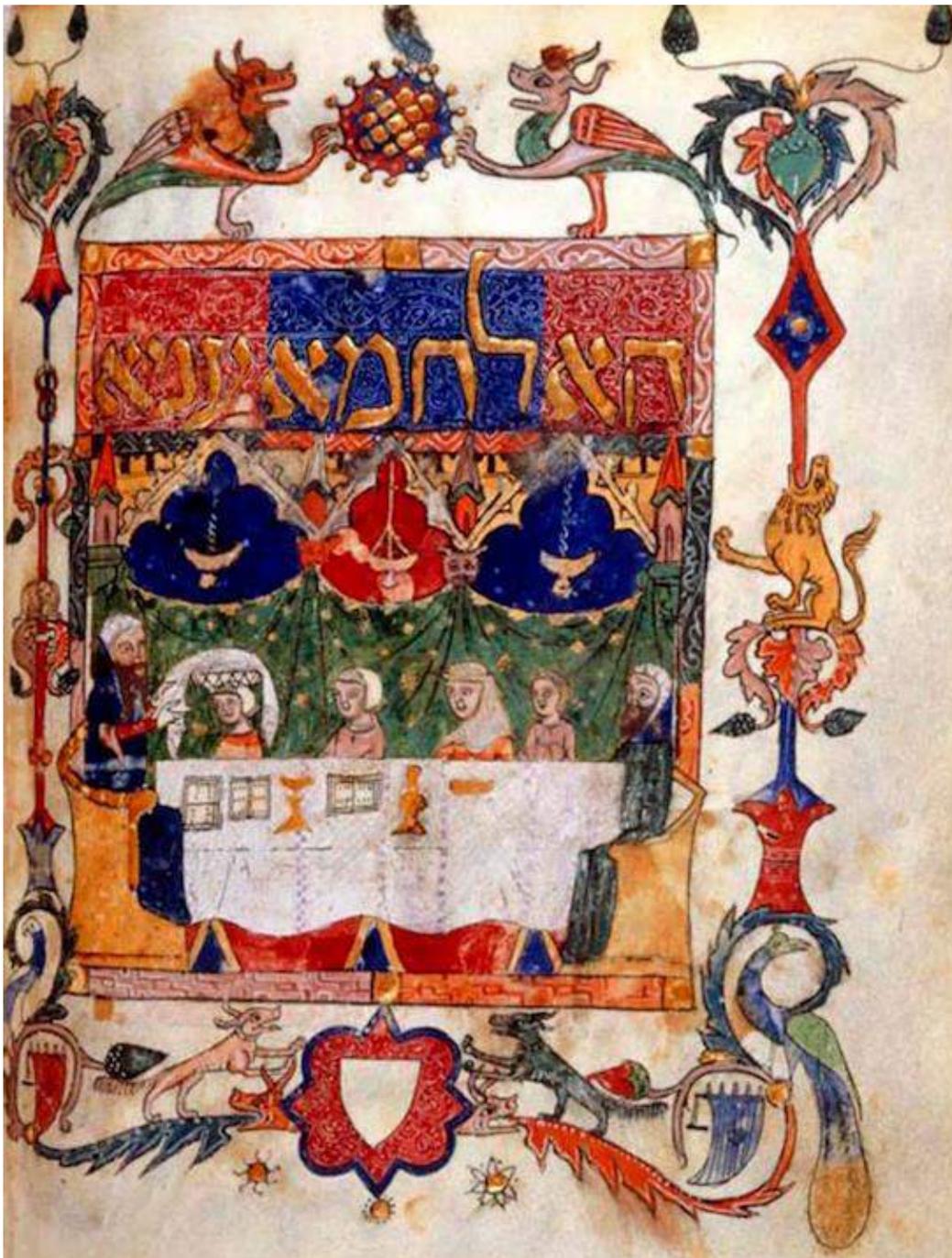


KOSHER KOALA

Newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society Inc.
www.ajgs.org.au



May 2016



A Sephardic Seder – from the *Barcelona Haggadah*, British Library

Source: © https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ha_Lahma_Ania.jpg

President's Report to the 2016 AJGS AGM

– an edited version

This year has been eventful – with high Highs, and low Lows.

It started extremely well when, following the 2015 AGM, Karen Coote, conservator, led a fabulous seminar on *Preserving Our Treasures*.

In August, AJGS applied to participate in the *Day of Jewish Culture and Heritage* at the invitation of Central Synagogue. Because of a last-minute hitch, they cancelled their participation, leaving us without a venue or the possibility of re-organising a presence. We look to the 2016 event to make our presence known to a wider audience.

At the beginning of September, the Society participated in Waverley Council's *Eat, Pray, Naches* project with several members offering their family stories and photos for the ongoing exhibition, and I ran a workshop about how to find your Jewish ancestors.

And then, within the space of a week last September, Jewish Genealogy lost two of our best – Rieke Nash and Pamela Weissberger. We are very much poorer for the loss. Later this year, we will, in honour of Rieke, hold a seminar on a topic relevant to Polish research.

In November, Dr Robert Vasl gave an entertaining talk on research in the Carpathian region.

By year's end, we had 5 honorary and 164 paid members.

We have continued to hold our Lindfield workshops one Sunday and one Monday each month. I particularly thank Jeannette Tsoulos and Evelyn Frybort who come to all of these and share their expertise with old hands and newbies. Thanks also to Dani Haski and David Laufer who helped at these workshops.

While the Sunday workshops have been quite popular, the Mondays are quiet. The workshops depend entirely on the willingness of members to volunteer their time and expertise. Unless more of you volunteer, we will consider reducing the number of Monday workshops so that we can again offer workshops in the eastern suburbs.

Dani Haski, with assistance from Kym Morris, has developed our new website. It is now ready for beta-testing. Dani will give a short presentation at the conclusion of the AGM.

Kym has designed a new letterhead and branding, and we now have AJGS bookmarks to advertise our presence and services when we participate in external activities.

Kosher Koala continues to roll out. I thank those who have contributed articles and reviews, or passed on new and interesting items which help to make *Kosher Koala* an interesting read and a useful resource.

I am speaking at the IAJGS conference in Seattle in August, and staying on in the US until mid-October. My call for a guest editor for the coming September issue has so far fallen on deaf ears. [*Editor's note: Dani Haski has since volunteered to be editor during my absence*]

Requests for assistance in researching Jewish ancestors continue at the rate of two or three weekly. In recent months, they have almost all come from outside the cities, and a goodly number from overseas. I think that this is some of the most important work we do.

The year ahead will be another marked by backroom effort. The new website affords us the opportunity to refresh our *Family Finder*. Many of our original listings belong to people who are no longer members, and for whom we have no contact details. We will soon ask you to re-submit your information in an electronic format – and will ask whether you would be happy to have this information listed on a secure, members-only section of the website. As with JewishGen's *Family Finder*, your email address would not be visible to anyone.

Another task at hand relates to our constitution. In 2015, the NSW Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation conducted a review of the Act and Regulations covering Incorporated Associations. The result

was a series of recommendations to be tabled in Parliament sometime this year. Many would benefit AJGS. These include a provision for electronic notification of the AGM and special general meetings; provision for electronic voting on association business; reduction in statutory fees for Tier 2 (small) associations; explicit removal of officer liabilities where officers have acted in good faith; and limits to the number of years an individual may hold office.

Making enquiries of the Department of Fair Trading, I discovered that our constitution had not been revised since initial lodgement some 20 years ago, and that it is probably not compliant with current (2009) legislation. This means that, for any deficient clause, the government's 'model constitution' is deemed to be in effect – but it also means we need to develop a new constitution – or decide to adopt the model constitution.

I would like to have a Constitution sub-committee. If you have any experience and wish to volunteer, could you please contact me.

And so I come to those I want to thank.

Firstly, Rabbi Lewin, Sarah Zuckerman and Jess Freeman for making us so welcome here at the North Shore Synagogue, Lindfield.

I especially thank Bill Bowes and Summit Internet, who support and sponsor our website and who have provided us, at no cost, with the development tools for the new website. Further, they will assist with the live launch/changeover later in the year.

I also thank

- ♦ Paul Winter, who has kindly audited our books;
- ♦ Gary Luke, who continues to be AJGen moderator; and
- ♦ Peter Arnold, who does such a wonderful job sub-editing *Kosher Koala*. He stretches my use of the English language every issue. If only I knew what I know now, back in the days when I was teaching English!

My role could not be accomplished without the support of the Society Committee:

- ♦ Kim Phillips, our Vice-President and Website Manager until we switch over to the new website;
- ♦ Sunny Gold, our Secretary and Minutes Secretary, who weaves magic out of nonsense;
- ♦ Michael Taub, our Treasurer;
- ♦ Jeannette Tsoulos, our Librarian and Resources Person; and
- ♦ Committee members, Eva Browne, Evelyn Frybort, Dani Haski, Kym Morris and Annette Winter, each of whom has contributed, in no small measure, to what we have accomplished this year.

Michael Taub has served admirably as our Treasurer for 2015, nudging us gently into the 21st century and the era of electronic banking. He has facilitated our decision to place money in term deposits, and sourced a new PO address for the society. He has transferred our books from our previous, but now obsolete, accounting package to a new one. He has set it up so our future membership renewal process can be electronically invoiced and receipted.

However, following his celebrating a significant birthday, Michael and his wonderful wife, Anne, have decided to travel while they can – a lot. As Michael is not seeking re-election as Treasurer, I thank him very much for his year of hard, and sometimes frustrating, work. I wish him and Anne a feast of travel.

The Search for Lieutenant Alan Robert Gubbay, Australian Hero of WW2

By Lucien Gubbay

My interest was first aroused by a 2011 article in the *Adelaide Advertiser*, concerning the WW2 exploits of Lieutenant Alan Gubbay. It caught my attention because of the coincidence of names – I have a brother Alan Gubbay – and because of a fancied resemblance in one of the lieutenant's pictures to a photograph of me in my younger days. It prompted me to search for the lieutenant's origins in an attempt to trace a possible connection to my own family.

The result was partly successful in that, though failing to identify the particular Gubbay clan from which he was descended, I did manage to trace the lieutenant's family back to Baghdad in the early years of the nineteenth century. Life in Baghdad was then becoming increasingly intolerable. Not only was the city much decayed by long neglect following natural disasters, but its Jews were also being subjected to vicious persecution by avaricious Ottoman governors. Many Jews, including my own ancestors, departed at that time.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P10358.001

The search was disappointing to me in another sense; it seems that, with scarcely a backward glance, the lieutenant's grandfather, David Gubbay, decisively turned his back on his Jewish roots on reaching Australia in 1880.

However, the account of one family's journey from oppression in a decayed province of the Ottoman Empire to the brave new world of Australia and the Pacific Islands – from Baghdad to the Commonwealth War Memorial in Papua New Guinea on which Lieutenant Alan Gubbay's name is inscribed – might be of wider interest.

Family Origins

Except when necessary for trading with Europeans, or to identify with a famous ancestor or a particular place or occupation, family names were rare in Baghdad until the latter part of the nineteenth century and even later. A man was simply identified by his given name, his father's name, his grandfather's name and so on. The Hebrew name *Gabbai* is generic, the title of the Treasurer of an important Jewish institution or charity – or even the Treasurer of an Ottoman provincial governor. My own ancestor, Haham Saleh b. Aharon (1725-1772) was appointed *Gabbai* of the Charity of the Four Lands in Baghdad; and so prestigious was that appointment that his sons adopted *Gabbai* as their family name. The European spelling *Gubbay* was adopted by family members who emigrated from Baghdad to British India and was later copied by their cousins who had gone to Aleppo. The same peculiar English spelling of the Hebrew name persists to this day.

There were two main clans of Gubbays in Baghdad, each descended from one of two men living there in the early 1600s. Though marriages between the two clans were frequent, they were otherwise unrelated. With the increasing use of family names – though these remained fluid for some time – others also adopted the name Gubbay for a similar generic reason or, with the same spelling, to associate themselves with a prestigious family. Several smaller clans of Gubbays thus came into existence. The reverse process also took place. One example was when the sons of the fabulously wealthy David Sassoon (once a Gubbay) adopted the name Sassoon for their own family. Another is when a seriously ill Gubbay promised to change his name to the more humble one of Shamash (a synagogue beadle) if he recovered: he did get better and kept his promise.

Abdallah and Rachel (née Joshua) Gubbay

In the early years of the nineteenth century, Abdallah Gubbay, together with other Jews, quit Baghdad to seek new opportunities abroad. Abdallah's own departure can probably be dated to around 1830. He and his wife travelled to Surat, and then, via Bombay to Calcutta in British India, where they established themselves and where their son David was born in 1860.

Abdallah later moved to Hong Kong, midway between the port cities of Calcutta and Shanghai, each already containing a community of formerly Baghdadi Jews. He traded in cotton and opium (then a respectable commodity) between the two centres. David was brought up in Hong Kong, for which he entertained lasting affection.

Years later, in 1880, Abdallah decided to move on to Shanghai with many members of the Sassoon family, to set up a real estate business. Shanghai was then home to a small colony of Baghdadi Jews, most of who worked for one of the Sassoon enterprises. Other perspicacious Baghdadi families had already amassed huge fortunes in Calcutta and Bombay by such investment; Abdallah might well have been inspired by their example. One of his descendants claims that there were some five or six marriages between Abdallah's family and the Sassoons; and Abdallah hoped, no doubt, to profit from that real or imaginary connection.

It was at that point that the family divided. David refused to accompany his parents to Shanghai and instead set out alone to blaze a new trail.

David Gubbay

Armed with his British passport and an impressive wooden travelling trunk, on which the initials D.G. were emblazoned in gold letters, David arrived in Sydney, Australia, in 1880.

He was determined to make Sydney his home and lost no time in starting to manufacture high-quality sweets, said to be the best in New South Wales. He also created and sold *pates de fruit* (fruit jellies). In 1891, he was described in official records as a *confectioner* from Burwood, a suburb of Sydney. Business prospered; and only a few years after his arrival in Australia, David took on employees, bought a fine house and married.

His wife Matilda Kerr (b.1865 Glasgow; d.1914 NSW) came to Australia with her parents from Scotland. Kilts were worn and bagpipes played at their wedding in Sydney in 1883.

It was not easy for Jewish men who had chosen to settle in the remoter parts of the Australian bush to persuade Jewish women to leave the comforts of the city to share their lives of isolation and probable hardship; and so marriages between them and local non-Jewish women were not uncommon. However, David cannot have experienced any such dilemma, for there is no evidence that he ever identified with Sydney's Jewish community. His name does not appear anywhere in its records. This, at first, made him difficult to trace. It seems clear that, apart from naming his first-born son Abdallah after his father, he must have turned his back on his Jewish roots.

In her book, *L'appel du Pacifique*, published in 1998, David's grand-daughter Denyse-Anne Gubbay-Pentecost, scarcely mentions the family's Jewish background. It is not known whether David's abandonment of his Babylonian Jewish heritage was a conscious decision, or whether it arose more gradually because of enthusiasm for his much-admired new environment.

The birth of a son, Abdallah David, named after David's father, was registered in Sydney in 1884. Another son, Albert Gubbay, was reported by the family to have been born in Sydney four years later. Albert married in 1917 and died in Nouméa in 1972 without issue. Details of a third son, Percy Joseph, were registered in 1887.

According to the account of David's divorce in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, he had married Matilda Kerr in 1883 (the *Evening News* incorrectly reported his marriage date as 1886). David lived with his wife for only six years before filing for divorce in Sydney in 1891 on the grounds of her adultery. Newspaper accounts

of the court proceedings, with all the distressing details, are available. Denyse-Anne's book gives a very different account of the circumstances that led to the divorce. According to her, Matilda was too independently-minded for her husband who, because of his family upbringing, was accustomed to submissive women; also, he neglected her badly after falling in love with another woman, Jane Grant.

Matilda Gubbay gave birth to a daughter, Beatrice, in 1899, several years after her messy divorce. No father was named on the birth certificate and, as there is no mention of Beatrice in the family account, David is unlikely to have been the girl's father.

David's health was not good at the time of his divorce. He suffered badly from asthma and bronchitis. His doctor advised him that oil extracted from the *Niaouli* tree to be found in New Caledonia, could 'perform miracles' for his ailment. So, shortly after the *decree nisi* was granted, David and his two sons left for Nouméa, a French possession. There he was joined by Jane Grant (1855-1931) and her two children, Emily and John Childs. David and Jane were married on Christmas day.

David fell in love with the beauty of the island. He abandoned confectionary and started to manufacture soap. Before long, he engaged in trading copra and the coconuts from which it is derived. Later, he also dealt with the many imported products, including wine, sold in his store in Nouméa. Nickel and gold were mined in New Caledonia; although that activity must have enhanced its prosperity, it seems that David distrusted dealing in minerals. David and Jane, together with their four children, came to regard Nouméa as their home; both died there.

There is also a record of David Gubbay's trading activity in Port Vila, New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), an island just over three hundred miles from Nouméa. Though discovered by other Europeans, the islands were named by Captain Cook in 1768. In the nineteenth century, outside interest was stimulated by the discovery there of precious sandalwood, and then by the exploitation of its natives in a vicious system of long-term indentured labour. French and British settlers planted cotton and, when the price collapsed during the American Civil War, they shifted to growing other crops, of which coconuts became the most profitable. The early colonists had totally shattered the traditional Melanesian system of law and order; their protecting powers made no determined efforts to replace it until an Anglo-French condominium was established over the islands in 1906. For enterprising traders seeking to make their fortunes, and willing to risk the hazards of living in so uncertain an environment, the prospect of relative freedom from customs, taxes and other restrictions must have been attractive.

David is mentioned in a history of Port Vila, (*France and England in the New Hebrides* by Edward Jacomb, 1914), as one of its two important local traders. The other important local trading firm was Kerr Brothers Ltd., which suggests that David's first wife might possibly have been the daughter of one of his business friends or rivals.

Edward Jacomb wrote of settler life in Port Vila:

British settlers are for the most part fairly well-to do. They are not rich men. Rich men do not live in out-of-the-way spots of the earth ... they are .. small traders who live simply but comfortably from the proceeds of their trading with the natives and who invest their modest profits in the planting and development . . . of coconuts.

It might reasonably be supposed that the everyday life of settlers in Nouméa, where David lived and worked for the latter part of his life, cannot have been very different.

Abdallah (later Dal) David Gubbay

Abdallah was born in Glebe, a suburb of Sydney, in 1884. He is listed as *Abdullah David* on his wife's family tree; but later became known as Dal, under which name his official documents were issued.

He was sent by his parents, then living in Nouméa, to a boarding-school in Sydney. There, increasingly embarrassed by his foreign-sounding name, and by the frequent explanations demanded of him because of it, he started to use the nickname 'Dal', which to him sounded more English, and even Australian. Later

he dropped Abdallah completely and employed Dal as his first name, thus severing the last link with his past.

In 1900, when only sixteen, Dal, as we must now call him, was abruptly recalled from school by his father and sent to promote his business affairs in Port Vila, capital of the New Hebrides. Dal worked in Port Vila for many years, visiting his family in Nouméa for varying periods. An admirer of English ways, he is said to have had English tastes and an English sense of humour. He adapted well to the club life of the island's European traders and planters. He dressed well, kept fit, rode a horse for sport – though his refusal to drink must to some extent have set him apart from the others. One of his more daring exploits, involving swimming through a shark-infested lagoon to settle a bet, became a local legend. All was not play though; for Dal diligently attended to his father's business affairs, which included running a store, acquiring plantations and making plans for the building of a modern hotel on the island.

Dal married Simone Marthe Walemot in 1928 (described in a 1952 press report of the later divorce proceedings as a *well preserved French woman with dark eyes*). They had five children, including Alan, the later war hero, whose births were registered in Glebe, a suburb of Sydney. There is some doubt about the reported dates for, according to Australian army records, the couple's third son Alan was born in 1923 – he might possibly have falsified his age in order to enlist in the army in 1942 and not need his parents' permission to fight offshore.

Dal and Marthe were recalled to Nouméa from time to time to see the family and eventually because of his father's failing health and death. He also had to deal with the business crisis brought about by the Wall Street crash of 1929.

It seems that it might not always have been a happy marriage, for Dal (in his later divorce proceedings) accused Marthe of misconduct, reportedly saying *...I have forgiven her time after time*. Be that as it may, Marthe left the New Hebrides in 1938 to live in a house in Sydney bought for her by Dal. She later claimed that this was in preparation for her husband's selling his business in Port Vila and retiring to Sydney.

Dal did eventually retire and return to Sydney in 1949, eleven years later. He then bought a hotel in Narrabri, 300 miles away, but lived there for only a few months before leaving his wife and going back to Sydney. He divorced Marthe in 1952; a lurid press report exists of the alleged goings-on in the Narrabri hotel.

Dal died in 1974. The cemetery in which he was cremated contains a Jewish section; but his ashes were *collected* – not buried. Marthe died in NSW some ten years later and was buried in a Catholic cemetery.

Lieutenant Alan Robert Gubbay



According to Australian army records, Alan was born on 9 January 1923 in Nouméa, New Caledonia. His mother being Catholic, Alan was not halachically Jewish; and on enlistment he declared his religion as 'C. of E.' (Church of England).

He and his brothers were educated at Canberra Grammar School, a prestigious private boarding school to which his war medals were later donated.

Alan joined the Australian army during WW2 and died in action on Kairiru Island (approximately 30kms NW of Wewak, PNG) in 1945. He was described in Australian War Memorial documentation as *a native of Nouméa, New Caledonia*; it was also noted that he had worked as a customs clerk in Elizabeth Bay, New South Wales, before enlisting in the army. Following his commissioning as an officer, he served with the 2/3rd Infantry Battalion before being transferred to the prestigious Z

Special Force of commandos; he led an eight-man unit to reconnoitre Muschu Island off Wewak on the

coast of New Guinea. Following an encounter with a Japanese patrol and having lost much of their equipment, several of the men, including Lt. Gubbay, managed to put to sea in an attempt to make contact with allied forces, but were never seen again. Having no known grave, his death was commemorated on the Commonwealth War Memorial at Lae, Papua New Guinea.

That official account was later challenged by Alan's younger brother, Donald, then living in Sydney, who claimed that the lieutenant had, in fact, been buried in a cave by Christian natives. As reported in 2011 by the *Adelaide Advertiser*, Donald maintained that Lt. Alan Gubbay's body was recovered in 1947 and transferred to the Commonwealth War Cemetery at Lae, Papua New Guinea. Until 1966, it was Australian policy to bury war dead as close as possible to where they had fallen. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission documents indicate that Lt. Gubbay is buried in a joint grave with fellow commando Lt. T. J. Barnes.

In 2011, Donald sought to persuade the authorities to repatriate Alan's remains *home* to New Caledonia and even enlisted the help of the French government, but without success.

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I gratefully acknowledge the help given to me in my search by Robyn Dryen (President of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society), who provided encouragement and access to many sources; by Andrew Hougie and Leanne Minney; by Liz Ison, who directed me to other channels of information; also to Denyse-Anne Pentecost's book *L'appel du Pacifique* (Paris 1998), from which I derived much information, included fascinating personal details of her family not found in official documents.

Lucien Gubbay
January 2016

About Lucien Gubbay

Born in Buenos Aires, Lucien Gubbay has his roots in the Middle-Eastern Sephardic community of Manchester, England. Educated at Balliol College Oxford, he was then commissioned in the Royal Air Force.

Lucien currently chairs the Montefiore Endowment, is a trustee of the London School of Jewish Studies and is a past president of the Elders of London's Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation. A former consulting structural engineer, he has long been fascinated by religious history, about which he teaches and writes. He is an Honorary Research Fellow of University College London.

He has written numerous books and contributed the section on England in the *Encyclopaedia of Jews in the Islamic World* (Brill, 2010).

An Amazing Find!

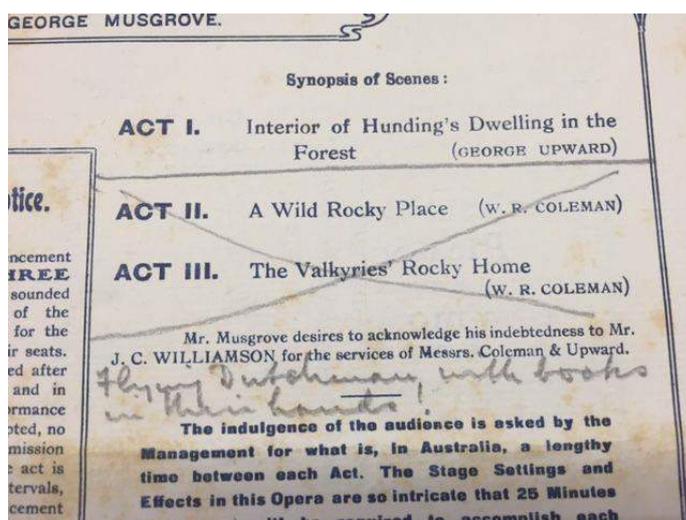
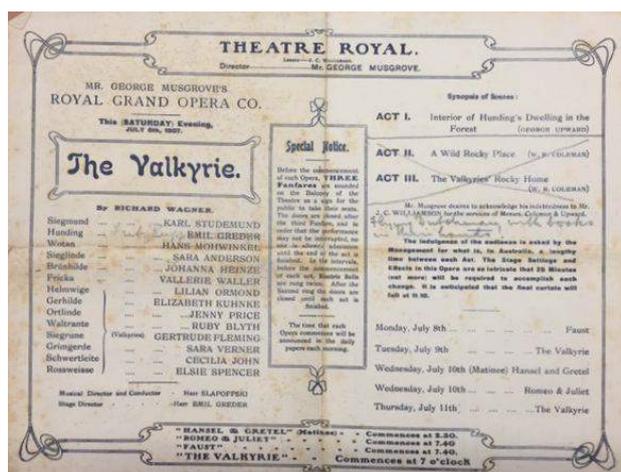
By Dani Haski

Over 100 years ago, at the turn of last century, my great grandfather, David Eisenberg, played violin in the orchestra for George Musgrove's German opera season. In a 1930 newspaper interview, David described a performance where the principal singers refused to perform unless they were paid more. After more than an hour of keeping the audience waiting, Mr Musgrove announced he was being held to ransom and instead of the scheduled program, the Australian members of the company would perform *The Flying Dutchman* holding the scripts.

Musgrove announced that one of the chorus – a Sydney girl – had consented to play the part to the best of her ability, and after another delay the curtain was raised, the time then being about 9 p.m. The chorus girl came on with the score in her hand – a most trying ideal – and I have never seen such a fine example of pluck. The girl from the chorus undertook this most difficult part and carried it through in a most creditable manner. Western Champion, 11 August 1930, p.10

I love this story and managed to corroborate it with an independent contemporaneous newspaper report in Trove.

Today, I spent a few hours in the National Library going through programs from the JCVilliamson Archives and came across a program for the German Opera Company performance of *The Valkyrie*. In pencil, Acts II and III were crossed out and the words "Flying Dutchman with books in their hands" was written underneath. How amazing to find a program for that very night in the archives!



Search for exit visas issued in Bordeaux in 1940

Karen Franklin, Director of Family Research at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, recently posted to the JewishGen Digest:

The Spanish diplomat Eduardo Propper de Callejon is remembered for having facilitated the escape of thousands of Jews from occupied France during World War II by issuing over 1,000 visas in Bordeaux in June, 1940. For his efforts, he received the Righteous Among the Nations award from Yad Vashem in 2008.

The official list of the visas 'disappeared' in 1941. Felipe Propper de Callejon, son of Eduardo, has asked for assistance in locating a visa or travel document issued by his father. He has never seen one.

Should you be in possession of such a document, or know where one can be found, kindly contact me privately at <mailto:karenfranklin@gmail.com>.

News

Sophie Caplan honoured

The Australian Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) honoured Sophie Caplan OAM with Life Membership “in appreciation of the service and commitment to the Society over many years.” Sophie was the inaugural President of AJGS and edited *Kosher Koala* from 1994 to 2002. From 2004 to 2011, Sophie was President of the AJHS.

She has contributed much to our knowledge of the history of Jewish life in Australia; the honour is well-deserved.

Mazel Tov, Sophie!

IAJGS Conference update



The huge conference program has been released and can be browsed or searched at <http://tinyurl.com/iajgsprog>. With hundreds of lectures, many SIG meetings and BOF (Birds of a Feather) gatherings, it looks to be the most content-rich conference ever.

The conference blog (<http://www.iajgs2016.org/blog/>) is running daily profiles of conference speakers and session topics. This is designed to assist early planning for participants and for those who wish to purchase a full- or partial-subscription to IAJGS Conference LIVE!

This year’s conference Family Finder is based on participants’ entries on JewishGen’s Family Finder (JGFF) (<http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/>), so it may be worthwhile checking to see if there have been any recent additions for your names and/or towns.

New NSW State Library catalogue

NSW State Library is about to release a new integrated Library catalogue which will allow you to search across published materials (books, magazines, maps), manuscripts, oral history, pictures and most e-resources (articles and e-books) – all in one search.

From 25 May, you will be able to log-in to the new catalogue with your current library card number, but your current password/PIN will not be retained. Use a temporary password – your surname (case sensitive, with the first letter capitalised).

It is recommended that, from 25 May, you change that temporary password. To do so, follow these steps in the new catalogue:

Click on: My Account – Personal Settings – Edit Details – Update Login Credentials

Family Tree Maker – not quite dead!

<http://www.mackiev.com/ftm/>

In a strange turn of events, *ancestry.com* announced the sale of *Family Tree Maker* to Software MacKiev – but not until months after announcing its demise, and leaving its users rushing to find/buy alternative software before their data disappeared or became inaccessible.

At the bottom of the MacKiev website page for FTM, is a FAQ button. Click on this to see how to continue using FTM if you have not already migrated elsewhere.

As the name suggests, MacKiev has been primarily a Mac operating system software developer, but has, for now, committed to both Windows and Mac versions of FTM.

If you have already given up on *Family Tree Maker*, and have decided to switch to *Roots Magic*, it can now import your files directly rather than via a GEDCOM. See <http://blog.rootsmagic.com/?p=2668> for instructions about how to import and preserve your data.

Justus Rosenberg

<http://tinyurl.com/NYTRosenberg>

On 29 April 2016, *The New York Times* ran a wonderful article on Dr Justus Rosenberg, WW2 Resistance fighter in Vichy France. He survived the war and, at 95 years of age, continues to lecture and support the fight against hate and anti-Semitism.

Call for Glaswegians

Glasgow Hebrew Burial Society has launched an appeal for support to restore the Glenduffhill and Riddrie Jewish cemeteries in Glasgow. With the stated aim of raising £1million, the Glasgow Jewish Cemetery Restoration Project is asking for donations from the Glasgow Jewish Diaspora.

There are photographs of the cemeteries and further information about the appeal on the website at <http://www.glasgowhebrewburialsociety.org/appeal.htm>

NB. If your family was associated with the Queens Park Hebrew Congregation, they are more likely to have been buried in the Cathcart Jewish cemetery.

Trutnov Memorial

In early May, the city of Trutnov, Czech Republic, unveiled a monument honouring survivors of women's forced labour camps in Sudetenland and Silesia. The all-women camps included Gabersdorf, Parshnitz, Schatzlar, Ober Altstadt, Bernsdorf, Arnau, Dunkenthal, Hohenehlbe, Ober Hohenehlbe, Leibau and Bausnitz.

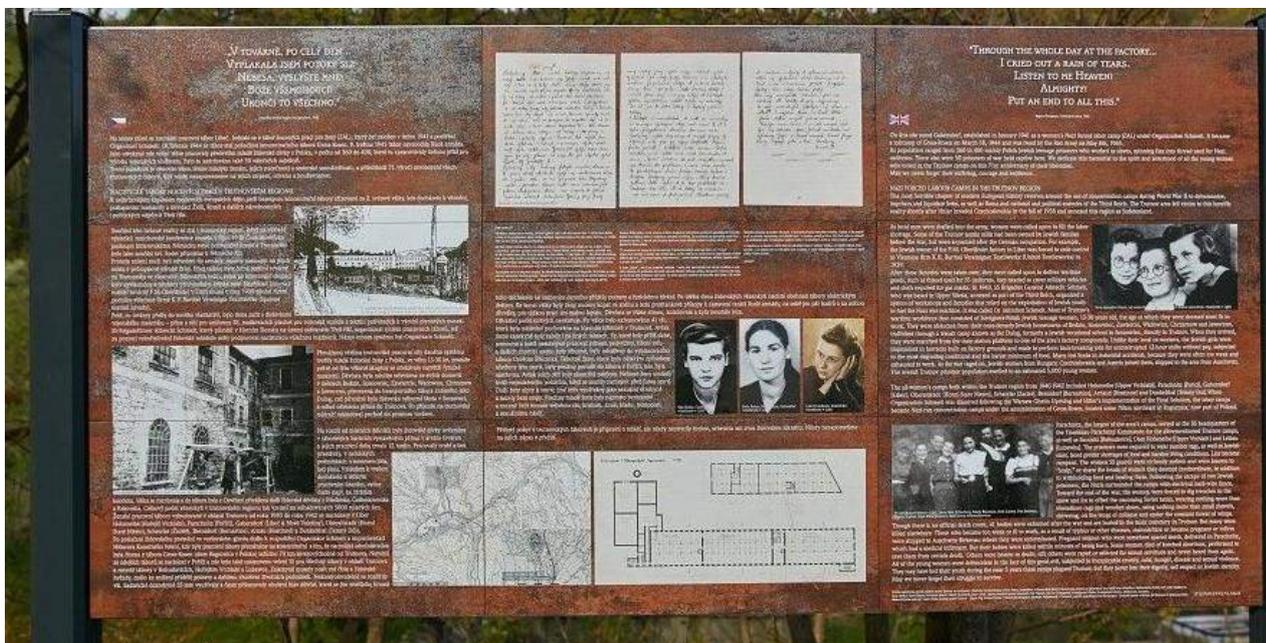


Photo: Město Trutnov (Trutnov city website) <http://www.trutnov.cz/>

Reclaim the Records – NYC Marriage Index Update

The NYC Marriage Index records, originally kept by the New York City Clerk's Office, were later moved to the New York City Municipal Archives. For many decades, the data were available to the public in microfilm format, but could only be viewed onsite at the Municipal Archives building in lower Manhattan. *Reclaim the Records* sued for access and finally obtained copies of these microfilms in October 2015. The microfilms have been digitised and the images uploaded to the *Internet Archive*.

The digitised records include:

Manhattan 1908-1929

Brooklyn 1908-1929

Bronx 1914-1929

Queens 1908-1930

Staten Island 1908-1938

Plans are underway for a volunteer project to index these records to make them more useful. For now, you will have to browse frame by frame to find the records of interest.

To view the images see: <https://archive.org/details/nycmarriageindex>

Ukraine has a Jewish Prime Minister!



In April, Volodymyr Groysman, an active member of the Jewish community in Vinnytsia, was appointed Prime Minister of Ukraine. He is reported to be the country's first Jewish Prime Minister and was formerly Mayor of Vinnytsia and more recently, Speaker of the Ukraine parliament.

See <http://tinyurl.com/UKRPM2> for more details.

Photo Source: Senat Rzeczypospolitej

Egyptian records – update

In April, there was a posting on the *The Heritage of Jews in Egypt* Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/exegypt/>) stating that the few remaining Jews in Alexandria, had, either willingly or unwillingly, handed over the community's historical records to the Egyptian Archives authority. There has long been a campaign (see <http://www.nebidaniel.org/>) to gain permission from the community to scan these precious documents so that those with Egyptian heritage could gain access to them.

There is now concern that, due to the instability in Egypt, the goal of easier (or any) access to these records will be even harder to achieve.

Sydney Jewish Museum – new events

The Sydney Jewish Museum will hold special 'after hours' (5pm-8pm) events on the first Thursday of each month.

The Museum Café will remain open, allowing visitors to enjoy a glass of wine and a special late night menu.

Archival film of the Warsaw Ghetto

Extraordinary footage taken in the Warsaw Ghetto has been uploaded to Facebook. From an apparently orderly entry to the ghetto, the descent into hell is captured in these terrifying and intimate images. Because much of the filming is in close-up, it is possible to identify individuals – if your family was there, you may find them in these fragments.

Warning – the footage contains truly appalling images.

<https://www.facebook.com/arkadiusz.swiderski.18/videos/1197242480303591/?theater>

POLIN wins 2016 European Museum of the Year Award



The European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA) goes to a museum which contributes most directly to attracting audiences and satisfying its visitors with unique atmosphere, imaginative interpretation and presentation, a creative approach to education and social responsibility.

The 2016 Award was won by POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. It was one of 49 nominees from 24 countries.

USC Shoah Foundation's holocaust testimonies to be more accessible

The USC Shoah Foundation announced a partnership agreement with ProQuest. The outcome of this agreement is that ProQuest will distribute the USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archives (all 53,000 testimonies) to colleges and universities – world-wide.

This is great news for those of us who do not live in Melbourne. At present, the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne is the only Australian location to view holocaust testimonies recorded outside Australia. The Jewish Museum in Sydney provides access only to Australian testimonies.

There is, as yet, no indication of when the new distribution will occur, nor which academic institutions will be the recipients.

Israel State Archives Digital Project

The Israel State Archives has begun to upload the first output of its project to digitise its entire collection. While this news was indeed welcome, the downside is that access to the original documents will now cease. While this is common practice where fragile material is digitised to permit conservation of the original documents and artefacts, what is not common practice is the censorship applied in this instance.

State Archivist, Yaacov Lozowick, admitted that nearly half a million pages were sent to the IDF Censor, who then redacted historical documents already in the public domain. So be aware that the files you browse might not be complete.

To search the digital images go to: <http://www.archives.gov.il/en/>

To read the interview with the State Archivist and other comments on the censorship issue, go to: <http://972mag.com/israels-state-archivist-opens-up-about-censorship-digitization/118567/>

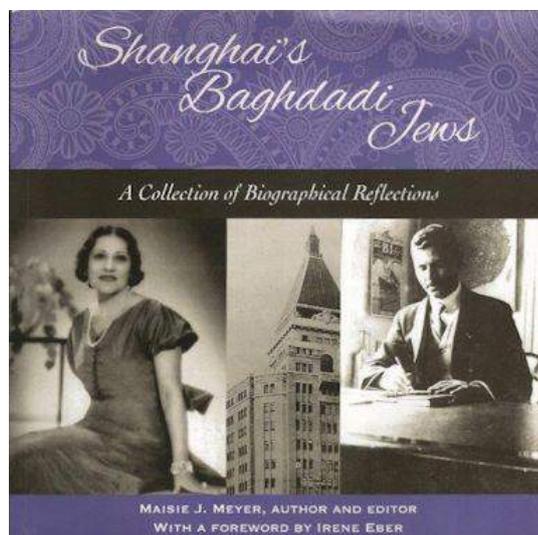
Book Review

Shanghai's Baghdadi Jews – A Collection of Biographical Reflections

By Maisie J. Meyer (Author and Editor)

Blacksmith Books, Hong Kong, 2015

Reviewed by Robyn Dryen



This book is an edited collection of 26 biographies of Baghdadi Jews and their families who lived in Shanghai from the 1840s to 1949, when the last families departed as the communists took power. Some of the stories are written in the first person. The chapter on Silas Aaron Hardoon and his family is an edited transcript of an interview with his daughter, Maple Doron. Other stories are written from archival sources such as legal documents, letters and newspaper reports.

The surnames of the included families are Abraham (including the Gubbay family who adopted the Abraham surname), Benjamin, Cohen, Dangoor, Elias, Ezra, Hardoon, Hayim, Hendeles, Jacob, Kadoorie, Levy, Moalem, Nissim, Reuben, Sassoon, Sopher and Toeg.

The material is well-documented, with many photos to delight those whose families are represented here.

For those researching possible family connections, the extremely rudimentary index is perhaps the most disappointing aspect of this book. While the listing is alphabetical, names appear in firstname-surname order, making it extremely difficult to read. Furthermore, many names appear in the text but not in the index. Similarly, many of those identified in photos are also missing from the index.

As each biography mentions other families and individuals in the story-telling, you might miss a vital reference if you do not read the complete text. Running at just over 400 pages, this requires a dedicated search. The stories, however, are compelling, and if you have an interest in 19th-20th century Shanghai, the book is a valuable addition.

A copy has been added to our resources library at Lindfield.

Useful and interesting websites

International Red Cross WW1 PoW files – update

<http://grandeguerre.icrc.org/>

The International Red Cross (IRC) has placed some records of WW1 PoWs online.

In 1914, the IRC established the International Prisoners-of-War Agency in Geneva. The Agency received lists of prisoners' names and records of capture, of transfers between camps and of deaths in detention – primarily from the Western, Romanian and Serbian Fronts.

When complete, this website will provide digital images of 5 million prisoner cards (both military and civilian PoWs) and half a million pages of records associated with these cards. Searching is by name, nationality, and civilian or military status. The images are batched and arranged only loosely in alphabetical order, so do search through the entire group to find a name. There are helpful hints for navigating your way through the site, and for finding additional related information.

New International Tracing Service (ITS) website

<https://www.its-arolsen.org/en/>

The ITS has launched a new website with a simplified inquiry form for information and research requests. The site also has new digital collections. These include photos of personal objects taken from prisoners in concentration camps (images by name); a collection of documents on allied requests for information on specific towns (images by town); and administrative files from the Child Search Branch following liberation – this last set contains no names or towns – they are procedural/policy documents.

Thanks to Peter Nash for this information.

Jewish Businesses in Berlin, 1930-45

http://www2.hu-berlin.de/djgb/www/find?language=en_US

This is an abridged version of the Database of Jewish Businesses in Berlin. It contains 8,024 records and can be searched by business name or district.

The database was set up between 2005 and 2012 as part of a research project at the Humboldt University in Berlin. It is the basis of the exhibition *Final Sale – The end of Jewish owned businesses in Nazi Berlin*. The 80-page illustrated catalogue of this exhibition is available online at:

<http://verratenundverkauft.info/en/catalogue.html>

The database of Jewish Businesses in Berlin was made available to the Centrum Judaicum (Berlin), the State Archive in Berlin, the Leo Baeck Institute (New York) and Yad Vashem (Jerusalem). Should you be interested in more information on a company you have found in the online database, you can contact these institutions.

The Jews of Posen

http://www.loc.gov/today/cyberlc/feature_wdesc.php?rec=7239

The US library of Congress has a video podcast of a talk by Edgar Luft about his book, *Jews of Posen Province in the 19th Century*. Edgar says the book took more than 28 years of research and runs to nearly 2,000 pages in four bound volumes. In this talk, he outlines many of the available sources for researching Posen's Jewish community.

Edgar has been a frequent contributor to *Avotaynu* and to many genealogical conferences, and has given many lectures to genealogical societies.

The video runs for 57 minutes.

New website for finding Spanish records and documents

<http://www.sephardicancestry.com/>

Genie Milgrom, author of *My 15 Grandmothers*, has created an excellent website to guide others in locating records and other documents in Spain. For those who have found the joys of the *Routes to Roots* guide to Eastern European repositories and their holdings, the concept will be familiar. Now those with Spanish roots have a town by town guide to what can be found. To facilitate requests for further information, phone numbers, email addresses and website addresses are listed for each of the archives.

Ontario Jewish Archives online catalogue

<http://ontariojewisharchives.org/>

The Ontario Jewish Archives has both an online catalogue of their holdings, and a series of online exhibitions relating to Jewish life across the Canadian province of Ontario. There are many photos – both

old and new, and detailed pages on each of the smaller regional Jewish communities. It is well worth exploring if part of your family migrated to Ontario.

Compelling Stories: Jewish Lives Lived – blog

<http://compellingjewishstories.blogspot.com.au/>

This website is Toby Anne Bird's blog of Jewish lives in literature. Each post consists of a short review of the contents of a memoir and is followed by lists of family names and geographical locations that appear in it.

It is a terrific resource for adding to your knowledge of life in ancestral towns and nearby villages. Your family might even be mentioned in one of these memoirs.

Seeking Kin

Hillel Kuttler, columnist with JTA (Jewish Telegraphic Agency), runs a regular column, *Seeking Kin*, which aims to help reunite long-lost friends and relatives. If you would like *Seeking Kin* to write about your search for long-lost relatives and friends, please include the principal facts and your contact information in a brief email to Hillel Kuttler at seekingkin@jta.org. Thanks to Dani Haski for this tip.

MyHeritage launches Tribal Quest website

<http://www.tribalquest.org/>

MyHeritage has launched a fascinating new project, Tribal Quest. Its mission is to record and preserve the family histories of tribal people who live in remote locations around the world. The first expedition documented the Himba people of Namibia. Visiting 19 villages, 2,763 names and complex relationships were recorded. The Himba project is already uploaded to the website and the journey log is a very interesting read.

The recently completed second expedition was to the highlands of Papua New Guinea. The documentation is coming soon. You can follow the projects on the Tribal Quest website. For the adventurous, there are volunteering opportunities to join one of the projects by completing the form at the 'Get involved' tab.

Yad Vashem – updated website

<http://yvng.yadvashem.org/>

Yad Vashem has launched its new interface for the Central Database of Shoah Victims. It looks terrific and the searching has been simplified – but there are teething problems with slow download times. When you make a search, there is a pop-up at the bottom of the page asking for feedback on the new site.

Please take a few minutes to let them know of your experience – it is taken seriously. When I responded that it was slow to load, I received a request for further information about time of day, location, platform I was using etc. This all goes to improve the website, and the timely response was as surprising as it was welcome.

Budapest Jewish birth indexes 1876-1895

<http://tinyurl.com/BPbirths>

More than 46,000 Budapest Jewish birth records from 1876–95 have been indexed and placed online by the Hungarian Society for Family History Research. The indexes are presented as a single spreadsheet which can be sorted, but cannot be saved or downloaded. Fields include both parents' names and towns of origin and father's occupation.

Papers Past [NZ] – new beta website

<https://beta.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>



The National Library of New Zealand has a revamped *Papers Past* website in beta testing. *Papers Past* contains more than four million pages of digitised New Zealand newspapers and periodicals. The collection covers the years 1839 to 1948 and includes 132 publications from all regions of New Zealand.

As well as an improved appearance and user-friendly interface, the new website searches letters and diaries, magazines, and parliamentary papers in addition to newspapers.

It is not clear whether this will replace the Digital New Zealand website (<http://www.digitalnz.org/>), which currently searches all this and more.

Time to revisit your favourite websites!

From the time you read this until the IAJGS conference begins in the first week of August, there will be additions to most of your favourite Jewish Genealogy websites. The SIGs and other organisations such as JRI-Pol, Geshet Galicia, IGRA and GenTeam, aim to complete major uploads of new data prior to the conference.

If you don't subscribe to their mailing lists, at list visit the databases to see what is new.

Workshop Dates for the rest of 2016

The Society will hold workshops on the following dates at:

Rev Katz Library, North Shore Synagogue, Treatts Road, Lindfield:

Sunday workshops 9.30am to 12.30pm	Monday workshops 10.00am to 1.00pm
5 June	20 June
3 July	18 July
7 August	15 August
11 September	19 September
9 October	31 October
6 November	21 November
4 December	19 December

The Last Word

Trove – are the obituaries premature?

In the last few months much has been written about the future of *Trove*. Much that has been written is inaccurate, or at least a distortion of the facts. In the lead-up to the 2016-17 Budget, there was the usual argy-bargy about where the Coalition government would make cuts. Every sector staked its claim for continued or increased funding, while the Government indicated that there would need to be cuts somewhere.

In this context, there was either a judicious leak from within the Australian National Library, mischief-making on the part of the press, or misguided activism by one/some of Trove's many devotees. Examples of reportage are – *Trove online database's future in doubt due to National Library funding cuts*, [ABC online]; *Trove: a great digital democracy under threat*, [The Guardian]; and even in the international Jewish genealogical world – *Australian Trove Funding May End* [Nu? What's New?].

Concerned citizens were urged to sign one of several hastily prepared petitions (e.g. *Stop Cuts to National Library of Australia & Save Trove* at Change.org; and *FUND TROVE!* at megaphone.org.au). These petitions were directed to Malcolm Turnbull and his government. What they failed to do was to address the management team of the National Library which determines how to allocate revenue across the organisation.

Predictably, the government's response was that within its given budget, the NLA was choosing to allocate fewer resources to Trove.

So what's happening?

It is true that there have been cuts right across the arts and cultural institutions; this is certainly cause for concern. As far as Trove is concerned, we know that the NLA is planning to reduce staff – it is not yet clear which staff – and whether any of the redundant positions are related to Trove activities. An unnamed 'spokesperson' for the NLA has indicated that fewer collections will be added to Trove and that there will be a **slowdown** in the rate at which digitised content is added.

But before lamenting the demise of Trove, take a look at the planned additions to Trove at <http://www.nla.gov.au/content/new-titles-coming> . Note that many of these projects are the work of institutions external to the NLA, including State and municipal libraries, universities, and bodies such as the Scout Association of Australia. This is not a **shutdown**.

If you want to get involved in retaining a dynamic and hugely important Trove, there are a number of things you can do. Firstly – use it! The Library monitors website traffic and reports on traffic as one of its performance measures. These performance outcomes are the basis on which the NLA argues its case for funding. Secondly – express your concerns about reduced funding for Trove, and ask that the decision be reconsidered by management. Surely there are other activities that the NLA could curtail instead.

Write to:

Mr Ryan Stokes,
Chair of the Library Council,
National Library of Australia
Canberra ACT 2600

and email:

Ms Anne-Marie Schwirtlich AM
Director-General
Australian National Library
sjaensch@nla.gov.au

Robyn Dryen
Editor: ed@ajgs.org.au