



# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (VIC) INC ANNUAL REPORT 2017 -2018

## Committee of Management

President	Allan Jankie
Vic-President	Debbie Jurblum
Secretary	Bubbles Segall
Treasurer	Rene Eisner
Committee	Heshy Adelist
	Rodney Eisfelder
	Liz James
	Bernie Kuran
	Ian Samuel OAM
	Lionel Sharpe OAM
	Max Wald

## Honored Life Members

Lionel Sharpe OAM  
Rodney Eisfelder  
Liz James

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[www.ajgs-vic.org.au](http://www.ajgs-vic.org.au)







## Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc.

ABN 17 078 119 093

### **2018 PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Allan Jankie**

As you will read in the various individual reports, this past year has once again been a busy one for our Society.

Our core mission of aiding people in researching their Jewish ancestry has seen us assisting many people not just here in Australia but from all over the world. Almost on a weekly basis we receive emails/telephone calls asking for help. As I've said previously, 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 a true hidden gem of a resource of our community.

Our Presentations/Meetings/Workshops held at the nearby Glen Eira Town Hall continue to be an unqualified success with both our members and other attendees enjoying both the venue and its amenities.

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 Liz James was awarded 'Honoured Life Membership' at last year's AGM. An award that was richly deserved for her lengthy and tireless work on behalf of our Society. She joins Lionel Sharpe and Rodney Eisfelder, as the only people to have been awarded this honour.

The team ably led by Rene Eisner, Liz James, Bernie Kuran 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. These presentations and workshops that we provide the Schools with, have become an integral part of their program.

The 'Marriage Database' digitization project, under the auspices of Ian Samuel, Rodney Eisfelder and Max Wald 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 growth in our Facebook page that she co-ordinates. We look forward to even more growth over the next 12 months, especially with the input of our youngest Committee member Heshy Adelist who is bringing us to a 'younger' audience via social media.

During this year we undertook the project of photographing the Jewish headstones at Fawkner Cemetery. Under the leadership and co-ordination of Max we've formed a 'partnership' with both the Melbourne Chevra Kadisha and Fawkner Cemetery Trust to share the information/photographs. Having almost completed the photography stage of the project Max has now turned his sights towards a similar project at the Springvale (Necropolis) Cemetery.

Bubbles Segall has handled the administrative duties of Secretary, with all that entails, with aplomb. Most especially the handling of enquiries and requests for help that she receives initially and then either deals with on her own or circulates amongst us for responses.

Rene Eisner, our Treasurer, has made sure that we're again not spending money we don't have! She's also responsible for the regular email newsletter to our membership which I'm sure you all read and enjoy.

Liz James, our Librarian, has once again done a great job. Liz is responsible for our Room and Resources and has continued to be a workaholic in all areas of our endeavours. Nothing is too difficult a request for Liz!

I'd like to close with a brief note of thanks to Lionel Sharpe. Lionel, as most of you are aware has been the 'public face' of our society for decades and this year he has decided not to re-nominate for a position on the Committee. Whilst we will sadly miss his cheery personality at our meetings he has promised to not be a stranger and will gladly aid us with his vast genealogical knowledge when we require him to.

Lionel was the person who recruited me to the Society some 10 years ago and I thank him for getting me involved in such a wonderful organization.

I look forward to catching up with you all during the coming year.

Allan Jankie  
President



Liz James receives her Honoured Life Membership Award.

**LIONEL SHARPE**  
**A tribute on his retirement from the AJGS-Vic Committee**  
**By Rodney Eisfelder**



As best as I can figure out, the Victorian branch of the Sydney based Australian Jewish Genealogy Society started about 1995, headed by Aubrey Schwarz, and Lionel was involved from the very beginning.

By the time I first made contact with the society in 1996, Aubrey had left the scene and Lionel was chair of the Victorian Committee. In 1997, the decision was made to incorporate the Victorian Branch as a separate incorporated organisation.

This took effect in late 1998 and Lionel became the Society's first President. At the first AGM in April 1999, Les Oberman took on the role of President, and Lionel became the Secretary.

In 1999 the Society published its first newsletter, and Lionel was the editor. From the third issue, the newsletter was retitled as "Jewish Genealogy Downunder", and Lionel continued as editor for 15 years - the last few years with the assistance of Kaye Quittner. The first few issues were literally "cut and paste", and it gradually became more professional looking as Lionel taught himself how to use Pagemaker.

This simple recitation understates Lionel's contribution. For many years, he hand picked new members of the committee, and, in a very real way, he shaped the society that we see today. Lionel was the minute secretary, the secretary, the newsletter editor, he dealt with Beth Weizmann to book the hall, he responded to family searches from around the world, and really was the back bone of the society.

I won't mention Lionel's years of service on the committee of the Australian Jewish Historical Society. I also won't mention the book that Lionel wrote to document the first 150 years of the history of the Melbourne Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society. I won't mention Lionel's professional contribution to the Jewish Welfare Society and RMIT. Lastly, I won't mention Lionel's regular contributions to Avotanyu over many years.

In June 2009, Lionel was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia - an OAM. The citation read "For service to the community, particularly through social welfare and Jewish organisations."

In 2016, Lionel decided to step back from his role as Secretary, but he has continued to participate on the committee. Lionel's retirement leaves a massive hole in the heart of the society. It will be up to us to steer this ship into the future and not drop the ball that Lionel has spent well over 20 years moulding. The regular committee meetings won't be the same without Lionel's wry humour. He will be missed.

## **SECRETARY REPORT by Bubbles Segall**

This year four committee members attended the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual International Jewish Genealogy conference in Warsaw in August which was hosted by the IAJGS {International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies}. This is the first time one of these conferences has been held in Eastern Europe. There were about 800 delegates from all over the world.

I represented Victoria at the Annual General Meeting of the IAJGS which was very interesting. Some of the issues which were discussed included the following:

- The IAJGS loses money at conferences held in Europe. They don't expect to make money at every conference.
- The IAJGS made money at the conference in Boston and didn't make money at the Orlando conference or this one in Warsaw.
- Ten new Jewish genealogical societies have joined the IAJGS over the past year.

Our society continues to receive emails from people in Australia and abroad who are trying to find information about their families. I am constantly amazed at the research skills of our committee members who more often than not are able to assist people with their research.

Bubbles Segall  
Honorary Secretary

## **VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018 by Debbie Jurblum**

Another year has flown by so quickly, filled with updates research and stories on our Website and Facebook page. The information posted on our Facebook page ranges from updates at different archives and new areas of research such as:

National Australian Archives updates  
Holocaust Survivors and Victims Database information at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,  
JewishGen and JRI Poland,  
GENTEAM World memory project posted 750,00 new records, Hungarian Roots and DNA testing.

Other information posted on our Facebook page included preserving family memories, projects reclaiming Jewish tombstones used for paving and roads during WW2, photographing tombstones/Matzevot at Fawkner Cemetery for the Jewish online Worldwide Burial Registry on JewishGen.

Visitors and Members of our Facebook page are welcome to post up interesting and relevant articles as they come across them in their genealogical research and help keep our community up to date!

Meetings Posted on our Website and Facebook page, held since the last AGM by the AJGS (Vic).

- 17<sup>th</sup> Sep 17 Mary Kozy Understanding Autosomal DNA
- 19<sup>th</sup> Nov 17 Photographing Jewish Tombstones at Fawkner Cemetery.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 18 Andrew Zalewski: Galician Portraits of Jewish Galicia (1772- 1918) a Vibrant Past Rediscovered.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Apr 18 A talk by Peter Nash, Escape from Berlin & survival in Shanghai
- 29<sup>th</sup> Apr 18 Continuation of Photographing Jewish Tombstones at Fawkner Cemetery.
- 27 May 18 JRI Poland an informative tutorial by Allan Jankie President of the AJGS (Vic) & Committee Member Max Wald
- 1<sup>st</sup> July 18 Solving Research Problems and overcoming Brick Walls

Debbie Jurblum  
Vice President

### **TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2018**

Fees received for the financial year were \$4,708, with 122 members financial. Thank you to all our members for their prompt payment of their fees.

**A warm welcome to our 24 new members.**

Donations totalling \$649.25 were received. Thanks to 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. Liz James kindly donated the cost of installing window blinds to the room. 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 four successful meetings. For the financial year our net income was \$713, with a bank balance at 30<sup>th</sup> June at \$10,292. A detailed Income and Expenditure statement is available for those who have not yet collected one.

Rene Eisner  
Honorary Treasurer

# Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc.

ABN 17 078 119 093



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## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2018

Membership Fees	4,706.00
total members 175 (53 unfinancial)	
Functions Income	810.00
Bank Interest Received	10.49
Donations Received	649.25
Donation of Equipment	100.00
Sundry Income	<u>60.00</u>

**Gross Income** **6,335.74**

### Less Expenses

Affiliation Fees IAJGS	- 98.01	
Archival Scanning	- 132.00	
Cons Affairs, Registration Fees	- 56.90	
Donation to Jewishgen & JRI-Poland	- 314.74	
Equipment purchases	- 100.00	
Equipment Hire – In One Voice	- 217.00	
Hall Rental for Meetings	- 1,403.01	
Lamm library computer fees	- 840.40	
Insurance Public Liability	- 647.00	
Printing Brochures	- 226.94	
Subscription to Ancestry.com	- 992.85	
Web Maintenance	- 593.75	
	<u>- 5,622.60</u>	- 5,622.60

**NET INCOME for year** **713.14**

Bank Balance at 1/7/17 **9,579.56**

**BANK BALANCE 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018** **\$ 10,292.70**

Refundable Deposit – Glen Eira Council	400.00
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## **ROOTS PROJECT REPORT by Bernie Kuran**



Following the success of previous years' 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. I gave a presentation on the Origins of Jewish Surnames, and this 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 send in emails, and to come to the Lamm Library to undertake further research with our volunteers. Over 250 children participated this year, and we look forward to our continued involvement with the schools next year.

I also presented on this topic at Limmud Oz, which was well received by an enthusiastic audience. The Limmud Oz conferences are a great opportunity for the society to reach out to mature audiences who may not be aware of our services, and we hope to present there on an ongoing basis.

Bernie Kuran

## **CEMETERY PHOTOGRAPHING PROJECTS report by Max Wald**

Last year we completed our first project of photographing headstones at Fawkner Cemetery. Including previously photographed headstones, approximately 4,500 sites have been completed with the co-operation of the Fawkner Cemetery Trust and the Melbourne Chevra Kadisha (MCK). This was achieved over two outings. The first was on Mitzvah day November 2017 and completed in May 2018, again with members and volunteers. Special thanks to Bubbles Segall and Rodney Eisfelder for their assistance organising the Fawkner Project.



The Images have been given to the Melbourne Chevra Kadisha to be included in their database. This will take some time as MCK still has to develop a system to include Fawkner images.

Our aim is to share these images with the JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR). This process has begun awaiting approval of MCK. We are now preparing to include other cemeteries. We have received a detailed plan of the Jewish areas from Melbourne General Cemetery but as this is a major exercise, it will be done over several visits in the future.

In the meantime, with the assistance of the Springvale Botanical Cemetery (Springvale Necropolis), we are in the process of organising a large project on Mitzvah Day (18<sup>th</sup> November 2018) this year. Plans are already in process and the community and members will be notified on how to take part.

Max Wald

### **RESOURCE ROOM REPORT by Liz James**

'The Roots Education Program which we are involved with, in conjunction with the Jewish Museum, with students from Bialik, King David, Mt Scopus and Yavneh has been very successful with both students and parents requesting help from the AJGS (Vic) for their family trees and also enquiring whether we have any historical data from our collection to use in their research.

Our 'Surname' Books have proved very popular at the 'In One Voice Festival' and for the 'Roots Education Program' with people and students researching the origin of the surname/s from countries such as Poland, Russia, Galicia, Germany, Ukraine etc.

The AJGS Vic have added many new books and maps to our collection this year. Thanks to Lionel Sharpe, Bubbles Segall, Fay Gliksman, Ben Frenkel, Tom Reisner, Peter Nash, Liam Getreu, Andrew Markus, Terry Ashton and Liz James for their book and map donations to our collection. Also to Liz James for donating blinds to help block out the glare from the windows when using the microfiche reader and computers.

Thanks also to the Lamm Library for keeping our collection updated and catalogued on their central database.

Liz James







## AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER



### Hi, I'm Heshy Adelist

I am thirty years old and I was born in Melbourne. I am a proud father of a two-month-old Girl (Emma).

My family comes from all over, my maternal Grandmother was born in Singapore but her family was from Iraq and India and my Grandfather was born in England and his family from Ireland and Poland. My paternal grandmother was born in Canada, but her family was from Poland and my Grandfather was born in Poland and his family also was from Poland. So, I'm mainly Polish (Ashkenazi) with Some Irish blood and some middle eastern (Sephardic Blood).

As you can see my family is from all over the world so growing up I would ask my Parents where are all our cousins and the answer was always overseas in Canada and the USA etc, so I think that sparked a flame to find everyone and once I started I couldn't stop!

I've done quite a bit of research; my tree goes back to the late 1700s with about 1000 people in my tree (blood-related). I use Ancestry, I find it to be the best with the most information etc, I use other links like My Heritage, JewishGen and a few others.

I'm in the process of making a book on each grandparent and their families. It is taking a lot longer than I thought but hope to finish it in the near future.

I find the best way to contact is through Facebook and email. There are a lot of great Facebook groups out there.

My advice for anyone starting research is:

1. Go and ask all your Grandparents and parents any information they know about the family.
2. Never be shy to ask questions
3. Use Ancestry.com and JewishGen
4. Always ask your local Genealogist for help

