondence from that era with people close to Curtin, including Curtin's mentors Frank Anstey and Tom Mann, his wife Elsie Curtin and Ben Chifley. After his retirement Ross was able to return to his writing and research.

Ross published his detailed and comprehensive biography on John Curtin in 1977 and it has been reprinted many times since then. This digital project will allow researchers to access much of the primary source documents that Ross consulted.



Above: Frank Kane digitizes material from the Lloyd Ross collection

Below: One of the images from MS3939 showing Curtin (standing in lower right) addressing Parliament. (by permission NLA)



<http://john.curtin.edu.au>

Water Corporation Sponsorship

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Water Corporation, the JCPML will shortly be undertaking another digital project, tentatively titled: *War & Peace, Rationing & Rebuilding: Life in suburban West Australia in the 1940s*. The Water Corporation is committed to providing equality of service across the state and are pleased that the web-based project will be available to both regional and metropolitan users.

The project will focus on the life of John Curtin and his home community of Cottesloe and will cover such aspects as housing, furniture and interior decoration, services, transport, recreation and entertainment, fashion and cultural life of the period. Although aimed primarily at secondary students, this multimedia resource will add to WA's historical heritage and provide an opportunity for the community to interpret the past and make connections to the future.

New on the Web

The JCPML has commenced digitisation of its video holdings which will be available through the Electronic Research Archive (ERA). To check out a sample, visit "What's New" from our home page and view a special edition of the video, "Paul Hasluck - War Historian". The former politician and Governor-General is interviewed by his son Nicholas Hasluck in this JCPML Education Program version, which features Paul Hasluck's relationship with John Curtin and examines Curtin's career in journalism and later in politics. Other videos may be found by searching ERA for "motion pictures".

If you've ever wanted to visit the JCPML facilities but haven't been able to because of distance or time constraints, then take a virtual tour around the premises by "walking through" our wonderful new panoramas. Panoramic views of the Challenge Bank Reading Room, the foyer and the exterior of the building are provided by clicking on appropriate spots on the floor plan. Look under "What's New".

Professional Highlights

The JCPML's Archivist, Kandy-Jane Henderson (right), has recently been appointed by the Governor as a member of the newly established State Records Commission which will report directly to Parliament on the performance of agencies' recordkeeping. The Commission will ensure that the principles and standards it sets address the impact of changing technology and administrative policies and practices. The other members of the Commission are the FOI Commissioner, the Auditor General and the Ombudsman.



In March Kandy-Jane Henderson participated in Access in the Electronic Age, the 2001 National Archives of Australia/Council of Federal, State and Territory Archives Residential School held at Bungendore in the ACT. She presented a session on meeting researchers' needs in a digital environment.

During May, JCPML's Public Programs Coordinator, Lesley Carman-Brown (left), attended the EDUCAUSE Conference in Brisbane to deliver a paper entitled *No Discernable Difference: Technology takes borderless education outback*. She talked about the ways in which the JCPML is developing an innovative education program that uses technology to take primary and secondary students on an historical journey using archival resources. Lesley's attendance at the conference was supported by her Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence.

Planning for Peace

It's February 1945 and the end of the war is in sight! Postwar planning by the Curtin Government is well underway and the prime minister is eager to avoid the economic and social upheaval that occurred after World War One.

This is the scene for the latest education program, *Planning for Peace: Postwar Reconstruction*, now available to secondary school students. They can participate in a role play exercise which

prepares them to take part in a parliamentary debate on issues such as full employment, immigration, the White Australia Policy, soldier resettlement and social security.

The program has particular relevance to students studying *Australia 1945-1990* and several schools have already booked to participate in third term. To find out more or make a booking, call Education Officer, Ros Marshall on 9266 4391.



Governor of WA, Lt-Gen John Sanderson, visits the JCPML

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