



**AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY [VIC]
2017**

2017 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As you will read in the various individual reports, this past year has been a busy one for our Society. Our core mission of aiding people in researching their Jewish ancestry has seen us assisting scores of people not just here in Australia but from all over the world. Not a week goes by without us receiving emails/telephone calls asking for help. Our committee never ceases to amaze me in their collective knowledge on Jewish genealogy. Their ability to solve 'roadblocks' and/or steer people to solutions is, in my humble opinion, a real hidden gem of our community.

This year has also seen some changes. Due to diminished operating days of the Lamm Library we have changed our opening days from every third Sunday to every 3rd Monday of the month.

Whilst this change has proven quite popular with those looking for assistance it has proven quite onerous on our Committee members who provide assistance. Some of us are unable to attend on Mondays due to work commitments and therefore there is a greater load on some members to run the Monday sessions. If anybody feels they are capable of assisting us and are available on Mondays please contact Liz James.

Another consequence of the diminished operating days of the Library was that we moved our Presentations/Meetings/Workshops from the Library to the nearby Glen Eira Town Hall. This move has been an unqualified success with amenities proving to be superior to what we had previously.

Without wishing to highlight everything we've done over the previous 12 months I would like to mention some aspects that I believe are noteworthy.

Firstly our Committee member Rodney Eisfelder was awarded 'Honoured Life Membership' at last year's AGM. An award that was richly deserved for his lengthy stellar work on behalf of our Society. He joins Lionel Sharpe, who was awarded similarly in the previous year as the only 2 people to have been awarded this honour.



Rodney Eisfelder receiving his Honoured Membership Certificate from President Allan Jankie, in the presence of Sonya Oberman

The team ably led by Liz James, Bernie Kuran, Rene Eisner and Max Wald have taken our 'partnership' with the Jewish Day schools and The Jewish Museum on their respective 'Roots' projects to a new level. The presentations and workshops we facilitated for the students of Mount Scopus, Bialik, King David and Yavneh has been universally acclaimed by everyone who participated. We also took part in The Jewish Museum "Can we talk about Poland" exhibition, giving a talk about accessing our Polish Roots.

The 'Marriage Database' digitization project, under the auspices of Ian Samuel, Rodney and Max continues to grow. We've also added a project to digitize the MCK records and that project is proceeding under Ian's direction. Ephraim Finch has been integral to this project.

Debbie Jurblum has our website running smoothly and this past year has seen her initiate our Facebook page. Both 'social media' outlets seem to be growing and we look forward to even more growth in the next 12 months.

Administratively Bubbles Segall has taken over the role of Secretary after the retirement (from that role) of Lionel Sharpe. This role is very important as not only does she handle the secretarial duties but she is the co-ordinator of all requests for assistance the society receives. Bubbles is responsible for distributing the requests to the correct relevant members and then responding to the enquirer.

Rene Eisner, our Treasurer, has made sure that we're not spending money we don't have! She's also taken on the responsibility of publishing an email newsletter to our membership, which I'm sure you all read and enjoy.

Liz James, our Librarian, and chief researcher has once again done a great job. Liz is responsible for our Room and Resources and has been a workaholic in all areas of our endeavours.

It would be remiss of me not to mention to those members of our Society with ancestry stemming from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, that next year's IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Warsaw from August 6-10 and it will present anybody who attends an unparalleled opportunity to learn more about researching in Poland and the neighbouring countries. I'm planning to attend and so are a number of our Committee.

Wishing you all a Shana Tovah and well over the Fast,

Allan Jankie

President

REPORT – SECRETARY

This past year the Society has received many emails, from people in Australia and abroad, who are trying to find information about their family histories. Our team of committee members, who have broad and diverse skills, usually respond within a few days. We are lucky as an organisation to have a committee who have expert knowledge of their own countries of interest and a broad knowledge of genealogical research which enables them to refer people on to other sources with queries they feel are beyond their expertise. They spend considerable time on this work which gains recognition for our society among genealogical and other groups in Australia and overseas.

Bubbles Segall
Secretary

MEETINGS, WEBSITE and FACEBOOK PAGE REPORT

It has been a productive year at the AJGS (VIC). We have had some interesting and informative meetings that have helped so many along their genealogy journey. Our meetings this year have moved from the Lamm Library to the sophisticated setting of the Caulfield cup room at the Caulfield town hall.



Since the start of our website and new Facebook page we have been able to reach a younger audience and gain new members. These two mediums are keeping you up to date with our activities and more useful research information! We love that our audience can add relevant information to our Facebook page!

On the 28th August 2016 we had a talk with John Donaldson a life member of Victorian Gum, an organization of family history researchers using computers. The Victoria Gum committee are expert at all manner of genealogy software. John has been using computers for family history since 1980 and was an Alpha tester for Ancestry.com for over 10 years for the Family Tree Maker (FTM) program. His talk focused on using computers and genealogy software especially FTM to organize your family tree, while learning to produce reports, charts, books and webpages to share your research with family and friends.

The 27th November 2016 was Mitzvah Day (good deeds) and our wonderful committee members opened our room for all who wanted help. Our members all specialize in different countries genealogy that assist in helping many different Jewish backgrounds.

On the 19th March 2017 we had a stand at the In One Voice Jewish Culture Street Festival introducing our society to the general public and gaining a large amount of interest.



On 7th May 2017 our Vice President Debbie Jurblum presented a talk 'Celebrating Ancestral Connections, her recent journey to Berlin Poland and Ukraine'. Last year Debbie and her husband Martin travelled to Europe on a journey to research and trace the towns, homes and history of their ancestors. Being told that there was little information, yet finding many wonderful surprises in town records. This was an interesting power point talk that included video inserts walking through the historic Warsaw Cemetery in which she found many new family members.



On the 27th May 2017 we held a Workshop 'Finding Your Roots'. Having had many years of experience in researching Jewish Ancestry, the committee was available to help members access Jewish records. This was an opportunity for all to share their roadblocks, striving to solve them.

On the 16th July 2017 we held a 'Presentation on Jewishgen' the home of Jewish Genealogy. Jewishgen is committed to ensuring Jewish continuity for present generations and the generations yet to come. This was a recording of a talk given at the 2015 IAJGS conference which was about learning how to navigate their free easy-to-use website. It featured thousands of databases, research tools and other resources to help those with Jewish Ancestry research.

Our genealogy talks have a high attendance, reaching many people while assisting with their genealogy needs.

The lectures and workshops provide members with the knowledge and understanding of the genealogy process, this allows them to gain access to new records adding to their trees.

Debbie Jurblum
22nd August 2017

Schools Roots Projects



Following the success of last year's efforts, members of AJGS (Vic) Committee were invited again to present to students from Mt Scopus, Bialik and Yavneh Colleges. For the first time, King David School also participated. A presentation on the Origins of Jewish Surnames wetted the students' appetite to enquire and research their family histories. They were able to ask questions from the Committee members there, and many took the opportunity to come



to the Lamm Library to undertake further research with our volunteers. Over 250 children participated this year, and we look forward to continuing our involvement with the schools next year.

Bernie Kuran August 2017

RESOURCE ROOM REPORT- AJGS Vic. 2017



The resource room has seen a busy year for people researching their ancestors both for genealogical as well as historical records.

The Lamm Library changed their opening times on Sundays to open only on the first Sunday of each month, so as well as the first Sunday of the month, we now open our resource room on the third Monday instead of the previously scheduled third Sunday. We are also available throughout the week by appointment only.

Requests for assistance have mainly been for data from Poland, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and the United Kingdom. The microfilm reader has been utilized in every session and people have often had to make extra appointments during the week in order to trawl through or download the relevant records.

Many microfilms have been ordered by various people throughout the year from the Family History Centre LDS in Salt Lake City. This microfilm ordering service will cease as of September 1st, 2017. After September 1st. records not in our library can only be viewed at Family History Centres. By 2020, it is hoped that all records from LDS will be digitized.

We are grateful to the Lamm Library and Michael Adler (in memory of his wife Rena) for their generous sponsorship of 'Ancestry' which can be accessed both in our resource room and the main library. 'Ancestry' is free to all members of the Lamm Library and the AJGS Vic.

We are also grateful to Rene and John Eisner for their donation of office furniture, shelving and storage cabinets, Allan Jankie for donating a poster rack, Max Wald for donating a printer and Ruth Beebe for donating a large number of books from her personal collection.

Due to flooding in January, the entire contents of the resource room had to be removed while the room was re-carpeted. Many thanks to the committee members who assisted in re-shelving the entire book stock on completion of the carpeting.

New books added to our collection can be viewed on the the Lamm Library catalogue. One recent addition to our collection is 'The Unbroken Chain' Biographical Sketches and Genealogies Illustrious Jewish Families from the 15th – 21st Centuries – MaHaRaM of Padua and MahaRaL of Prague (Third Edition) by Neil Rosenstein.

We have worked the Jewish Museum – (Mount Scopus, Yavneh and King David) and Bialik helping students with their roots projects and this has resulted in further enquiries from the students requesting assistance on their family ancestry. It's rewarding to see the interest and enthusiasm shown by these young students and has certainly been a highlight of our work in ensuring that family memories and information are passed down through the generations.

Finally, many thanks to our wonderful committee of volunteers who give countless hours of assistance to researchers both locally, interstate and overseas. Indeed the entire committee are always available for assistance and are pleasure to work with.

Liz James

22 Aug 2017

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Report on new Film Scanner 'ScanPro 2000' at The Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic)

BY MAX WALD



During my visit to the International Jewish Genealogy Conference in Salt Lake City in 2014, I spent many hours at the 'Family History Library' researching many records for myself and friends and members of our society.

I was impressed by the assistance offered to anyone visiting. More so, I was very taken by the modern and latest equipment used for scanning microfilms. The motorised scanners connected to a computer and operated with a mouse, were amazingly easy and fast. Having the ability to either make a photocopy or copy the image to a memory stick. Needless to say, I was excited at the prospect of having similar equipment in our rooms.

During recent years, I have personally travelled to the Heidelberg Family Centre on many occasions to use a basic Canon scanner connected to a computer where I did a similar but slow process, needing to refocus on every scan.

We had in our rooms a very old scanner/projector, which did not print copies. The only method of saving a copy of a record was to take photographs of the poor images in the screen which was very unsatisfactory. After much nudging to our committee, raising funds, getting quotes, early Sept 2016 we finally purchased and received a slightly used machine, at a much reduced price. We also purchased an accompanying new computer to be solely used for scanning Microfilms of all sizes and Microfiche. Thank you to all the generous members who donated to this purchase.

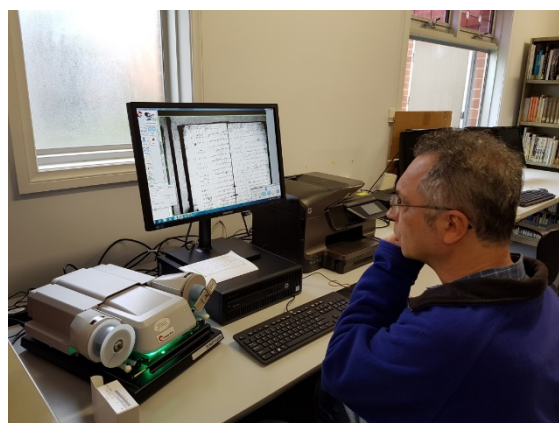
Since installing the new scanner, we have been inundated with members ordering films and copying, not only single images, but complete filmstrips, to evaluate if other family was in the same town. We have had much success in members discovering additional ancestors in this way.

Although LDS Family Search is making most of their microfilms online, this process will not be complete until 2020. There will still be a need for ordering, and viewing films that are not online.

We have almost 170 Microfilms ordered by our members that will be permanently available.

MAX WALD
JULY 2017

Rodney Eisfelder checking out the new equipment



FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

Fees received for the financial year were \$4,007, with 122 members financial. Thank you to all our members for their prompt payment of their fees.

A warm welcome to our 9 new members.

Donations totaling \$12,197.80 were received. Thank you all for your generous support. Included is the kind donation towards the subscription to Ancestry.com from Michael Adler in memory of his wife Rena.

With the funds received we purchased our Microfilm Scanner with integrated computer and screen. Donations of equipment were received:

Bookshelves with desks and filing from Rene & John Eisner, a printer from Max Wald, poster rack from Allan Jankie. So now our Resource Room is a fully functional office and library thanks to the organisation of Liz James.

This year, we have continued to have marriage records scanned and recorded, and have printed brochures for distribution to schools etc. During the year there were 3 successful meetings.

For the financial year our net income was \$550, with a bank balance at 30th June at \$9,579. A detailed Income and Expenditure statement is available for those who have not yet collected one.

Rene Eisner
Treasurer