



# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (VIC) INC ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

## Committee of Management

Co-President  
Co-President  
Past President  
Vic-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Committee

Rodney Eisfelder  
Bernie Kuran  
Allan Jankie  
Max Wald OAM  
Terry Ashton  
Rene Eisner  
Heshy Adelist  
Aaron Blicblau  
Helen Gardner  
Liz James OAM  
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

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Report edited by Rene Eisner

## **2023 PRESIDENTS' REPORT by Rodney Eisfelder and Bernie Kuran**

2023 for the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic.) has ushered in not only the post-Covid era, but for the first time, the society has co-Presidents. The fact that two of us are required to fulfil the role that Allan Jankie employed with aplomb, is testament to his tenure as President over the previous 13 years.

Also, long-standing committee member Bubbles Segall decided to call time on her formal roles in our society. Bubbles joined AJGS (Vic) in 2009, joined the committee in 2012, and performed the role of Secretary with distinction from 2017. Bubbles is still our first point of call for all matters relating to South African and Lithuanian ancestry, and remains actively involved in assisting us with the Schools Roots Projects. We are grateful to Terry Ashton for seamlessly taking over the role of Secretary.

Over the last year, the Society has had to move to new rooms behind the Lamm Library. This was forced on us as the landlords decided that we would have to pay to remain in the building. The amount demanded for our previous room was utterly unaffordable for a small volunteer society such as ours. Our new smaller rooms would also have severely tested our budget, but for some generous donors to whom we are greatly appreciative.

For the first time in over 3 years, the Committee was able to meet face-to-face again, and we certainly relished the opportunity to discuss matters pertaining to the society, and enjoy each other's company.

The one benefit that Covid provided, was the ability to have presentations on Zoom by learned genealogists from overseas. One such presentation was "Using USHMM database for Genealogical Research" delivered by Dr Jude C. Richter, PhD, Research and Reference Specialist from United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

This Annual Report contains reports provided by Committee members pertaining to the various activities undertaken by the Society. We have again been involved with the School Roots program in conjunction with Jewish Day Schools, UJEB, and The Jewish Museum of Australia. The Cemetery Project has been largely completed and we have turned our attention to Shule Memorial boards, as well as the Jewish Marriages Database, the DoJR Project, and our main task of assisting people with their Jewish genealogical research.

## 2023 PRESIDENTS' REPORT (cont)

We, as co-Presidents, are blessed to have a fabulous Committee who continue to amaze and inspire us with their dedication and knowledge. We are forever grateful to:

Max Wald – Vice-President

Rene Eisner – Treasurer

Terry Ashton – Secretary

Allan Jankie – Immediate Past President

Liz James – Librarian

Heshy Adelist – Committee

Ian Samuels – Committee

Helen Gardner – Committee

Aron Blicblau - Committee

We look forward to continuing our work in assisting you with your research, as well as providing informative and entertaining presentations over the next year.

All the best,

Rodney Eisfelder and Bernie Kuran

Co-Presidents.

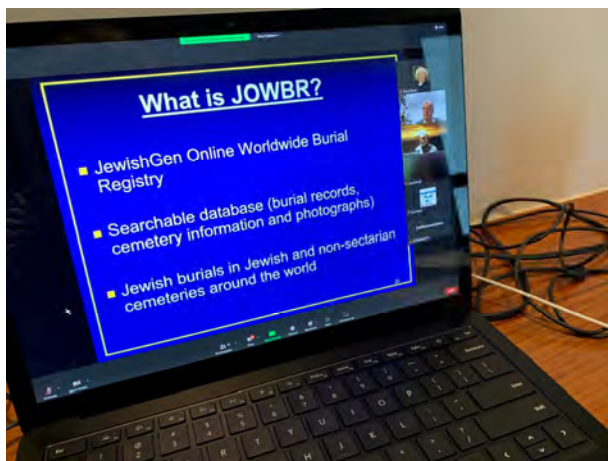


## VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2023 by Max Wald

Apart from the events of this year, the only matters pertaining to my involvement: -

Continuing to add photos taken by our Society with the wonderful help of volunteers over the last few Mitzvah-Day projects, to the online Melbourne Chevra Kadisha website.

These included Fawkner Cemetery. Melbourne General, Springvale Necropolis (still ongoing)



The Memorial Plaque project for JewishGen has hesitated for the time being due to the lack of time.

Many synagogues are already completed and yet to be put online.

Max Wald  
Vice President





Family

Like branches  
on a tree,  
we all grow  
in different directions,  
yet our roots  
remain as one.

# SECRETARY'S REPORT AND PRESENTATIONS

## 2022-2023 By Terry Ashton

This year our committee meetings returned largely to face-to-face contact, with meetings held on Zoom only during the winter months.

During the year we returned to providing our members with face-to-face presentations on the whole, with Zoom presentations held only when the speaker was from interstate or overseas.

The following is a summary of the 2022-2023 presentations.



AJGS VIC-AGM 2022 Presentation by Bubbles Segall

### **September 18<sup>th</sup> 2022 - AGM** **Organising and preserving** **genealogical information.**

Bubbles Segall spoke on how to organise and preserve genealogical information, whether members were beginners or seasoned researchers.

### **October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2022 - What is the** **DoJR Project?**

Bubbles Segall, Helen Gardner & Liz James discussed the research they had compiled in relation to the database of DoJR and the significance of the information for genealogical purposes.

### **December 4<sup>th</sup> 2022- Using 'Family Tree Maker' or 'Reunion' and more**

This was a face-to-face workshop which offered practical guidance on developing members' family tree, using 'Family Tree Maker' or 'Reunion' or other similar software packages.



## PRESENTATIONS (cont)

### **February 12<sup>th</sup> 2023- Using USHMM database for Genealogical Research**

This was a live streamed presentation by Dr. Jude C. Richter, a Research and Reference Specialist for the David M. Rubenstein National Institute for Holocaust Documentation, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.



### **May 28<sup>th</sup> 2023-Genealogical Steps re writing a book on one's family.**

This presentation by Marvin Bude, President of VAJEX, discussed his genealogical research into his family, where he explained how his research was conducted, the lengths he travelled to interview surviving families, and the methods used to self-publish both a hard copy and digital editions.



Marvin Bude

Terry Ashton  
Honorary Secretary

# Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) Inc.

ABN 17 078 119 093



PO Box 2071  
Camberwell West, Vic, 3124

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## STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 2023

Membership Fees		4,285.00
Meetings Income		380.00
Beth Weizmann storage fees in advance		1,250.00
Donations Received		7,545.10
Bank Interest Received		0.30
<b>Gross Income</b>		<b>13,460.40</b>
<u>Less Expenses</u>		
Advertising	-	150.00
Affiliation Fees IAJGS	-	94.59
Beth Weizmann (Lamm Library) Room Occupancy ½ yr	-	1,250.00
Consumer Affairs, Registration Fee	-	61.20
Donations annual to JewishGen & JRI-Poland	-	305.97
Fees for using Square Tap and Pay	-	2.61
Hall Rental for Meetings	-	1,380.00
Hall Rental refundable deposit (Glen Eira)	-	1,000.00
Moving expenses	-	1,402.50
In One Voice	-	243.00
Insurance Public Liability	-	770.00
Lamm Library – maintenance of Library Catalogue	-	840.40
Printing	-	112.99
Subscriptions to Genealogy websites	-	161.81
Website Maintenance	-	778.80
Website Upgrade	-	3,520.00
Zoom for Meetings	-	<u>173.17</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	-	<b>12,247.04</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS for year</b>		<b>1,213.36</b>
Bank Balance at 1/7/22		<u>\$10,552.43</u>
<b>BANK BALANCE 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b>		<b><u>\$11,765.79</u></b>

# TREASURER'S REPORT by Rene Eisner

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2023

Membership fees received for the financial year 2023 were \$4,285, with 133 members financial. Thank you to those members for their prompt payment of their fees.

**A warm welcome to our 11 new members.**

Donations totaling \$7,545 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 \$1,213.36 with a bank balance at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at \$11,765.79.

Rene Eisner

Honorary Treasurer



**In One Voice 2023**

# RESOURCE ROOM REPORT

By Liz James OAM



The Australian Jewish Genealogical Society Vic. moved to another section within the Lamm Library, taking up 3 small rooms overlooking the garden area.

The Australian Jewish Historical Society Vic. are fortunate to be able to store some of their resources within one of these rooms, as opposed to looking for outside storage, thus having the advantage of catalogue queries and requests from the public, being provided to the enquirer, all on the one visit.

Many thanks to our many donors including Trevor and Heather Cohen for generously donating to the Society so that we could remain at Beth Weizman. Their generosity and passion for history and genealogy has been appreciated over the many years.

Many thanks also to Father Terry Lyons for making available booklets of English Synagogue records and to Marvin Bude for the donation of his family history volumes both hard copy and CD.

## RESOURCE ROOM REPORT (cont)



We still receive many requests for assistance with Family Trees, compilation of Family History books and help with using commercial websites but apart from a few enquiries for assistance with Bevis Marks records and Hungarian research our reference library seems to have become superseded by online records that the public can access from their computers at home.

The resource room is available on request, we are happy to assist.

Liz James OAM  
Librarian



Thanks to Liz James for all her hard work packing and sorting and then reorganising our new rooms.

# ROOTS PROJECTS 2023

By Liz James OAM



## Schools Participating

- Mount Scopus – Year 8, 4 sessions
- Yavneh – Year 9
- Sholom Aleichem – Grade 6
- Bialik – Year 7 – double session
- King David – Year 8 – double session

# ROOTS PROJECTS 2023

By Liz James OAM

## Locations

- Jewish Museum of Australia for Mt Scopus, Yavneh and Sholem Aleichem
- Bialik College on campus
- King David on campus
- Evening presentations by Liz James at the Jewish Museum for Scopus and Yavneh parents.

## Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (Vic) committee presentations

Liz James – Assortment of documents available for Roots Projects.

Bernie Kuran – The Origin of Jewish Surnames.

Bubbles Segall – Using JewishGen to find Ancestors.

Terry Ashton, Rodney Eisfelder, Esther Kahn and Max Wald assisted at Bialik with discussion about Jewishgen, Jews in Australia, Jews in the Pale of Settlement, Jews in Poland, Sephardic Jews and Jews in South Africa

## 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 emailed or sent back 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.

## 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.

## 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 of their ancestry 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.

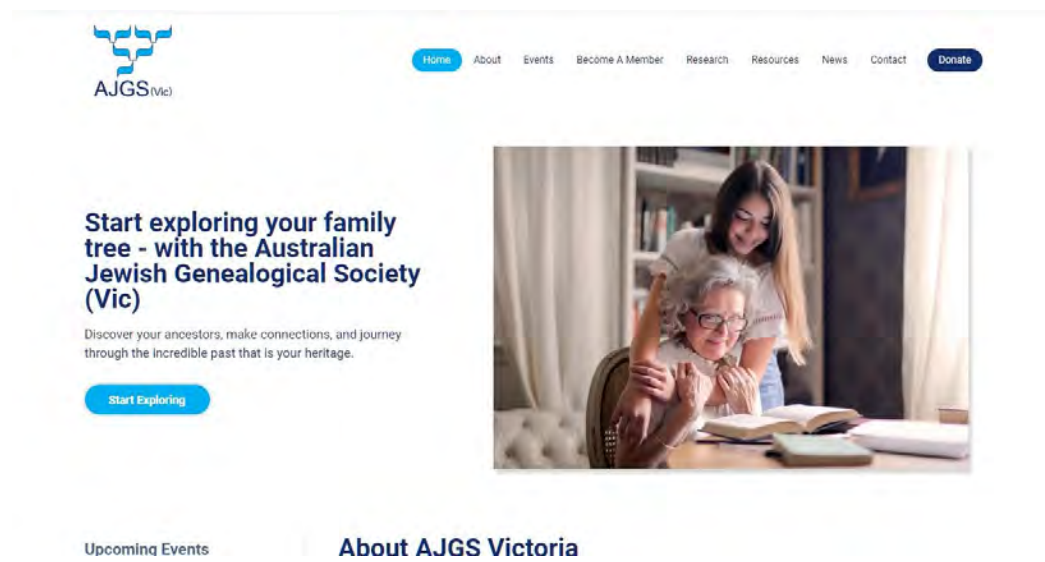
Liz James OAM

# Website Report 2023 by Aaron Blicblau

The website has been updated regularly. It has been managed by Aaron Blicblau in conjunction with Rene Eisner, and the website has been monitored and overseen by the “Digital Freak” .

There have been no major issues.

There have been on the average one to two “hits” on the AJGS-Vic website per day.



Aaron Blicblau



# Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) Annual Report 2023

By Helen Gardner

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 roadblocks and lack of information on the lives of our ancestors so common today need never be repeated.

A presentation in August 2022 to the IAJGS International conference titled “A Treasure Trove of Records Hidden in Plain Sight” covered the work done over the previous year from August 2021 to August 2022. Liz James, Bubbles Segall and I were the presenters. A version of this talk was presented to the 2022 AJGS AGM in September.

Liz and Bubbles withdrew from the DoJR team due to other commitments, though Liz remains on call for occasional help. Evie Katz and Manny Kingsley joined as an outcome of the presentation to the 2022 AGM.

Evie and I met with Rachel Chrapot from Kadimah and several members of her team in February. Kadimah is in the process of reinventing itself and reorganising their catalogue. If we come back in a year, they may have more information to share. It was agreed that Kadimah would supply DoJR with descriptions of records they currently know about, once their reorganisation is completed.

DoJR in the US have a team headed by Jan Gronski which has developed an AI program to read handwritten Polish, Russian and Yiddish documents. Because of the strong Yiddish component in our community, Jan was eager to meet with us while he was in Melbourne. He was looking for help with Yiddish and possibly Russian speakers, and we have put him in touch with Alex Dafner from Kadimah, who has agreed to help, both individually and in recruiting a few other people.

## DoJR continued

Helen Stein in the US is working on a small data base we could use to keep track of people and organisations as they move through the process.

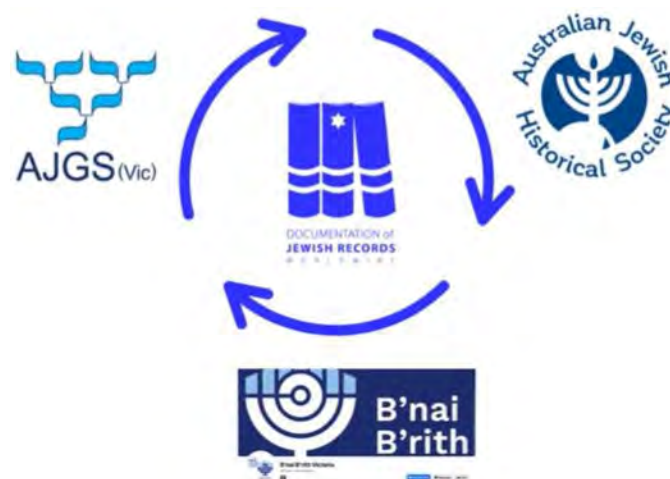
Evie and I visited B'nai B'rith, Vic, and their CEO, Ellana Aarons was very supportive. We have developed a model for approaching organisations, and a template with a simplified set of fields for data entry. Sabrina Elias, the archivist with AJHS in Sydney, came to the BB Offices, talked to us about archiving, and proceeded to do a first pass at archiving all of the boxes held in the BB Office, which involved re-organising the contents of the boxes so that like documents were held together and separate from unlike documents.

JCCV, Mt Scopus College, Courage to Care and St Kilda Shul are planned as the next organisations to contact.

Marcel Alter has joined the DoJR team.

Helen Gardner

31 July 2023





# FACEBOOK REPORT 2023 by Heshy Adelista

Facebook / Social Media has grown in the past year incredibly with 646 Members including 168 new members from 31 countries, almost 100 more than last year!

## FOR YEAR 2022-23

646 Members

177 Posts

602 Comments

2,457 Reactions

24,994 viewed

64% Female

36% Male

Age Range	Women	% Women	Men	% Men
13-17	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
18-24	4	0.7%	3	0.5%
25-34	16	2.7%	10	1.7%
35-44	38	6.4%	23	3.8%
45-54	56	9.4%	28	4.7%
55-64	83	13.9%	37	6.2%
65+	187	31.3%	113	18.9%

## Countries

Australia	505	Netherlands	2	Brazil	1
United States	47	Poland	2	Ecuador	1
Israel	43	Colombia	1	Malaysia	1
United Kingdom	7	Ukraine	1	Austria	1
Canada	4	Luxembourg	1	Fiji	1
Germany	4	Russia	1	Czech Republic	1
France	4	Switzerland	1	Timor-Leste	1
New Zealand	4	South Africa	1	Romania	1
Spain	3	Hungary	1	Turkey	1
Indonesia	2	Italy	1	Sweden	1
				Mexico	1



## FACEBOOK PAGE




Australian Jewish Ge...



# Australian Jewish Genealogical Society - VIC >

Public group · 647 members

 **Joined** ▼

 **Invite**

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