



AUSTRALIAN JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY (VIC) INC ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

Committee of Management

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Committee

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

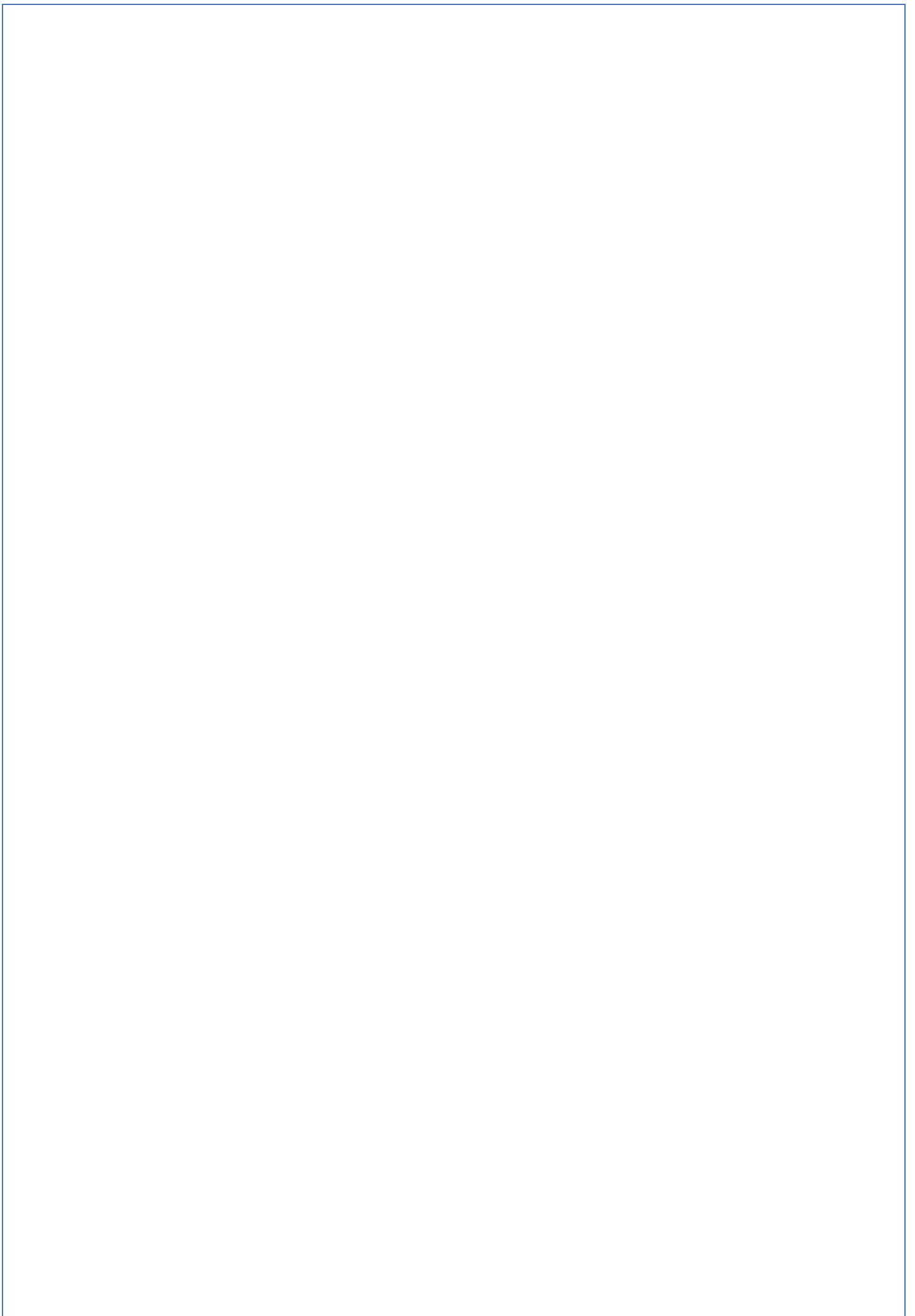
Honoured Life Members

Rodney Eisfelder
Liz James OAM
Allan Jankie

ajgsvictoria@gmail.com

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

2024 PRESIDENTS' REPORT

By Rodney Eisfelder

This has been my first year as sole president of the society, as my co-president last year, Bernie, moved into the vice-president role.

During the year we have held a balanced program of in-person talks and workshops as well as Zoom talks given by local, interstate and overseas speakers. We have had talks on methodologies, on software, on DNA research. We have had introductory talks, and social gatherings.

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.

We continue to work on various projects, although progress has slowed on some of them.

Personally, I find my greatest reward is when we are able to help someone find their family, whether it is a living cousin or a long-forgotten ancestor. We have had quite a few successes over the last year, whether it is escorting overseas visitors to the graves of their ancestors, or finding newspaper mentions that fill in a vital gap in a family tree. The fundamental point of our society is to learn from each other and to help each other find those elusive relatives.

As President, I have been blessed to have a fabulous Committee who continue to amaze and inspire with their dedication and knowledge. I am forever grateful to:

Bernie Kuran – Vice-President

Terry Ashton – Secretary

Rene Eisner – Treasurer

Allan Jankie – Past President

Liz James – Committee & Librarian

Max Wald – Committee

Heshy Adelist – Committee & Social Media

Ian Samuel – Committee

Helen Gardner – Committee

Aaron Blicblau - Committee & Webmaster

Viv Bayer – 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
President.



Rodney Eisfelder



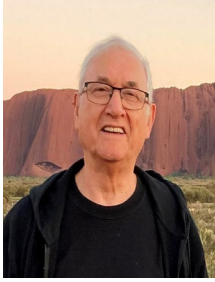
Bernie Kuran



Terry Ashton



Rene Eisner



Max Wald



Allan Jankie



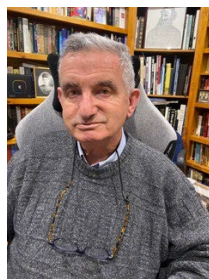
Liz James



Helen Gardner



Heshy Adelist



Ian Samuel



Aaron Blicblau



Viv Bayer

SECRETARY'S REPORT AND PRESENTATIONS 2023-2024

By Terry Ashton

The committee meetings for 2023-2024 were largely face-to-face, with meetings held on Zoom during the winter months.

During the past year our committee has provided members with a large number of presentations, with some being held on Zoom only when the speaker was from interstate or overseas.

The following is a summary of the 2023-2024 presentations.

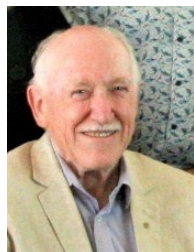
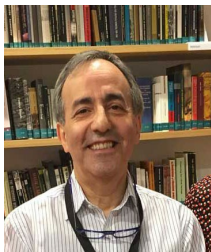
July 16th 2023 – “Beyond Vital Records”

Max Wald talked about the 1929 Polish Business Directory and Rodney Eisfelder showed a wide range of websites with searchable records beyond official birth, death and marriage records, especially address books, historical newspapers and magazines.



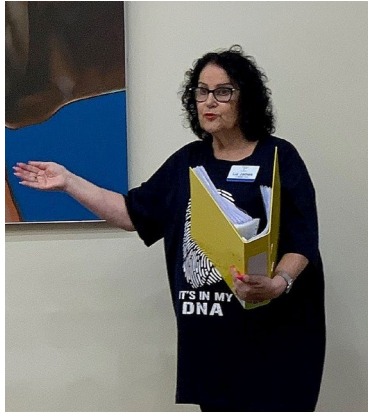
September 10th 2023- “Using Ancestry.com for Family History & an Introduction to Ancestry DNA.”

Jason Reeve, Head of Ancestry Content & Community, Australia and New Zealand presented a Zoom presentation on “Using Ancestry.com for Family History & an Introduction to Ancestry DNA.”



November 12th 2023 Lionel Sharpe Memorial Presentation

Michael Tobias, OBE BSc MSc, President of JGSGB, Board Member of JRI-Poland and Dr. Paul Gardner AM, presented a joint Zoom session, talking about how each of them contributed to finding the parents of a Kindertransport child.



February 4th 2024 - Introduction to Jewish Genealogy

AJGS (VIC), librarian and archivist, Liz James, OAM, discussed 'An Introduction to Jewish Genealogy, explaining how easy it was to find your ancestors & trace your ancestry.

Liz James



February 26th, 2024 "Ask the Family Tree Maker Expert"

An expert on Family Tree Maker, David Stephen, president of Victorian GUM Inc, discussed via Zoom the consideration of using FTM software system for ancestral trees.





The Degen-Dudakov Family Book

March 3rd 2024 - social afternoon tea

Members were invited to enjoy a social afternoon tea to chat with other like-minded genealogical enthusiasts and committee members of the AJGS (VIC). Many brought copies of their family trees or family memorabilia.

April 14th 2024 - “DNA case study: Judith Auerbach – Theresienstadt Toddler”

Michael Tobias, OBE BSc MSc, President of JGSGB and Board Member of JRI-Poland spoke via Zoom on “DNA case study: Judith Auerbach – Theresienstadt Toddler.”

May 19th 2024 – Jewish surnames, their origins and meanings

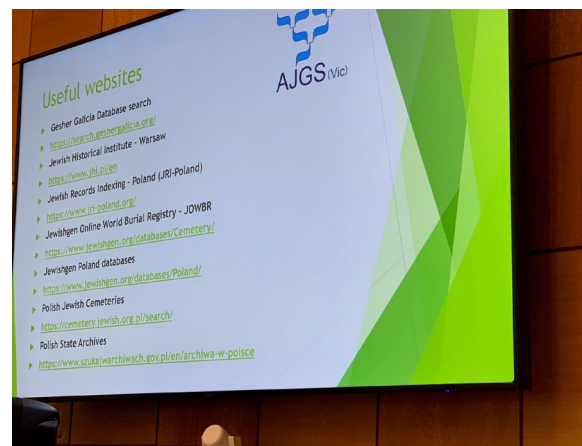
AJGS (VIC) Vice President, Bernie Kuran, spoke on Jewish surnames, their origins and meanings.

June 16th 2024 – Researching Polish Records

Max Wald & Allan Jankie discussed how to go about researching Polish records.



Max Wald & Allan Jankie



Terry Ashton, Honorary Secretary

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, 2024

Membership Fees Received	4,545.00
Meetings Income	580.00
Glen Eira bond deposit returned	1,000.00
Donations Received	<u>6,491.00</u>
Gross Income	12,616.00
<u>Less Expenses</u>	
Advertising- MDA Diary	180.00
Affiliation Fees IAJGS	98.52
Beth Weizmann (Lamm Library) Room Occupancy	3,750.00
Badges	49.00
Consumer Affairs, Registration Fee	47.70
DoJR (Documentation of Jewish Records) advance	250.00
Donations annual to JewishGen & JRI-Poland	241.36
Fees for using Square Tap and Pay	57.00
Hall Rental for Meetings	930.00
Insurance Public Liability	835.00
Lamm Library – maintenance of Library Catalogue	924.00
Printing & purchase resource books	137.70
Subscriptions to Genealogy websites	149.73
Website Maintenance & Hosting	816.75
Website Upgrade	880.00
Zoom & SMS for Meetings	<u>327.17</u>
<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	<u>9,673.93</u>
NET SURPLUS for year	2,942.07
Bank Balance at 1/7/23	<u>\$11,765.79</u>
BANK BALANCE 30th June 2024	<u>\$14,707.86</u>

TREASURER'S REPORT by Rene Eisner

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2024

Membership fees received for the financial year 2024 were \$4,545, with 124 members financial. Thank you to those members for their prompt payment of their fees.

A warm welcome to our 18 new members.

Donations totaling \$6,491 have been received. Thanks to all, for your generous support. It is amazing to know that our friends appreciate the work we do.

This year is the start of our contribution to the Lamm Library for the use of our Resource Room. Our website is now complete, **with the facility to pay memberships and donations on line.** This has been very successful.

For the financial year funds saw a net surplus of \$2,942 with a bank balance at 30th June 2024 at \$14,707.86.

Rene Eisner
Honorary Treasurer



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[Membership Renewal](#) [Donate](#)

Membership Renewal

Step 1 of 3

Name *(Required)*

First

Last

Email *(Required)*

Phone *(Required)*

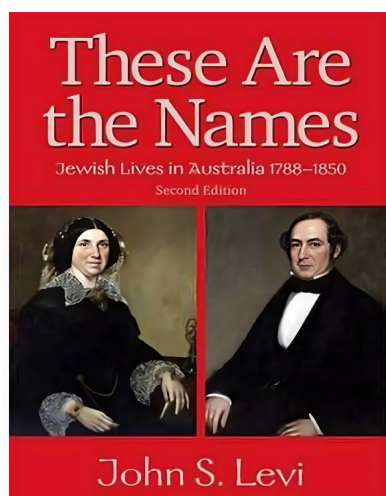
Membership Number

RESOURCE ROOM REPORT

By Liz James OAM

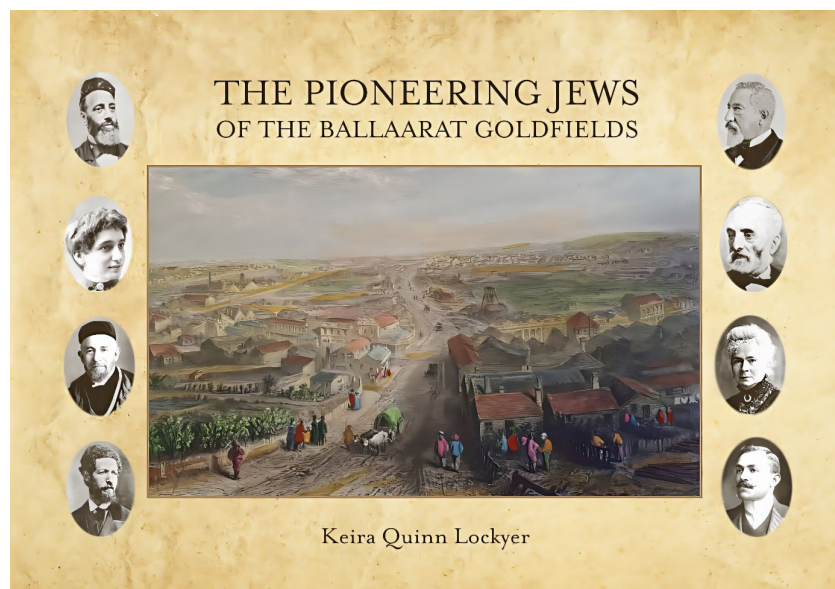
Lionel Sharpe Resource Collection

Many thanks to Trevor and Heather Cohen for generously donating to the Society so that we could remain at Beth Weizmann. Their generosity and passion for history and genealogy has been appreciated over the many years. Thank you to Susie and Rodney Eisfelder for the donation of documents and books that have been catalogued and now stored in our Resource Room.



Last month, we wished Rabbi John Levi a very happy 90th birthday. John's contribution to Australian Jewish genealogical and historical research from 1788 has been invaluable.

His books '*The Australian Genesis*,' '*These Are the Names. Jewish Lives in Australia 1788-1850*' are invaluable for their wealth of information and as an important but little recognised aspect of Australian Jewish History.



Many new books have been added to our collection this year. One book I would like to mention is "*The Pioneering Jews of the Ballarat Goldfields*" by Keira Quinn Lockyer. Another area that apart from an earlier book written about the Ballarat Synagogue in 1979, no

other work has delved into the profiles of some of the pioneering Jewish men, women and children of Jews on the Ballarat Goldfields as extensively as this.

RESOURCE ROOM REPORT (cont.)

The book includes an index to over 450 of Ballarat's Jewish pioneers and the important role they played in their lives as Jews as well as part of the wider community. Keira has generously donated the proceeds of her book (over \$2100 to date) to the Ballarat Synagogue. Her generosity and pro bono research over the last four years has been very much appreciated.

Over 150 copies have been purchased so far as well as many donated to libraries and organizations. One of our members purchased 2 copies for himself and was so impressed, he then purchased another 10 copies to donate to all of the Jewish schools in Melbourne.

Keira received many congratulatory letters from descendants, historians and Ballarat genealogical and historical societies including the following from a Jewish researcher.

"Thank you on behalf of all of those Jewish people who are mentioned in the book. You have given them a voice and my copy of your book will be treasured and admired ...the illustrations, the stories, anecdotes and lists. All of these people have come back to life through your amazing contribution, not only to the Ballarat Synagogue but to all of the Jews of Victoria".

Please email ajgsvictoria@gmail.com for an appointment to use the resource room if you wish to do research or simply browse.

Hope to see you shortly.

Liz James OAM
Librarian



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Roots Projects

We're here to assist students research their familial roots and support their insight into their genealogy.

Take a look at our available resources below:

6 Generation Ancestral Chart

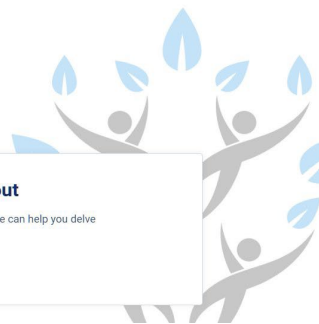
A simple, easy-view look at how to organise your family's layout over generations.

Download

Roots Projects Handout

Get an understanding of exactly how we can help you delve into your genealogy.

Download



ROOTS PROJECTS 2024

By Liz James OAM

Schools Participating -

- Mount Scopus - Year 8 - 4 sessions
- Yavneh - Year 9
- Sholom Aleichem - Grade 6
- Bialik - Year 7
- King David - Year 8
- United Jewish Education Board - Bat-mitzvah Class - various schools

Locations -

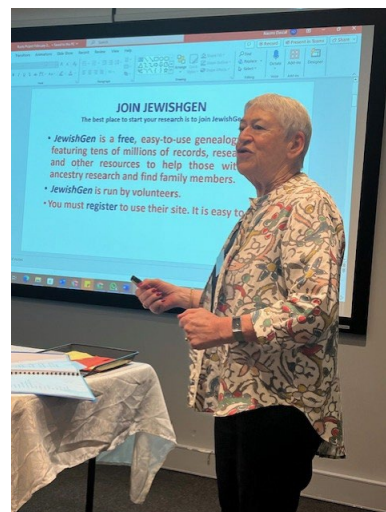
- The Jewish Museum - Yavneh, Scopus, Sholem Aleichem and UJEB
- Bialik College Campus
- King David Campus
- Evening presentations at the Jewish Museum for Scopus and Yavneh parents by Liz James.

Presentation included -



- Assortment of documents available for Roots Projects - Liz James

- Using JewishGen Databases to search for Ancestors. - Bubbles Segall



Pre-Preparation - January -

- Rene Eisner prepared email handouts and business cards.
- Bubbles Segall prepared email handouts and power point presentation on using JewishGen.
- Liz James updated Power Point presentation on finding documents, maps, photos, and the use of websites to support the data found on each family tree.

February -

- Schools emailed and then students completed their four-six generation trees to send back to the Society two weeks prior to our visit. Documents from National Archives of Australia, Melbourne Chevra Kadisha, Yad Vashem, Birth, Deaths and Marriages etc where available, were attached to the six generation trees and returned to the students on the day of our visit.

ROOTS PROJECTS (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.

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, Turkey, Brazil, Argentina, Rio De Janeiro, USSR and Ukraine. Very few documents available on the latter countries but JewishGen is now starting to include more areas for research. The Society will need to consider these countries of origin in preparation of an increased demand for documents and the ability to translate and assist these young students so that they can also begin their journey of discovering their own unique ancestry.

'One of the benefits of doing a Family Tree, is seeing history through the eyes of your ancestors'.



Liz James OAM - 2024

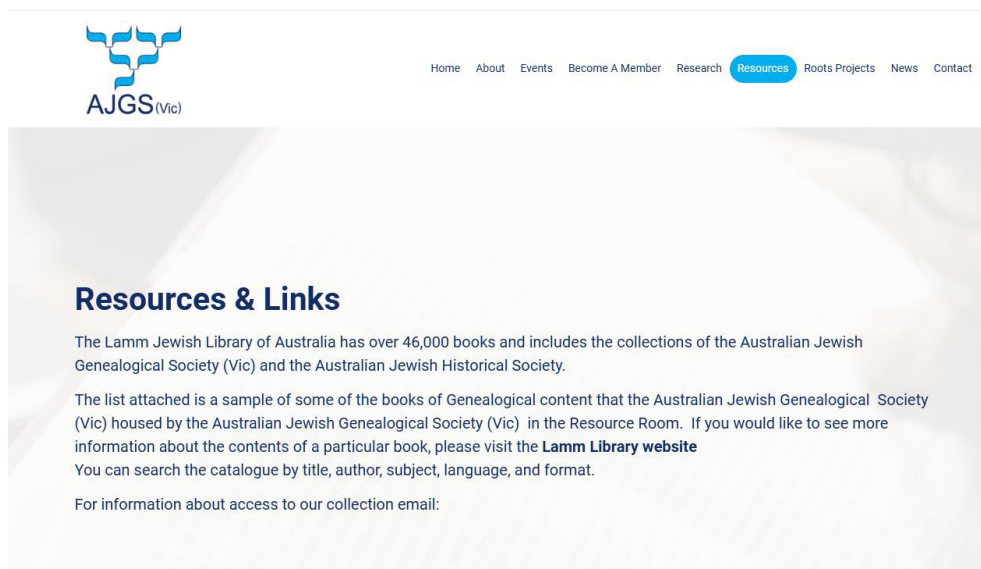
Australian Jewish Genealogical Society - Vic

Website Report 2024

by Aaron Blicblau

The AJGS-VIC website was updated to reflect current activities. There were 61 clicks on the website with over 1000 views of the front page. The website is up to date. There were no major problems with the website. All was running as expected.

Aaron Blicblau



Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) Annual Report 2024

By Helen Gardner

1. Preamble.

The Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) is dedicated to preserving Jewish memory through research which will locate and document every Jewish record across the globe.

Most organisations which have been in existence prior to the almost universal use of computers have boxes of uncatalogued archive material stowed in boxes and stored wherever they can find room for them. The local arm of the project aims to create a master list of all archival records of Melbourne's Jewish communal organisations. This initiative will catalogue these records, preserve them and thereby help create a comprehensive history of the Melbourne Jewish community.

2. **We are genealogists.** A considerable amount of time this year has been spent learning about archiving.

- We met with Frankie Pinch, archivist for Mt Scopus College, who is very supportive of the project, and willing to be “on call” for assistance.
- Sabrina Elias, archivist for the AJHS in Sydney, came to Melbourne and made a first pass at documenting B’nai B’rith’s collection of archive boxes. She then organized to supervise two interns from Charles Sturt University (Melbourne Campus) to continue more detailed work.
- We attended a series of 3 sessions on archiving, given by Dr Stefanie Halpern, head of collections, YIVO, arranged by the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilization.
- We catalogued a box of material on B’nai B’rith collected by the late Horst Eisfelder and donated by his son Rodney Eisfelder. The Eisfelder collection is now part of the B’nai B’rith archives. We also repacked B’nai B’rith’s boxes into standard archive boxes.

3. **DoJR** (renamed as the Community History Project) became a project of B’nai B’rith, in order to be part of a not-for-profit, incorporated organisation which may have the provision for DGR status, and which has offices and staff available when necessary. The local website is

<https://www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria/projects/bnai-brith-community-history-project/>

DoJR continued

4. We met with David Slucki at the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilization about ways to work together on archiving Melbourne's Jewish history.

5. Funding

- With appreciation, we record that AJGS VIC donated us \$250 seeding funding. This money has been transferred to a B'nai B'rith account set up for DoJR.
- We are investigating our eligibility for a grant from the Community Heritage Fund.

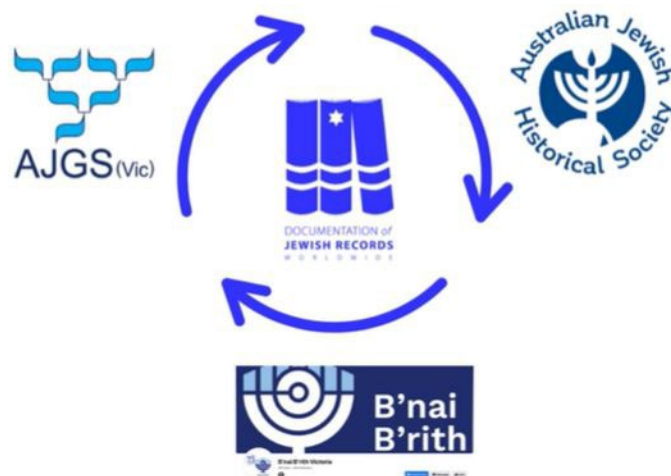
6. Cataloguing

- We have completed cataloguing Courage to Care boxes, and have been given permission to use the completed file of their archives to show other organisations the level at which we work and the kinds of information we collect.
7. Helen Stein in the US has sent a mini data base to keep track of our contacts, visits, etc.
8. We are still looking for volunteers so we can expand our work. If you are interested, please contact me at:

<https://www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria/projects/bnai-brith-community-history-project/>

Helen Gardner

Team Leader, Victorian branch, DoJR.



Facebook



Australian Jewish G...



Australian Jewish Genealogical Society - VIC >

Public group · 845 members

Joined ▾

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Events

Files

Albums

Reels