

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



# KOSHER KOALA



WINTER/ JULY 2020

AJGS  
*L'dor V'dor*

'Eros Bendato' (*Eros Bound*) - Igor Mitoraj (1944 - 2014) sits in front of the Town Hall Tower in the Rynek, or market square, of Krakow.

# EDITORIAL



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Dear Members,

We hope you have remained in good health during this past half-year. The ravages of COVID-19 have wrought many changes to our lifestyle, and the AJGS has not been immune to its effects.

Membership fees would also normally be due at this time. In light of the ongoing disruptions caused by the pandemic the AJGS committee has decided to provide existing members with one year's **FREE** membership for the financial year - 1 July 2020-30 June 2021. New members wishing to join during this period will also receive **FREE** membership for the year.

Donations are always welcome, of course!

Our bank details are: Australian Jewish Genealogical Society  
BSB: 633 000 Account No: 158979559

No workshops or events have been held since early March, and unfortunately, because of the requirements of social distancing, we feel it is still too early to begin in person meetings just yet.

We do however, now have two exciting zoom events planned for August.

The first, a Genealogical Detective Workshop, gives you the chance to engage some help from our expert genealogical sleuths to solve a mystery in your family tree. The second is a guest speaker, the co-vice president of the Australian Society of Polish Jews and their descendants (ASPJ), Estelle Rozinski. Estelle will tell us all about the *Missing Mezuzot Project*, a living history project she instigated in her ancestral town of Zdunska Wola. More details about these events and how you can participate can be found at the end of Kosher Koala.

Our best wishes for your continuing good health and we look forward to meeting you online soon.

***AJGS Acting President Jeannette Tsoulos and the Committee***

# FEATURES

## PRESERVING HISTORY AS IT HAPPENS

DANI HASKI

As genealogists we spend a lot of time wandering through the historical back alleys of our ancestors' lives. But 2020, barely half over, has been historic for us for a number of reasons. The year has been characterised by a thesaurus full of adjectives ranging from apocalyptic to unprecedented. While our forebears had to contend with poverty, pogroms, disease and displacement, we started this year with the choking smoke of the summer bushfires, further devastating rural areas after years of unrelenting drought. This was followed by drenching rain, which, although mostly welcome, flooded vulnerable areas. And then came a global pandemic, spread by the very connectedness that makes our world so economically and culturally rich.

All over the world, citizens were tasked with the onerous obligation of staying home to prevent the spread of a new contagion that risked the health and lives of our loved ones and our communities. Australians rose (or rather sank into sofas) to the challenge and after several weeks of lockdown, restrictions were eased and life has slowly begun to resume, albeit under a new set of social conventions. We are all trying to find our new normal.

This is history happening. As we try to piece together the experiences of our family members through the 1918 flu pandemic, we have an opportunity to record our own experiences today for generations to come. When we are no longer here our words and pictures can still relate our thoughts, feelings and impressions of the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. And we have a host of options at our fingertips to achieve this in ways that will be preserved for eternity.



WHO Covid-19 Dashboard (screenshot)



The cultural institutions we use regularly for our research are running several programs to which anyone can contribute, to capture this moment for posterity. Galleries, museums and archives are all trying to record history as it happens. Here's what's been happening at some of our favourite Australian institutions.

## SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM

The Sydney Jewish Museum (SJM) has been closed to visitors since March but it has not remained idle. As we know, restrictions on gatherings were instituted not long before Passover. This necessitated some creative solutions to family seders, with zoom-seders proving popular.

Rosalyn Sugarman, Head Curator of SJM told *Kosher Koala*:

Sydney Jewish Museum curators are always seeking opportunities to expand the collection, and reached out to the community to document how Jewish religious life and practices have been adapted during Covid-19.

SJM began collecting photographs, artwork, items and memorabilia from the community describing how Covid-19 is affecting our lives culturally and religiously.



In years to come, this will help the Museum's visitors understand the experiences that have continued to shape Sydney's Jewish community.

In particular the museum curators wanted to know:

- How Judaism was being practiced during this time?
- How communities observed Jewish festivals and Shabbat?
- How we celebrated weddings, births, brit milah?
- How we grieved and mourned?

The Samuel family (pictured) were one of the first to respond. They contributed images from their son Theo's bar mitzvah which took place on 15th and 21st of May 2020, at a time when the synagogues were closed and no visitors were allowed in people's homes, not even extended family. Keen to mark the occasion, involve friends and family in Australia and overseas and stay within the Jewish tradition, the family consulted Rabonim from both the Great Synagogue and North Shore Synagogue (where they are members), and prepared an online ceremony.



Choosing an appropriate time for attendees in Israel, Paris, London, New York and Melbourne, a ceremony of prayers, sermons and blessings was held on Theo's Hebrew 13th Birthday. The following Thursday, once restrictions had eased slightly, the immediate family joined the clergy at the Great Synagogue for a morning service and Theo was called to the Torah. Positions where people stood, what they touched and the length of the service was carefully planned.



If you have an experience you would like to share with the museum you can upload your contribution to the SJM Website's [\*Collecting In The Time of Pandemic\*](#) page.

(Samuel Family images supplied by Sydney Jewish Museum; used with permission)

[HOME](#)

# COVID-19: Preserving the stories of Australia

## NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

The [National Library of Australia](#) (NLA) quickly realised that Covid-19 represented a critical challenge and a great opportunity. As the pandemic began to sweep the globe they recognised the need to capture not just one moment, but millions of moments, many of them online and ephemeral. NLA established a program to record the daily experience of our nation, both online and offline, so that subsequent generations can understand what life was like during this period.

In February 2020, web archivists began identifying and collecting material about, what was then, a breaking national story about a novel Coronavirus, COVID-19. Online material that has been collected includes a mix of government advisories and tertiary education information for incoming students. News sites have also been archived, as well as travel advisories from companies like Qantas and Virgin Australia.

As of mid June, 681 website snapshots had been recorded, with collection ongoing. Some sites are collected daily, some weekly and others monthly.

NLA isn't just collecting websites.

Publishers from across Australia are depositing electronic publications in the National e-deposit service (NED). NED is an online service for publishers that enables the deposit, management, storage, preservation, discovery and delivery of published electronic material across Australia. Maps, newsletter, and statistical bulletins relating to COVID-19 are just some of the types of content [already available through Trove](#).



We [NLA] are working with photographers who are visually documenting COVID-19 around Australia and we will later conduct oral histories with a diverse group of interviewees to ensure that many perspectives and experiences are recorded.

The NLA would like you to help it by collecting and sending printed ephemera, for example – the flyers in your mailbox about your neighbourhood COVID-19 support group.

You can read more about the NLA's COVID-19 project on its dedicated webpage: [\*Covid-19 Preserving the Stories of Australia\*](#), and follow the National Library's social media channels to learn how you can help collect this National story.

## STATE LIBRARY OF NSW

The State Library of NSW (SLNSW) has also been collecting posters, flyers and mail-outs appearing in local neighbourhoods in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It established the [#NSWathome](#) initiative, partnering with the ABC to collect and record how people were spending their days. Citizens were encouraged to take a photo of life during lockdown – how we worked, learned, ate, stayed fit, stayed informed and entertained – and to post these photos to Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag #NSWatHome. Selected photos appear on the ABC's [This Moment in Time](#) project and on the Library's website. The photos will also be collected by the Library using their Social Media Archive.

SLNSW also established [The Diary Files](#), a project designed to collect stories, poems, lyrics, thoughts and reflections from the people of NSW and beyond as we transition from strict isolation to the new normal of social distancing and heightened hygiene. Anyone can contribute to The Diary Files.



While browsing The Diary Files I came across a series of [entries from residents of Montefiore in Hunters Hill](#). They were submitted by 86 year old Sheila Levy and vividly describe the emotional effects of lockdown on several residents.



Sheila and her husband moved into "Monte" in Hunters Hill in February, expecting a bucolic lifestyle supported by the kind staff. In March, with the risks of coronavirus for the elderly so high, many aged care facilities went into lockdown.

Sheila describes what happened at Monte in her diary entry:

...we were no longer allowed to leave the grounds except for medical reasons. If visits were necessary, masks and gloves were to be worn until we returned. Then for the next seven days we were checked for blood pressure, temperature and oxygen were recorded. We were no longer allowed visitors.

In April, Margaret Morgan described in her entry how she celebrated her birthday:

My family... connected with me via WhatsApp (to me a new sensation). At the appointed time of 7pm, I viewed a lovely table with a delicious BBQ dinner, pinot noir by the glass (not for the children) and a cake in the background. They told me it was a delicious meal; I could even smell it. It was then decided a second call at 7:45 for cake and candles – what a hoot! I was here in my room, they were singing their song, candles were blown out and cake cut... We'll always remember it as the most unique and funniest celebration as yet and more to come.

But in May, she recorded her anxiety over the rising death toll:

Awful news of the death rates internationally – more disturbing are the figures from close districts to our home, nursing home and aged care facilities... Unfortunately, this situation has affected our predicament in lockdown. No visitors from family nor friends. No deliveries which was felt most on Mother's Day. No outings was the hardest rule; feeling very locked in and frustrated by the yearning for independence as in the past. Yet, we remain safe and virus-free.



These diary entries will provide valuable insight for future researchers as they try to piece together how their family felt through this unpredictable period.

The State Library's reading rooms are now open from 10 am to 6 pm, Monday to Friday, but a reduced number of readers are allowed at any one time to maintain safe physical distancing. Online bookings are essential and available for two daily sessions for the main reading room: morning: 10 am to 1.30 pm, afternoon: 2.30 pm to 6 pm. If you want to access Special Collections you have the option to book one or two sessions per day.

Refer to the [SLNSW Website](#) for more details.



## NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

During the lockdown The [National Archives of Australia](#) (NAA) highlighted their digital collections with a feature called #ArchivesAtHome. This page had links to their [family history resources](#), their [Flickr gallery](#) and specialist sites such as [Destination Australia](#), a site designed to highlight records related specifically to the immigration history of Australia, including 22,000 photographs of people arriving and living in Australia taken by government photographers between 1946 and 1999.

The NAA is slowly reopening its reading rooms as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. The research centre in Canberra is now open from 10am to 4pm weekdays, but you will need to make a booking to visit as the number of researchers is capped. Researchers will also be asked to leave the room between 1.00 and 1.30pm to facilitate additional cleaning. Records need to be requested in advance. You can complete an [advance request for records](#) online and the archives will contact you to confirm your booking.

Most research institutions are reopening with appropriate public health precautions in place. These will include limiting the number of people inside, taking names and contact numbers for potential contact tracing and increased hygiene requirements. If you wish to visit a specific institution please consult their website to find out the particular requirements relevant for that location.



The 40th annual IAJGS conference, which was due to take place in San Diego, California, is another victim of the Coronavirus pandemic. The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) announced instead, that it will hold a virtual Conference, now scheduled for Monday, August 10 through Thursday, August 13.

Aware of participants' different time zones the organisers are scheduling two blocks each day - 10am-1:30pm EDT and 4pm-7:30pm EDT. For Australia Block 1 starts August 10, 10am EDT = August 11 Midnight AEST; Block 2 starts August 10 4pm EDT = August 11 6am AEST. There are three sessions in each block.

These times are still not particularly convenient for Australians who might want to participate. Luckily on-demand and pre-recorded sessions will be available to registrants for 60 days after the conference.

At this stage there are two choices per session and the speaker roster includes the big guns of genealogy, including blogger Kitty Munson Cooper; Janine Cloud from Family Tree DNA; Crista Cowan, the Barefoot Genealogist from Ancestry; W. Todd Knowles (Family Search); Daniel Horowitz (My Heritage); Schelly Talalay Dardashti (My Heritage & Tracing the Tribe) and Randy Schoenberg (Geni.com & Jewish Genealogy Portal).

Sessions include panel discussions on things such as when people took surnames, finding ancestral towns, and DNA. There will be enhanced chatrooms to discuss these subjects further with the experts. There's also a retrospective of 40 years of IAJGS conferences, a look forward to the next 25 years of JRI-Poland and a deep dive into The Knowles Collection with W Todd Knowles.

Three documentaries will be streamed: Children of the Inquisition (9/8 at 11am AEST/ 11/8 at 8:30 pm AEST), The Presence of Their Absence (11/8 at 8:30 pm AEST/ 13/8 at Midnight AEST) and Estamos Aqui: Danken got! (We are Here: Thank Gd) (13/8 at Midnight AEST/ 15/8 at Midnight AEST). There will be filmmaker panels for the first two.



And for a bit of fun there are two game show sessions: Genealogy Death Match and Jewpardy – a conference favourite introduced by the late Pamela Wiessberger

Registrations are open. For more information refer to the [IAJGS 2020 website](https://iajgs2020.org).



Stanley Diamond



Sarina Roffe



W Todd Knowles



Crista Cowan



Avi Ben-Zion



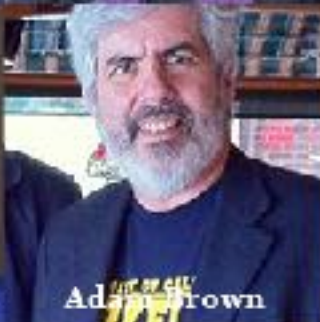
Schelley Talalay  
Dardashti



Daniel Horowitz



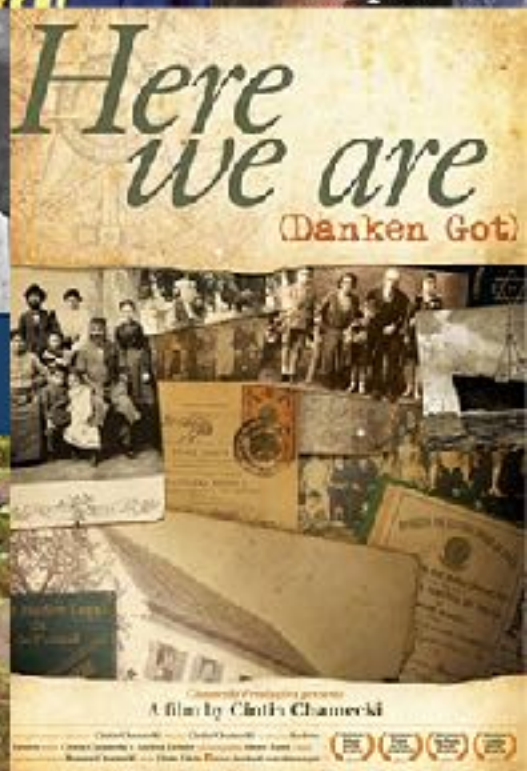
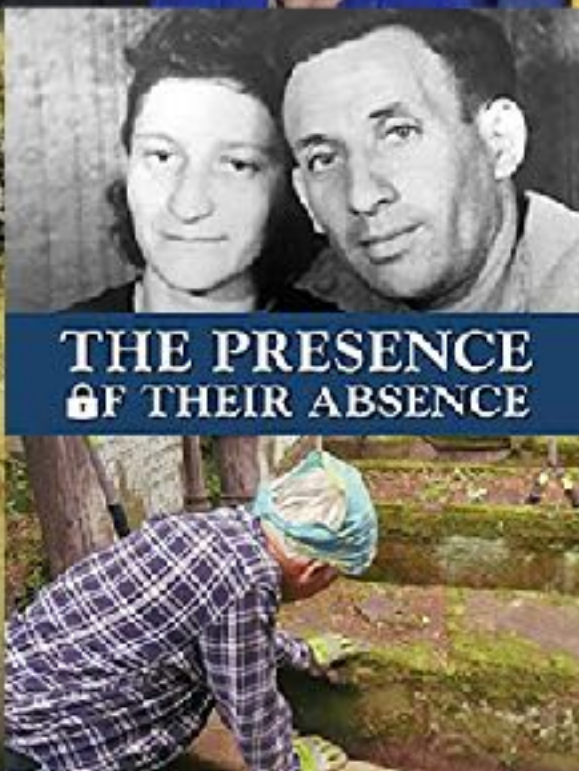
Madelein Isenberg



Adam Brown



Kitty Munson  
Cooper





**IAJGS**  
Benevolence

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES

40<sup>TH</sup> IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

# JEWISH GENEALOGY

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

10-13 AUG 2020

[IAJGS2020.ORG](https://iajgs2020.org)



# NEWS & VIEWS

## A WALKING TOUR OF JEWISH SYDNEY

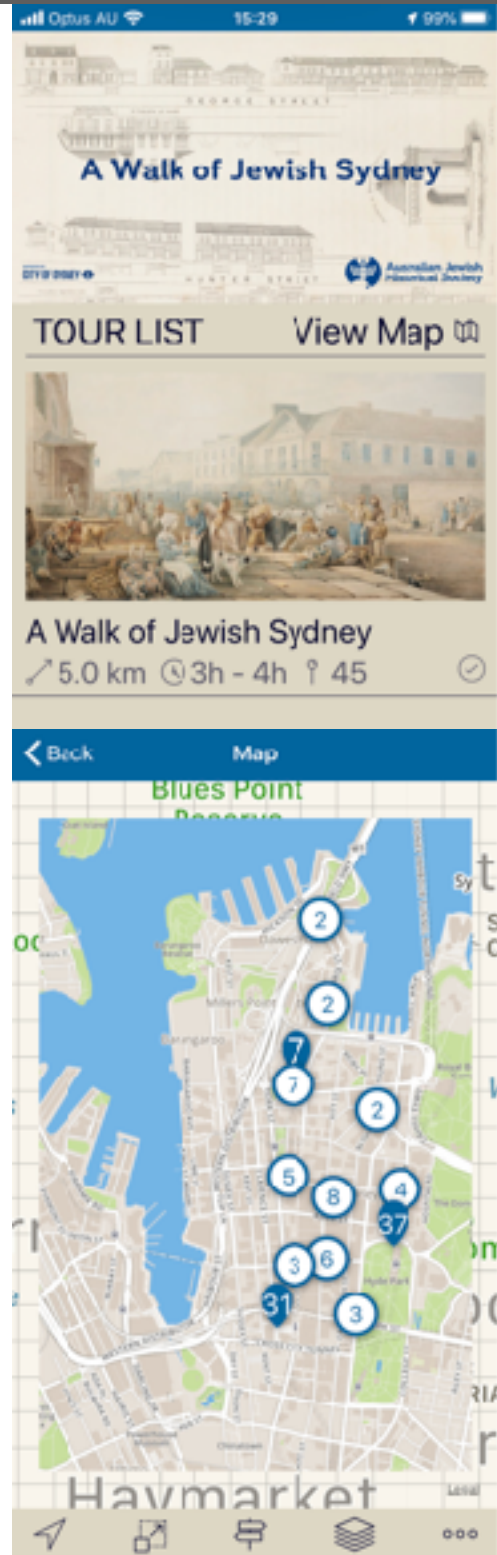


There are countless Jewish Walking Tours across Europe and now Sydney has one of its very own to add to the list. The Australian Jewish Historical Society (AJHS), in association with City of Sydney, have released a free, self-guided walking tour in a mobile phone app called *A Walk of Jewish Sydney*.

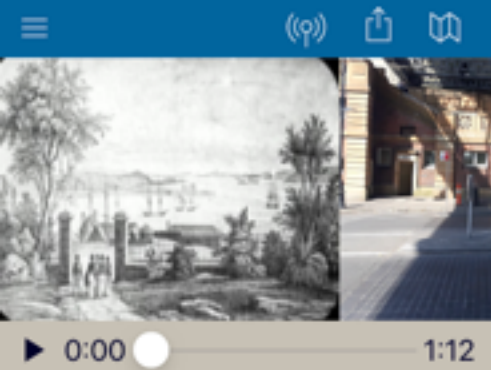
Covering 5 km within the Sydney CBD, with an expected duration of 3-4 hours, the project was the brainchild of Peter Keeda. Peter was inspired by a community walk he attended several years ago and fellow AJHS member Helen Bersten's book *Jewish Sydney: The First Hundred Years 1788-1888*.

With an MA from Sydney University in Hebrew, Jewish and Biblical Studies, Peter was well acquainted with the colourful characters that populated the early colony and he has created a fascinating and enlightening tour you can take at your own pace.

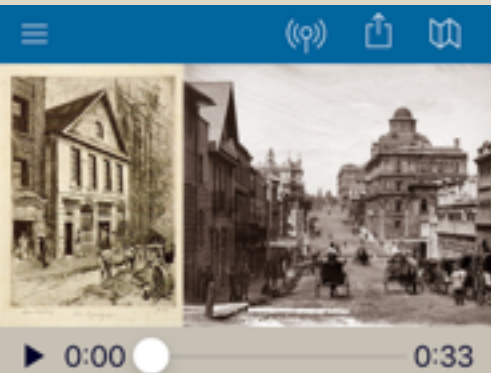
Starting at Dawes Point (although you can pick up the tour at any of the 45 stops along the way) the app starts with an Acknowledgement of Country, some housekeeping and safety information. You can choose to read each entry or, if you prefer, you can use headphones to listen to a computer generated audio track of each entry (although I personally found the robot reader somewhat grating - I would have preferred a human narration).







## Dawes Point Cemetery and 5-7 George Street



## Bridge Street Synagogue 4 Bridge Street. View from south-west corner of George and Grosvenor Streets

*On George Street a few*

Previous Stop 13 of 51 Next



The app directs you to each landmark, starting at the approximate site where 18-yr old Joseph Levy, the first Jew to die in the colony, was buried on the 15th of April, 1788; and opposite where Mr Michael Hyam, a free settler who came in 1827, was authorised to perform the first circumcision in Australia.

The walk meanders through The Rocks and up George St, past the corner of Harrington and Essex St, where Elias Davis was hanged in 1806. Past the locations of long gone prayer halls and synagogues on Bridge St, Druitt St, George St, York St and Macquarie St; past places of business and commerce such as Lewis Leon's Oil & Colour Warehouse, established 1842, where one could buy wax, sperm whale oil and blacking for shoes; The Strand Arcade, bought by the Burleigh (formerly Bernstein) Brothers in 1922 and host to a large number of Jewish-run enterprises; the iconic Darrel Lea sweet shop on the corner of King and George St, where Harry Lea (born Monascher Levy 1876-1957) established his famous confectionary company – named after his youngest child; and of course, Frank Lowy's flagship Westfield shopping centre on Pitt St Mall, directly opposite Simcha Myer Baevski's Myer Department Store, two iconic brand names associated with Jewish entrepreneurs.

But it's not all religion and business. There are tales of notorious criminals like bushranger Edward Davis, leader of the Jewboy Gang, and "Phil The Jew" Jeffs, a bootlegger in the 1930s who became embroiled in the infamous razor gang attacks. There are Sydney's culinary entrepreneurs such as Rebecca (Rieke) Selig (born 1819, Denmark) who arrived in Sydney in 1865 with six children, no husband and no English, and by the 1880s had opened a kosher eatery on Pitt St with a particularly fastidious Chinese cook; and Walter Magnus (1903-1954), restaurateur and art collector immortalised in all his corpulent glory by William Dobel.

And there are artistic trailblazers such as Isaac Nathan (1790-1864), writer and composer of the first opera produced in Australia, *Don John of Austria*; pharmacist Edmond Samuels, uncle of Supreme Court Justice Gordon Samuels, who ran a "headache bar" (reportedly the only one of its kind in the world) on Castlereagh St, and penned several books, including *The Highwaymen* (1935), the first Australian-themed musical, set in the Bendigo goldfields; and George Baron Goodman, who arrived in Australia in 1842 and established the first professional photographic studio.

There are countless more colourful characters and fascinating finds on this informative walk. In fact, in researching material for the app Peter uncovered so many great stories he has plans to create more walking tours of Jewish life in places like Newtown, Parramatta and Darlinghurst, as well as a driving tour of regional Australia.

You can download the *A Walk of Jewish Sydney* app from the App Store and Google Play or via the [AJHS website](#).

#### HOBART SYNAGOGUE'S 175TH CELEBRATIONS ADAPT TO COVID-19



Hobart Synagogue, the oldest Jewish place of worship still in use in Australia was due to host its 175th Anniversary celebrations in July. Hobart Hebrew Congregation has run services in the heritage-listed synagogue in central Hobart since its consecration on July 4, 1845, and was set to mark the milestone with an array of projects and a program of public celebrations. While coronavirus forced the celebrations to be cancelled, the projects have been successfully completed during lockdown.

The highlight of the anniversary year has been making the congregation's meeting minutes from 1841 to 1958 easily accessible online. The State Library of Tasmania (which holds the synagogue's archives), finished digitising the minutes earlier this year, but it was still difficult to make sense of the mostly handwritten documents.

The synagogue put out a call for volunteers to undertake the laborious exercise of transcribing the records, amounting to more than 475 separate documents. The timing of the request, at the start of the virus lockdown, turned out to be fortuitous. Members and friends of the Synagogue—including several members of AJGS—seized the opportunity and got the work done in under three months.

Among them was Beverley Hooper of Perth, the great-great-great-granddaughter of Judah Solomon, a pivotal figure in the early life of the congregation: Solomon

donated land from the garden of his mansion Temple House for the building of the synagogue. Ms Hooper had the honour of transcribing minutes from 1841 that record the contributions of her ancestor and other synagogue founders.

Once the transcriptions were complete, the congregation's current President, Jeff Schneider, a web developer with a degree in Library Science, converted them into an online archive that can be accessed from the [synagogue website's archives page](#).

The congregation also took advantage of the enforced interruption to services to accelerate a number of long-planned maintenance and restoration projects at both the synagogue and the historic Jewish cemetery a few kilometres away at Cornelian Bay.

An anonymous donor funded the work, which included repointing the sandstone walls enclosing the oldest graves at the cemetery, fixing cracks in the synagogue's lime render, and repurposing Australian cedar panels retrieved from what was left of some of the original pews into a desk.

As Mr Schneider commented:

We were delighted that so many members of our community were able to come together for the important work of transcribing the minutes. We're very proud of what they achieved, as well as of the improvements we were able to make to the synagogue and cemetery. It's a further illustration of how, throughout our history as a small and isolated community, we've been able to overcome every difficulty we've faced. Now that things are starting to return to normal, the congregation's future looks brighter than ever.



While it's a shame not to be able to celebrate this significant milestone with the congregation, it's encouraging to know that the Hobart community is active and growing, with an influx of young families moving to the island state in recent years.

Hobart Hebrew Congregation President Jeff Schneider will be hosting a Zoom information session on Sunday, 26 July, at 3:00pm. He will recount some of the stories recorded in the congregational minutes and detailing how the archive was created. [Email the Synagogue](#) to register.

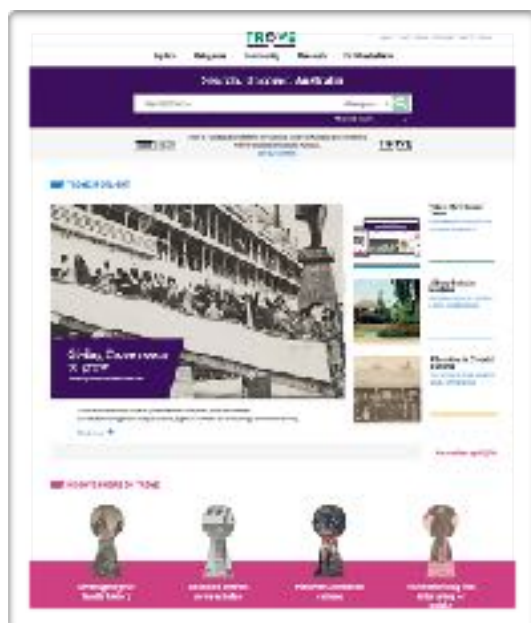
## TROVE CELEBRATES 10 YEARS WITH A MAKEOVER



To celebrate its 10th birthday Trove has gone live with its new interface and it's quite a different experience to the original. The logo, graphics and fonts have all been updated and the way

information is presented has changed a bit, but this incredible resource has lost none of its utility or value. In fact, the major changes are invisible and specifically designed so Trove can continue to grow at an exponential rate.

The single search bar at the top of the screen remains, but now, below it, is a Trove Spotlight feature article. To the right of the Spotlight is an introductory video to the new features. It's worth taking a few minutes to watch this as it explains the new layout and navigation. Below the feature are links to research guides for different areas, including family history.



Searching the vast collection (6 billion items and counting) still starts with the single search bar, but just underneath, on the right hand side, is a link to Advanced Search, which gives you more options. Select the category you wish to start with and simply click on the headings at the top to change to a different category.

When a search is initiated from the home page, the first three entries for each category are displayed starting with Newspapers & Gazettes,

followed by Magazines & Newsletters, then Images, Maps & Artefacts and the other categories. There is a link on the right to view further results in each category.

When you select to view the category results, the familiar filter preferences now come up on the right hand side, rather than the left. The format is the same, with the ability to refine the category further, and filter by place, title and date range, amongst other parameters. By clicking on the result link the same style of window we have become familiar with







displays OCR text on the left and the scanned image on the right. Fonts and graphic styling is a bit different but the experience is clear and consistent.

One new feature is the ability to collaborate with other Trove users on projects.

Using the new Trove may take a little getting used to but it is still one of the most phenomenal resources for researching our families here in Australia – and unlike many other countries – it is free. For more about the changes to Trove read [\*Giving Trove Room To Move\*](#) at the Trove Blog.

## AJHS CONSOLIDATES AUSSIE DEATH DATABASES



There are estimated to be over 88,000 Jewish people buried around Australia. For years the Beverly Davis Database (BD-BD) was one of the scarce resources available with information about Jewish burials in Australia. Beverley Davis (and others) transcribed over 40,000 Jewish headstones and burial records from cemeteries in Australia and New Zealand, plus Australian War graves overseas. The Jewish Cemetery Trust at Rookwood also had an excellent database, which included photographs of headstones. When the trust was disbanded the database was taken -over by the Rookwood Cemetery Trust. The information was eventually incorporated into the new Rookwood database managed by a US based company. AJGS also had a large collection of headstone images collected by dedicated members over the years but these were also not easy to access.

The Australian Jewish Historical Society (AJHS) has been working to create a resource that consolidates these disparate sources, as well as other death and burial records from multiple sources around Australia. The result is a new and improved AJHS Burial Index.

Starting with the BD-BD as its foundation, the project has integrated data from the Jewish Cemetery Trust database with records from Chevra Kadisha from each state and various synagogues, and as many photographs as they've been able to collect. Significantly these records include information about close to 5000 cremations, something very few Jewish people opt for as it has been traditionally forbidden.

The database now holds almost 80,000 records and is being constantly updated. It's been a mammoth task to cleanse and standardise data from so many sources.



Records can be searched and viewed in 4 different table layouts:

- **Quick Reference** – a simple search interface with a limited number of fields
- **Inscription** – a search that includes the written inscription on the headstone
- **Mobile Reference** – a view for mobile phones with only 4 fields visible
- **Detailed** – as the name suggests this view presents numerous fields to narrow down search parameters.

To search the database select your preferred layout, enter search parameters in the cell below the heading of the relevant field. (insert screenshot examples)

When you've found who you're looking for, click the VIEW button to see the available information for that person. If you find errors, want to add details to an entry or add a photograph of a headstone click on the "Suggest Edits" tab on the right hand side of your browser window and fill in the online form.

There is still much work to be done and AJHS is looking for volunteers to complete some specific projects. One of these involves checking and standardising cemetery names across the database. As the data has been gleaned from so many sources, the same cemetery may be listed in different ways. If you're familiar with cemeteries in your local area and have some time to help [email Peter Gorfinkle at AJHS](#).

## OTHER CALLOUTS FOR CROWDSOURCED VOLUNTEERS

*Many hands make light work.* Crowdsourcing take this adage online and allows large numbers of volunteers to tackle projects that would be nigh on impossible to accomplish by individuals or organisations alone. As family historians we owe much to crowdsourced volunteers who have transcribed handwritten and printed records into indexes in so many of the databases we use regularly. But the work is

never done and there are several projects, here and around the world, that always need volunteers to help transcribe and organise records so they can be accessed by everyone.

## AROLSON ARCHIVES EVERY NAME COUNTS PROJECT



Arolsen Archives is building the world's largest online archive with information on the victims of Nazism. They have created a crowdsourcing project, *Every Name Counts*, with volunteers entering names found on documents in the Arolsen collection into the online archive to ensure the victims will never be forgotten.

The first projects involved indexing records from Buchenwald, Dachau and Sachsenhausen. In the first 4 weeks volunteers entered 250,000 names; within 7 weeks, 1 Million names had been entered.

But the collection holds 26 Million records so there is still much work to be done. Anyone can join the project at the *Every Name Counts* website.

## YAD VASHEM PERSONAL FILES



Another organisation that needs help with their huge database of Holocaust Victims is Yad Vashem. Their *Shoah Victims Names Database* has identified nearly 4M of the 6M Jews murdered in the Holocaust.

As with the Arolsen Archives, the information comes from many sources; therefore, there can be more than one entry for a specific victim.

They are now working to create a *Personal File* for each victim, with the aim to collate multiple entries into one file for each individual – like making a folder for each person. They're hoping the genealogical community can help them with this mammoth task.

If you regularly use the Yad Vashem database it's easy to contribute. Simply search for a specific individual in the *Central Database of Shoah Victims Names*. If you find records that you think may be related to one individual, fill out a suggestion to bind them in one *Personal File*. Detailed



instructions on how to suggest a new Personal File can be found at the Yad Vashem website.

Once the match is verified by Yad Vashem, future searching for the person will yield only one result, but a number in an orange circle will appear after the surname to show there is more than one record for the person. Clicking on the surname will display all the records for that individual.

## arcHIVE - NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA



The NAA has developed a community approach to describing and transcribing the records in their collection. Called arcHIVE they have a dedicated website where anyone can jump on and spend time deciphering documents so they are easier for visitors to the NAA website to find. Of the current batch of documents 61,170 of 64,211 have been transcribed. Head to the arcHIVE website to lend a hand.

## FAMILYSEARCH SIGNS MOU TO DIGITISE UKRAINIAN ARCHIVES



Familysearch has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Archival Services of Ukraine to scan records held in Ukrainian archives.

According to a report on the Russian genealogical blog *Lost Russian Family*, Sasha Sichkarenko, field relations manager of Ukraine for FamilySearch International is delighted, saying:

It is a huge day! It is fantastic news and a big step forward for modern-day Ukraine and its archives! ... I'm happy that all components met in a perfect combination in the right place at the right time. This window of opportunity can bring a lot of positive and useful things to Ukraine, to the Ukrainian people, and to all who have Ukrainian ancestry and want to know their heritage.

FamilySearch International has been working in Ukraine since 1994. They already host more than 20.5 million record scans from 16 regional archives in the FamilySearch catalog. The political uncertainty in Ukraine over the last few years has hampered efforts to digitise more records.

A change of leadership at the State Archival Services of Ukraine may have made the new agreement possible. Anatoly Khromov, who previously served as deputy of the



head of the Secret Service of Ukraine archive, became the new director of State Archival Services of Ukraine in December 2019. Soon after Khromov took up his position in February, archive officials met with Familysearch to discuss cooperation. A mere 5 months later an MOU has been inked. While Covid-19 has complicated matters, Sichkarenko hopes work will begin either in late summer or early autumn 2020.

Familysearch plans to scan and index a wealth of records including revisions lists, censuses, court and police records, 19th and 20th century newspapers with obituaries and other news, church prayer lists, Nazi occupation “card-indexes”, the “filtration documents” used to document Ukrainian forced labourers of Germany (called Ostarbeiters) and prisoners of WWII.

They also hope to include lists of orphans and widows of servicemen who died in WWI; personal files, career lists of employees with family information from the late 19th to early 20th century, land ownership materials; noble family records, books, maps, photos and gazetteers.

This agreement will build on the tireless work undertaken over the last few years by Alex Krakovsky, who has been forced to take various branches of the Ukrainian Archives to court several times so he could scan records from the archives without being charged an exorbitant fee. In response to a Facebook post in the *Tracing The Tribe Facebook Group*, Alex said that he had been negotiating with Familysearch to host his scans but would not be offended if they re-scanned records he has already digitised:

...it's much easier for them to rescan everything with their own equipment... (the) Main challenge is they use their own system to store and index everything. ... I don't mind if they rescan everything with better quality... I really want them to do as much as they really can at full mega speed.

Let's hope this change of heart persists and both Krakovsky and FamilySearch can continue to make these records more accessible to everyone.



Inside the synagogue in Odessa, Ukraine.  
Photo: Dani Haski

## JEWISHGEN CONTINUES TO MODERNISE



Jewishgen have updated their discussion group system and will be discontinuing most SIG discussion lists in the near future. As technology has advanced the old system has become outdated and volunteers are not able to adequately maintain the legacy systems.

Jewishgen members are now encouraged to join the main Jewishgen discussion forum and can submit enquiries to a single point of contact. Entries can then be searched using hashtags (of the sort that is common in social media such as Twitter) or simple keyword search. Results can then be sorted.

There is also a simple [Wiki](#) (collective guide) with links to a hashtag guide and forum FAQs.

## JEWISH GENEALOGY SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND



New Zealand has a similar history to Australia with regard to Jewish citizens. And now they have their own Jewish Genealogical Society. The Jewish Genealogical Society of New Zealand (JGSNZ) has been meeting since last year.

JGSNZ Secretary Kerry Aluf told KK:

Our group is quite small, only 18 paid up members. We are spread across the country so we have been having physical meetings in both Wellington (The Holocaust Centre) and Auckland (Raye Freedman Library) using skype/zoom to connect. Of course due to Covid-19 our meetings of late have been via zoom.

The past 18 months have been spent getting our group formalised and up and running. We are still finding our way forward, at present we are sharing our family stories and offering help with ongoing research.


Although meetings are for members only, they gladly welcome curious visitors to come along without signing up first. For more information about JGSNZ [contact JGSNZ Secretary, Kerry Aluf](#) for more information.



The Old Jewish Synagogue, Auckland. Photographer: T. Hann.

## MY HERITAGE ENHANCES MULTILINGUAL MATCHES



 Name changes can be one of the most challenging aspects of family research. The same name can be spelled differently in different documents and in different languages. Finding names in old records can be challenging when it is handwritten in Polish or Hungarian, but it can be almost impossible when a record is written in language that doesn't even use Roman characters. Even with the wonders of Google Translate, it can be difficult to navigate records, archives and websites from Russia, Greece or Israel.

In 2015 My Heritage launched its Global Name Translation technology, which automatically translated names into different languages in searches: For example the name Alexander corresponds to Alessandro in Italian and Alejandro in Spanish. The Global Name Translator will find these variations, and also find Александр in Cyrillic characters and Саша, the Russian form of Sasha, a popular nickname for Alexander.



My Heritage has now added this translation feature to their Smart Matches service. This will potentially open up archives and indexes even further, and help more people find more information.

It's already had an immediate benefit to me personally. I was contacted recently by a marketing person at My Heritage for permission to include one of my own record matches in the [blog post introducing the feature](#). Upon examination of the match I realised first, that it was valid and second, that it gave me more information on the individual, including the name of his wife. The match pertained to Michael Misroch/Mizrach, the brother-in-law of my great-grandmother's niece, Haya Zlata Schmuljan. I had found Michael's name on a page of testimony for his brother, Israel, and Haya Zlata. The PoT also indicated that Michael had emigrated to Israel. The My Heritage system matched my entry for Michael Misroch with an entry in Hebrew from Billion Graves. With my rudimentary prayer book Hebrew I was able to confirm that the names of his parents matched and so verify that the match was sound. The Smart Match also gave me the details of Michael's wife, Ana.

Smart Matches are available as part of paid subscriptions to My Heritage.

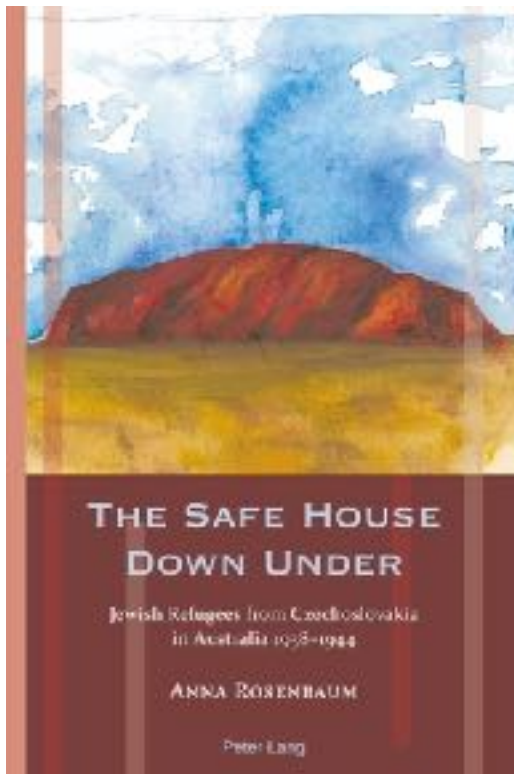
# BOOK REVIEW

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THE SAFE HOUSE DOWN UNDER: *Jewish refugees from Czechoslovakia in Australia 1938-1944* - Written by Dr Anna Rosenbaum

Published by Peter Lang, 2017, Oxford, New York.

Reviewed by Daniela Torsh



This important book aims to examine Australia's role in the appeasement of Hitler, and its attitude towards admitting Czechoslovak Jewish and German refugees, an experience close to my heart as it is that of my own family.

The author writes about how our Government was influenced by anti-Semitism; and the attitude of the Czech diplomats based in Australia towards their Jewish citizens. In addition, the book investigates the history of contact between Czechoslovakia and Australia and how we came to support British appeasement in Munich 1938. There is a useful chapter on the history of Czechoslovakia, created in 1918, which helps place the story of

Australian-Czech relations in a historical context. Rosenbaum includes a useful chronology of events from the 1938 Anschluss in Austria to September 1939 when Poland was invaded by Germany and war was declared by Britain and its allies, including Australia<sup>1</sup>.

The book was originally a doctoral thesis by a multi lingual Czech refugee who had grown up in post war Czechoslovakia. Her previous study at the University of Sydney with Professor Konrad Kwiet was in the field of Holocaust Studies. She acknowledges the experience of both her own family and her husband's family as refugees, influenced her choice of exile studies.

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<sup>1</sup> P303



For her doctorate Rosenbaum researched the newly opened National Archives in Prague and the National Archives in Canberra, as well as archives in America and Britain. She found a lot of new historical material previously unexamined<sup>2</sup>.

She writes that German and Austrian immigrants here were aware that there was resentment towards people who came from countries that were at war with Australia during the First World War<sup>3</sup>. They were worried they would be classed as enemy aliens and interned once war broke out. So, they were anxious to conceal their origins. She gives examples of how the Czechs magnanimously gave passports to Germans and Hungarians to help them get to Australia. This caused a great deal of suspicion in both Britain and Australia and problems later on for Czechs wanting to gain Australian citizenship. My own father was caught up in the miasma of suspicion. Some Jewish refugees tried to claim they were not Jewish for fear they would once again become victims of anti-Semitism in their new country.

The Czech Government in exile in London, headed by Edvard Beneš, issued a worldwide statement to say that refugees who had been Austrian or German citizens were not to be issued with a new passport. Their Czech citizenship had to be verified said Jan Masaryk, the Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs in exile. It appears Czechs may have been too generous in giving away their citizenship to assist Austrian and German Jews to escape from Europe.



Daily Examiner (Grafton)  
Thursday 13 October 1938

Anna describes how they attempted to verify the nationality of refugees who claimed Czechoslovak citizenship. It's possible this may have been one of the reasons my father's application for naturalisation took so long. He complained to our local Member of Parliament in North Sydney about the delay. We were never told the reason but he did finally get permission for naturalisation in 1955, seven years after we landed. My parents became Australian citizens at the North Sydney Council Chambers in Miller St on 27 May 1955. I too was no longer classed as an enemy alien from that date onwards.

Rosenbaum studied Hansard, the official Parliamentary records for the debates in 1938 on immigration and concludes that parliamentarians had mixed feelings about

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<sup>2</sup> P 220-230

<sup>3</sup> Rutland Suzanne. *Edge of the Diaspora*. Sydney, Collins, 1988

admitting Jews to Australia. They recognised that refugees were threatened by the coming war but the uncertainty of the impact of prospective refugees was reinforced by the prejudices of the anti-Jewish lobby groups. She nominates in this category the Australian Returned Services League (RSL), the musicians' union, small business owners, civil servants and some professional groups like the medical, dental and legal associations. Rosenbaum says that Jewish immigrants were considered by some Australians as outlandish in their manners, appearance and accented English. Sir Frank Clarke, the President of the Victorian Legislative Council called them "*slinking, rat faced men*"<sup>4</sup>. *The Bulletin* specialised in horrible cartoons of Jews with large noses and hunched backs like something from *Der Stürmer*, the worst anti-Semitic publication in Nazi Germany.

Interior Minister John McEwen announced that the Australian Government was ready to take 15,000 refugees over the next three years at a rate of 5,000 per year. This was a repudiation of the Evian Conference request for countries to increase their numbers of Jewish refugees. McEwen said the refugees were to be introduced progressively so existing living standards would not be reduced. Refugees had to be of good character, in good health (this had to be proven by evidence) and have at least 200 Australian pounds. The cost of a landing permit would be reduced to 50 pounds if maintenance was guaranteed by an approved organisation in Australia. It helped if you spoke English. Application forms were available from the British legation in Prague. My father's good friend from the bank where he worked in Vienna, Fritz Sanders and his wife Pepperl applied for our landing permits and agreed to maintain the three of us when we arrived.

The leadership of the Jewish community in Sydney cautioned new arrivals from Germany and Austria not to speak German in public in case they aroused hostility<sup>5</sup>. The Consul General for Czechoslovakia in Sydney, Dr Adolf Solanský was anti-Semitic and he was critical of the Jews who spoke German. Beneš' personal secretary, Eduard Táborský in London, was also unhappy about Czech refugees who spoke German. The Czech Defence Minister in exile, Sergej Ingr. declared it was not in the interests of the Czech army to have a German Jewish character.

Solanský held Czech Jewish immigrants in contempt because of their real estate acquisition and business ventures in Sydney. In his reports to London he complained "*Jews were always known for their lust to enrich themselves quickly*". He was critical of lawyers and doctors who were trying to get their qualifications

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<sup>4</sup> Rutland p 188-192.

<sup>5</sup> Rutland P238.

recognised and didn't support their efforts. He alerted local authorities to attempts by German and Austrian asylum seekers who arrived on Czech travel documents to be recognised as Czech citizens. Jewish refugees who anglicised their names (like my family) were criticised by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior in the Czech government in exile.

Despite this antipathy, Solanský formed a Czechoslovak business association of experts who emigrated to Australia, including Henry (Jindra) Rubin, former secretary of the Juta Company in Turnov in northern Bohemia. Jindra Rubin, born in Plzen, was a good friend of my father's and had employed him in his Prague import and export business after Dad was thrown out of his job in a Vienna bank in 1933 because he was Jewish. They continued their friendship after they both emigrated to Australia. Jindra died in 1985 and his wife Ada who was a close friend of my mother's died in 1992. They arrived in Australia in 1939. Ada's qualifications as a lawyer were not recognised so she retrained as a language teacher and worked at Abbotsleigh School in Sydney teaching French and German.

Solanský also recommended Rubin for cooperation with the Australian Reconstruction Authorities on the basis of his expertise in the field<sup>6</sup>. Another Czech Jewish refugee Solanský befriended was Frances (František) Lord, born in Opava, northern Moravia<sup>7</sup>, who worked at the Mt Stromlo observatory in Canberra on Black Mountain. Solanský had a keen interest in astronomy. Lord, who arrived in Australia in 1940, went on to found his own optics company making lenses and importing photographic equipment for television broadcasts and ground support equipment for aircraft. He was a leading light in this new field in Australia. Lord's expertise had a profound impact on the development of optical instrumentation in Australia according to Dr Rosenbaum. My father used to play tennis with Lord and Moci Kohn on Sunday mornings in Rose Bay. Dad and Moci were in the Terezin ghetto together during the war.

Dr Rosenbaum tells the stories of numerous refugees from Czechoslovakia who have made notable contributions to Australian life, like Professor Helen Hughes, an economist who worked for the World Bank, Associate Professor Julie Moscheles, an esteemed geographer from Prague and Paul Morawetz, whose father was Managing Director of the Bohemian Union Bank.

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<sup>6</sup> p 243. Jindra had worked in the oil industry before the war.

<sup>7</sup> P 268 -271

In 1939 the British declared that Czechoslovaks were not enemy aliens except for the Sudeten Deutsch who had to be designated as holding German nationality. Less than a year later the British secretly asked Prime Minister Robert Menzies if he would accept German and Italian internees for detention in Australia. In July 1940 over 2,000 German, Italian and Austrian internees were sent on the ship *Dunera*<sup>8</sup> to Australia. Among them were 54 Czechoslovak nationals, most of them Jews contrary to their earlier declaration. They arrived in August 1940. Some internees were released from detention camps when they were recognised as refugees. Several subsequently joined the Australian Infantry Forces (AIF). Almost third of these men were Jewish. After the British conceded their error in sending the Jews on the *Dunera* to Australia, 51 Czechoslovak detainees decided to stay in Australia. Rosenbaum writes *“it becomes more than obvious that they saw their migration to Australia as transformation from a sophisticated European ambience to the culture of a frontier country.”*

That was definitely how my father saw things.

Rosenbaum comments on the lack of class consciousness as a novelty: *“their admiration of the easy-going ways of the Australians was one of the factors that helped them integrate into Australian society.”*<sup>9</sup>

In her conclusion Anna says the story of Czechoslovak Jewish migration mirrors the broader refugee Jewish story of anti-Jewish prejudices and stereotypical views that prevented a more humanitarian approach to the worldwide Jewish refugee crisis<sup>10</sup>.

In many cases the contribution made by Czech Jewish refugees to this country's growth was remarkable, claims Dr Rosenbaum. They developed new industries and businesses, demonstrating great ingenuity and a strong determination to succeed. They made important and essential contributions to the scientific and intellectual development of Australia and even joined the ranks of the Defence Forces during the war.

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<sup>8</sup> The story of the *Dunera* describes the arrests in the UK of predominantly Jewish young men and innocent refugees of German origin, who were judged to be a potential Fifth Column for the Nazis. Over 2500 men were transported to Australia and detained in an internment camp near Hay in NSW. The episode was vividly dramatised in the TV series *The Dunera Boys* (ABC 1985) written and directed by the Australian Jewish film director Ben Lewin and produced by Bob Weis. Ref: [National Museum of Australia](#); [Migration Heritage Centre](#)

<sup>9</sup> P 260

<sup>10</sup> p 301



# DIY

## PHOTO ENHANCEMENT AND COLOURISATION COMPARISONS

My Heritage recently introduced some interesting image tools including photo colourisation and enhancement. My Heritage claims the Photo Enhancer will improve the quality of blurry and grainy photos. The company claims it also improves photos of large family gatherings with faces that are too small to recognize clearly. I decided to put these new tools to the test and compare them to other alternatives.



I adjusted this image using Photoshop, the My Heritage Photo Enhancer and a program called Movavi. My Heritage and Movavi both use artificial intelligence to adjust the images. In photoshop I used Adjust Curves to alter the brightness and contrast. I'll leave it to you to judge which approach delivered the better outcome.

While My Heritage's claims for their photo enhancer may be a tad overstated, their colourisation tool is much more impressive. Attempts to achieve realistic colour in photographs goes back to the very start photography itself. I have a copy of a photograph of my 2nd and 3rd great grandfathers which was taken in the early 1870s. It was hand coloured with paint and gold leaf. Now, there are applications that use Artificial Intelligence to analyse an image and apply realistic, if somewhat still vintage style colour. Colourisation is a beautiful way to bring you old black and white photographs to life. I have two programs I can use to colourise images: My Heritage and Movavi. Here are some examples of what they can do.

Which version you like best will be a matter of personal taste.



# SLEDGEHAMMER

## THE SEARCH FOR MORITZ WERTHEIMER

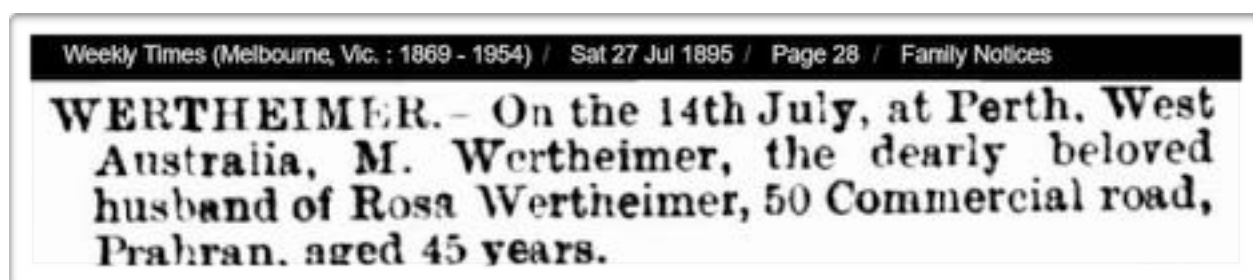
ROSE RAYMEN (JHGSWA)

In June 2016, the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of WA (JHGSWA), received an enquiry from a woman named Karen Wertheimer, in relation to a burial plaque inscription at the Jewish Memorial Cemetery in East Perth, which read, 'WERTHEIMER July 1895.'

Karen's sister, Judy Earnshaw, had been searching for the death certificate and burial records of their paternal great-grandfather, Moritz Wertheimer, to no avail.

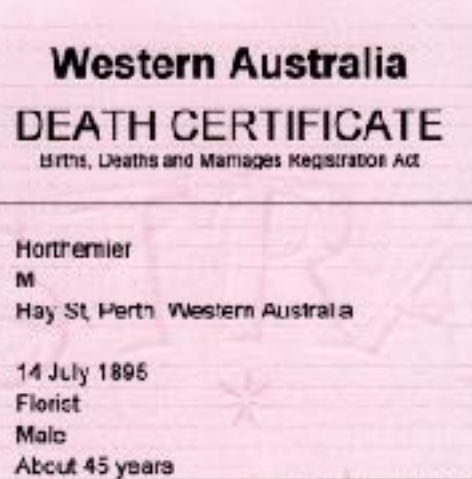
Moritz was born to Bernhard Wertheimer and Therese Weinberger, in 1850, in Pezinok, near Bratislava, in the former Kingdom of Hungary (present day Slovakia). On 5 May 1874, Moritz married Rosa (Rosine) Schenk in Pressburg, Hungary, and in July 1879, Moritz and Rosa sailed from Gravesend, England to Melbourne.

Judy and Karen had located a death notice (pictured below) placed by Moritz's widow Rosa, in Melbourne's The Weekly Times, which stated that their great-grandfather had died on 14 July 1895 in Perth, Western Australia. This information convinced them that it was indeed their ancestor memorialised on the burial plaque at the East Perth Cemetery.



As a voluntary genealogical researcher with the JHGSWA, my assistance was sought. Firstly, I checked the Western Australian BDM Registry Online Index for Moritz's death entry but found nothing. I conducted a search for the name on Ancestry's Australia Death Index 1787-1985 but was unable to locate an entry for a Moritz Wertheimer. I also tried various alternative spellings of 'Wertheimer' without success. Finally, I typed in the initial 'M' for the given name and included the year of birth and death. I scrolled down the Ancestry results and one name





jumped out at me, ‘M Horthemier, born 1850, age 45, died 1895 in Western Australia.’

I contacted Karen and told her in that my opinion their great-grandfather’s name had been misspelled and I was confident that the death entry for ‘M Horthemier’ was his.

Karen ordered the death certificate from the WA BDM Registry which read, ‘M Horthemier, Place of Death: Hay Street, Perth, Western Australia, Date of Death: 14 July 1895, Occupation: Florist, Age: about 45 years.’ Judy and Karen had long known that Moritz was a florist during the time he lived in Melbourne.

Michelle Urban, Vice President of the JHGSWA, contacted the National Trust of WA which is responsible for maintaining the East Perth Jewish Memorial Cemetery. In November 2016, Michelle, myself, Karen Wertheimer, her sister Vicki Sheppard, brother-in-law John Earnshaw and Sarah Murphy, the Trust’s Director of Conservation, met at the cemetery to discuss the possibility of replacing the original memorial burial plaque.

I offered to proofread the burial list sent by the National Trust. However, on examination I noticed the list was incomplete and contained a number of errors. I researched all the names of the deceased and updated the list with the additional information I found.

In December 2017, the Perth Hebrew Congregation and JHGSWA held a service to rededicate the burial plaque on the plinth at the Jewish Memorial Cemetery. Rabbi Dovid Freilich OAM recited reconsecration psalms and a memorial prayer in Hebrew and English. He then read out the names on the plaque, including Moritz Wertheimer and 32 other Jews memorialised at the cemetery.



From Top: Moritz Wertheimer’s death certificate; the memorial in Perth cemetery; Moritz Wertheimer’s descendants; President of the National Trust of WA Max Kay with Rabbi Dovid Freilich.  
Photos courtesy of Sas Saddick; reproduced with permission

# LINKS

## CONSOLIDATED KRAKOW RECORDS



Krakow was the heart of Jewish Galicia. The city housed a vibrant and diverse community for hundreds of years. During WWII Krakow was one of the few Polish cities not to be completely destroyed by either Allied or German forces. As a result there is a wealth of physical and documentary history readily available, although it is not always immediately accessible.

In recent years the Jewish Community of Krakow has blossomed. The old Jewish neighbourhood of Kazimierz, named in the 14th century after the Polish King who allowed Jews to settle in the city, has rediscovered its heritage and celebrates its Jewish history proudly.

For those of us with deep roots in the city, it has been a challenge to navigate the many sources and indexes available for the region. JRI-Poland and Dan Hirschberg have been excellent sources for me personally. Now, The Jewish Community Centre of Krakow ([JCC Krakow](#)) has consolidated 50 databases into a single search site.

Krakow Jewish Heritage is described as:

a new, upgraded, and expanded version of [shoreshim.org](#), which was run by Julian Schamroth for many years and represented the long-term, professional work of many individuals, including Steven Blumenfrucht, Dan Hirschberg, Judie Goldstein, and Lili Haber of the Association of Cracovians in Israel, as well as numerous others.



The site presents exact and phonetic search options and search results are divided into chronological periods (pre-1900, 1900-1939 and 1939-postwar), similar to Dan Hirschberg's database. Some results may be assigned to all 3 categories.

Data sources included Census lists from 1790, 1795 and 1870, birth, marriage and death records going as far back as 1798, school and university lists, business registers and wartime data pertaining to the flight of Jews from the city. A full list of sources is available on the website.

The site is free to search but access to some results is only available to subscribers (but at US\$29 a year the fee is hardly onerous and you're contributing to an excellent resource).

## NSW LAND REGISTRY HISTORICAL LAND RECORDS VIEWER



When we research our European ancestors we sometimes come across Cadastral records pertaining to property holdings in towns, villages and shtetls.

Now we can search property records in Australia too.

The NSW Government's Land Titles Registry was privatised in 2017 and is now operated by NSW Land Registry Services under a 35 year lease. Following a major digitisation program you can now access over 19 million land records and related historical documents online. The program digitised one of the largest holdings of archival records in the state. The original material is now held by NSW State Archives and Records, which ensures the long-term preservation of these valuable historical documents.

You can search these historical resources using the Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV), although it is not a straightforward process.

HLRV contains a range of records including:

- **Maps:** a collection of parish maps and town maps that show how subdivisions and other actions have changed land parcels over time.
- **Plans:** details of plans registered between 1863 and 1995.
- **Old System Records:** information about land registered under the 'old system' between 1792 and 1863, including the General Register of Deeds, Old System Registers, Indexes and Primary Application Records.



• **Old Form Torrens Register and The Purchasers Index:** records of Torrens Titles from 1863 to 1961 and the Purchasers Index from 1863 to 1971.

A good starting point for exploring the digital repository is the *[Historical Records Info page](#)* which has explanations of the various records available through NSW LRS and specialised terminology used in property records. Only some of these records are available to view in the HLRV.

They are:

- Charting maps (including county, parish and town)
- Plan Lodgement books 1863-1995
- Historical maps (cancelled editions of Crown land parish maps)
- Grant Index and Register
- Vendors Index 1825-1986 (PDF 478.2 KB)
- Purchasers Index 1896-1985 (PDF 868 KB)
- General Register of Deeds (Old System deeds) 1825-1992
- Old System records
- Torrens Purchasers Index
- Old Form Torrens Register 1863-1961

It's not the easiest database to navigate but it could yield some interesting information. For example: I found a reference in Trove to some land my 3 x great grandfather wished to mine near Coolac. The entry in the Government Gazette on February 24, 1891 stated the county and Parish details of the reserve in question, No. 120. I was able to locate this plot on old maps held in the registry collection. It shows the change over time too. The 1889 map clearly shows plot 120. By 1898 that plot is no longer visible. All this information illuminates my 3xGG-Father's lifelong obsession with gold mining.

The records can also be accessed over the counter at NSW LRS, via NSW LRS public terminals, via NSW State Archives and Records, in-person at the State Library or through approved Information Brokers (a list of approved brokers is available on the [NSW LRS website](#)).



## VIRTUAL TOURS OF LITHUANIA



Travelling to the lands of our ancestors is one of the great pleasures of genealogical research and several companies in Europe specialise in Jewish Genealogical Travel. Of course, right now travel anywhere is hugely curtailed by Covid-19.

Jerulita Travel is a Lithuanian based travel company who normally organise guided tours to Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. With their guiding work gone, Jerulita have uploaded a series of short videos and virtual tours of towns and cities in Eastern Europe, including Vilnius, Riga and Kaunas, among many others, so we can take a trip to the old country without leaving our lounge-room. Some videos are short and sweet, like highlights from the Kaziukas Fair (Vilnius, 2018) that has been running in the city for 400 years. There is a good collection of drone tours over towns like Dubingiai and Kaunas in Lithuania and Rachki in Poland; and some longer virtual tours of Trakai and Zhasliai, a segway tour of Riga and a bicycle tour of Karnave.

All the videos can be viewed on the [Jerulita Travel YouTube channel](#).

## SELECTED ROOTSTECH LECTURES AVAILABLE FREE



RootsTech, the annual genealogical technology conference, is making selected lectures from past conferences available to view online at no charge.

Highlights include general session addresses from Salt Lake and London conferences between 2015 and 2020, including a keynote address by Saroo Brierly, whose real life search for his biological family in India was dramatised in the film *Lion*, and notable sessions such as *DNA, Genealogy, and Law Enforcement: All the Facts* (SLC, 2020), which has taken on greater importance since the arrest and subsequent conviction of the Golden State Killer using this technology.

The videos can be accessed through the [Rootsech website](#).



## 61,000 TURKISH JEWISH GRAVES NOW ONLINE



*The Jerusalem Post* reported on a [new database of Turkish Jewish burials](#), years in the making. The project was started back in the late 1980s by Professor

Minna Rozen, then a professor at Tel Aviv University.

Between 1988 and 1990 Professor Rozen and her team travelled to cemeteries across Turkey. They mapped the cemeteries in detail, recorded headstone data and took over 100,000 photographs, cleaning up the cemeteries as they went. The records were digitised but not available to the general public. Now, 30 years later, thanks to funding made available through the [Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center](#) of Tel Aviv University, an online database has been released.

The project is dedicated to British American historian Prof. Bernard Lewis, a specialist in the history of Islam and the Middle East. Prof. Lewis provided both moral and financial support to the project over many years.

The database contains 61,022 Jewish tombstones from across Turkey.

The research covers 28 different Turkish cemeteries, including a Karaite cemetery in Istanbul, the Italian cemetery of Istanbul, as



Images clockwise from top right: Etching- Hasköy cemetery by Jules Laurens; Gravestone of Sarah, Daughter of Avraham Avinu, Hasköy, died 01-06-1698; views across Hasköy Cemetery; Upper portion of the table-shaped gravestone of Rivka, wife of Nissim Mutal ; aerial view of Hasköy Cemetery.



well as several smaller cemeteries from communities in Western and Eastern Anatolia, who ceased to exist after a combination of wars that occurred during the 20th century, in addition to Jewish migration throughout the region.

According to the website:

...its primary goals are to preserve the remnants of the gradually-disappearing Jewish life in Turkey, aid scholars to paint a broader and richer picture of the past, and enable interested laypersons to search for their roots. The computerised database includes physical and epigraphical material dating from the earliest cemetery it documents (November 1582)—the Hasköy cemetery in Istanbul—until the end of field work in Turkey in the summer of 1990. It thus covers 400 years of Jewish existence in the region—mostly under Ottoman rule and then, from 1923, the Republic of Turkey.

The data is now part of *The Turkish and Balkan Jewry Documentation Project*. Researchers hope to eventually include cemeteries across Greece, Albania and Bulgaria. Some of the site, including the database, is in Hebrew so you'll need to view it in Chrome or Edge if you want it translated in your browser.

The website itself is quite informative with sections on Turkish Jewry, the history of the project, the individual cemeteries and instructions for mining the database. But the database itself is a bit confusing and difficult to navigate. I found it easier to have a stumble around and then go back to the instructions with the benefit of hindsight.

To enter the database scroll down past the navigation instructions (ignore where it says to scroll back up to open the database). Alternatively you can click on the [CEMETERIES](#) link in the left hand navigation menu.

In the Cemeteries Section you'll see a link on the right hand side of the page that says *Open the Database*. If you scroll down a little further there is a list of Turkish Cities and a gallery of images from individual cemeteries that can be browsed. Unfortunately I couldn't find a way to enlarge the photographs of the headstones in the galleries. They are very, very small.

Finding a family name is not straightforward either. When you open the database it takes you to a page where you can input your query to a set of fields on the left hand



side. When you click on each heading - Cemetery, Stone Number, Gregorian Date, Personal Data, Stone Data, Family and Name or Text- a set of fields drops down for you to enter your search parameters. The information sorts dynamically as you input more search parameters but to view any details with names you need to select one of the Phonebook Reports from the dropdown menu above the data list. There are three phonebook reports to choose from: Names & Dates, Family-Dates-First Name, and Dates & Names. These reports appear identical. The difference between them appears to be the sorting parameters, as indicated by the headings.

Above the Phonebook Reports dropdown is the Select Chart dropdown. This allows you to view the data graphically as Pie or Bar charts. It will be very useful to statisticians and academics but has limited utility for genealogists as it's about the dataset rather than specific names.

This database is a huge undertaking and will be a boon to academics for years to come. The fact that some of these graves go back to the 16th Century will open up exciting new possibilities for scholars to try and connect families even before the advent of surnames.

## NEW ARTICLES ON AVOTAYNU ONLINE



Avotaynu Online recently added a bunch of new articles from past editions of Avotaynu Magazine. Most of the articles were first published in the Summer 2017 edition of *AVOTAYNU* and many are based upon presentations given at the Orlando IAJGS conference in July 2017.

Two articles that may be of interest to people of Ashkenazi descent are *Contested Origins of Eastern European Jewry: Clues from History, Linguistics and Onomastics* by Alexander Beider and *The Genetic Origins of Ashkenazi Jews* by Harry Ostrer

Of interest to Sephardi researchers will be articles on the Jewish communities of *St Martin in the Carribean* (Sprott), *London's Portuguese Community* (Sael) and the *Jewish genetic legacy of Brazil* (Blajberg).

## 1921 CZECH CENSUS FOR PODKARPATSKÁ RUS ONLINE!



Lara Diamond, of *Lara's Jewneology* blog, has reported on the release of a 1921 census covering a part of Europe which was formerly part of Hungary, became Podkarpatská Rus (Czechoslovakia) between WWI and WWII, and is now known as Zakarpattia Oblast (Ukraine).

Lara Diamond writes:

After this area became part of the newly-formed country of Czechoslovakia after WWI, the new government conducted a census in 1921 to get a handle on their population... The amount of information contained in these lists is enormous.

Lara lays out comprehensive instructions on how to access the images but has found many challenges and inconsistencies in the data:

For the towns I've looked through, it looks like the first pages are just lists of heads of household, followed by the more comprehensive census sheets. For my towns, there didn't seem to be any correlation between names in the list and the order of the following census sheets, but at least it'll let you know if your family will be found and it's worth the time. ... some [records] are written in Slovak (...so English-speakers will be able to easily read the names), but other towns are enumerated in

Ukrainian, so you'll need to know ... what your surname of interest looks like in Ukrainian.

She also adds a disclaimer that many birthdates and village names may be inaccurate and some records are difficult to read, but she is still excited and views this as a valuable resource for researchers with family from this region.

## GREEK RECORDS ONLINE



Jews have lived in Greece for millennia. In May, My Heritage added three exclusive collections of historical Greek records that could yield some exciting information about these communities. The collections include:

**Greek Electoral Roles 1863-1924** - 1 million records consisting of males aged 21 and up who were eligible to vote throughout Greece during this period. Records list the voter's given name, surname, father's name, age, and occupation and are sorted by province, municipality, and town or village. Each record includes the individual's name in Greek, as well as in English letters.

**Corfu Vital Records 1841-1932** - includes scanned images of the original documents. This collection consists of birth, marriage, and death records from Corfu and documents the life events of all residents of the island regardless of their ethnicity or religion.



Catalan Synagogue in Salonica, Ottoman Empire (now Greece)  
[Wikimedia Commons]

Birth records from this collection may contain the child's given name and surname, birthdate and place of birth, name and age of both parents, and the given names of the child's grandfathers.

A marriage record from this collection may include the first and last name, date of marriage, age, place of birth, residence, and the fathers' names of the bride and groom.

Death records include the name of the deceased, date of death, age at death, place of birth, residence, and parents' names.

**Sparta Marriage Collection 1835-1935** - An index of marriages in Sparta, Greece. This collection includes images of the couple's marriage license and their listing in the marriage register. The records list the full names of the bride and groom, the date of marriage, their fathers' names, the birthplace of the bride and groom, and occasionally the names of witnesses to the marriage. The records in these collections contain scanned images of the original documents and are searchable in both Greek and English, making them very useful for users who do not speak Greek.

Read more about this collection in the [My Heritage Blog](#).

## EXPLORE THE NEW SYNAGOGUE OF BRESLAU, GERMANY



Digital reconstructions of synagogues that no longer stand allow us to pay a virtual visit the houses of worship in which our ancestors may have prayed. [Jewish Heritage Europe reports](#) on a Polish-German project to create a highly detailed 3D model of the second largest synagogue in Europe: the monumental New Synagogue in Breslau, Germany (now Wrocław, Poland), built between 1865–1872 and destroyed on Kristallnacht. At its height, Breslau had a Jewish population of 20,000, behind only Berlin and Hamburg in size.

[A video on the site](#) takes you on a tour of the building and recounts the history of the synagogue, which was designed and built for the reform community by Edwin Oppler, a prolific Jewish architect in the region. It was the second largest synagogue in the pre-WW2 German-speaking world. All five grand synagogues Oppler designed were destroyed during the war.



Edwin Oppler 1831-1880  
(Wikimedia Commons)





According to the [project's website](#):

The history of its construction reveals an intriguing yet virtually unexplored account of a rivalry that involved three major religious communities, each of which tried to outdo one another with a larger and more opulent place of worship. Catholics, Protestants and Jews took concurrent initiatives to build their impressive sacred buildings.

Created by the Institute of Architecture, Hochschule Mainz, the formal name for the project is "*The New Synagogue in the Context of Three Religious Communities. Digital Reconstruction and Documentation of the Breslau/Wrocław Synagogue*". It involved a Polish-German workshop for architecture students from the Hochschule Mainz, Germany, and art history students from the University of Wrocław, Poland.

The 3D model can be viewed through [Sketchfab](#) and you can [download an app](#) that allows exploration of the synagogue via augmented reality.

## TAP INTO A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE



The [My Heritage Education Centre](#) is a collection of genealogical education videos and webinars available to everyone. While the website is largely a marketing tool for My Heritage, promoting it's products and features, it does provide a broad collection of educational content that can help you improve your research techniques and understand some of the more complex areas of modern genealogy such as DNA and navigating the myriad of different collections available online.

The content is organised into a set of simple subject areas: Family Trees, Research, DNA and Health. The content can be further filtered by type: webinars, how to videos and articles on areas of interest.

Webinars include "Ask the Experts" sessions on subjects such as the new [Greek Record Collections](#) released in May, how to use [Family Tree Builder](#) to [record sources](#) for your data and [5 tips for managing My Heritage DNA results](#) - including how to view matches, use the chromosome browser and navigate AutoClusters.

# EXHIBITION

SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM - JEWS FROM ISLAMIC LANDS

plus *Nostalgic Glimpses of a Bygone Era*

OPENS JULY 1 - WEDNESDAY & SUNDAY 10am-4pm

Judaism originated in the Middle East several thousand years prior to the establishment of Islam in the 7th Century CE. Until the 15th Century most Jews lived in locales that become majority Muslim countries. This new exhibition traces the lives of Jews who lived in the Middle East, Asia Minor, North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula from ancient times.

There are many intriguing and unique traditions and sub-cultures that have evolved from these distinct regions. The myriad practices, rituals and experiences of these Jews make up an integral part of Jewish culture as a whole...

This exhibition tells the stories of Jews from Islamic lands through objects from the Sydney Jewish Museum's collection and those sourced from local families with direct lineage from these regions.



Many Mizrahi and North African Sephardi Jews settled in Australia and they've made a significant contribution to the community and the country.

Cadry's Carpets (pictured right) is a landmark business in Edgecliff. Jacques Cadry arrived in Australia from Iran in 1952. He is credited with introducing Australians to the exotic beauty of Persian rugs, challenging the suburban normality of wall to wall shag pile carpet.



Henry and Albert Ninio arrived in Australia from Egypt in 1956. Henry earned a pharmacy degree from the University of Adelaide and the brothers established Piaf Perfumery, with business partner Alex Siros. Their signature perfume, Piaf, became a symbol of elegance and luxury.

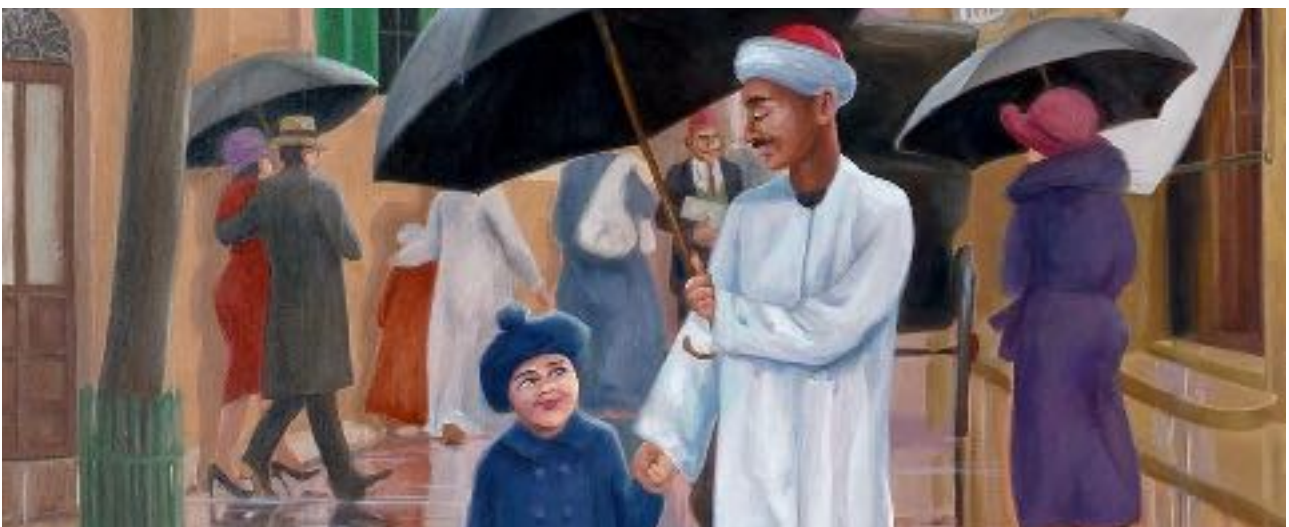


Entering public office Henry Ninio was elected a member of the Adelaide City Council from 1983-1997 and served as Lord Mayor of Adelaide from 1993-1997. His daughter, Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio from Emanuel Synagogue, donated several key items from the family collection to the exhibition.

Alongside the main exhibition is an art exhibition, Nostalgic Glimpses of a Bygone Era, with paintings by Camille Fox, a Jewish artist who was born in the “golden era” in Alexandria, Egypt.

Camille's bright and colourful paintings depict scenes from her memories of a charmed life in Egypt, with lavish children's birthday parties, summers spent by the beach in Alexandria in a private cabin, and afternoon tea at the Cecil Hotel.

She recalls people like Mohammad, their 'bawab', who used to walk her to school, her grandfather, whom she would visit at his textile store in Anfushi, Alexandria, and her grandmother, who would delicately nibble cakes and sip sweet black coffee in fine English porcelain cups in Alexandria's finest tea rooms.





# WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

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Due to the ongoing Coronavirus Crisis AJGS workshops will remain suspended for the foreseeable future.

You will need to register to attend Zoom events. A link to register is included with each individual event. [Click here](#) for more information on how to set up Zoom on your computer or iPad if you do not have it already.

## Genealogical Detective Workshop

**Sunday 2nd August, 10 am – 11:30am**



Has one of your relatives disappeared from the historical records?

Have you lost a loved one in the mists of time?

Do you have a mysterious anomaly in your family tree?

You need some help... but who you gonna call?

The AJGS Genealogical Detective Agency of course!

Give our team of genealogical super sleuths the chance to help you crack your case and solve your genealogical mystery

Send your queries, questions and baffling conundrums to us by 25th July-this gives us time to investigate your case. There's no mystery too small... Every question helps us to learn something new.

Email your questions to the [AJGS Genealogical Detective Workshop](#).

**[CLICK HERE to register to receive your zoom invitation to attend.](#)**



# Guest Speaker: Estelle Rozinski -

Co-Vice-President of the Australian Society of Polish Jews and their Descendants (ASPJ)

**Sunday 30th August from 3 to 4:30 pm**

## The Missing Mezzuzot Project



Estelle is the driving force behind the *Missing Mezzuzot Project*, first in a series of living history projects exploring Jewish life in pre-war Poland. The *Missing Mezzuzot Project* is now a permanent exhibit in the museum of Zduńska Wola, the town Estelle's great grandparents lived in.

The *Missing Mezzuzot Project* records the history and stories of Jewish families in Zduńska Wola prior to 1939, when there was a population of about 12,000 people, a third of whom were Jewish. The project was created to provide a broader view of history, so that the

next generations might better understand how people lived, worked and prayed before the Holocaust. The project also helps preserve the names of those who disappeared without a trace.

Born in Melbourne, the daughter of Holocaust survivors, Estelle works as an artist, curator and educator. She is also Co-Vice-President of the Australian Society of Polish Jews and their descendants (ASPJ).

Click on the links to read and download the **Summer** and **Winter** editions of the ASPJ newsletter HAYNT.



**[CLICK HERE to register here to receive your zoom invitation to attend.](#)**