

HaMerkaz

ACT Jewish Community Magazine

December 2016 | Kislev 5777



HAPPY CHANNUKAH
sending love, light and peace



A: 31 National Circuit, Forrest ACT 2603
P: PO Box 3105, Manuka ACT 2603
T: 02 6295 1052
E: actadmin@canberrajewishcommunity.org
W: actjc.org.au

A warm welcome to the following new members of the ACT Jewish Community

Sarah Bloustein & Jens Light
Rebecca & Chris Carpenter
Michael & Susanna Elkaim
Mark Krumholz & Rebecca Anderson
Ron Levy
Eldad & Kimberly Ohayon
Dion Esterman
Kyril Estrin
Lisa Gelbart
Sarah Greenbaum
Shifra Joseph
Jessica Kliger
Victor Negrin

Alex Polson
Deena Rosalky
Rebecca Ganon
Hannah Golan Burnett
Ori Bahar
Daniel Coppel

Friends of ACTJC

Alan Cowan
Jane & Tim O'Neill

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Editor's Welcome

Shalom and welcome to the Channukah edition of HaMerkaz. We now have an editorial committee – Adele Rosalky, Simon Tatz, Merrilyn Sernack, Rob Cussel and Karen Tatz. The committee has had its first meeting and put together some ideas for the future editions of HaMerkaz.

The journal is for the Community and should reflect who we are and what we have done. It has also always been a journal of record of events and thoughts of the ACTJC, and we are lucky to have Adele assisting us in remembering what we need to include to ensure that we preserve the community's history.

We welcome contributions from groups within the community and from individuals. Please remember that, while all contributions will be considered, they must comply with the Publications Policy (available on our website with all the other policies – <https://www.actjc.org.au/policies>, and must be submitted in time for publication of an issue).

Next year there will be four quarterly issues – we will aim for February/March, May/June, August/September and November/December. If you have any ideas, thoughts, articles, comments, references, etc. please contact the committee. You can send an email to the office and they will pass it on.

Hanukkah (/ˈhɑːnəkə/ *HAH-nə-kə*; Hebrew: חֲנֻכָּה *khanuká*, Tiberian: *khanuká*, usually spelled חנוכה, pronounced [χanuˈka] in Modern Hebrew, [ˈχanukə] or [ˈχanikə] in Yiddish; a transliteration also romanized as Chanukah or Hanukah) is a Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire. Channukah is observed for eight nights and days, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar. It is also known as the **Festival of Lights** and the **Feast of Dedication**.

Chag Sameach

Karen Tatz

On behalf of the HaMerkaz Editorial Committee



The Eight Candles of Channukah

The first candle glows with a wish
for all the best things in life.

The second radiates the love that's
in your heart.

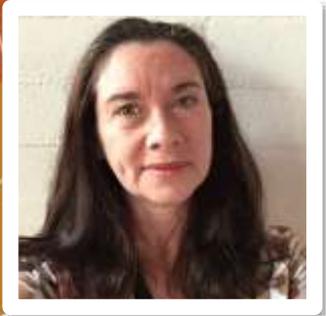
The third candle gleams with good
luck and success in all you do.

The fourth is a beam for
friendships that stay with you
forever.

The fifth candle is a ray of
closeness for family near and far,
and the sixth shines for good
health, today and every day.

The seventh candle flickers softly
for the joy found in simple
pleasures,
and the eighth a tiny beacon of
peace and happiness.

As your menorah glows with light,
may all eight days be warm and
bright with happiness.



President's Report

2016 has been a productive and vibrant year for the ACT Jewish Community. Thank you to all people who have joined us for one of our many community programs and events – and heartfelt thanks especially to those who have pitched in to help make it all happen.

Welcome also to our new and returning members of the ACTC Board for the 2017 term. The AGM on 29 November appointed the following people to our new Board:

- Yael Cass as President;
- Robert Cussel as Vice President;
- Merrilyn Sernack as Secretary;
- David Rosalky as Treasurer;
- Veronica Leydman as Assistant Secretary/Treasurer; and
- Peter Wise, Naomi Lee, Joseph Solomon and Sharon Polishuk as ordinary Board members.
- Athol Morris as ordinary Board member, co-opted 13 December 2016.

It is fabulous to have three new members of the Board who represent young families in our community. Naomi, Joseph and Sharon will bring the voice of families to our table (along with Veronica) to help us continue our focus on family-friendly programming and continuing to expand our child and teen education and engagement. I am delighted to have them on our team for the next year.

I would also like to thank David Reiner and Karen Tatz who have stepped down from the Board after the 2016 term. Both made a strong contribution to our work this year. David - as a firebrand advocate and chair of our Capital Appeal and Karen - as a key player on our Members and Events Committees, as a co-convenor of our Yom

Ha'Shoah Service and for her continuing role on the HaMerkaz editorial committee. We are lucky to have such smart and committed members who step up and contribute to our community.

The 2016 Annual Report prepared for our AGM in November is an excellent record of the work undertaken over the last year by the board and the committees and groups active in our community. It is available on our website – so please take a moment to read about what has been achieved for the Jewish community in Canberra over the last twelve months.

There are three themes which stand out in our 2016 Annual Report. The first is our focus on delivery of education programs to the ACT Jewish community over 2016.

Rabbi Meltzer and our short-term scholar in residence, Eryn London, delivered a suite of topical and engaging education courses over the last year – with nearly 120 classes held for anyone with an interest in Jewish history, philosophy, and religious commentary. This is on top of the range of seminars and talks presented by the Australian Jewish Historical Society, the Lunch 'n Lecture series and the NCJWA functions held over the year. A smorgasbord of topics was covered to suit every taste.

Our young adult program has continued to grow in numbers and strength with over 90 young adults coming together for social and educational programs. Much of the growth in our community membership base over the last year has come from this group. Congratulations to R Meltzer for his focus on our young adult cohort – a group we are very pleased to welcome into our community.

Our child and youth education program has also continued to expand and evolve over 2016 with support from our interim shlichim Liat and Kelila and, from August 2016, under the direction of our marvellous new shlichim Rotem and Raz. These young adults are mentors for our kids and have done a superb job in supporting our cheder program, the Matan Bat Mitzvah program, the Toddlers playgroup and Tots Shabbat, our teen and tween programs and in supporting our local madrichim with our pluralist youth movement. For a smallish community we certainly punch well above our weight.

Our second priority has been delivery of our 2016 Capital Appeal to rebuild and improve the facility of the National Jewish Memorial Centre. Our Special General Meeting in August 2016 provided a detailed report on the content and progress of our Capital Appeal. The key messages are:

- As part of developing the Appeal campaign we undertook a round of community consultations in early 2016 to gauge community priorities for the short to medium term. This was a very useful process which helped set our priorities for 2016 and frame our messages for the Capital Appeal;

- We have raised over \$3.4 million and remain in discussion with a range of potential donors and philanthropic organisations in Sydney and Melbourne. Our work on the Capital Appeal will continue into the New Year.
- Thank you to all members of the Canberra community who have generously supported the Capital Appeal. We appreciate your support for this important project.

Our third priority has been on strengthening governance within the ACTJC. The Board has focused on developing our governance framework and policies which govern the work of the Board and our community. Over the last year we have reviewed our Child Protection Policy, our Jewish Care Policy, and the Privacy Policy. We have put a strong emphasis on building our membership base which has continued to grow over 2016. We have formalised all employment contracts with staff, have extended the appointment of Rabbi Meltzer by a further two years and have held monthly staffing meetings and performance reviews with all staff.

Our priorities for 2017 are:

- To continue delivery of our adult and child education programs;
- To conclude the Capital Appeal and rollout the building project; and
- To continue to enhance our relationships with peak Jewish organisations such as the ECAJ, the JCA, the ZFA, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, the NCJWA, Jewish Care and the Federal Australian Jewish Ex-Servicemen's organisation (FAJEX). Each of these organisations has worked with us over the last year on projects of common interest and this shows the standing of the ACTJC nationally.

My thanks to the remarkable people on the ACTJC Board over the last year: David, Robert, Merrilyn, Yvette, Veronica, David Reiner, Peter and Karen. Thank you to R Meltzer for his unstinting energy and innovation to support our community. And thank you to our professional and committed staff - Vicki, Alice Dawson, and Alice Hekimian. Arava, Raz and Rotem - who make up the engine behind our achievements,

Wishing you all the best the New Year break and hope you return rested for another busy and successful year as a member of the ACT Jewish Community.

Yael Cass
President, ACT Jewish Community





From Rabbi Meltzer's Desk

Channukah is upon us and we are getting the latkes ready, the doughnuts are frying, and the candles are ready to shine their light forward. It is such an easy festival to engage with, because it touches on so many of our desires for the world. Peace, harmony, light, camaraderie, they're all themes of this beautiful 8-day holiday.

Summer is also here, the UV index is high, the temperatures are soaring, and for the most part we are all ready for the year to be over, work to be done, and the summer vacation to begin.

I look back at this year, and as you will see from the various reports in this edition, it has been jam-packed. But I also look forward to next year. We already have a full program in the works with our adult education programs including regular Judaic, Hebrew, and cultural classes, as well as our Kid and Youth Learning programs.

I look forward to seeing all of you involving yourselves in some way over the course of 2017.

I want to take the remaining words allocated to me to explore the idea of what it means to be part of this extraordinary community. As we leave for the summer, we will focus inwards, to our own physical needs; to relax and refresh ourselves. We might also dedicate some spiritual me time; some introspection while sitting on the beach or enjoying a holiday away Shabbat dinner.

But over the course of the next few weeks we will not necessarily be intimately connected to our community. We won't be seeing constant emails about programming and events coming from the office, nor will we be ducking in to pick up a challah or two. You won't get an invoice saying that you haven't paid your membership dues. You will be away, and that's great.

But it is important that you remember that despite your travels and holidays, we will still be here, and you are still connected to us.

This little community, full of all the heart and soul that we all love, is still here. Ready and waiting for you to return and fill our walls with your presence.

Over the past 2.5 years we have made Canberra our home and we love it. We love the places, the greenery, the attractions, but mostly we love the people. All of you are what makes us so happy to be here in the ACTJC.

Over the course of the summer I ask you, as we are all refreshing, how can we connect better. Is there something that you would like to learn, or is there something you would like to explore. Would you like to join us in our home on a more regular basis, or would you like to be able to have us join you for a coffee.

I am always available to speak and to connect with you – so please let's make 2017 the year where we enhance those relationships and bonds that makes our community so fantastic to be part of.

Have a great summer,

Rabbi Alon Meltzer

President's Kol Nidrei Appeal 11 October 2016

Last Thursday I heard a fascinating Radio National program hosted by Waleed Aly on the place of joy in a moral life. He described three main features of joy:

First is that being joyful is a communal thing – it is not a solitary activity.

Second, is that joy is dichotomous – it needs a contrast, like poignancy, delay or even pain to be real; if all is joy – then joy is nothing.

Third, joy is a function or product of other activity; it arises from being involved in an experience or being engaged in some other action – and often arises by chance and is not an object in itself.

Kol Nidrei night and Yom Kippur are clearly not about being joyful – just the opposite. This period is about reparation and reflection in order to live a better life – to be a better friend, parent or community member. It is a time for me, and all of us, to reflect on what we have done and achieved, what we still need to do or do better as a member of this community.

I derive joy from being involved in the ACT Jewish community – sometimes pain but mostly joy! Our own individual contribution is more significant because of the immediacy of being in a small community. We are not anonymous members of a larger Jewish community or congregation.

My hope for the next year is that each member of this community, but particularly our children, will feel this sense of joy and community in being part of services and functions held at this Centre. I hope that our kids will build a strong connection with being Jewish. To develop a sense of familiarity and pleasure in recognising prayers and rituals. That they see being part of a Jewish community as a joyous part of their life – and not alien or abstract.

When I was growing up, my father would spontaneously recite his favourite lines from the Haggadah or High Holy Day services. He wasn't very spiritual but he loved the poetry of texts. One of his favourite lines in the Seder Haggadah was the description of the joy when Israel went out of Egypt and the mountains skipped like rams and the hills like lambs. And, in the Yom Kippur service, he loved the description of God as a craftsman

where the Jewish people are like clay in the hands of a potter, like glass in the hands of a blower, and a curtain in the hands of an embroiderer. I think as a surgeon and carpenter of the body, as he put it, he liked the image of people being able to be crafted and fashioned to be better, more healthy, members of their community.

This is what we all want, I think, for the children in our community. That we support our children developing a sense of familiarity and connection to being Jewish, to our texts and services. So, this year for our Kol Nidrei appeal, we are asking people to make a small contribution to the work of our CaTZ Youth Movement, the Canberra T'nua Zionit youth movement – where we bring all kids together under the joint leadership of our local Madrichim and shlichim, Raz and Rotem. It is a classic Canberra pluralist movement where we have leaders from both Netzer and Hineni, and often Bnei Akiva, working together to support our children in undertaking social and educational activities relating to the history, culture and religion of being Jewish.

The whole Board appreciates that the entire community has been very generous this year – in contributing to the JCA General Appeal and to our one-off Capital Appeal – so we have set a small target of \$10,000 for the Kol Nidrei appeal. We are already extremely thankful for the fabulous contribution that many community members have made to our broader projects

– with over \$400,000 being contributed by this community alone to our Capital Appeal. We are also investing a lot of time and energy in ensuring that your commitment is matched by support from Sydney and Melbourne donors – with nearly \$3m being raised so far, including our original reserves and grants.

As part of that broader work we have been reviewing the tax-deductible status of our community funds – and, with advice from a specialist adviser who works with many national Jewish, catholic and Muslim organisations and congregations, we are

establishing a new Combined Library, Museum and Art Gallery (CLMA) fund as a single tax deductible fund to replace our previous Education Building fund. A key advantage will be that donations to this new CLMA fund can be used for our community education role and program expenses as well as capital expenses. From this year, we will have the opportunity to be flexible about the application of funds received from donations and from the JCA because the new DGR will have a broader scope which reflects the purpose and activity of this community.

The entire Board is working to ensure we have a strong and vibrant community for the future. I hope you will make a small contribution towards our Kol Nidrei appeal for our youth programs.

I wish you all the best for the fast and G'mar chatimah tovah to all.

Yael Cass
President, ACT Jewish Community

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Channukah on the Hill

On Tuesday 29 November, the second Channukah on the Hill event was held at the Mural Hall in Australian Parliament House. There were 220 people who accepted the invitation to a joint ACTJC/ECAJ Channukah event attended by a broad cross-section of MPs and Senators.

Present were Julian Leaser and Michael Danby as joint MCs; Josh Frydenberg, Mark Dreyfus, Mike Freelander, Stirling Griff, (all six Jewish MPs in our Federal Parliament); as well as Kelly O'Dwyer MP representing the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, and Tanya Plibersek MP, representing the leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten; Kevin Andrews, Mike Kelly, Tim Wilson Senator Richard Di Natale, and Malcom Roberts. Other speakers at the event were: Rabbi Alon Meltzer, Rabbi Yaakov Glasman, President of the Rabbinic Council of Australia and New Zealand, and Rabbi Shmueli Feldman from Chabad ACT. Visiting Israeli Minister, Tzachi Hanegbi was also in attendance.

As Josh Frydenberg noted on his webpage:

It was a wonderful gathering of parliamentarians, members of the ACT Jewish community and the community at large to celebrate Chanukah and the importance of light filling the darkness around the world. It was also a time to reflect on the contribution the Australian Jewish community has made to Australian society and Australian politics.

Josh said it was an honour to light a candle on the Menorah.

Delicious jam-filled doughnuts, wine and soft drink were enjoyed by all. There was a buzz of excitement when the bells rang just after 6pm for the politicians to return to duty. They managed to squeeze in a few photos before dashing off to resume their seats. The Senate passed the legislation to restore the building industry watchdog the next day.



Jewish Chaplaincy Channukah Ceremony and Drinks

On Tuesday 6 December, a small number of Community members joined the Rabbi and his family at the annual Channukah ceremony and drinks for the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services (RACS). A number of representatives from the Committee and each of the Services (Army, Navy, Air) joined together for talk, eats and candle lighting. Yael Cass provided refreshments and we enjoyed doughnuts and wine. The event was organised and sponsored by Rabbi Ralph Genende, Senior Rabbi to the ADF and RACS Member. Rabbi Genende holds the event for his fellow Chaplains each year at Channukah.

Australian War Memorial launches new display: The Holocaust: witnesses and survivors

A new permanent display titled *The Holocaust: witnesses and survivors* opened at the Australian War Memorial on Wednesday, 30 November 2016. Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the Memorial, described it as a much-needed addition to the Australian War Memorial's Second World War galleries.

The exhibition represents the Holocaust through the experiences of some of the survivors who made new lives in post-war Australia, as well as those of Australian official war artist Alan Moore, who accompanied British troops as they liberated the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany.

The exhibition has been developed by the Australian War Memorial with the support of the Jewish Holocaust Centre. It includes over 85 collections items from both institutions.

The launch was attended by members of the Australian Jewish Community including our President, Yael Cass, and members of the Rosauer family. The exhibition features works by Bernard Slawik, who was a prisoner of Janowska concentration camp at Lvov, Poland and the grandfather of Dan Rosauer, a member of our Progressive Congregation.

With its expressionist style and blunt account of death, this drawing provides a harrowing and deeply personal account of the callous and bureaucratic killing of Jews. Skulls dominate this image, signifying both the actual human remains evident in the death camps and the Death's Head symbol worn by the SS troops who administered the camps.

Merrilyn Sernack



L to R: Margaret Beadman, Abram, Cesia Goldberg and their son at the opening.



Bernard Slawik (1904-1991), Loading the freight cars to Belzec, drawn in either Janowska concentration camp, Lvov, Poland, c.1943, or Sweden, c.1946, pencil on paper, ART90348

Daughters of Auschwitz

This article continues the series on provenance of artworks on view in the National Jewish Memorial Centre.

On 9-10 November, we remembered the coordinated attack on Jews throughout the German Reich in 1938 which became known as Kristallnacht or The Night of Broken Glass. After Kristallnacht, with its organised destruction of synagogues and Jewish property, the Nazis began a round-up of German Jews, which ultimately led to the Holocaust.

The artist, Muriel Nezhnie Helfman, wove a beautiful series of Holocaust imagery from 1979-1989. The series is called Images of the Holocaust, and was inspired by her research into war images of the Second World War. She was a child of Russian Jewish parents, raised in the USA, with formal training in art. Stationed in Europe at one point in her adult life as an 'army wife', she took up tapestry and, in 1979, produced the first in the Holocaust series, Daughters of Auschwitz. The series consists of six tapestries: Daughters of Auschwitz (1978), Daughters of the Earth (1981), Ghetto Child - Strop Report (1982), Liberation (1987), Deportation (1988), and Pogrom 1989). In 1988, they were exhibited in a gallery in Chicago, along with the cartoons, the schematic line drawings placed behind the weaving surface during production.

The tapestries have hung in the University of St Louis, the city where Nezhnie's studio was set up in the basement of her home. In 2012, they were exhibited in the St Louis Holocaust Museum. Nezhnie was a pillar of the St Louis arts community until her death in 2002.

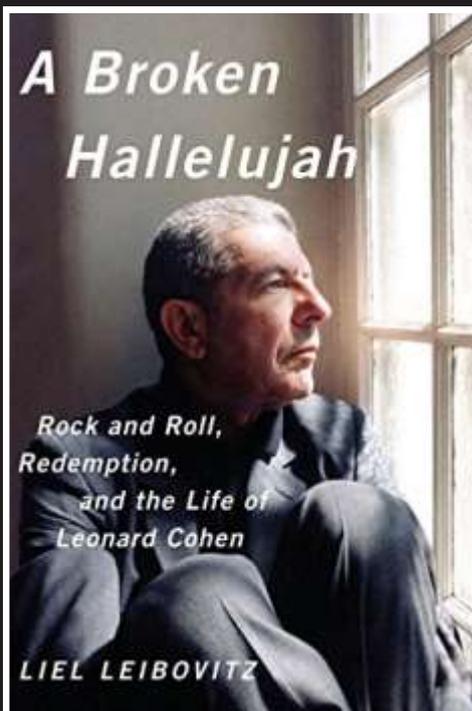
In 1984, a Holocaust exhibition was held at the National Jewish Memorial Centre in Canberra from 4-12 March, and was regarded as the most significant public event yet attempted by the Jewish Community in Canberra. Included in the exhibition were enlarged photographs of three of the tapestries created by Muriel Nezhnie. The photographs were taken by Dr Harry Rosenberg during a visit to the USA. Dr Rosenberg, who died in 1995, was a highly acclaimed biochemical scientist at the Australian National University and was a foundation member of the ACT Jewish Community, including first teacher of the community's cheder. A plaque honours his service to the community in the Orthodox synagogue.

Today, the Rosenberg photograph hangs in the foyer of the NJMC and reminds us of Kristallnacht, the Shoah, the artist Muriel Nezhnie Helfman, and the photographer, Dr Harry Rosenberg.

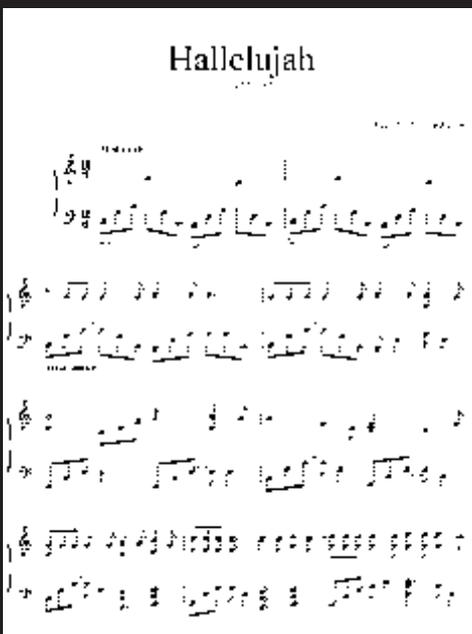
Adele Rosalky
December 2016



A Broken Hallelujah: Rock and Roll, Redemption and the Life of Leonard Cohen by Liel Leibovitz



W.W. Norton & Co. 2014. 288 Pages
ISBN: 978-0393082050



In the preface to *A Broken Hallelujah*, Liel Leibovitz's new book about the philosophical underpinnings of the work of Canadian singer/songwriter Leonard Cohen, the author bestows Cohen with the heady designation of prophet, "Millennia ago, as we began asking ourselves the same fundamental questions we still ponder, we called men like him prophets, meaning not that they could foresee the future, but that they could better understand the present by seeing one more layer of meaning to life. The title still applies."

The title was hard earned. Perhaps Leonard Cohen was born harboring an incipient need to question what meaning might lie within the seemingly uncontrollable chaos of life. It's possible that his father's untimely death jump-started a somewhat premature search for meaning in the then nine-year-old Cohen, but it's likely that it would have commenced soon enough, simply under different circumstances.

His lifelong pursuit of the big questions has found its way through many destinations, external and internal, geographical and philosophical. Traveling with him from the start were the ancient teachings of Judaism, which were joined along the way by the influence of other writers, an eventual deep commitment to Zen Buddhism, and his responses to the ever-changing culture and politics of the times.

By 1963 Cohen had already published a book of poetry and a novel. It was several years later that he made the fateful decision to put his words to music. There was something magical about that combination of his melancholy tunes and often enigmatic lyrics. His renditions of those songs have come to resonate deeply with a loyal and still developing fan base, growing to an unexpected crescendo during his seventh decade on the planet.

This is the third Leonard Cohen-related book I've been asked to review in as many years. As I sat down to read *A Broken Hallelujah*, I couldn't help but wonder if I'd find it to be no more than a rehashing of already published material. I'm delighted to report that this thought-provoking book not only stands on its own, it is absolutely outstanding and although a reader's previous interest in Leonard Cohen might add an extra layer to the reading experience, it is certainly not required.

Review by Naomi Tropp

<http://www.jewishbookcouncil.org/book/a-broken-hallelujah-rock-and-roll-redemption-and-the-life-of-leonard-cohen>

The Canberra Times

The Letters to the Editor pages of newspapers are designed to foster debate, elicit responses, present community views, and stir up controversy.

The Canberra Times, arguably one of the best newspapers in Australia considering the size of the population, certainly presents a diverse Letters section. Most of the content is on local issues, such as light rail, planning and politics; however, there are an increasing number of letters that are explicitly anti-Semitic and anti-Israel. This leads to two possible assumptions: that they reflect the views of the Canberra community, or they reflect the views of *The Canberra Times*.

There is no question that anti-Israel sentiment has risen in the Australian media, especially on social media. My concern is that mainstream media are publishing letters that are either the imagination of conspiracy theorists, or are simply so factually incorrect that they serve as misinformation and propaganda. I would like to think that the *Times* does not have an agenda or political disposition against Israel (or pro-Palestinian); which leaves the only answer that those attacking Israel are more vigorous in their campaign.

Conversely, the Jewish community responds defensively. We rarely see letters that are pro-Israel – letters defending Israel or the Jewish people are usually a response to critical comments.

Nevertheless, *The Canberra Times* has some serial offenders who get a regular run, most notably Greg Ellis of Murrumbateman. For example, on 16 May 2016, the Canberra Times printed his letter alleging that Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff had been ousted from office

[b]y the ruling elites of the West who see Rousseff's real crime has been her enthusiastic and crucial embrace of the anti-New World Order partnership of BRICS countries, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa which has proved to be an increasingly effective bulwark against the US-NATO-Israel agenda for global hegemony. Rousseff has also been a strong long time critic of Israel's treatment of the Palestinian people.

The fact is, Rouseff was impeached by her own Senate after a series of corruption allegations; and yet the *Times* found it appropriate to publish a letter which basically said the Jewish World Conspiracy was behind her removal from office. Normally, letters alleging grand conspiracies never make it to print. The problem is, this is not an isolated example.

Greg Ellis was at it again on 13 September, when he criticised the “appeal to establish a new Jewish war memorial and museum” in Canberra as inappropriate because Australia had not given “suitable recognition to the frontier wars which inflicted such a terrible toll on Indigenous Australians.” Conflating the Jewish Centre’s building program with the Frontier wars is ludicrous, so this type of comment is nothing more than a snide anti-Semitic jibe. But it is there in our local newspaper.

Ellis, and others with similar views, have had dozens of letters published, including claims that Israel is destroying Palestine, stealing land, killing children, committing war crimes, and so on.

Under the provocative heading ‘Israeli aggression’, Gwenyth Bray of Belconnen wrote:

There are hundreds of Israeli settlements, with over 800,000 Israeli

Jews, in the West Bank, built on land stolen from Palestinians, Israeli-only roads snaking through the area, check points through which Palestinians must pass to move around what is supposedly their own land and a massive separation wall, built on more stolen land, keeping farmers from their land and the population from basic services.

I have submitted letters in response, and occasionally they get published. Dr Alan Shroot and others are given space to respond, mostly with factual information and correcting the distortions and lies. But there does appear to be an imbalance when it comes to letters about Israel-Palestine.

Should the Jewish community have a policy on responding to anti-Semitic letters? Should we be writing letters highlighting the incredible inventions that are coming from Israel and note the impact a BDS would have on Canberrans if these technologies, medical breakthroughs and advances in renewables were banned? Or, would an assertive campaign like this create more of a backlash and more misleading, inflammatory and quite frankly, anti-Semitic letters from Canberra’s usual suspects?

I must add that there are many disturbingly anti-Muslim letters too. And I suspect that the Islamic community has similar conversations about how to respond to thinly disguised vilification of our religion and religious homeland.

Simon Tatz

*published in The Canberra Times
November 2016*

Pistachio Coconut Banana Upside-Down Toffee Cake

(This recipe was given to Sarit with visual measurements so she has had to estimate the precise amounts)

Ingredients for the topping:

80gm butter
200gm brown sugar
juice of 1 lemon or orange
2 tablespoons of boiling water
3/5 bananas (I usually put 4)
1 cup of pistachio or pecan nuts (or whatever nuts I have in the cupboard)

Ingredients for the cake:

250gm butter
1 cup brown sugar
4 large eggs
250ml buttermilk or sour cream
1 cup of self raising flour
1 cup almond meal
1 cup desiccated coconut
2 teaspoon ginger and cinnamon

Method:

I use a 26cm spring tin – greased and lined with baking paper

Make the topping – add all ingredients one at a time starting with the butter first, bring to the boil and simmer for approximately 10 minutes until it looks brown or caramelized.

Slice the bananas and add to the caramelised mixture and add the nuts mix well and pour into the cake tin.

Make the cake – Beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy.

Add the eggs one at a time and beat well.

Add butter milk and combine well by hand using a wooden spoon.

Mix the dry ingredients in a separate bowl then mix the wet mixture together.

Pour gently over the caramelised mixture.

Bake at 180 degrees for one hour or until it is cooked – the surface will bounce back when gently pressed in the centre.

Serve with cream.

A recipe from Sarit Cohen's grandmother



Representation of finished cake:
Courtesy: Google Images

ACT Zionist Council Report

Our new Constitution was approved at the first Annual General Meeting of the ACTZC on November 24. At that meeting, Dion Esterman was elected as the first President and Robert Cussel as Secretary. The Committee members are: Dr Anita Shroot, Dr George Rothman, Dr Jon Rosalky and our Shlichim, Raz Sofer and Rotem Dvir. New members of the ACTZC are encouraged to come forward and register. There is no membership fee. An application form is available from the office.

Ginette Searle, Executive Director of the ZFA, spoke after the AGM and brought greetings and mazal tov from ZFA President Danny Lamm. Ginette reiterated that the ZFA is not a static construct and with the input of young leaders like Dion, has much potential to grow and develop. She reminded us that the first President of the ZFA was Sir John Monash and next year will be the 90th anniversary of its founding. Next year will also be 120 years since the first Zionist Congress, 100 years since the Balfour Declaration and the advance on Beer Sheva. 2017 will be 70 years from the UN Partition Plan. Our connections with Israel are fundamental to our identity and strongly supported amongst the Jewish Australian population. However, there is still the challenge (as identified in the Gen08 study) to continue to make these connections relevant and meaningful, which involves ensuring that our engagement with Israel continues to be appealing to the

Dion Esterman: Inaugural President ACTZC

My name is Dion Esterman and I have recently been elected the Inaugural President of the ACT Zionist Council. It is my privilege to take on this significant role and I look forward to working with all of the community in actively participating and undertaking Zionist activities in the coming year.

I grew up in Melbourne, attending Leibler Yavneh College from Kindergarten all the way through to in Year 12. During this time, I was an active member of Maccabi Soccer and Basketball as well representing Australia at the Maccabiah Games in 2005. I was a regular chanich of Bnei Akiva and also won the Australian Bible Quiz, representing Australia in the World Finals in Israel.

After school, I went on Shnat with Bnei Akiva, spending my year on the MTA program at the Gush Yeshiva in Alon Shvut. Upon my return I began a double degree of Biomedical Science and Materials Engineering, little did I know it would take me 7 years to complete.

In my first four years, I continued with my soccer and took on increasingly senior roles in Bnei Akiva and the community. As well as being a Madrich, some of the positions I was elected to included Federal Merakez (President), Gizbar (Treasurer and Rosh Shnat (Head of Israel Programs), Melbourne Gizbar (Treasurer) and Rosh Tarbut (head of events), as well as Rosh Machane (Camp Director) three times. I also led on two interstate Junior carnivals with Maccabi, ran the Mount Scopus Beit Midrash program, was a Madrich on Yavneh Zionist camps and Scopus

younger generations.

The Shlichim program is essential for youth engagement and Canberra now has its new Shlichim, Rotem Dvir and Raz Sofer, to focus our attention more fully on education, children, youth and our young people. The peer to peer connection is critical and fundamental in this process. Ginette outlined a broad range of programs available, all of which are documented at our notice boards.

Ginette also referred to the need to reclaim the title "Zionism" in a positive light. Rabbi Dov Lipman, former Knesset member, spoke on this topic earlier this year in Canberra at an ACTZC event. Rabbi Lipman has affirmed that "the success of the Zionist Federation of Australia model has me convinced that all Jewish communities must re-embrace very open and unapologetic Zionism." (See <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Zionism-is-not-a-dirty-word-466102>.)

Simon Schama, historian, prolific writer and host of the television series, "The Story of the Jews", brilliantly affirms that "Zionism isn't a dirty word" and offers an interesting take on YouTube, from the point of view of a Diaspora Jew, when he praises pluralism in the Jewish community and the creative feedback that Judaism gains by being embedded in other cultures. (See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUwwx27POXQ>.)

Robert Cussel,
Secretary ACTZC



L to R: Dion Esterman, Raz Sofer, Rotem Dvir and Danny Lamm

surf camps, and regularly layned and did Mashgiach work each week.

In 2012, I moved to Maccabi to develop and recruit for a new Sports Leadership Program. In the first half of 2013, I led this program in Israel, culminating in being a Manager for the Junior delegation at the Maccabiah Games. Following that, I went to Canada for 6 months on university exchange at the University of Waterloo. I then returned to Australia to finally finish my degree and take on the position of Youth Director with Caulfield Shule, which I did for a year and a half. Bnei Akiva also asked me to be the Australian representative on the World Council, which I accepted. Finally, I took one final holiday for 4 months to South America before moving here to Canberra as a graduate with the Department of Health.

It has been a really interesting and enjoyable first year in Canberra and the community has been great. I look forward to working with the rest of the Committee of the ACTZC; Robert Cussel, Anita Shroot, George Rothman, Jon Rosalky and the slichim, Raz and Rotem; as well as the wider community in many fruitful and engaging activities.

Dion Esterman
ACT Zionist Council President

Zionist Federation of Australia Biennial Conference



Senator Mitch Fifield addresses the conference

Photo: courtesy of zfa.com.au



Media Panel at the Conference

Photo: courtesy of zfa.com.au

The Zionist Federation of Australia held their biennial on Sunday the 4th of December in Melbourne. Leading Zionist figures from all over Australia descended onto Beth Weizman for a day of discussion and debate.

In the most significant move for the ACT community, it was unanimously voted on to accept the ACT Zionist Council as an affiliate member of the ZFA. Danny Lamm spoke before the vote on the strength of the ACT community and how glad he was to finally have an established Zionist Council in the capital. He thanked Yael Cass and Robert Cussel and all of those who contributed for their hard work in getting the Council off the ground. He looks forward to a fruitful engagement with the community for many years to come.

Throughout the day, delegates heard from representatives from around Australia about the different activities that were undertaken in the previous years as well as the vision for the upcoming one. Next year is a year of anniversaries such as the 120th anniversary of the first Zionist Congress, the 100th anniversary of the Light Horse Brigade charge in Beer Sheva, the 70th anniversary of the UN Partition Plan vote, the 50th anniversary of the 6 Day War and liberation of Jerusalem and the

90th anniversary of the ZFA. We look forward to celebrating all these milestones in the coming year.

Keynote speakers at the event included Alan Hoffman, the Director General of the Jewish Agency For Israel. He spoke about the importance of the work that JAFI does and the significance of the work undertaken by Diaspora Jewry. He especially singled out Australia for our strong commitment to Israel including our extremely high Aliyah rate, our participation in Israel programs and Israel trips, our participation in partnerships with various Israel groups and the fundraising efforts in which we punch far above our weight.

Professor Andrew Markus gave a presentation on the Gen08 study that was conducted and how it compared to other Jewish communities around the world. He then introduced the follow up study, Gen17, which will see the change in our community over the last 9 years. We encourage everyone to fill this out when it is released early next year.

Senator Mitch Fifield spoke about his strong friendship with Israel and the Jewish people and how Arts and Culture can help build bridges between groups of people who may have differences. Ambassador Shmuel Ben Shmuel addressed the conference thanking them for their strong support of Israel and for the close ties that the embassy has with them all around the country. There was also an interesting debate among leading journalists Rita Panahi, James Campbell and Jamie Hyams on a range of topics including bias in the media, the controversy regarding 18C, the role of sponsored trips to Israel for politicians and journalists and the attitude of different political parties in Australia today towards the Jewish community.

Finally, there was a mezuzah giving ceremony for all those making Aliyah in the coming months. The range of people and the reasons each has decided to go truly shows the breadth and depth of the Australian Jewish community. It was a fitting backdrop to what was a significant and interesting event.

Dion Esterman



Australian Jewish Historical Society ACT Branch

The AJHS has published a new brochure which provides details of the activities of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, ACT Branch. The Society has arranged a varied program of talks and events for the next twelve months. We hope you will attend our meetings to hear our interesting and knowledgeable speakers talk about Jewish history from a local, national and international perspective. The brochure is online at: <https://www.actjc.org.au/ajhs>.

Our last meeting for this year was on Wednesday, 14 December, at 7.45pm and our speakers were: Raz Sofer (our Community shaliach) on the 'Current geo-political issues of Israel and the Arab world' and Dr Alan Cowan on his 'Impressions from his trip to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and the deletion of the memory of the Holocaust'. Both speakers delivered excellent talks which were received with acclamation by a large audience of community members.

For Your Diary:

Wednesday, 15 March

Adele Rosalky will present the Earle Hoffman Memorial Lecture in Australian Jewish History. She will give an illustrated talk on A Jewish Cultural Landscape in the Goulburn Area. This will be preceded by a short AGM.

Wednesday, 17 May

Dr Suzanne Rutland, Combatting Antisemitism in the School Playground: an Australian Case Study

Wednesday, 19 July

Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod, Jewish and Israeli Identities in Contemporary Israel

We look forward to seeing you at our events and hope that you will consider becoming a member of the Society.

For more information – please contact the Office Manager, ACT Jewish Community Centre by phone 02 6295 1052 or by email actadmin@canberrajewishcommunity.org

Victor Isaacs
President, AJHS



The ACTJC ReachOut is a new program encouraging members to look out for each other. We want to establish a group of people who are prepared to help other members within our community. Its really just looking out for each other as good friends do.

As a ReachOut friend you could help by picking up a fellow member when going to a function or social occasion, collecting some shopping occasionally or catching up for a cup of coffee during the week.

We would like to involve community members and possibly non-members to ensure its success. It is important that we hear from members who are willing to share ideas and contribute in any way.

At our initial meeting we had a good response and we discussed the following initiatives: Companionship, visits, transportation, domestic help (gardening, shopping), all of which may be provided by our volunteers.

Please contact Arava if you would like to participate in volunteering or if you need assistance.





Grumps R Us is Ten Years Old!

Grumps is 10 (Tin / Aluminium)

Early in November, Grumps held a luncheon to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the first meeting in 2006.

Grumps was one of the initiatives of Professor Ben Selinger in our Community. He at one stage described it as an iteration of his "Beyond the Pale", from earlier years; but with a different selection criteria. Male, retired, opinions on most things.....

We started with 12 on the first day. We soon agreed to meet every Thursday instead of fortnightly; easier to not forget. We now generally have at least enough attendees for two minyanim each week.

Most of the first 12 were able to be present for the Anniversary. Ben was to read his history of the Group but at the last moment was not able to join us. Rumour has it that he has started a not dissimilar group where he now is, in Sydney. Tom F volunteered to read his words. Tom Blumenthal was very gracious in his words, as was Len Leitch, who was not present but whose contribution was read for him.

Bill Arnold

Grumps Ten Year Anniversary

As a ten year old, Grumps (nicknamed "G") has left childhood and was showing a greater understanding of the world as it is. He despairs at the antics of the community that surrounds him but accepts he can't influence it very much anymore because

screaming blue murder is no longer effective in attracting attention.

G looks forward to his barmitzvah in three years' time where hopefully his Zadek (currently with a fallen woman in Sydney) will be able to make it.

G was welcome at birth as the family had all recently retired and needed an activity that would keep them occupied and amused and encourage to get together to correct the world's problems. G was fed on John Remmel's magnificent Apfel Strudels and was apprenticed to J's handyman class and both contributed to developing great table tennis skills. He almost matched the game skills of his grandad Peter W.

G's success at playing the stock market came from watching Uncle Vernon on his mobile and everyone else yelling "sell". He inferred that the vital info came from Uncle V's reading the Jewish News at the same time.

The Bill and Raffi's super-intellectual drachas on matters spiritual and temporal were mind shattering, but with therapy, G did eventually recover.

G's family had grown so large that it now dwarfed the two Minyan families in the village and this was a great source of pride, particularly in Uncle Tom's cabin.

G's older cousin "Beyond the Pale" had left home many moons ago and was now just a distant memory. His had been a more difficult birth because he initially rejected his parents' entreaties to be more family orientated as he preferred to play with his own friends outside. However, this mellowed with time.

Uncle Mervyn had his revenge when it came to Sunday school classes that M had deemed were not meant to be fun.

So G is looking forward for the current home extension plans



becoming a reality and has offered to make and sell latkas to help with the mortgage repayments until the tooth fairy pays out big time to the aging, increasingly toothless family.

Cheers and Lotsa fun

Ben Selinger

What is so Special about Grumps ?

What is so special about Grumps? is the question I often ask myself. Usually, when you decide to join a club, association or any organized gathering it is because there is a common link between you and the group. You could appreciate music, collect stamps, play sport, exercise in the gym or watch birds – together with members you decided to associate with. When you join you must obey the rules, regulations, pay membership fees, attend AGM's, elect the committee, etc, etc. Most of the time you enjoy the company of your fellow members, but at other times you are frustrated because of politics, jealousies or back stabbings. In some cases you feel inadequate in comparison with other members and it can cause discomfort. Sometimes you feel the majority of the members are stupid fools and it is not worth for you to be there.

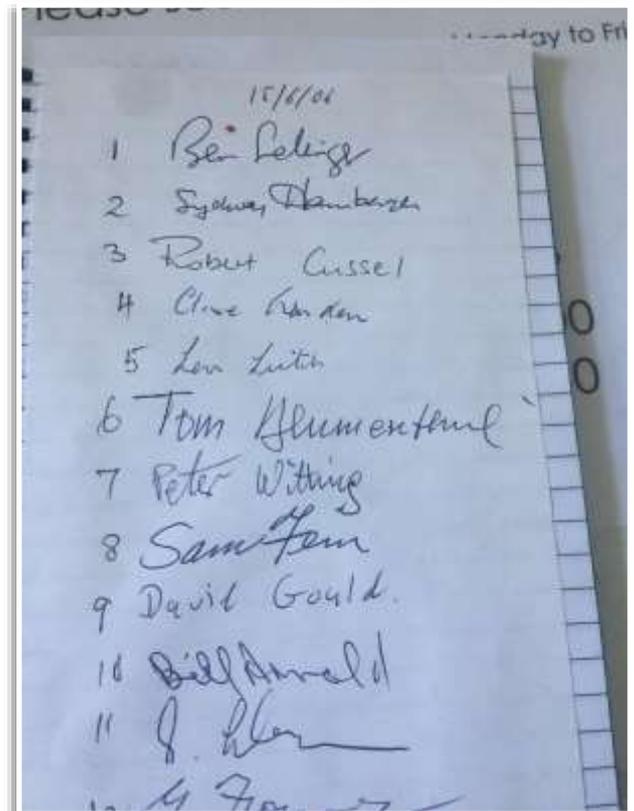
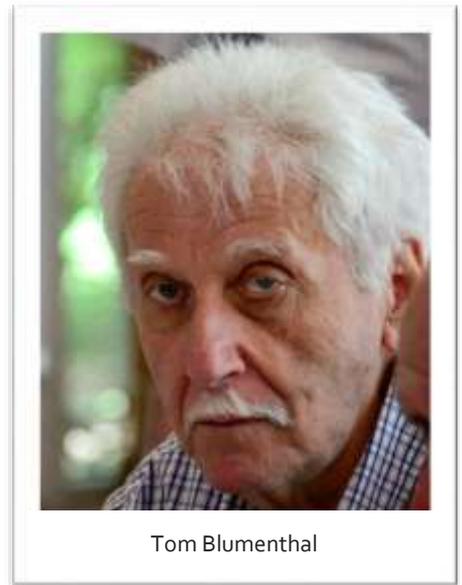
Dear fellow Grumps!

Aren't we lucky that we belong to a group where the above does not apply? At least not for me. Ten years ago, when I joined the Grumps I was a newcomer to Canberra and I hardly knew anybody. During these ten years I never felt uncomfortable among our fellow members and I must admit every week I am looking forward to our weekly meetings. Every week I milk my imaginary cow, so some of my fellow grumps could whiten their strong brew of coffee. During those ten years I developed friendships, healthy rivalries in table tennis and also experienced lots of enjoyments from the debates and discussions. The range of topics in these debates is wide, sometimes serious, sometimes funny or even crazy, but always entertaining. We have evolved from a group of twelve founding members to a solid base of at least 25. I bet that at our beginnings no one envisaged the future success.

My message to all of you is. BE PROUD WHO WE ARE; ENJOY OUR GATHERINGS AND PARTICIPATE AS MUCH AS YOU ARE ABLE. We are all equal, we are all responsible for the continuation and success of our group.

LONG LIVE MIGHTY GRUMPS !!!

Tom Blumenthal



10th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Grumps

I am really sorry that I couldn't be here at this gathering for the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the Grumps and the visit of its founder and early driving force, Ben Selinger. Because it's not often that social groups, which can easily be formed, manage to find the glue to hold together and endure for such a significant period.

I realise that Grumps has been a most important part of my social life. It has provided a regular event where I am guaranteed to meet with friends of long standing, people I like, of like interests, dealing with issues I consider important, almost always in a friendly and reasonable way.

It has involved me in the affairs of our Jewish Community and helped me keep informed about developments I would otherwise have been unaware of, especially in these days of big, exciting plans for our buildings and all the services we look forward to being involved with over the future years.

It has also been an organisation wherein our membership can keep abreast of the activities of individuals in our Community, in their achievements, travels, illnesses (for instance, when my prostate swells I know who is by far the most well-known practitioner in the field to deal with it but, as yet, no members' discounts have been negotiated with him). As we get further into our senior years, this bond has become precious to me and is one of the real satisfactions of my life in Canberra.

Yet another, marvelous dimension to the Grumps activities has been the group purchase of our table-tennis table. This has provided in some cases the only sporting physical activity some of us are in a position to enjoy. It's not often that players can get together for what is a competitive game and yet keep the atmosphere pleasant and enjoyable, where everyone can find himself on a winning team, where there is much noise and laughter, and yet a different way to communicate than around a discussion table.

Ben realised the need for such a group as ours, and indeed its origins emerged out of facts such as that men usually did not organise their social lives as well as women did, often being more solitary while the women around them organised their social lives for them. A male group seemed to meet the need, but would it hold?

We were all so hesitant at the beginning. There were around 10 people at the first few meetings, which were going to be held monthly; would this hold? would a group without a committee, meetings without an agenda, no funds to account for, possibly have powers of endurance?

Well, we launched, and wonderfully, everything gelled. The format worked and such was the need for The Grumps that, before long, it had settled down to a weekly gathering.

I think that it was an initial success because of the relaxed, unofficial leadership of Ben



Tom Frommer

whose manner enabled the early gatherings to be inspired by whatever topic was of current interest to the local Jewish Community. We were fortunate that there were some, including Ben, who were on the ACTJC Board at the time and brought matters of interest to many who would never have been so close to those who ran the Community and made the management decisions. In fact, for a time we began to imagine that we were some kind of ginger group whose opinions had to be listened to. It was certainly true that we became one of the most well-supported branches of the Jewish Community, numerically. I believe that our board was proud of the success of our seniors group and this news travelled around other Communities as a model for them to try to emulate.

We have been fortunate to have in our membership over the past decade, a most interesting mix of talents and experience. Such a range of expertise and achievement personified has meant that we have had interesting participants who knew what they were talking about. Whether it was on science, the law, religion, politics, history, there have been those who could lead a discussion. We have invited speakers from within our midst or from outside to enlighten us on special topics of current interest and always provided a fair hearing and interesting debate. On many occasions, I have gone home inspired by the conversations, at some times feeling privileged to know that I was able to benefit from such intimate and insider knowledge.

My gratitude to the originator, founding members and friends, for the pleasure of belonging to the Grumps. It has filled these recent years with interest, pleasure and companionship and has enriched my life. Grumps seems such a dowdy title, self-deprecating, mean. In fact, the gathering continues to stimulate and I look forward to sharing many more years in the company of you all.

Len Leitch (in absentia)



Bob Miller



Ben Selinger and his wife, Veronica.
Photo: courtesy of Google Images

Kol Nidrei 5777 - What Have We Done?

אהבנו,
בכינו,
גמלנו,
דברנו יפי.

Ahavnu – We have loved,
Bakhinu – we have cried,
Gamalnu – we have given back,
Dibarnu yofi – we have spoken great things!

האמנו,
והשתדלנו,
זכרנו,
חבקנו,
טעמנו ספר.

He'emanu – We have believed,
v'Hish'tadalu – and we tried to give our best effort,
Zakharnu – we have remembered,
Dibaknu – we have embraced,
Ta'amnu Sefer – we have chanted Your book!

יצרנו,
קמחנו,
לחמנו עבור הצדק,
מצינו את הטוב.

Yatsarnu – We have created,
Kamahanu – we have yearned,
LaDammu avur ha-tzedek – we have fought for justice!
Mitsinu et ha-tov – We have exhausted all the good we could do.

נסינו,
סרנו לראות,
עשינו אשר צויתנו.

Nisininu – We have tried,
Sarnu lirot – we have turned aside to see,
Asinu asher tzivitanu – we have done as You have commanded us!

פרשנו,
צדקנו לפעמים,
קראנו בשמך.

Peirashnu – We have expounded Torah,
Tsadaknu lifamim – we have been righteous, sometimes,
Karanu b'shimkha – we have called out in Your Name!

רצינו,
שמחנו,
תמכנו.

Ratzinu – We have been steadfast in our will,
Sama nu – we have rejoiced,
Tama nu – we have supported one another.

Friends, in a moment, and 9 times over the next 25 hours, we will recite the vidui, the confession, where we will offer up to the Almighty the guilt laden expressions of our mortal failings. We will examine the wrongdoings of the past year, we will come red-faced with regret as we have let some opportunities slip through our fingers, and others which have taken hold of our bodies and souls for the negative.

There is nothing wrong with spending a day examining our failings, it is healthy, it is transformative, its healing. Yet, on a day where we look at our flaws, let us take a moment to examine our successes.

This prayer, offered by Rabbi Binyamin Holtzman, allows us a chance to express aloud our successes alongside our failings.

Friends, in the words of Kol Nidrei,

From the previous Day of Atonement until this Day of Atonement and from this Day of Atonement until the [next] Day of Atonement that will come for our benefit.

מיום כפורים שעבר עד יום כפורים זה, ומיום כפורים זה עד יום כפורים הבא עלינו לטובה

Another year has come and gone. Another year full of blessings and trials, opportunities and missed moments, successes and failings. Here is our opportunity to look back, take stock, and ensure that we can only improve in this new year.

Tonight I would like to focus on three of these beautiful statements *He'emanu* – We have believed, *Yatsarnu* – We have created, *Tamaanu* – we have supported one another.

He'emanu – We have believed

This has been the year of big dreams. This has been the year where we have put it all on the line, to ensure that we are well beyond the line in the future.

Tomorrow, towards the end of Mussaf, we will sing one of the most joyous songs of the annual liturgy. Mareh Cohen.

Verily, how glorious was the appearance of the high priest, when he came forth safe from the holy sanctuary, without any evil occurrence.

אָמַת מֵה נִהְדָר הָיָה לְהַגִּיד
בְּצֵאתוֹ מִבֵּית קֹדֶשׁ יְהוָה
בְּשָׁלוֹם בְּלִי פֶגַע

I know it's hard to believe, but go back to the times of the Temples, and Yom Kippur was the most joyous of all days. All morning long there would be the long and complex process of sacrifices. It was a one-man show, the Kohen Gadol doing all the work, and the nation standing in the courtyard. The moment that the Kohen Gadol would exit the Holy of Holies a revelry like no other would break loose.

The Mishnah in the tractate of Taanit, 4:8

R. Simeon ben Gamaliel said, "Never were more joyous festivals in Israel than the fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur, for on them the maidens of Jerusalem used to go out dressed in white garments—borrowed ones, in order not to cause shame to those who had them not of their own;—these clothes were also to be previously immersed, and thus they went out and danced in the vineyards,

אמר רבן שמעון בן גמליאל לא היו ימים טובים לישראל. כחמשה עשר באב. וכיום הכפורים. שבהן בנות ירושלים יוצאות בכלי לבן שאולין. שלא לבייש את מי שאין לו. כל הכלים טעונין טבילה. ובנות ירושלים יוצאות וחולות בכרמים.

The women of the Jewish people would go out into the vineyards, in borrowed clothes, and they would dance – with a goal forming bonds of friendship, and partnerships for marriage with the onlooking men.

It was a day of celebration and in earnest, today should be a moment where we can also celebrate.

But that celebration came because of one thing. It came because of the faith, the belief, that we have in ourselves, and in the Almighty. We believed that our good deeds outweighed the bad, we sent the Kohen Gadol into the holy of holies, where he would advocate on our behalf for forgiveness, believing that we would be successful, and when he exits unscathed, we were vindicated because of that belief. It was a gamble sending the Kohen Gadol in, surely if the nation wanted, they could just refuse, live without belief in punishment and reward, they don't need to take the risk.

Yet they believe through and through, they take the gamble, and they come out winning.

"Never were more joyous festivals in Israel than the fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur"

לא היו ימים טובים לישראל. כחמשה עשר באב. וכיום הכפורים

Friends, this has been a year where we have believed. This has been a year where we have gambled it all, and friends, that belief has paid off.

Look at our successes. We have strengthened our adult education program, we have grown our regular classes, we have expanded our offerings, we have broadened the scope of what we do, to ensure that we can provide space for the wider demographics of our community. We have been fortunate to learn from numerous different voices and we have been extremely lucky to engage at length with Eryn London. We have restructured our youth education program; we are seeing more kids across the age ranges, we are providing for more interests, and we are only growing. We have our amazing Shlichim, Raz and Rotem, who have already impacted so many of our kids, teens, young adults, and so many of us. We have proven to the wider community that we are here, we are growing, and we are a model that can and should be replicated. We have showcased our community with Limmud Shavuot, with our engagement in advocacy, and with our fledging youth movement.

Our Capital Campaign is a whole different ball game, this has been the year of strong belief that we have what it takes to build something that is greater than just us, that we have the ability to enhance the very image of our national community, and that we as a strong, growing and vibrant community are the rightful custodians of that legacy.

Friends, this has been a year of successes because we have believed. Yes, we have much work to do, we have much more to believe in, we have to take these dreams, these hatchlings of plans, and we need to concrete them so that they remain a fixture of our community. But this is a year of success because of our strong beliefs that while we are smaller in numbers, we are wholly capable of punching far above our weight.

May this be a year of continued belief, where we set new goals, and soar to new heights.

Yatsarnu – We have created

This has been a year of creating. This has been a year where well laid plans many years in the making have come to fruition. It has been the year where the visions of our founders, past boards, past presidents, and past members, have been made real.

Yom Kippur is the moment that we create our case, beseeching the Almighty, to weigh the heavenly scales in our favour.

On the Second day of Rosh Hashanah, our Scholar in Residence spoke about the importance of taking a moment in prayer to compose our thoughts and utilize our words.

One of the recurring prayers of Yom Kippur is called Chamol al Maasecha, it's found in each of the repetitions of the Amidah.

Have mercy on those You have made, take joy in those You made, and those who shelter in You will say, as You absolve the ones You bear, "Be Sanctified, Lord, through all that You have made"

הַמּוֹל עַל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְתִשְׁמַח בְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ, וְיֵאמְרוּ לְךָ חוֹסֵיךָ, בְּצַדִּיקְךָ עֲמוּסֵיךָ, תִּקְדָּשׁ אֲדוֹן עַל כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ. כִּי מְקִדִּישֶׁיךָ בְּקִדְשֶׁתְּךָ קִדְשָׁתָּ. גָּאֵה לְקִדּוֹשׁ פֶּאֶר מְקִדּוּשִׁים

For with Your Holiness You sanctify all who affirm You holy. It is fitting that the Holy One be glorified by holy ones.

We ask God to have mercy on those that he made, to have joy in those whom he made.

The Torah tells us in Bereshit 1:27

And God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

וַיְבָרָא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַלְמֵ אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתָם: אִתּוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:

God has the responsibility on this most awesome day, to remember us, envelop us, protect us, and rejoice because of us, by virtue of the fact that He made us.

Being a parent reminds me of this responsibility each and every day. My beautiful daughters, Daliah, Ella and Meirah, are not only our biological products, but they are the products of our nurturing, of our love, our care, or attention.

When we are highly invested in our creations, we are not always able to see their flaws, to see their successes, to see their growth and their development. When we are in the act of creating, we don't always see the huge improvements and gains that we have made.

Friends look back tonight, and over this Yom ha Kippurim, this day of reckoning, and see the trajectory of this community.

Look back 65 years ago, to the founders of this community who came together to establish a Jewish presence in the nation's capital. Look back 50 years ago to the first Capital Campaign to raise money to build this building. Look at the growth of a community that saw this building as the limits of its needs for its occupants. Look at the growth of our membership, where we have added 5 new families and 12 young adults this past year. Look at the strength and diversity of our congregations. Look at the family that has been created who cares for one another, who devotes themselves to one another, and who raises up one another.

Look through this past year, and see the creation stories we have. See the Bar and Bat Mitzvah's we have celebrated, the births we have celebrated. These acts of creation that define our life cycle. These are the acts of creation that enhance our future. Look at the culture we have created, where we have an academic integrity and vibrancy that surpasses most communities in this country, where we have coexistence not successfully heard of anywhere else in the world, a culture where we are able to push one another, debate with one another, engage with one another, and still befriend one another. We have created a place of true beauty, of holiness, and of purity. It's an act of creation that has been 65 years in the making, one that has been worked on by many different hands, through many different eras. Some still here, some passed, others moved away, but a place that has been created on strong foundations, with high reaching arches.

Friends, we have more to create, but we can proudly look on what we have crafted, and we can take immense pleasure and pride in this creation.

May this be a year of continued creation, where we imbue Godliness into the world, and where we shine forth as a strong community.

Tamañnu – we have supported one another

This has been a year of supporting one another. Years of high productivity, of completion of goals, of vibrant growth, they take their toll. It means more hours of dedicated work, it means more people are involved in different areas, and it means more support is needed.

At the end of each Mussaf on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we open the Ark behind me, and recite the following prayer, with variations, but with a single thematic.

This day may you strengthen us. Amen

Hayom t'amtzeinu. Amen

This day, may you bless us. Amen

Hayom t'varcheinu. Amen

This day, may you give us greatness. Amen

Hayom t'gadleinu. Amen

This day, may you deal with us kindly. Amen

Hayom t'drsheinu l'tova. Amen

This day, may you hear our cry. Amen

Hayom t'shma shavateinu. Amen

This day, may you accept our prayers compassionately and willingly. Amen

Hayom t'kabel b'rachamim u'vratzon et tefilateinu. Amen

This day, may you support us with your hand of righteousness. Amen

Hayom t'smicheinu b'yimin tzidkecha. Amen

The final moment, of the pivotal Mussaf prayers, we request of the Almighty to support us. It's a common refrain through all our prayers, this is the God who heals the sick, who remembers those in the dust, who gives life, and gives hope, this is the all supporting, all comforting God, and we are commanded to mirror the Almighty.

There are multiple mitzvot given in the Torah that are specific to supporting those in their time of need. Mitzvot of charity, of visiting the sick, of feeding guests, of showing up to shul each week. Ok, so that one's not written in the Torah, but its most definitely a mitzvah. One mitzvah that we are commanded is that of burying the dead.

This year we lost an amazing member, Walter Blumenfeld, he was the first and only person within our community, a member of this community, that passed away during my tenure. I have buried two beautiful souls here in Canberra, but Wally cuts me the deepest.

Walter was so deeply committed to everyone and anyone around him as his children, friends and colleagues related at his funeral and memorial service. To bury him was deeply heartbreaking, but also very comforting, as the multitudes of people who he had supported came out to support Helen and his children in turn.

This is the key of what being part of a community is about. We support those in need, and in turn, those very people whom we supported, come and support us in our time of need.

This support is needed in times of sorrow and grief, and in times of joy and happiness.

Friends, over the past year I have seen this community support so deeply and committedly. I have seen financial support come towards our capital campaign, our educational campaign with our JCA telethon, and with our Gemach fund, to help those in need. I have seen families bake and cook for new and expectant mothers, I have seen families break bread with new arrivals to our bush capital. I have seen members cry over those who are unwell, and I have seen members laugh in joy over those who are celebrating.

This is what community is all about.

We can always push ourselves to support more, we can always look over our shoulders, and see who needs help.

There is a beautiful anecdote of a young woman in severe trauma. She unfortunately dies, and goes towards the pearly gates. As she arrives, she is seated in a comfortable chair in front of a screen, and she begins to watch the story of her life played out through footprints in the sand. Her life starts with so many footprints, her friends, family, parents, siblings, as she goes through school these prints swell and decrease depending on the ebbs and flows of school friendships, she sees multiple prints throughout her life, until she nears the end of the recording. Here she sees solitary footprints, they must be her own as she deals with horrible trauma. God comes and sits down next to her, and she begins crying, screaming, yelling at God. How could you leave me all alone, when no one else was around me, when I was suffering such immense pain, how could you leave me alone.

God cries, he sheds a tear, and says my dear one, my child, you were not alone. You were going through such immense pain, such tragedy, such a void of joy, that I did what any parent would do, and I picked you up.

We will not always be able to make a visible difference in our supporting one another, we might not realise what that hug, that fresh chicken soup, that offer of child minding, that drive to the doctor might mean. For some it might mean very little, for others it might mean the entire world.

We must always push ourselves to do more in supporting one another, but at the same time, we must look at the amazing support that we do give to one another, and we must be very proud of those achievements.

May this be a year where we are not only supported, but also supportive.

Conclusion

Dear friends, on this Kol Nidrei night we look at our achievements. We look at all that we have believed in, we look at all that we have created, and we look at all that we have supported. We do not do this vainly, in a manner that pedestals us into thinking we are far worthier than our true value.

We do it because on a day where we look at the negativity we have dealt out or dealt with, when that negativity can make us reflect and jade our year gone by, we must also remember that we are a mix of good.

Tonight, and tomorrow, we stand on the praecipes, hanging in the balance between good deeds and bad ones, and we recall all that we have done to show the Almighty, to prove to him, that we are worth keeping around.

Friends, we have a lot to strike our breast for, we have a lot to atone for, but at the same time, we have so much depth, so much love, so much care for one another, and we are reaping the fruits of that very hard and very dedicated work.

May this be a year where we utilise our strengths and good characteristics, so that we can enhance our sphere of influence on this world, and so that when next year comes around, we might not need to atone for as much as we do today.

Rabbi Alon Meltzer

No Fat Fruit Cake

Edith Blumenthal
(an original recipe)

(no eggs, milk, butter or sugar)

Ingredients:

375 gr mixed dried fruit
250 ml apricot nectar
1 teaspoon honey
1 cup cooked mashed pumpkin
1 1/2 cups SR flour
1 teaspoon mixed spice
1 teaspoon bicarb soda

Method:

Sift flour, spice & soda ingredients together
Combine fruit, nectar and honey in a medium saucepan and bring to boil.
Reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 3 minute.
Allow to cool and stir in remaining ingredients.
Spread mixture into paper-lined tin (20 cm).
Bake in moderate oven (180 deg) for app 1 hour.



Bread Maker Challah

Ingredients:

Dough

1 cup warm water
1/2 cup white sugar
1 tablespoon honey
1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 1/2 teaspoons salt
2 eggs, room temperature
4 cups bread flour
2 1/4 teaspoons bread machine yeast

Glaze

1 egg, whisked
1 tablespoon water

Directions:

Dough:

Place warm water, sugar, honey, vegetable oil, salt, 2 eggs, flour and yeast in the pan of the bread machine in the order recommended by the manufacturer. Select Dough cycle; press Start.

After the machine is done, remove the dough, and place it on a very lightly floured board. Punch the dough down, then let it rest for 5 minutes.

Divide the dough in half, then divide each into 3 equal pieces. Roll pieces into ropes 30-35cm long, and braid into a loaf. Do the same with the remaining dough.

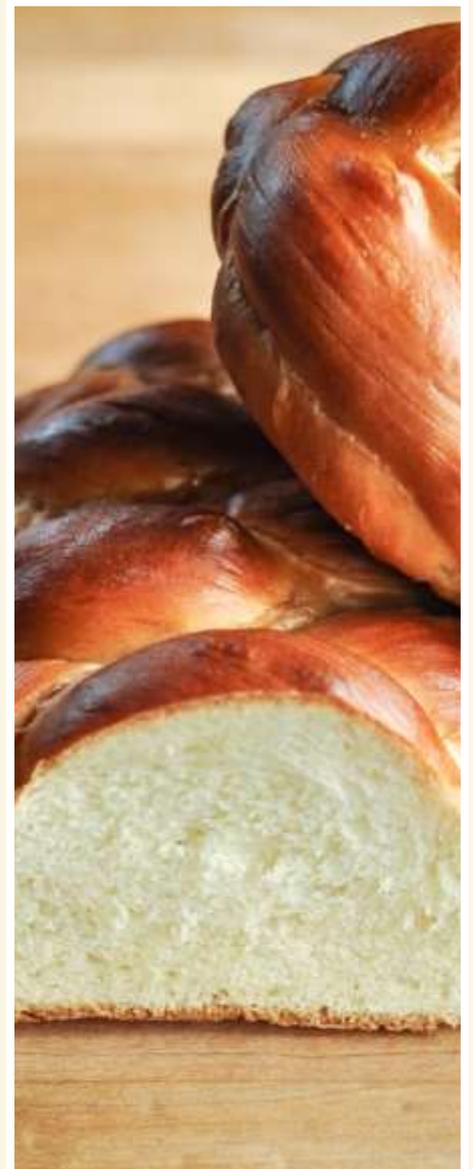
Place the loaves on a greased baking tray, mist with water, cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let rise for 1 to 1 1/2 hours in a warm, draught-free place, until double in size.

Preheat oven to 180 degrees C.

Glaze:

In a small bowl, beat together 1 egg and 1 tablespoon water.

Brush risen loaves with egg mixture and bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until golden brown. If it begins to brown too soon, cover with foil.



Science and Religion:

Based upon a Droscha for Rosh Hashanah (Progressive Congregation)

Genesis states: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. Atheists seek to discredit this and any notion of God and Creation, while Creationists reject evolution and assert the literal truth of the bible. Can we read the bible in a meaningful sense and at the same time accept the accumulated body of scientific learning collected over the centuries? Albert Einstein wrote: “*Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.*” What he actually meant is subject to argument¹ and Rabbi Jonathan Sacks² states: “**Science takes things apart to see how they work. Religion puts things together to see what they mean.**” **How are we to reconcile what is stated in Genesis with what we learn from science?**

Perhaps we can start with our eternal questioning over the ages as the source of all our investigating and wondering. It is our questioning nature that underlies all our endeavours to explain our existence, whether this be in the form of scientific investigation, a biblical narrative or an origin story. Can we both accept the science of evolution and a deeper meaning explained or pointed to in Genesis?

Professor of History at the Hebrew University, Yuval Noah Harari, writes that science can now date the age of the universe at over 13.5 billion years and the beginnings of life on Earth at 3.8 billion years ago. Harari asks why is there only one homo sapiens species now, yet 70,000 years ago there were several different types of humans. Where happened to our lost relatives such as Homo erectus (East Asia), Homo rudolphensis (East Africa), Homo neanderthalensis (Europe and west Asia)? The problem might be that we had a hand in their demise and with that the story of Cain and Abel has special significance.

What is so special about us or what do we have that other humans did not have? Harari holds that, 70,000 years ago, the cognitive revolution (or what Julian

Huxley called psycho-social evolution) began, in which the key factor was our enormously complex brains. Neuroscience is shedding light on this amazing organ between our ears, which evolved possibly due to mutation and resulted in the development of billions of brain cells that interconnect and give us the power to control our environment. It gave us the ability to think, plan, communicate and, perhaps most importantly, the ability to develop spoken and written language. We evolved to live in tribes and cooperate and master our environment.

By 10,000 years ago, we were the only humans left. We had triumphed. Our ability to communicate and

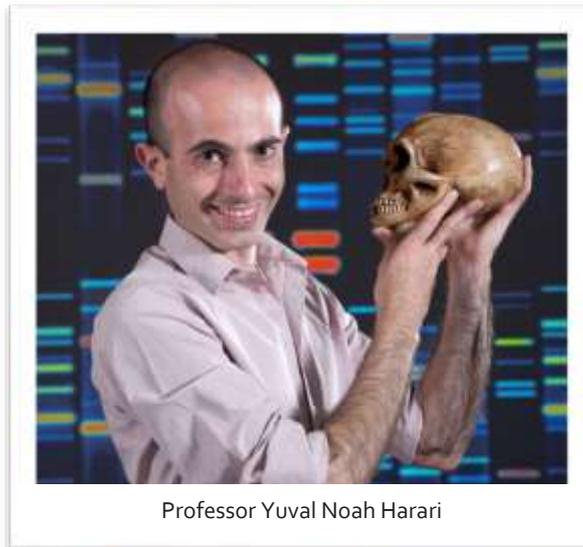
imagine resulted in a curious adaption that might be too easily dismissed as of no importance. This is the ability to tell imaginative stories. Our ability to tell stories, imaginary and made up stories, had one important and fundamental outcome. It gave us the ability to unite the tribe to a common purpose. The story telling became integral to the success of tribes and indeed early civilisations and is still absolutely essential today. Story telling was a critical development in the ability of

tribes to transform into nations consisting of thousands and then millions of humans.

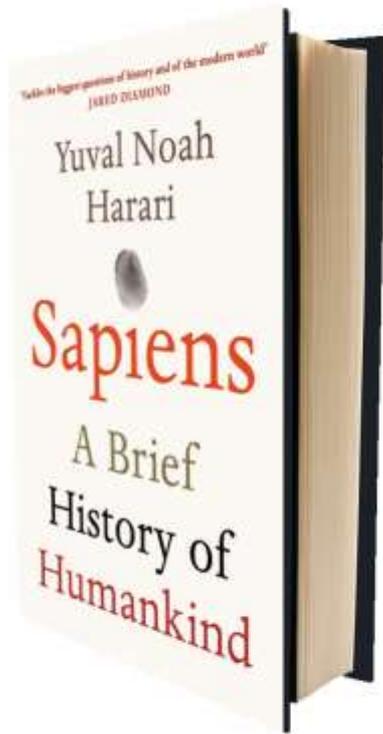
To quote Harari: “Any large scale human cooperation – whether a modern state, a medieval church, an ancient city or an archaic tribe – is rooted in common myths that exist in people’s collective imagination.”

These powerful stories can be negative and, in the end, self-defeating. Consider the insane and very dangerous story that the Nazis told about their master race without realising the falsity and hubris of their central message that hoodwinked an entire nation.

These powerful stories can also be positive and uniting and liberating. Do not underestimate the power of the Torah to unite the Jewish people over a period of 5777



Professor Yuval Noah Harari



years. But there is one characteristic of the Jewish people that allowed us to keep our story and continually reinvent it – that is the power of Midrash – which is a process of commentary or questioning of the **original text that was handed down**. “It is the power of constant questioning that creates the dynamism that keeps Judaism relevant.”³

“This habit of questioning and wrestling brings to mind a story about Nobel laureate, Isidor Rabi, who attributed his becoming a scientist (rather than a doctor or a lawyer, like most other immigrant Jews) to his mother’s way of greeting him after school. While most Jewish mothers asked their children, “Did you learn anything today?” Rabi’s mother asked him, “Did you ask any good questions today?”⁴

Midrash, as far as I understand it, is the process of continually interpreting and reinventing our own story so that we integrate new knowledge, new understanding and new discoveries into the original story. This gives the story of the Jewish people special and unique significance – the process of continual questioning and challenging interpretations. The word challenging has special meaning here.

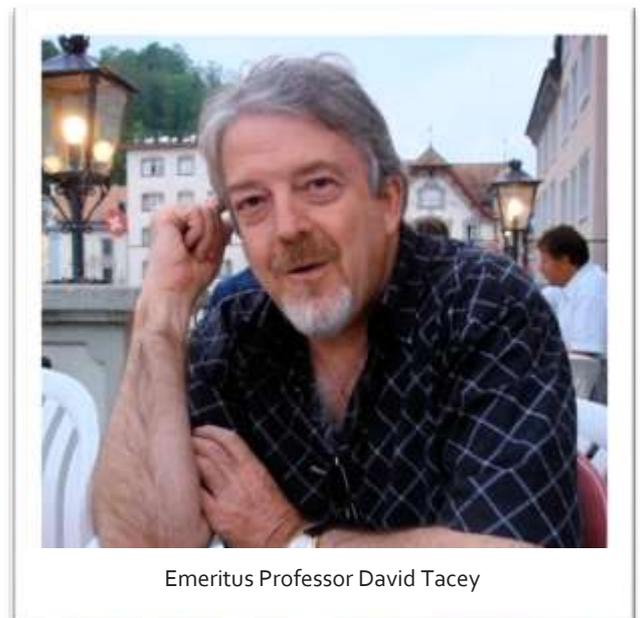
David Tacey, Emeritus Professor of English at LaTrobe University, Research Professor at the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture in Canberra and

prolific writer in the field of religion and spirituality, states that, if we can read the bible as a **long, sacred, narrative poem**, we can begin to understand and appreciate what is meant. If we view these passages as poetry, as myth and metaphor (or symbols), we begin to appreciate our origin story. Tacey warns us not to read the bible as the literal truth or we will lose the meaning that is intended. In fact, it can be dangerous to read many passages as the literal truth, as is made plain with the growth of religious fundamentalism.

Tacey, a Christian scholar, praises the Jewish way of reading scriptures as midrash or commentary, as an essential process of explaining our existence and purpose. In fact, he holds that when Christianity was brought to the West, the commentary or midrash that went along with it, was lost and with it the propensity to question why we are here.

The Enlightenment of the late 18th Century in Europe (Haskalah in Hebrew) provides the rationale for much of Reform Judaism. The development of Reform Judaism can be seen as just another step in the process of midrash – that is the continual challenging of accepted story telling or doctrine. In that light, Reform Judaism can be seen as a powerful challenging of accepted doctrine which has the potential of allowing the Jewish people to reinvent themselves and through this process, remain relevant, potent and united to face the challenges of the 21st century.

Robert Cussel



Emeritus Professor David Tacey

¹ <https://newrepublic.com/article/115821/einsteins-famous-quote-science-religion-didnt-mean-taught>.

² Jonathan Sacks, *The Great Partnership: God, Science, and the Search for Meaning* (2011), p. 2.

³ <https://thejewishobserver.com/2013/02/05/a-tradition-of-questions-questioning-tradition/>

⁴ <http://forward.com/opinion/3565/a-tradition-of-questioning-tradition/> Note: Isidor Rabi discovered magnetic resonance imaging.

NCJWA celebrates Bat Mitzvah Graduation

On Shabbat Toldot, 3rd December, members of the Canberra section of NCJWA joined Sophie Thorpe, Shani Craegh, Elana McNee, Vida Rosauner and Yarden Livne to celebrate their Bat Mitzvah. Magen David necklaces were presented to each girl to mark the occasion.

These gifts are presented in memory of the NCJWA Canberra Section founders and volunteers who dedicated their time working for our community, and Israel. NCJWA Canberra was formed in 1951 and has always provided a support and a social group for Jewish women and girls.

NCJWA nationally always supported the Canberra Community and Vera Cohen z'l' MBE helped The National President of the day raised money for our current building. It was fitting that the Bat Mitzvah luncheon was held in the Fanny Reading Auditorium, so named to thank National Council of Jewish Women for their contribution.

National Council of Jewish Women of Australia was founded in Sydney in 1923 by Dr Fanny Reading MBE, becoming a national organisation in 1929. With seven Sections around Australia, NCJWA maintains its position as the only Australian Jewish women's organisation with a platform working for the general community, the Jewish community and its various projects in Israel.

In 1925 NCJWA was affiliated to ICJW (International Council of Jewish Women), representing over one million Jewish women worldwide. ICJW has representatives speaking on behalf of women's issues at the UN in Paris, Geneva, Vienna and New York.

In 1929 NCJWA was affiliated to NCWA (National Council of Women). We advocate with National Council of Women on women's issues and interests both locally and nationally.

NCJWA Canberra held three recent events

In November our annual "Short and Sweet" poetry event featured the tremendous talent of the late Leonard Cohen. Yvette Goode hosted the afternoon tea and funds were raised for The Breast Cancer

Support Network,

Sarit Cohen gave a personal account of her latest exhibition at the M16 art space in Griffith. Sarit, had invited the other artists, to give a talk about their individual work. A fascinating, afternoon was enjoyed by all and money was raised for Toora House, a women's refuge in Canberra.

Our December film, *The Governess* was set in the late 1800s in England and followed the life of a feisty, strong willed Sephardi girl. The film screening was organized by Jo Dixon.

Ticket money from all our film and supper evenings is donated to our Israel projects. We support the Haifa Rape Crisis Centre and help fund a scholarship at Haifa University for a woman student of Ethiopian descent. Our NCJWA group, also support the Ilan Foundation, currently building a new Day Care facility in Tel Aviv, for young adults with special needs.

Next February we will be holding a garden party as a new members social function. Please look out for details in Grapevine and bring a friend.

Please contact the office if you wish to be put on The National Council of Jewish Women's email list.

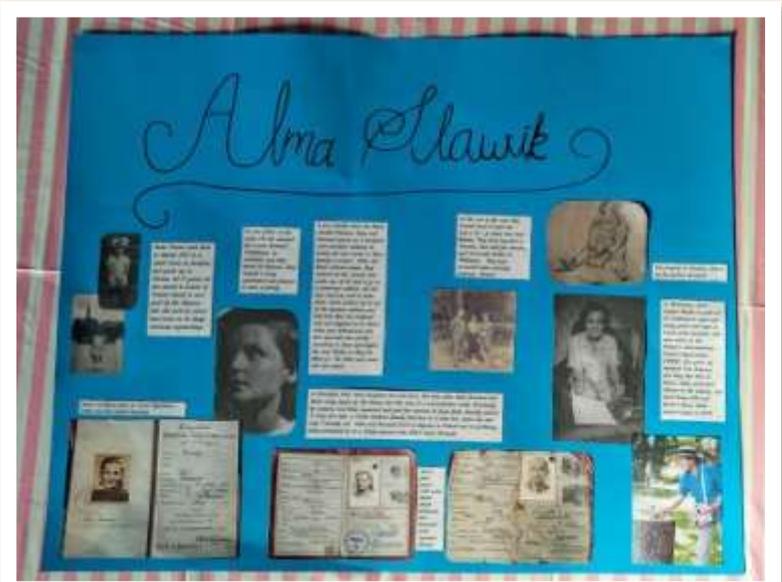
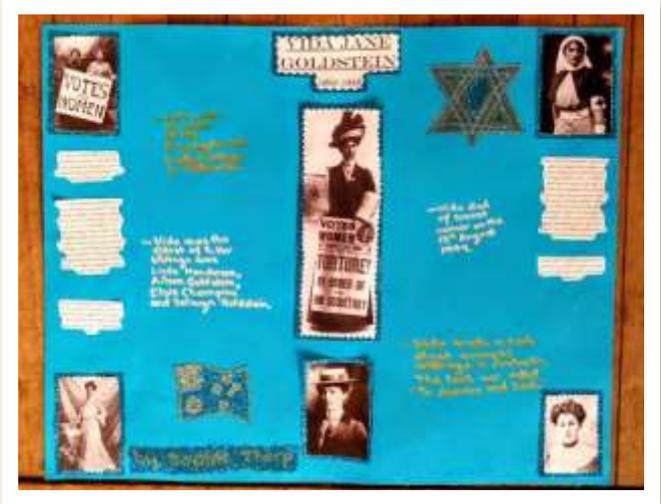


Anita Shroot



Mazal Tov!

This month we celebrated our five Bat Mitzvah girls from Canberra their culmination of studies. We want to thank all community members who joined us for congratulating the girls.



UPJ Biennial Conference 2016

From the 17th to the 20th November, Progressive Jews from Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia gathered for the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ) Biennial Conference in Perth. Robert Cussel, Kevin White and I were there.

From the beginning of the Conference, when I was warmly welcomed, to the end, I felt the friendliness and positive energy of all present. Whatever the affiliations of individual delegates – Congregational members, members of the UPJ and WUPJ (World Union for Progressive Judaism) executive and staff, Rabbis, Cantors, leaders in Netzer (Progressive youth movement) or simply interested individuals – people came together in a positive spirit to advance the cause of Progressive Judaism in our region.

The presentations of Dr Ron Wolfson, Fingerhut Professor of Education at American Jewish University and UPJ Biennial Scholar-in-Residence, stuck in my mind. He talked about what he called “Relational Judaism”. His essential message was that, no matter how inspiring the services or stimulating the educational programs of a congregation may be, people will not join and participate in congregational life unless they have established personal relationships with members – and that this should be our focus. Delegates were then divided into small groups which discussed various strategies for making congregations more welcoming.

Rabbi Danny Freeland, WUPJ President, described how, during the crisis at the Kotel this month, he and others brought Sefer Torahs to female worshippers besieged by protesters and surrounded by security forces at the Western Wall. Security forces tried to take the Torah scrolls from their arms.

Members of Kehilat Brit B'racha, the fledgling Progressive Congregation of Indonesia, along with Rabbis Shoshana Kaminsky and David Kunin, gave a fascinating presentation about the growth and development of their Congregation.

Peter Kohn, a journalist with the Australian Jewish News, outlined how the media could be used to promote individual congregations and the Progressive movement.

David Knoll AM, a Past President of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and a Board Member of the Executive Council of

Australian Jewry, gave thought provoking presentations on the effective management of volunteers and the case for Progressive Judaism.

And there were many other fascinating presentations during the Conference.

There were also opportunities to rejuvenate and refresh throughout the Conference – inspiring Shabbat services led by Rabbis, Cantors and lay leaders throughout the region and a Conference Choir, exercise and yoga sessions on glorious Scarborough beach, and a fun “Back to the Future” Formal Night where people dressed in ‘50s flash or couture of the future!

Equally important, however, was the opportunity to network with Rabbis, Cantors and lay leaders throughout the region. I believe developing and sustaining these relationships is of crucial importance to the Progressive Congregation getting the support it needs to grow, and feeling an intrinsic part of the wider Progressive Jewish movement. These bonds will be strengthened by the approval of a resolution at the UPJ AGM which authorises the UPJ Executive to approve the admission of the Progressive Congregation of the ACT Jewish Congregation as full members.

Peter Wise



UPJ BIENNIAL 2016

LOOKING BACK AND TO THE FUTURE

PERTH: 17-20 NOV

My UPJ Biennial Conference Experience

I want to just add a few additional highlights from the Union for Progressive Judaism's (UPJ) Biennial Conference held in Perth

The event is unique as it is open to all Progressive/Reform Jews, including rabbinical staff, community leaders and any member of a congregation who wishes to attend. Participants came from all over Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific region. This creates an amazing atmosphere of conviviality and camaraderie. In fact, the main theme of the conference was the importance of building relationships within community as the essential ingredient in ensuring Jewish continuity.

Another highlight was the power of the Cantor Michel Laloum's voice to lift the service to a new level. The contribution of music to Jewish religion, life and culture was evident throughout the conference, including contributions from the Conference Choir, Rabbi Gary Robuck and Mark Ginsberg of North Shore Temple Emanuel.

Rabbi Dr Orna Triguboff's meditation sessions and teachings of the principles underlying Kabbalah provided a qualitatively different interpretation of Jewish existence and meaning.

Orna is leading a Kabbalah tour of Israel, May 1 to 11, 2017. Some of the highlights of the tour include visits to Jerusalem (the holy city), Tzfat (city of mystics), Beit Shean (ancient sacred sites), Negev desert (Bedouin community), Zichron Ya'akov (spiritual music and ancient medicine) and Rosh Pina (community, land and spirit). Further details are found at: <http://www.neshamalife.org/?i=522/kabbalah-tour-of-israel>

Both the UPJ and Australian Reform Zionists' Association (ARZA) held their Annual General Meetings at this conference. An important outcome for Canberra was that our Progressive Congregation was warmly welcomed into the UPJ family of congregations, although the formal affiliation process will take some time to complete. The UPJ Annual Report is available here:

<http://upj.org.au/index.php/learning/publications-and-resources/897-upj-annual-report-2015-2016-published>

More details including some of the presentations, learnings and teachings from the Biennial can be found here - <http://www.upj.org.au>.

Robert Cussel



L to R: Peter Wise, Robert Cussel and Rabbi Adi Cohen

Shlichim in the ACT Jewish Community: Remembering Our History

In *The Australian Jewish News* on 26 August 2016 (p4), there was a report about the arrival in Canberra of two shlichim from Israel, Raz Sofer and Rotem Dvir. The report states that their arrival marked "a first for the capital".

Of course, I welcome them to Canberra and, of course, this is an important milestone for the Canberra Jewish community. It is an important part of the push to improve the quality of Jewish life in the ACT, as the article correctly states. It is also the first such initiative since the establishment of Zionism ACT, affiliated to the Zionist Federation of Australia. I commend all those involved in this initiative.

However, we forget our history at our peril. This is not entirely a first for the national capital. Yes, it is indeed the first time that shlichim have come to Canberra through the Jewish Agency and the ZFA. But the ACT Jewish Community Inc. has hosted shlichim from Israel in the past, in the early 1990s, albeit under a different program.

Long-time members of the community will recall the arrival of Rinat Rozinov, who was our first shaliach. She provided education and youth activities and served the community from December 1990 until May 1992. We then had a second shaliach, Einat Shavtay, from September 1992 until August 1993. Presidents of the ACT Jewish Community Inc. at the time were Dr. George Rothman (1989-1991) and Dr. Alan Shroot (1991-1993).

My own records are still in boxes following our move last year to Sydney so I have relied on several people for their help with the information for this article: my thanks to Alan and Anita Shroot, to their son Howard Shroot in Jerusalem, and to David Rosalky and Margaret Beadman. I would welcome any additional input to what is recorded here! It is so easy to lose corporate memory and to lose knowledge of what happened in the past!

Rinat Rozinov (now Jablon) (Canberra 1990-1992):

Rinat lived in the granny flat of Anita and Alan Shroot at

their former home in Aranda. While in Canberra, Rinat met Brian Jablon, who was posted from the USA to the USA Embassy for two years from early 1991 until early 1993. Love blossomed when Brian visited the National Jewish Memorial Centre to find out about Jewish activities in Canberra. ("The rest is history," as Alan Shroot wrote in his reply to my query!). They were married in Israel in 1993.

Anita and Alan Shroot have remained in touch with Rinat and Brian, and visited them in Ra'anana in May 2016. Alan reports that, after serving in Israel, Morocco and India, as well as Australia, Brian recently retired from the US diplomatic corps but still works part-time for them, and that Rinat has a job with the US Embassy in Tel Aviv. They have three daughters.

Einat Shavtay (now Ben Yehuda) (Canberra 1992-1993):

Einat was accompanied to Canberra by her boyfriend, Shlomo Ben Yehuda. They lived in the downstairs flat of Janet and Tom Frommer in Aranda. They married in Israel in 1995. Alan Shroot reports that Shlomo works in forensics in the police force. Einat works in Jerusalem as a social worker and they also have children.

Alan Shroot recalls: "They were both part of Project Arevim which sent shlichim to small communities. I remember the contact was an American lady named Bella Borstein whom we met in Jerusalem. That was in July 1993 (when Deborah [Shroot] was swimming in the Maccabiah) so one of them was definitely in Canberra at that time."

Sylvia Deutsch



Executive Council of Australian Jewry

ECAJ 2016 Annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia

On 27 November 2016 the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) released its 2016 Annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia. This Report confirms that antisemitism continues unabated in Australia and it underlines the importance of our collective efforts to monitor and report any antisemitic incidents which you encounter in the workplace or in public life. The key findings of the Report are:

The 12 month period ending 30 September 2016 saw a 10% increase over the previous year in antisemitic incidents in Australia involving threats or acts of violence;

The ECAJ, Jewish community roof bodies in each State, and other Jewish community groups logged a total of 210 antisemitic incidents during the period, including physical assaults, abuse and harassment, vandalism, graffiti, hate and threats communicated directly by email, letters, telephone calls, and leaflets. This compares to a total of 190 such incidents logged by the same sources over the preceding 12 month period.

Attacks (assault, abuse, vandalism, and graffiti) accounted for 70% of the total number of incidents, with 149 incidents. Threats (email, letters, telephone, leaflets) accounted for 30% of the total number of incidents, with 61 incidents.

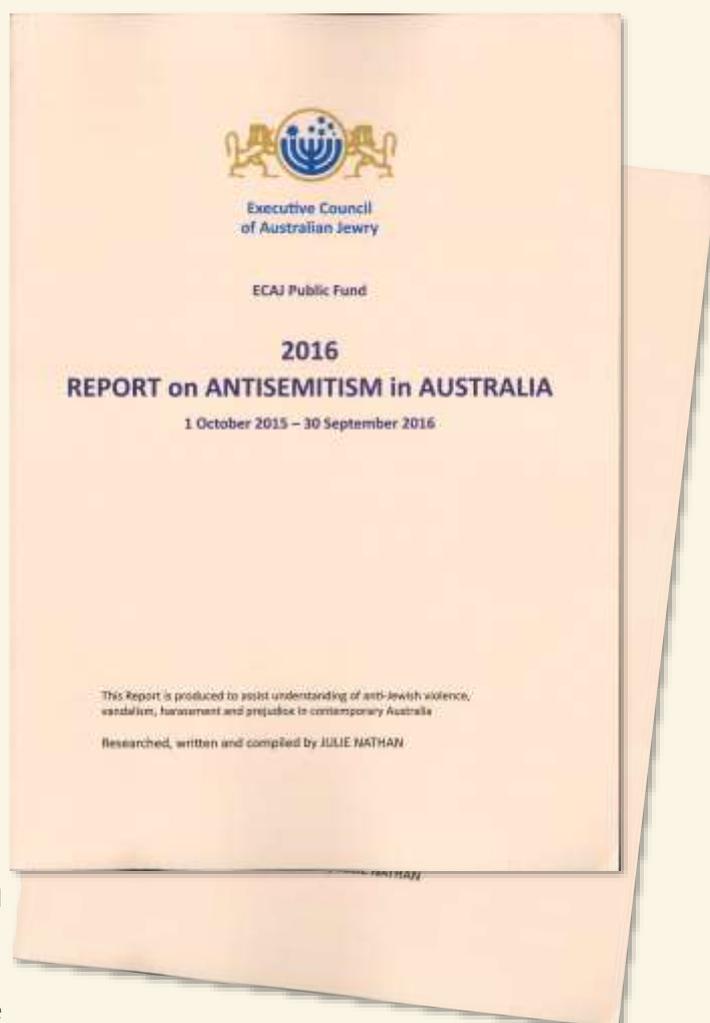
For the first time, the report includes information on the ethnic composition of the perpetrators of some types of antisemitic incidents. The result is that of the 72 perpetrators whose ethnicity was logged, these were composed of 34 Caucasian, 31 Middle Eastern, 5 Maori/Polynesian, and 2 African. Percentage-wise, it comprised Caucasian at 47%, Middle Eastern at 43%, and 'Other' at 10%.

For a diverse society such as Australia's to be socially cohesive, it is imperative that those in positions of influence within Australia publicly condemn antisemitism and other forms of racism, and support legal and other measures to counter all forms of racism.

Hard copies of the ECAJ Annual Report and the 2016 Annual Report on Antisemitism in Australia are

available for reading at the Centre. The link to the Antisemitism Report can be found on the ECAJ website at: <http://www.ecaj.org.au/2016/ecaj-annual-report-on-antisemitism-in-australia/>

Yael Cass
20 December 2016





2016 AGM awards Life Membership to Len Dixon



I'll begin with the more tangible contributions my father has made to the Community over his 54 years as a member:

As well as being on the Board many times, he was the President for one three year period which included the opening of the Centre and later for a single year.

He taught at the Cheder at various times and prepared a number of boys for their Bar Mitzvah, including his grandson Sam whom he taught the old-fashioned way, with him learning to read both the words and the trope. This in turn enabled Sam to make his own contribution being a regular Friday night Ba'al-Tefillah from shortly after his Bar Mitzvah until he went to live in Sydney.

He (Dad that is) ran bridge lessons and bridge games to raise funds for the community and who can ever forget his famous Borscht stall – a constant feature of every food fair!

Before moving on, I would like to acknowledge my mother Ruth's role. Both Dad and I feel this honour to be partly hers. They were very much a team with her supporting Dad in his official positions especially by welcoming people into our home; but also in her own capacity, notably with the NCJW.

However, the core of Dad's involvement has always been his

participation in the Minyan and the Chagim. When we first arrived there was only an Orthodox service although some of the most regular attendees were what we then called Liberal. Dad remembers us going to Shul the very first Shabbat we were in Canberra. Just being a Jewish man who came to Shul was the most important contribution you could make at the time and to some extent still is – but Dad, with his very religious upbringing in the East End of London, was able to provide much more. He didn't Lein (read from the Torah), but helped out in every other capacity in the service.

He has continued to do so ever since, even and eventually, adding to his repertoire and our services by beginning to duchen (perform the Priestly Blessing) just a couple of years ago. For any of you who have not been in Shul for the duchening, I can recommend it – it's a beautiful thing, but then I may be biased.

Both of our memories are sketchy on early Chag celebrations but I have two that have mysteriously lodged themselves into my consciousness. The first is a Purim fancy dress parade when Dad put me in one of his suit jackets and his Homberg, handed me a packet of salt and made a sign to hang around my neck reading Mr and Mrs Lot. I'm not sure if I won but I should have! The other is a communal Seder we held at Telopea Park School (I'm guessing because David and Adele Hoffman were students there). I don't think it was an annual event at that stage but I remember being there with my family and several other families for most of the day. I'm pretty sure Dad led for at least some of Seder but what I remember the most is that I got a little bit Shiker!

So, on that note, it is with both pleasure and pride that I support this recommendation and wish my Dad many more healthy years in which to enjoy it.

Jo Dixon
November 2016



2016 AGM awards Life Membership to Margaret Beadman OAM

Several members of our community contributed to this commendation to award life membership to Margaret Beadman, including by Tom and Janet Frommer, Vernon Kronenberg, Mervyn Doobov, Rafi Lehrer, Sylvia Deutsch and Adele Rosalky.

Margaret 'Maggie' Beadman was awarded an OAM in the Australia Day honours in 2006 for "her service to the community through support for the Australian War Memorial as a volunteer and guide, and to the Jewish community".

Prior to receiving her Australia Day honour, Maggie was awarded an Australian War Memorial (AWM) Medal in 1993 for her contribution to the Children of the Holocaust exhibition. Maggie assisted the curators of this exhibition, Anna Gray and Lola Wilkins from the Art Section, with preparing the collection. Then in June 2015, Maggie was named as the first Fellow of the Australian War Memorial by the Director, Brendan Nelson. In announcing that honour, Brendan Nelson said that Maggie is one of life's very special people – a 'giver' in every sense of the word who enriches all whose lives she touches.

This statement is true in relation to the ACT Jewish Community

– and though Margaret is a very private person who does not seek office or preferment, she is a powerhouse of support for a range of projects within the Jewish community and for our broader Australian community.

I will mention just a few of these projects which are her passion:

- Maggie has been a volunteer and guide with the AWM since 1988 – the longest serving volunteer at the War Memorial. She has undertaken extensive research in the AWM Art Department to support major exhibitions, such as the Stella Bowen exhibition showing the work of this Australian official war artist. She is highly regarded for her valuable research to honour and identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service personnel, and to document and catalogue all Jewish men and women who have served with the Australian Defence Forces.
- Maggie has worked with the AWM to document the records of the cohort of Dunera boys sent to Australia on 10 July 1940 in the HMT Dunera who subsequently volunteered as home-based soldiers with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) 8th Employment Company. The



Margaret Beadman with Vernon Kronenberg

Dunera sailed from Liverpool carrying 2,500 mostly Jewish male internees of German or Austrian birth. They had been classified as refugees from Nazi oppression but upon arrival in Australia were sent to Internment and Prisoners of War Camps in Hay, NSW and Tatura, Victoria. In April 1942, after their release from the internment camps hundreds of the Dunera boys signed up as volunteer soldiers with the newly formed AIF 8th Employment Company assisting the war effort at home.

- Maggie has worked to support women who have been the victims of domestic violence and rape through her work with the National Council of Women of Australia, the International Women's Year, the Institute of Criminology and the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre. Maggie has undertaken a research project for the National Council of Women of Australia on the incidence and impact of rape called Victims and the Offenders. Her contribution to advocacy on women's issues has been recognised by being named as a life member of the International Council for Women.
- Maggie has been awarded an ACT Government Immigration Medal for 25 years of service teaching English to migrants and for initiating the Teaching Women in the Home program.

Within the Jewish community, Margaret can be counted amongst the founders of the Canberra Jewish community through her contribution to the establishment of the Canberra Betar Zionist youth movement in the 1950s, which was the very first organised youth movement and organisation for Jewish education for children in Canberra.

I have drawn upon Alex Auswaks' Recollection of the Origins of Canberra Betar which was published as a blog in Jerusalem in 2004 for this record of our community history. Alex sadly died in 2013.

Alex recounts that Chiam Golovesky was a Betar Shaliach who came to Australia from the Irgun in Israel in the late 1950s. In 1959 he appointed Alex Auswaks as the head of Canberra Betar, when he came to study in Canberra. Alex had been a former member of the China Tientsin Betar who moved to Australia in the early 1950s.

Alex formed a Betar leadership group in Canberra with:

- Margaret Beadman, who was an akela or den leader with the local scouts;
- Tom Frommer
- Sam and Lila Landau (when Sam was Secretary of the Navy)
- Margaret's friend Josh Riches, (who was a veteran of WWII and the Vietnam War) and
- Dr Gershon Weiler, who had also been in the Irgun and the Israeli army and moved to Australia to join the Philosophy department at the ANU.

Margaret and Josh looked after the scouting. Sam and Tom

were 'transport officers'. And Alex Auswak taught Jewish history. The Good Neighbour Council gave Betar a hut in Barton for their meetings, well before the National Jewish Memorial Centre was built.

Betar was the only formal Zionist organisation in the ACT at that time in the late 1950's and 1960's. In 1962 Betar Canberra was invited to the International Scout Jamboree and Margaret, Josh, Tom and Alex attended in Tom's red convertible car.

The Canberra Betar unit became a regional training centre for Sydney and Melbourne Betar groups – with children sent to Canberra to stay with local Jewish families for training in bush survival and scouting skills. Maggie recalls that Canberra Betar also invited Aboriginal children from Bateman's Bay to join their scout camps. These children were also accommodated with local Jewish families.

Maggie recounts that she was living in Israel during the 1967 Six Day War and assisted the war effort by digging trenches. She recalls she was one of the first volunteers, with Ruth Landau, to clean the university at Mount Scopus during the aftermath of the war. Later in 1967, virtually the entire Canberra Betar leadership group went to Israel and worked on a kibbutz as volunteers where they met up with Alex Auswak who had made Aliya in 1963. Alex organised the Australian volunteers to assist with fruit picking to replace the soldiers who were still mobilised

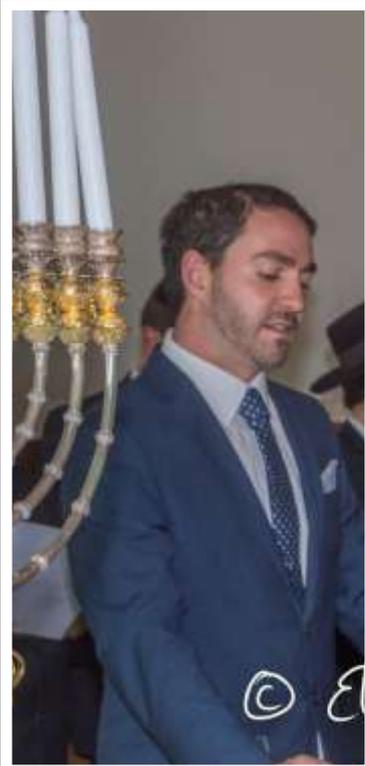
Margaret's contribution has extended well beyond her role in setting our first formal youth movement. Maggie has also:

- been on the committee of the ACT Branch of the Australian Jewish Historical Society since its inception in 1984;
- been an active member of the ACT branch of the National Council of Jewish Women of Australia
- supported the Women of Valour research projects undertaken by our Matan Bat Mitzvah girls – including at our 2015 Anzac Day lunch where Maggie gave a presentation on the contribution of Jewish women to the Australian airforce, army and navy in WW1 and WW2.
- been instrumental in the early days of Hamerkaz in having copies produced on the Gestetner machine of the British High Commission; and
- assisted over the years in preparing countless kiddushim and suppers for community meetings.

Thank you Maggie. I am delighted to support the award of Life Membership to Margaret Beadman.

Yael Cass
November 2016

Photographs taken at Channukah on the Hill



Chanukah



on the Hill





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