



# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (VIC) INC ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

## Committee of Management

President  
Vic-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Committee

Allan Jankie  
Max Wald OAM  
Bubbles Segall  
Rene Eisner  
Heshy Adelist  
Terry Ashton  
Rodney Eisfelder  
Helen Gardner  
Liz James OAM  
Clive Kaicer  
Bernie Kuran  
Ian Samuel OAM

## Honoured Life Members

Rodney Eisfelder  
Liz James OAM  
Allan Jankie  
Lionel Sharpe OAM dec.

[ajgsvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:ajgsvictoria@gmail.com)

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



# Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc.

ABN 17 078 119 093

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| President's Report by Allan Jankie                         | 2     |
| Vice President's Report by Max Wald                        | 3     |
| Secretary's Report by Bubbles Segall                       | 4     |
| Database Report by Rodney Eisfelder                        | 4     |
| Statement of Income & Expenditure                          | 5     |
| Treasurer's Report by Rene Eisner                          | 6     |
| Website Report by Rene Eisner                              | 6     |
| Reports by Liz James                                       |       |
| Roots Project  | 6     |
| DoJR & Library Report                                      | 10    |
| Roots Project Report by Bernie Kuran                       | 11    |
| Documentation of Jewish Records (DoJR)<br>By Helen Gardner | 13-15 |
| Facebook Report by Heshy Adelist                           | 15    |
| Zoom Meetings by Terry Ashton                              | 16-18 |

Report edited by Rene Eisner



## Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc.

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### **2022 PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Allan Jankie**

In 2008 I was approached by the late Lionel Sharpe to consider joining the committee of this society, which I did.

In 2010, following the sad and sudden passing of Les Oberman, I was elected President of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc. and it has been my honour and privilege to lead this group of dedicated people for the past 13 years.

Over that time period we have informed, entertained, assisted and aided thousands of people here in Australia and worldwide in their quest to find out more about their families and their genealogical histories.

The depth and breadth of knowledge contained within our Committee people has been, and continues to be, nothing short of astonishing.

But the time has come for me to retire from this role and pass the baton on. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank the current Committee members:

Max Wald, Bubbles Segall, Rene Eisner, Liz James, Rodney Eisfelder, Ian Samuel, Bernie Kuran, Heshy Adelist, Terry Ashton, Clive Kaicer, Helen Gardner

along with all those others who served as committee members during the last 13 years for their support to me personally, and their hard work in achieving our Society's aims of assisting people in their genealogical research.

I look forward to catching up with you all at our Presentations (Zoom and/or Live) and being able to swap genealogy stories!

**Allan Jankie**, President

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2022 by Max Wald

As we are acclimatising ourselves to living with Covid 19, the Society has continued to use Zoom for our presentations. This has become the norm as many presenters can be invited from overseas, and occasionally we have morning sessions to accommodate time zones of our international presenters.

We have had 9 zoom meetings; all will be detailed further by Terry. Importantly, we have experimented to assist our members' zoom sessions.

Our initial Breaking Down Brick Walls presentation was held 19<sup>th</sup> June. We would like to invite members to use our assistance on a one-on-one basis. Please avail yourselves of this service. Many of you have already contacted us individually, but please send your queries through [ajgsvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:ajgsvictoria@gmail.com).

2022 for Mitzvah Day, the Society is undertaking, with volunteers, to photograph Memorial Plaques and Yizkor Boards at many of our Synagogues.

This data will be uploaded to JewishGen's 'Memorial Plaques Database' information from synagogue yahrzeit plaques and other memorial records from around the world.

**Max Wald**, Vice President



AJGS VIC-AGM  
12 SEPTEMBER 2021

## SECRETARY'S REPORT by Bubbles Segall

Another year of committee meetings and presentations on Zoom. We are offering our members a choice of Zoom or face-to-face for our AGM this year. We look forward to catching up with you.

As Helen Gardner mentioned in her report, three of us (Helen, Liz James and I), have been involved with the Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR). Part of my role has been identifying Victorian Jewish communal organisations which potentially hold records of genealogical interest.

**Bubbles Segall**

Honorary Secretary

## DATABASE REPORT 2022 by Rodney Eisfelder

The society's marriage database continues to grow, and now contains over 34,000 records, with about 2000 records added over the last 12 months. One significant addition was a scan of one of Rabbi Goldman's personal registers from the time he was at Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. The register was acquired by the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem from a dealer. We also got scans of "recent" marriage records from Hobart (covering marriages from 1944 to 1967), a large backlog from the Great Synagogue of Sydney and also one Macquarie Street register from the 1860s.

**Rodney Eisfelder** - keeper of the marriage database.

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PO Box 2071  
Camberwell West, Vic, 3124  
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## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2022

|   |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Membership Fees                                 |   | 4,583.00                |
| total members 182 (55 unfinancial)              |   |                         |
| Donations Received                              |   | 6,750.00                |
| <b>Gross Income</b>                             |   | <b>11,333.00</b>        |
| <u>Less Expenses</u>                            |   |                         |
| Affiliation Fees IAJGS                          | - | 92.51                   |
| Archival Scanning                               | - | 2,692.75                |
| Consumer Affairs, Registration Fee              | - | 60.10                   |
| Donations annual to JewishGen & JRI-Poland      | - | 284.77                  |
| Zoom for Meetings                               | - | 332.00                  |
| In One Voice                                    | - | 243.00                  |
| Insurance Public Liability                      | - | 696.00                  |
| Printing Brochures                              | - | 67.97                   |
| Subscriptions to Genealogy websites             | - | 66.60                   |
| Website Maintenance                             | - | 297.50                  |
| Lamm Library – maintenance of Library Catalogue | - | 840.40                  |
| Website upgrade – deposit                       | - | 880.00                  |
|   | - | <u>6,553.60</u>         |
|   |   | <u>- 6,553.60</u>       |
| <b>NET SURPLUS for year</b>                     |   | <b>4,779.40</b>         |
| Bank Balance at 1 <sup>ST</sup> July, 2021      |   | <u>5,773.03</u>         |
| <b>BANK BALANCE 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022</b>   |   | <b><u>10,552.43</u></b> |
| Creditor : Website developer \$4,000            |   |                         |
| Cash float : \$120.00                           |   |                         |

# TREASURER'S REPORT by Rene Eisner

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2022

Membership fees received for the financial year 2022 were \$4,583, with 127 members financial. Thank you to those members for their prompt payment of their fees.

## **A warm welcome to our 10 new members.**

Donations totaling \$6,750 have been received. Thanks to all, for your generous support. It is amazing to know that our friends appreciate the work we do.

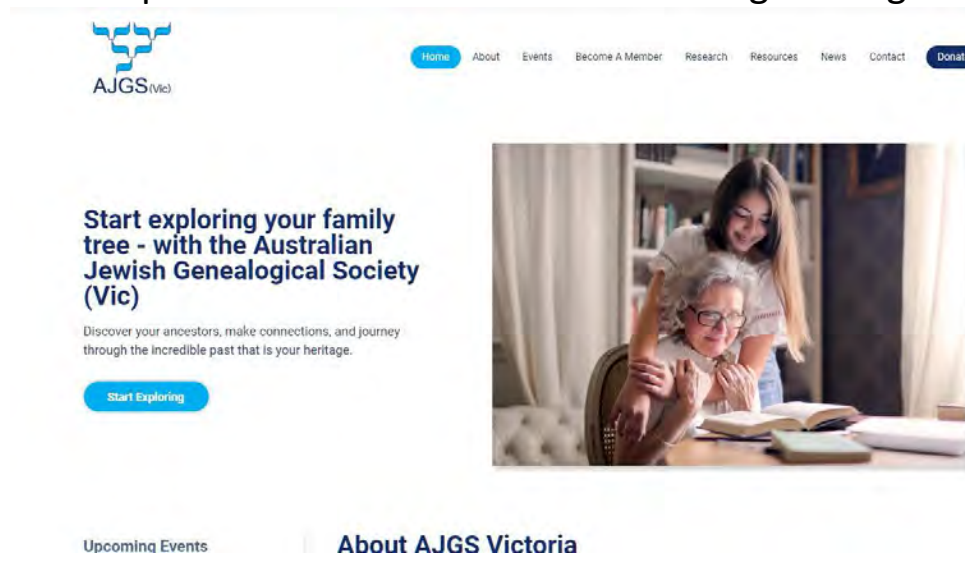
For the financial year funds saw a net surplus of \$4,779.40 with a bank balance at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at \$10,552.43.

# WEBSITE REPORT 2022 by Rene Eisner

At the start of the 2022 year, it was discovered that our website [www.ajgs-vic.org.au](http://www.ajgs-vic.org.au) was compromised and unable to function.

The Committee agreed to enlist a Web Developer to design, modernise and construct a new website for us. The re-designed website should be fully functional and go live prior to the AGM.

We hope that our members and the public all over the world will find helpful information and links for their genealogical research.



Rene Eisner  
Honorary Treasurer

# REPORTS 2022 by Liz James

## ROOTS PROJECT



### **Schools Participating**

- Mount Scopus – Year 8 – two sessions
- Yavneh – Year 9
- Sholom Aleichem – Grade 6
- Bialik – Year 7

### Sholem Aleichem, Grade 6

### **Locations**

- St Kilda Synagogue in conjunction with the Jewish Museum
- Bialik College
- Evening presentations at the Jewish Museum for Scopus and Yavneh parents by Liz James.

### **Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) committee members' presentations**

Liz James – Assortment of documents available for Roots Projects.

Bernie Kuran – The Origin of Jewish Surnames.

Bubbles Segall – Using JewishGen to find Ancestors.

### **Pre-Preparation - January**

- Rene Eisner prepared email handouts and business cards.
- Bubbles Segall prepared email handouts and power point presentation on using JewishGen.

### **February**

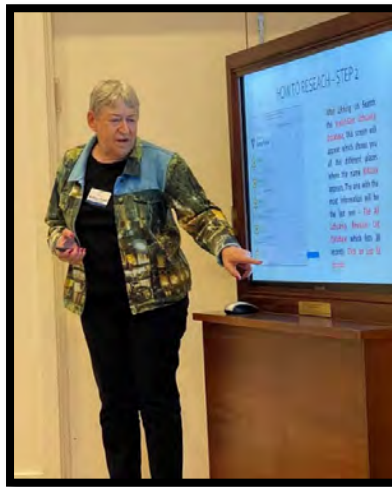
- Schools mailed completed six generation trees to the Society.
- Documents from National Archives of Australia, Melbourne Chevra Kadisha, Yad Vashem, Birth, Deaths and Marriages etc attached to six generation trees. Returned to the students on the day of our visits.



## ROOTS PROJECT (Cont)

### Activity

- Names of countries most of the students' ancestors lived in highlighted on their trees.
- Students made lists of the countries, towns/cities and surnames from their trees.
- Students formed 'country' groups and discussed the names and towns to see if they found any matches, similarities or even relatives.
- Students very engaged in this activity and excited about their finding.



Liz James  
Bubbles Segall

Below: Bernie Kuran



### Evaluation

Sessions went smoothly, staff extremely supportive and interested. Students very engaged.

Preparing the trees before the sessions meant that students already had ownership of up to four generations and the rest could be discovered over time.

Majority of the grandparents of the students were born approximately between 1950-1960 in Australia, South Africa, Israel, Morocco,

USSR and Ukraine. Very few documents available on the latter countries but JewishGen is now starting to include more areas for research.



### Roots projects discoveries

When constructing their family trees, students in the Melbourne Jewish Community are always discovering interesting facts about each other and how they are related. Whether their ancestors were neighbours in Cape Town, prayed at the same shtetl in Poland, or were cousins in Ballarat, the community overlaps to such an extent that the DNA matches amongst the Jewish Community are so strong and endogamous that one can be related to another via many different paths

The Australian Jewish Genealogical Society Vic. participated in the School Roots Projects at the Jewish Museum this year and imagine their surprise when three Year 8 Mount Scopus students discovered they had matching ancestry via a double wedding held 122 years ago at the Bourke St. Synagogue, (Melbourne Hebrew Congregation.)

Abraham Moses Davis and his brother Benjamin Percy Davis, sons of Simon and Yetta Davis married sisters Sarah and Matilda Visbord daughters of Wolf and Natalie Visbord on the 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1900. They were married on Boxing Day as their father could not spare them to be away from the factory at any other time of the year.

*'After the wedding at the Bourke St Synagogue, and a reception at the masonic Hall, Melbourne, Abraham and Rose and Benjamin and Matilda left by train for their honeymoon. Benjamin and Matilda alighted at Mordialloc, while Abraham and Rose went on to Frankston. Abraham was proud of the fact that he was more adventurous by going all the way to Frankston'. (Trevor Cohen – AJHS Journal Vol. X 1988 pp 250 -264.)*

## ROOTS PROJECT (Cont)

Year 8 Mt Scopus students, Olivia Samuel and Max Woolf are descendants of Abraham and Sarah and Charlie Davis descends from Benjamin and Matilda. They were each given a copy of the family tree which they will update and keep updating as each milestone in their lives are celebrated.

**Liz James OAM - 2022**

**Australian Jewish Genealogical Society – Vic**

**Australian Jewish Historical Society – Vic**



The double wedding of the DAVIS and VISBORD families 26<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1900.



Charlie  
Davis and  
Olivia  
Samuel



Max Woolf

## DoJR AND LIBRARY REPORT 2022

As part of the team led by Helen Gardner and including Bubbles Segall we spent a considerable amount time allocating and listing 500 books of Australian content to be placed on the World Wide Jewish Catalogue (JCat).

A list of 600 Genealogical books likely to be of use for anyone wishing to find their ancestors was also created and will be listed on the AJGS Vic website. The list includes Yizkor and rabbinical books, naming indexes, shtetl finders, journals, maps, newspapers and microfilms.

Liz James OAM

## ROOTS PROJECT REPORT by Bernie Kuran

Members of AJGS (Vic) Committee were invited again to present to students from Mt. Scopus, Bialik, Yavneh and Sholem Aleichem. Bernie Kuran provided a presentation on the Origins of Jewish Surnames to whet the students' eager appetites to enquire and research their family histories.

They were able to ask questions from the Committee members there, and many took the opportunity to email enquiries to the Committee to assist with their research. Over 300 children participated this year, and we look forward to continuing our involvement with the schools next year.

Bernie Kuran

# In One Voice 2022



# Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) Annual Report 2022

The DoJR project aims to collect information on all Jewish records world wide, and create a catalogue, JCat, which will enable searchers to know what Jewish information is available anywhere in the world. In this way, the road blocks and lack of information on the lives of our ancestors so common today need never be repeated.

The AJGS-Vic team of Liz James, Bubbles Segall and Helen Gardner has been privileged to be the pioneering Jewish Genealogical Society, providing data on the past and present Victorian Jewish community to DoJR. The JCat template has been refined and an initial working model prepared, using data supplied by us. We reported on our initial progress to the IAJGS conference held in August 2021.

In addition to the 4500 records held in the State Library of Victoria, which were entered in the previous year, we have added 6 new major sets of data.

## **1. Applications from residents of the former USSR applying to immigrate to Australia, 1992-1995**

First the data was entered into a Family Tree structure in an Ancestry file on the web. There were roughly 750 applications, all of which were scanned for preservation. Many applications contained documents in Russian, and about 2/3 of these have now been translated. These have provided patronymics not supplied by the applicant, dates of birth and marriage, and, in some cases, information that parents on the birth certificate were not the same as indicated by the applicant, and occasionally additional relatives not mentioned by the applicant.

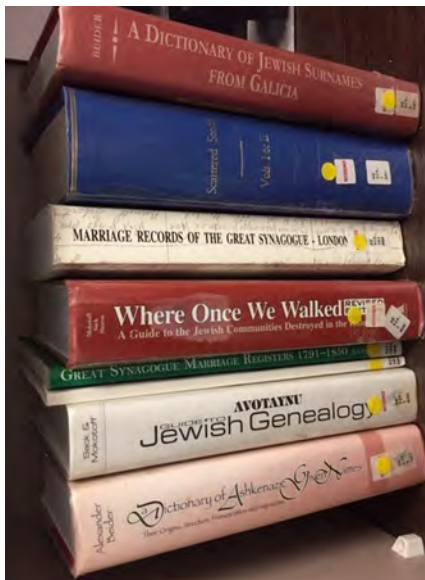
We've kept the file private, because many of the applicants are still alive. There are 11,728 people in the file and 3,310 individual surnames. We will be providing a list of surnames on the revamped AJGS website so people can see if there is a name of interest, and can then contact us to find out more.

Grateful thanks are due to Dianne Israel, Susie Eisfelder, and Rachel Markus for scanning, and to Rachel in particular for invaluable help with organising the scans. Thanks also to Eleanor Aghion, Bella Tseytlin, Raya Goldtwig, and Rona Zinger for help with translations.



## 2. 500 Genealogical books with an Australian Connection.

Our record collection for JCat is about specifically Australian resources. An “Australian” book was defined as one which was either written by someone who has lived in Australia, or about someone who has lived in Australia. The vast majority of books in the Lamm library are neither Australian books nor books with genealogical content, so we selected 500 of them which fit both those categories. The list has been entered into JCat.



## 3. An Australian Reference collection

The process of selecting appropriate books for an Australian genealogical collection led to an understanding that some of those books are actually distinctively Australian reference material which are unlikely to be found in Jewish libraries outside Australia. So we created a small reference collection of 23 books, now entered into JCat.

## 4. The Australian Jewish News Photo Collection

This consists of over 80,000 archival photos taken at community events over the years. They were collected in envelopes held in filing cabinets in the Australian Jewish News Offices. These are currently being scanned in New South Wales by the AJHS, and name-tagged using facial recognition. The first tranche has been completed and the second tranche has been sent. It is envisaged that the project will be completed by the end of 2022. After they have been reviewed they will be placed on the AJHS website.

## 5. Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society.

Established in 1939, the journal’s contents are a rich source of Jewish life in Australia from its inception. The index of articles has been entered into JCat.

**6. Custodial organisations in Melbourne.**

Approximately 245 communal organisations were identified which potentially hold records of genealogical interest, and we are now ready to embark on Phase 2 of the project: to interview heads of organisations to review their inventory of records, identify those that may have Jewish family history relevance, and enter a description of their data into JCat. NOTE that the records themselves are not included in JCat, only a description of what records are held.

Helen Gardner    Team Leader, AJGS-Vic Survey team  
 16 August 2022

 **FACEBOOK REPORT 2022 by Heshy Adelst**

Facebook / Social Media has grown in the past year incredibly with 478 Members including 74 new members.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>FOR THE LAST YEAR</b><br/>                 478 Members<br/>                 234 Posts</p> | <p>609 Comments<br/>                 2,363 Reactions<br/>                 23,301 viewed</p> |
|---|---|

|                   |       |         |                 |       |
|-------------------|-------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| <b>63% Female</b> |       |         | <b>37% Male</b> |       |
| Age Range         | Women | % Women | Men             | % Men |
| 13-17             | 0     | 0%      | 0               | 0%    |
| 18-24             | 4     | 0.9%    | 3               | 0.7%  |
| 25-34             | 14    | 3%      | 8               | 1.7%  |
| 35-44             | 32    | 7%      | 16              | 3.5%  |
| 45-54             | 41    | 8.9%    | 22              | 4.8%  |
| 55-64             | 68    | 14.8%   | 29              | 6.3%  |
| 65+               | 129   | 28%     | 94              | 20.4% |

|                     |               |                |               |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| <b>By COUNTRIES</b> | Germany 3     | India 1        | Nigeria 1     |
| Australia 364       | Netherlands 3 | Russia 1       | Romania 1     |
| United States 42    | France 3      | South Africa 1 | Austria 1     |
| Israel 26           | Poland 2      | Malaysia 1     | Brazil 1      |
| United Kingdom 7    | Italy 2       | Turkey 1       | Switzerland 1 |
| New Zealand 4       | Hungary 1     | Spain 1        |               |
| Canada 4            | Ukraine 1     | Colombia 1     |               |
|                     | Ecuador 1     | Luxembourg 1   |               |



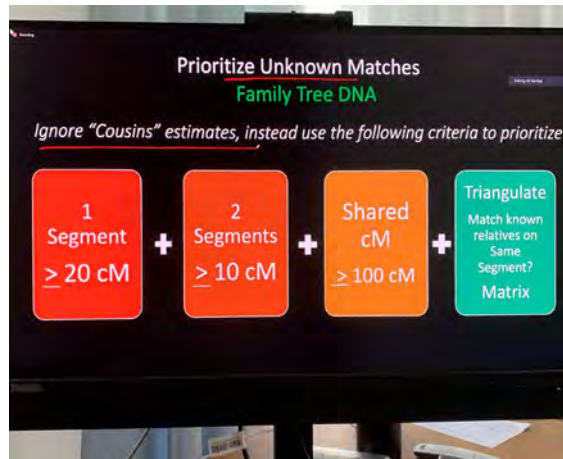
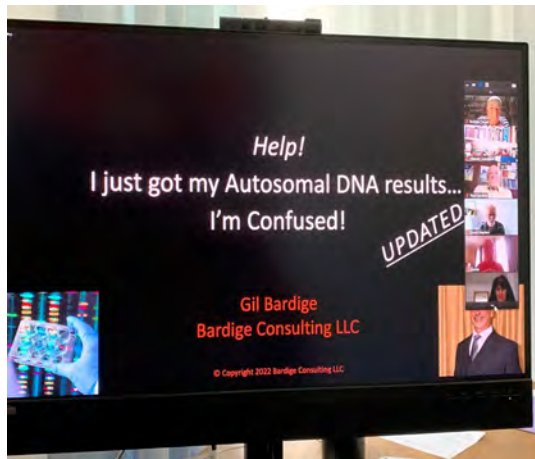
# Summary Of Our Zoom Meetings

By Terry Ashton

As Max Wald has said many times, we are fortunate to be able to have diverse speakers from around the world. During the past year, the AJGS VIC hosted a number of talks on Zoom. If you were unable to attend any of them, or wish to review, please go to our website, go to 'Events' and then 'Past Presentations' and select the zoom presentation you would like to listen to.

- **July 2021 - Carol Hoffman - Exploring your Roots with LitvakSIG**  
Carol Hoffman gave a very detailed step by step walk through the LitvakSIG website, showing the fabulous information available for researchers on Lithuania. (there is a handout for this talk, but no video)
- **15 August 2021 - Robinn Magid - Finding Your Eastern European Jewish Family In The Jri-Poland Database**  
Robinn Magid is the Assistant Director of JRI-Poland. In 2020 Robinn became the Project Manager of JRI-P Nextgen Project to redesign their website and search engine. On this presentation Robinn showed us through the use of the new Website.
- **12 September 2021 Annual General Meeting of AJGS VIC – with Serafima Velkovich as our Lionel Sharpe Memorial Speaker – The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names at Yad Vashem**  
AGM was held with elections and reports. Liz James remembers Lionel Sharpe. Serafima Velkovich is the head of Family Research Section at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. She lectures on the use of Yad Vashem archives and the website.
- **17 October, 2021 - Shauna Hicks – Free Australian Resources for Family History**  
Shauna worked in government for over 35 years as well as in libraires and archives in Queensland, Canberra and at the Public Record Office, Victoria. In this presentation, Shauna discussed the various free Australian resources available for those researching their family history.
- **21 November, 2021 - Allan Jankie & Bernie Kuran –DNA discoveries and our amazing stories**  
Allan Jankie and Bernie Kuran shared their fascinating DNA discoveries and what those discoveries meant.

- **30 January, 2022 - Gil Bardige - Help! I Just Got My Autosomal DNA Results and I'm Confused (Part 1)**



Gil Bardige has been a genealogist for over 40 years, with 15 years of experience in DNA/Genetic Genealogy. His presentation provides specific guidance on how to use DNA as an effective tool in your genealogy tool belt.

- **27 February, 2022 - Gil Bardige - Help! I Just Got My Autosomal DNA Results and I'm Confused (Part 2)** A continuation of Part 1 of Gill's talk.
- **24 March, 2022 - Dr. Sebastian Gurciullo – Online collections at the Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV)**  
**Dr Sebastian Gurciullo** is a professional archivist, curator, editor and writer and currently works at the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) as the editor of *Provenance*, the refereed journal of Public Record Office Victoria, an interdisciplinary journal which publishes articles based on archival research in history, cultural heritage and the interpretation of archival collections. His talk outlines many useful sites at the PROV for those researching their family's history.
- **24 April, 2022 - Jeff Schneider – Hobart Hebrew Congregation Digital Archives**  
 In this joint AJGS(VIC) / AJGS(NSW) presentation, Jeff Schneider, President of Hobart Synagogue, takes us through the Hobart Synagogue Digital Archive, launched in 2022. During the Covid lockdowns of 2020/21, Jeff undertook the mammoth task of digitising and cataloguing the archives of one of Australia's oldest synagogues, the earliest records dating from the late 1820s. This archive is a valuable tool for any genealogist with connections to the Hobart Jewish Community.

- **29 May, 2022 - Terry Ashton - Using UK Data for Research on your European Jewish Ancestors**

Terry has been a genealogist for over 30 years with a primary interest in using UK resources to discover more about European Jews who made the UK their home. This talk covers a number of resources available for those researching their family's history in the United Kingdom.

- **19 June, 2022 - Live presentation with the AJGS VIC committee -Breaking down brick walls**

Members were invited to pose questions relating to difficulties/'brick walls' they were experiencing in genealogical research with AJGS VIC committee members on hand, to try and solve their problems.

Terry Ashton,  
committee member, September 2022



Isaac Solomon and Isabella Solomon Family Tree

