

HaMerkaz

ACT Jewish Community Magazine

October 2016 | Elul 5776

*Happy Rosh
Hashanah*

to all the Members
and Friends of the
ACT Jewish
Community





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From the Editor's Desk



Hello everyone and welcome to the Rosh Hashanah edition of Hamerkaz. The Board is currently forming a new Editorial Committee to look after Hamerkaz and we plan to publish five editions a year – at Rosh

Hashanah, Chanukah, early in 2017, Pesach and in the middle of next year. If you would like to be involved or be part of the Committee, please let me know. I would like to thank Yvette Goode for the wonderful work she did on the four previous editions. They were fabulous.

For a number of reasons, we haven't had the opportunity to get together to consider how we are going to continue with Hamerkaz. There are some good ideas floating around and also the need to ensure that Hamerkaz continues to record the history of the ACTJC in a meaningful way. This edition is not as fulsome as previous ones and we are clearly missing some areas such as input from community members, NCJWA, the

Grumps and the ACT Zionist Council. Hopefully, we will be on top of things for the next edition.

If you have any ideas, thoughts, articles, comments, references, etc, please contact me. You can send an email to the office and they will pass it on.

I hope you enjoy this edition and wish everyone all Shana Tova, a happy and healthy new year.

Karen Tatz
On behalf of the Hamerkaz editorial committee.

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President's Report



Rosh Hashanah is here – a time for reflection and preparation for the coming year. There are two comments I want to draw upon for my Rosh Hashanah message. Both are relevant to the work of the ACT Jewish Community Board and to members of our community.

First is the High Holy Day message from the Union for Progressive Judaism (published in this edition of HaMerkaz). The UPJ leaders pose that a national collective challenge is to transform our congregations into communities and names on a membership list into meaningful relationships.

This is the exact objective which drives the members of our Board and the work of Rabbi Meltzer. Our effort is focused on bringing all members of our community together – to learn and share in common programs of adult education, children's education, a joint youth movement, communal Seders, kiddushim, memorial services and celebrations. That is the hallmark of the ACT Jewish community and an objective we should protect and treasure.

Second is the Rosh Hashanah message of the orthodox Chief Rabbi Mirvis (also published in this edition). He comments on the importance of embracing three fundamental principles of Jewish life

in response to broader global hatred and unrest. These principles are repentance, prayer and charity. Charity encompasses communal meaningful action and pitching in to a broader goal, rather than standing on the side lines.

This is another objective of the Board and our whole community. We work for the benefit of all members of our community – and for the broader civil society through our contribution to interfaith engagement, the projects sponsored by our ACT section of the National Council of Jewish Women and our collaboration with Jewish Care.

All members of our Board are pitching in to make our community stronger, more vibrant and more engaged. At Rosh Hashanah we are personally ringing every member of the community to wish you Shana Tova – to invite you to join us in our communal activities and at services over the High Holy days.

We have a remarkable community where all members meet, learn, eat and pray under one roof. Our job is to ensure that this continues from strength to strength.

I wish you all a Shanah Tova – a healthy, happy and stimulating new year.

Yael Cass
President



*Our heartfelt congratulations to Rabbi Alon and Rebbetzin Lindsay on the birth of their beautiful baby daughter on Tuesday 27 September.
A sister for Daliah and Ella.*

From the Rabbi's Desk



Well it's that time of year again. How did it go so fast? Wasn't it just a few weeks ago when we spent the majority of the month in shul and with the community? Is it really Rosh Hashanah?

This has been an adventurous year. Last Succot we received the news that we would be the capital

appeal recipients and this year we have been planning and working on this major project. Since that point we have raised just over 40% of our target, we have welcomed a Scholar in Residence and two shlichim. We have seen numbers swell in our adult education program, and our children's programs. We have seen successful weekly programs with our teens and tweens.

Rosh Hashanah is an amazing time to pause for a moment and look at the year past. For the ACT Jewish Community it has been truly a wonderful year.

During the prayer service of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we recite the prayer of Unetaneh Tokef. A two paragraph piece of liturgy that frames the importance of the period. The first paragraph depicts the judgment day, where the angels in heaven tremble at the awe-inspiring event of the annual judgment of all creation, with the implication that man should also approach this day with trepidation. The heavenly *Book of Chronicles* is opened, in which every human being's fate will be inscribed.

The second paragraph continues this point, depicting how every event that will occur in the upcoming year is "written on Rosh Hashanah and sealed on Yom Kippur. The closing words are "Who will rest and who will wander, who will live in harmony and who will be harried, who will enjoy tranquillity and who will suffer, who will be impoverished and who will be enriched, who will be degraded and who will be exalted."

Last year we saw the final line come true on Rosh Hashanah afternoon, with then Prime Minister of Australia being replaced by Malcolm Turnbull. But we also saw these amazing other blessings of our community come into fruition.

The ACT Jewish Community is in such a good place, we have settled into a very nice groove. We are not complacent, and we continuing to innovate and engage in a number of different areas. We truly are very lucky.

This Rosh Hashanah, Lindsay, Daliah, Ella (and depending on time of printing, perhaps even Baby #3), and I, wish you all a Shanah Tova, a happy and healthy new year.

May it be a year where we are able to see the blessings of our life manifest themselves in front of us. May we realise these gifts, and cherish them each and every day of the year.

See you in shul,

Rabbi Alon Meltzer



Message from the Chief Rabbi - Rosh Hashanah 5777



"בראש השנה יכתובן וביום צום כיפור יחתמו" - 'On Rosh Hashanah it is inscribed and on Yom Kippur it is sealed'

As we recited these moving words in the *Unetaneh Tokef* prayer last year, we could hardly have anticipated the devastation that would be wrought by the relentless terrorist atrocities that would follow. The daily threat of terror is one to which our brethren in Israel have long become accustomed, but that awful reality has largely been greeted by silence in the mainstream media. Global terrorism has spread its tentacles far and wide, making no place on earth immune to this scourge. As the French philosopher and author Bernard-Henri Lévy has said, the world must now learn from the experiences of the Jewish State.

Never before in the history of human conflict has every innocent man, woman and child found themselves on the front line. As we endure an onslaught on our freedom, our democracy and our very civilization, what should our response be?

The *Unetaneh Tokef* prayer provides an answer: תשובה וצדקה - Repentance, Prayer, and Charity.

תשובה - Repentance

Teshuvah comes from the Hebrew word meaning 'to return'. Over our High Holydays we are tasked with making a uniquely honest and comprehensive assessment of ourselves so that we can return to our natural state of piety and purity. Our global challenge is to return to the values of human dignity, tolerance, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. That process must begin with ourselves and those upon whom we can make a positive impression.

– תפילה - Prayer

#PrayersForParis #PrayersForMunich #PrayersForBrussels. If these popular sentiments from social media are anything to go by, it seems that the world is rarely more united in prayer than after devastating terrorist attacks. In July, after a particularly brutal murder of a beloved Catholic Priest in Normandy, one Twitter user responded to my own message in despair: "The time for prayer is long gone," he said. I couldn't disagree more.

The Talmud describes prayer as *avodah shebalev* – the 'service of the heart' – because, in essence, prayer is about training oneself to love and serve God. The

Hebrew word for prayer, *tefillah*, is linked to *tofel*,

which means connecting to a greater power. We pray with a deep sense of humility and responsibility because we understand that we can never simply be a 'law unto ourselves'. The power of prayer has always been and will always be a force for good; a spiritual connection with something greater than ourselves, elevating our souls and directly affecting our future actions. We will never fully comprehend the potency of our prayers or how things would have turned out without them but we do know that while terror thrives on a sense of narcissism and superiority, through prayer, we act with modesty and accountability.

צדקה – Charity/Righteousness

The first Chief Rabbi of the Holy Land, Rav Kook, taught that the antidote to causeless hatred is causeless love. Having embraced *Teshuvah* and *Tefillah* with all of the self-improvement that they require, we will have an instinctive and deeply rooted love for peace. But *Tzedakah* is the means by which we look beyond ourselves and turn that goodness into positive, meaningful action that will leave a lasting impact on the world around us.

Every one of us can increase the degree to which we give of ourselves to others, whether as part of an organised charitable campaign or by investing our time and energy into kindness and generosity. There is no degree of evil that cannot be overcome and outshone by an equal and opposite desire to do good for others.

Embracing more fully these three fundamental principles of Jewish life as a response to global hatred and violence might feel inadequate, even naïve. But, I believe that we are far more likely to change the world through positive action and leading by example, than simply by standing in judgement.

May this coming year be one filled with only peace and reconciliation among the peoples of the world.

Valerie and I extend to you all our very best wishes for a happy and fulfilling New Year.

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis
September 2016 • Ellul 5776

High Holy Day Message from the Union for Progressive Judaism



At Rosh Hashanah, our congregations come together to pray that the New Year be transformed from fearful to hopeful, from a dangerous place to a peaceful one.

There is so much cause for fear in the world today: assault weapons sold in department stores, dangerous political leaders, suicide bombers in airports and terrorist threats in schools. Overcoming the overwhelming sense of fear, and feelings of futility and ambivalence about the future, can be a challenge.

We can be proud that our Progressive communities have modeled behavior that provides meaningful inspiration and hope to a world filled with violence and disharmony.

- Our egalitarian communities welcome participation from all Jews, of any sex and sexual preference; they are our rabbis and Torah readers, board members and lay leaders.
- Girls and boys prepare for their bar/bat mitzvahs, learning to daven (pray), read and chant from the Torah and speak confidently from the bimah.
- In UPJ congregations throughout Australia, New Zealand and Asia, we pray from a Siddur that is accessible to anyone attending our religious services, with Hebrew, transliteration and translation that is inclusive and inspiring.
- Social justice initiatives are highly valued in our communities, supporting Aboriginal literacy projects and asylum seekers, feeding the hungry at homeless hostels and providing supplies to refuge shelters for those escaping domestic violence.
- Our love for the State of Israel is expressed in our support for equal rights for all Jews who have made Israel their home; and through ARZA, we continue our support for an egalitarian prayer space at the Kotel and equal state funding for all congregations.

Transforming from a congregation to a community, from faceless names on a membership list to meaningful relationships, is among our newest challenges. Embracing this new direction has the potential to bring greater involvement from the next generation of leaders in our movement, helping to ensure the continuity of our Progressive community.

At the UPJ Biennial Conference in Perth this November, two dynamic international leaders – Rabbi Danny Freeland and Dr Ron Wolfson – will address this new challenge, with sessions on “Taking welcome beyond the superficial”, “Marketing a Judaism that is relevant to modern Jewish life”, and examining our personal and organisational goals so that involvement in our communities is attractive to the Progressive and larger Jewish community. To learn how you can register and join in this inspiring conference, visit the UPJ website (www.upj.org.au) and click on the link to our special Biennial website.

We pray that these hopeful messages can counteract the daily news reports that threaten to overwhelm us, and wish our UPJ community a healthy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

L'shana tova tikatevu : may our communities be inscribed and sealed in the *Book of Life*,

Roger Mendelson
President

Jocelyn Robuck
Executive Officer

Rabbi Fred Morgan
Movement Rabbi

Rabbi Adi Cohen
Chair, Moetzah

Reflections on Rosh Hashanah



The meaning and significance of Rosh Hashanah has changed for me over the years, as I am sure it has for most

people. Growing up, my father was the Ba'al Toekah (the one who blew the shofar), and so the excitement of going to shul was not so much for prayer part of the the service, but rather for the shofar blowing. Since then, I have gone to services in a retreat centre for older adults, a nursing home, and in shuls in both the United States and the United Kingdom. My most memorable prayer services took place during the five years that I spent celebrating Rosh Hashanah in Alon Shvut, a Yeshuv in Israel. It was there that I attended services at 5:30am, feeling the chilly wind while walking to shul, but then watching a beautiful sunrise through the progression of the Shacharit (morning) service.

Something that I remember from all of these places is the way that they prayed. What was sung out loud, what was said quietly, and which tunes were used during the service. A regular complaint that is made, especially when one moves to a new shul or there is a new chazan is "they didn't use my tune". We all have ideas of what tefilla (prayer) is, what it should be, and how it should sound.

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the Torah and Haftora readings tell us about forms of prayer. In the first few verses of Genesis, Chapter 21, we see that God remembered Sarah, and she gave birth to a son, to Isaac. She praises God for the great gift that she was given, as it says in verses 6-7:

And Sarah said, "God has made joy for me; whoever hears will rejoice over me." And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children, for I have borne a son to his old age!"

She was witness to a miracle and her

initial reaction was to thank God and praise Him and His actions.

A few verses later (Genesis Chapter 21, Verses 9-18) we hear about Hagar being sent out of the house of Abraham. She and her son Yishmael go into the desert and run out of water. She does not know what to do. She does not know how to help her child or herself, and so she calls out to God in despair. I can almost imagine the image of her leaving Yishmael under a tiny shrub so there is shade, walking a bit further away and just breaking down in tears in the vast desert.

In the Haftora (Samuel I 1:1-2:10) we read about Chana. Chana was barren just like Sarah. She goes to the Mishkan, the Holy Tabernacle, to pray to God, to plead that she should be able to conceive. She has a different type of prayer than both Sarah and Hagar. She is praying in pain, but not in despair. She goes to the "House of God", but does not call out loud. She prays silently, with only her lips moving. It is a private prayer or conversation, between herself and God.

There are times that each of these models of prayer are fitting. Over Rosh Hashanah and the month of Tishrei, we spend quite a bit of time in shul praying. At times we are given the opportunity to have a quiet conversation with God, pleading for the things that we need or want. At times we are given the opportunity to call out in pain, both our personal suffering, but also for the communal and global pain that we bare witness to. And we are given the chance to sing out loud with the entire community, praising and thanking God for all that we do have.

May this year be filled with times to sing out and praise God, but may we also find words and strength in our times of need.

May you have a happy, healthy and sweet New Year.

Eryn London

ACTJC Scholar in Residence

Old Parliament House goes Kosher for the Launch of the ACT Jewish Community's Capital Campaign

August 30th was a busy day in the nation's capital, not only was the 45th Parliament opened, but just down the road at Old Parliament House, the ACT Jewish Community held the launch of its 2016 Capital Campaign.

Bringing in Sydney based caterer, L'amour, and a KA mashgiach to provide a sumptuous kosher feast was a rarity for such a prominent venue, but it set the tone for an evening focussed on the importance of a strong and vibrant national Jewish community.

It was a savvy affair with a number of dignitaries including Senators, Members of Parliament, heads of the Jewish community from around the country, and the local community. The launch of the campaign to raise \$6.3 million is only the beginning of the journey, which will see events held in both Melbourne and Sydney, to extend and redevelop the National Jewish Memorial Centre.

The project which will include a National Jewish War Memorial, a museum space, and upgraded facilities, is aimed at enhancing national advocacy. Rabbi Meltzer said in his address during the event "In a world where advocacy is becoming ever more important we need to be able to represent our national community, in a home that is modern, elegant and truly representative of Australian Jewry".

Yael Cass, the President of the ACT Jewish Community noted "We have invested time, effort and resources to deliver a program of events and services to bring the local community into our Centre. Now is the time to expand and rebuild the bricks and mortar of the Centre to provide a modern National Jewish Centre. The centre will have the amenities to match our spirit and our activities. A Centre where we can proudly live a Jewish life and represent Judaism to the broader community."

Keynote speaker, Alex Rychin, Public Affairs Director of the ECAJ said "This appeal is about writing the next chapter of Jewish contribution to this country. This will be a world class facility, complete with museum and war memorial, where visitors can learn from the national heroes that our community has produced, people like Sir John Monash, Sir Isaac Isaacs and Rose Shappere, that as Australians we have the power to overcome and the duty to contribute."

Focussing on the national role, Senator Zed Seselja, representing Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, spoke of the growth of our local community and the long history of the community's impact with the political and diplomatic community.

Dr Andrew Leigh MP, representing the Leader of the Opposition Bill Shorten MP, spoke about the rise of anti-Semitism in Australia and the need for a centre that educates the broader public, including those in the corridors of power, about the impact of the Australian Jewish Community to Australia as a whole. Remarking on the incredible location of the ACT Jewish Community, with 17500m2 of land just 650 metres from Parliament, Dr Leigh said "You have a strong community and an extraordinary site. As that video drone rose over the top of the site you could see where the new building would be and its close proximity to Federal Parliament. It's a reminder of how much good can be done from that site."

The event was attended by 130 people and all were asked to pledge towards the campaign. Chief Minister of the ACT Andrew Barr closed the evening with a toast to the local community and the importance of a national Jewish centre, and a pledge of \$5000 towards the campaign.

The campaign has already raised \$2.69 million towards the goal and will move to events located in Sydney and Melbourne as part of its national campaign.



In Contributing to Australia's Welfare, the Jews Found Theirs

Alex Ryvchin is the director of public affairs for the Executive Council of Australian Jewry. This article is based on the keynote speech delivered by Alex on 30 August at Old Parliament House for the launch of the ACT Jewish Community's capital appeal for a new National Jewish Centre including a Jewish war memorial and museum. This article has subsequently been widely published including in the Sydney Morning Herald and in Jews Down Under, an online magazine for Australian Jews. It is an astute commentary on the duty of all Jews to contribute to the welfare of the countries in which they live and illustrates how this principle has been put into practice in Australian society.

Australia's Jewish community has always understood that its fortunes will rise and fall with the fortunes of the nation.

And so, when Jews gather in their holy places, they pray for the welfare of this country in a tradition that originates in 594 BCE, when the Jews lived in exile in Babylon.

"Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile,"

wrote the Prophet Jeremiah,

"... and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."

These words, contained in a letter sent from Jerusalem to the leaders of the exiled community in Babylon, came at a time when the Jews faced a profound dilemma. Now also a people of the diaspora yet a distinct nation with enduring ties to their homeland, the Jews would need to reconcile their longing to return with their new reality of living as foreign subjects in distant lands.

Jeremiah's decree became a pillar of Jewish life in exile. It counselled the Jews to see themselves as a part of the societies in which they lived and, most crucially, it compelled them to do good, not just for their own community, but for all citizens of the land – for in their welfare, they would find their own.

By 135 CE the Jews would see their autonomy collapse under the weight of Rome and the focus of Jewish life devolved from Jerusalem to the far-flung reaches of the Empire. Adapting to their new reality of statelessness, the Jewish sages developed further

doctrines to maintain a national identity while achieving genuine integration.

A central plank of Jewish life became the principle of "Dina d'malchuta dina", (the law of the land is the law), by which the Jews were compelled to respect and observe the laws of the countries in which they now lived.

These values nurtured a sense of agency and civic duty, and engendered a tradition of full participation in all aspects of society.

But there is another reason why Australian Jews pray for this country and have served the nation with unimpugnable devotion and rigour. It is because they love it.

Many in the Jewish community came here to escape communism's tyranny, or from the ashes of the Holocaust, or having witnessed the shame of apartheid. This has given the community an acute awareness of its blessing to be called Australians.

The Jews trace their beginnings in Australia all the way back to the First Fleet. At least eight Jews made that journey – convicts who evidently didn't get the memo about respecting the laws of the land.

The most famous of these was Esther Abrahams. She later became the wife of NSW governor George Johnston and administered vast areas of land in her own right.

She was described by a contemporaneous source as being

"of eccentric habits, hasty in temper, and with an abrupt mode of expressing herself";

thereby removing any doubt she was Jewish.



Titus' troops carrying off plunder from the Temple of Jerusalem Arch of Titus, Rome.

In times of great peril for the nation, Australian Jews served and sacrificed. In the Boer War, Rose Shappere, was notable among nurses who volunteered to tend the sick and wounded. She inspired generations of Australian women to make immense sacrifices for the Australian war effort.

In World War I, 13 per cent of the Australian Jewish population enlisted to serve King and Country and fight great battles in distant lands. Three hundred of them would make the supreme sacrifice.

And of course from the Jewish community there came the greatest soldier that this country has ever produced, and arguably, one of the most gifted battlefield commanders the British Empire has produced, Sir John Monash.

And the first Governor-General to be born in Australia, Sir Isaac

Isaacs – a man eulogised by a Melbourne newspaper as “perhaps the greatest Australian of our time, or any previous time”.

What makes their achievements truly great is that they gave the best of themselves to this country and did so for all Australians. They are not just icons for Jewish Australians, they are national heroes.

Ever conscious of their history, Australian Jews have drawn a central lesson from the lives of Monash, Isaacs and Shappere – that as Australians we have the power to overcome and the duty to contribute.

Alex Rychin
Director of Public Affairs for the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.

This piece is based on a keynote address



Esther Abrahams.



Sir Isaac Isaacs and Lady Isaacs

Introducing our Shlichim - Rotem and Raz



Dear friends,

The month of Elul and the days preceding the Jewish High Holidays are when we do what is called a heshbon hanefesh: an accounting of the soul. For the two of us, who only arrived in Australia for the first time a few weeks ago, this is definitely time for reflection. The upcoming holidays have reminded us of our past journeys and the roads that led us to Canberra; our most challenging mission in life so far. So just before we start, we wanted to take a moment and share with you some of our past experiences on Rosh Hashanah, some of our past beginnings:

Rotem (25) celebrated her first Rosh Hashanah in Mitzpe Netofa, an all-Orthodox peaceful Yishuv in the north of Israel. By the time she was 16, Rotem spent Rosh Hashanah as a Bnei Akiva youth movement guide running programs. When she turned 18 joined Israel's civilian national service, there Rotem spent her Rosh Hashanah as a guide in a foster care centre for at-risk youth in Ma'ale Adumim.

Meanwhile, Raz (27), celebrated his first Rosh Hashanah in Ga'aton, a secular Kibbutz on the slopes of the western Galilee. By the age of 16 Raz was celebrating Rosh Hashanah in Rishon LeZion, a major city in the Dan area as student activist. When he turned 18, Raz joined the IDF intelligence core, celebrating 3 consecutive new

-years in an olive-green uniform. The Rosh Hashanah following the completion of his army service, Raz was backpacking through Central and South America.

In 2013, right before Rosh Hashanah, we met for the first time. Raz had moved to a student's village in Lod while studying for a BA in Middle-Eastern history, while Rotem was already studying for her BA in psychology and arts. During our academic period we volunteered in the Jewish-Arab city of Lod, fostering a local sense of community and social engagement. From there the road to the Huppah wasn't long, and on July 2015 we got married. Last year, Rotem celebrated Rosh Hashanah as kindergarten teacher and guide for at-risk teens, while Raz was working in an Israeli NGO striving to strengthen Israel's periphery.

Rosh Hashanah, the time for new beginnings, has led us here- to Canberra. May our journey here be as exciting and fruitful as our previous ones, may we succeed in bringing Jewish education and our love for Israel to this wonderful community. We wish to thank all of you for taking the time and care to help us settle in and give us such a warm welcome.

Shana Tova!

Raz & Rotem

Chocolate Workshop
for all the ages

October 19 7:00pm

30 Participants Limit - Sign up now!

\$20 per person

ACT Jewish Community

Mexico: Learning and Feasting

Rabbi Alon and Rebbetzin Linsay had the opportunity to represent the ACT Jewish Community in Mexico, at the Nahum Goldmann Fellowship in June. Representing the local community as well as the national community (Rabbi Meltzer sat on the Board representing the Executive Council of Australian Jewry) is something that we can all be proud of.

Rabbi Alon and Linsay sat down to answer some questions about their experience.

What is the Nahum Goldmann Fellowship about?

R'Alon: The Nahum Goldmann Fellowship is the flagship program of the Memorial Foundation of Jewish Culture. The Foundation, created by Nahum Goldmann, the architect of the Claims Conference and the World Jewish Congress has at its core the mission of re-establishing and fostering Jewish culture and scholarship lost in the Holocaust. It is about bringing together Jews from across the political and religious spectrum and engaging in a conversation.

Linsay: The Fellowship is about learning. You learn texts with some of the most amazing scholars; Rabbis and Professors from across the world. It's about learning about other countries and cultures, all of whom unite together as Jews, with 40 other Jews. It's about understanding how we all fit in to this big puzzle of the Jewish people.

What was the most enjoyable part of the program?

Linsay: Having the opportunity to speak your mind and share your thoughts and ideas as to what would create a stronger Jewish people was definitely a highlight. It's a safe space, in that you are respected for whatever your opinions, but you do not have to hide what you are feeling or thinking. You can just speak about what's on your mind about any given topic, no matter how jarring you are. It can be a wakeup call, but overall its very stimulating.

R'Alon: Meals, definitely the meals. First its dabbled with exotic cuisine, like citrus eggs, and cactus (not a fan), but more importantly it's an opportunity schmooze. On one side of me I could have a conservative female Rabbi talking with an Orthodox Rabbi with a long greying beard, and on the other side I could have a young reform man, speaking to a religious Zionist woman. Each is in deep and meaningful conversation, discussing ideas, texts, politics, and life. At the end of the first lunch you realise we aren't so different from one another.



What was one new thing you came away learning?

R'Alon: I was involved in the Alumni Leadership Program with Professor Stephen Windmueller, which means that my program was a little different than Linsay's. One of the most interesting things I learnt was the idea of the relationship between lay leaders and professional leaders. Lay leaders often expect contractual arrangements, key performance indicators (KPIs), and other methods of evaluation. But often times lay leaders do not have a constructed role description or methods of evaluating this work. One of the ideas discussed was the growth of lay-leader contracts and KPIs as a mechanism to ensure lay-leaders and professional staff can work together without doubling up on roles, energies and creating conflicts.

Linsay: I learnt about a host of new communities; geographic, political, and denominational. We are very lucky at the ACTJC because we work together in a very symbiotic manner; it's very different than most other places around the world. But even so, how much about one another do we really know? Do we know each other's siddur, or Torah commentary? Do we know if we are similar or apart from one another in mindset, are we bound together or drifting away? Going to the Nahum Goldmann Fellowship allowed me to answer some of those questions. It also left me with new questions.

Last question, did you miss the kids?

Linsay: Of course, but it was nice to get away and spend some time learning and engaging with the wider Jewish world. But of course it was great to come home and see them.

R'Alon: If you asked me that question each day, the answer would be different. Of course we did! But I would do it again in a heartbeat.



Introducing our Scholar in Residence - Eryn London

I sometimes joke that I am a bit of a nomad. The truth is, that I think that there is so much in the world to see and experience, and I want to see as much of it as possible. When I saw the advertisement that a community in Canberra, Australia was looking for a scholar in residence, I immediately wanted to apply. Not only would I have a job that was everything I wanted to do, but I would have the opportunity to go to a city, country, and continent that I had never been to before.

After talking to Rabbi Meltzer and Yael, I was even more excited about the job. It seemed like it was going to be a warm and vibrant community, and I would be able to put into practice what I have been studying for the past five years. When I saw the advertisement, I had only moved to New York a few weeks prior, and I was in the middle of a hospital chaplaincy internship. And so, very true to my nature of not having transition time, I finished my internship on a Friday and on Sunday started my adventure to Australia.

Many people have asked me if I feel settled in Canberra yet. I happily answer, yes. I found it a very smooth transition to the city and to the community. Partially because I started teaching almost right away, but mostly because of the warm welcome that I received. I don't think I have ever been taken care of so warmly by non-relatives or people I did not know. I am very grateful to everyone who helped find me a place to live, helped me move my bags up lots of stairs,

helped me buy all the things I might need in my new apartment, who took me around so I could get to know the city, and to all who made sure to come over and introduce themselves so I would not feel like a stranger any more.

I would say most of my day is spent at the Jewish centre, preparing classes, teaching classes, meeting with schools or talking to members of the community- but I am enjoying all of it. I find am learning so much both from preparing my classes, but even more so from learning with everyone who is attending.

In my time not in the Centre, I am becoming more acquainted with the city, and I have started to enjoy the National Gallery, the National Library, and even learned how to walk around the lake without having to use my GPS to get there. I am looking forward to the warmer weather and learning all the other great things the city of Canberra has to offer.

Shana Tova,

Eryn London

Canberra Youth Shabbaton with Hineni

On the 9th-10th of September we had the privilege of bringing Canberra's youth and three leaders from Sydney for a fantastic Shabbaton at our community centre. The weekend began with candle-lighting on Friday evening, followed by a youth-style Kabbalat Shabbat, and a delicious Shabbat meal. The evening continued with a set of Israel programs for all ages, which the kids all loved.

After their sleep the kids joined Shacharit, where they were engaged with a Parasha Quiz throughout the Torah Reading. After the service, we had Kiddush with the rest of the community, Women's Mincha led by one of our own, Naomi Leydman, followed by another exquisite meal. The afternoon continued with programs on making global issues relevant, fostering a connection to Judaism and another Israel program for the seniors. Our afternoon concluded with a lovely sing-along over more food, followed by a beautiful rendition of Havdalla, which many of you joined us for.

We wish to thank our own CaTZ madrichim, and the guest madrichim from Sydney who worked relentlessly, around the clock to ensure the children had a meaningful, fun and safe experience. Based on the responses so far, the kids had a great time, and are looking forward to the next one.



The Netzer Camp Experience



Close to ten years ago, dragging along a suitcase twice my size, my parents nearly had to force me onto the bus for my first ever Netzer camp. It's hard to remember exactly what happened, a whirl of new faces, ideas, and experiences. Not being an overly social child at the time, I was really pushed to my limits, to engage with other kids of all ages and with the only supervision being my leaders who have now long since finished their time in Netzer. Yet despite all this I kept coming back, year after year, around school and family holidays and to this day have not missed a single camp.

Netzer camps for me where a time and place where I was encouraged to be myself, and to open up to those around me. It is in this environment that educate chanichim (participants), on values our values of community, Progressive Judaism, Zionism and social action.

This year I'm 19 and I had the pleasure of being the Rosh Machane (Head of Camp). Netzer Sydney's 2016 Winter Camp, *Machane Olympia*, was held between the 5th and the 10th of July and was a huge success for Netzer Sydney and the Progressive Community as a whole.

This year's we had 97 incredibly enthusiastic Chanichim on camp. This number is incredible for a Netzer Sydney Winter Camp as last year's camp had 70 participants.

It's incredible to see that the amount of effort that Netzer Sydney has put into their events and community involvement pay off in such a big way.

For twenty two chanichim, which represents 20% of the total camp, this was their first Netzer camp. They woke up really early in the morning, finished packing their bags and suitcases, made a sandwich and travelled to one of the most unique experiences a kid can have: Netzer Camp. I'm sure they shared my experience from my first camp: starting off a bit worried and afraid, not knowing anyone on camp and quickly realised the wonders of camp: the friendly madrichim, the fun activities, the skills you learn and off course... the Shabbat.

One of the most special and important experiences of Netzer camp is the Shabbat. The Netzer Shabbat atmosphere is truly unmistakable, the air feels lighter, and a feeling of peace sweeps over the campsite. Shabbat on camp is a completely different experience to the rest of camp, and we had an amazing Shabbat. It started a bit before evening - when all of the chanichim went to their rooms, took a shower and put on their Shabbat clothes, then we all joined together for the Shabbat service, led by our amazing Shalhevet group (year 12). This is the first time this group organized and led a service, as part of their training as the future leaders of the movement.

The following morning we had a Shacharit service which was a very peaceful and relaxing service, we read from the Torah and had call ups and discussed this week's Parasha, then we had our traditional Shabbat Limmud and discussed leadership in a Jewish content, had different activities, and had some down time before the Havdalah.

I would like to send a special thank you to Rabbi Meltzer and the ACT Jewish Community.

This camp we had 9 chanichim from Canberra attend, 7 of them attending their first Netzer activity. It's amazing to have such support from you and we are very happy with the ACTJC and Netzer's relationship.

I would like to see all of the chanichim and many more in our future summer camp that will be run this January.

Yours,

Jordan Warner Hall- Netzer Madrich and Rosh Machane Olympia



Lunch n Lecture with Stan Goodenough

Introduced by Anita Shroot, the speaker was Stan Goodenough from the Christian Friends of Israel. Goodenough, a South African correspondent for various Christian news organisations, has lived in Israel, mainly in Jerusalem, with his Czech-born wife and seven children since 1991 and has fully integrated into Israeli life.

Indeed, some of his sons have served in the Israeli Defence

Forces (IDF) despite having had to request special permission to do so. As an important member of the Christian Zionist Organization, he has taken a leading role in the movement to combat the pro-Palestinian agitation and not-so-latent anti-Semitism of some mainstream Christian denominations. This is a major part of the message he is currently undertaking during his visit to various parts of Australia.

As a committed Christian believer, he bases his pro-Israel arguments on passages of Scripture, most notably on the Old Testament. This focus underlies his assertions on the importance of the maintenance of all of Israel as the home of the Jewish people, the in-gathering of them all from exile in the Biblical land promised by G-d in the end of days. That includes Judea and Samaria and the whole of Jerusalem as the eternal capital of the Jewish state. In other words, he is against the two-state solution favoured by the UN and most of the Western countries that maintain some sort of relationships with Israel, including the USA.

Given the hostility of the Palestinians of all shades of opinion, that may not be an untenable proposition, regardless of the theological basis, or the lack of such, of many participants in the Israeli political landscape.

The talk evoked a lively discussion by the large and attentive audience, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Some remarked on the inevitability of the dependence of Israel on the USA. Others mentioned the arguments against continuing that dependence. Still others complained of the one-sided, pro-Palestinian reporting of Israel events in the Western media and the difficulties of seeking a true picture of what is really happening. The vote of thanks for the talk by Robert Cussel, the Chairman of the ACT Zionist Council, reflected the sentiments of the audience in an expression of gratitude to the speaker for being such an avid champion of the Zionist cause by a Christian spokesman, a true friend of Israel.

Submitted by Bob Miller

Belconnen Smells of Fresh Challah

The Jewish young adults of Canberra have been keeping busy over the winter.

Recently, about ten young adults came together for the inaugural 'Challah Bake in Belconnen' with the help of funding from Moishe House Without Walls, a sub-program of the broader Moishe House initiative which provides assistance to young adults to arrange small-medium sized events for young adults with the aim of promoting a sense of Jewish identity and community, regardless of geographic location.

Attendees were walked through the end-to-end process of how to prepare and bake the perfect challah by the very knowledgeable teacher for the evening Romi Rutovitz, and were wowed with the results (see picture). This event is just one of many events held at the homes of young adults across Canberra, which cater to young Jewish adults of varying levels of religious observance. Given the success of the night, the Challah Bake in Belconnen may just become a regular thing!

Angie Glance



Exhibition of the Life and Works of Ernest Fooks, Architect of the National Jewish Memorial Centre

The Faculty of Architecture, University of Melbourne has selected Dr Ernest Fooks as the featured architect for 2016. An exhibition of his life and works will be held in the first week in December at Fooks' home in Caulfield, Melbourne. Not only did Dr Fooks design the National Jewish Memorial Centre in Canberra, but other extant buildings are the B'nei Brith building and a building on the Mt Scopus campus in Melbourne. Adele Rosalky is assisting with drawings, plans and papers from the collection of her father, Earle Hoffman who was President of the ACTJC at the time of the design of the NJMC.

Born in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, Ernest Fooks, artist, architect and town-planner, arrived in Melbourne from Vienna in 1939 as a refugee from Nazi anti-Semitism. He made an immense contribution to the culture and professional life of Melbourne as the first lecturer in Town and Regional Planning at RMIT. As the chief assistant on the architects' panel with Victorian Housing Commission in charge of town planning he designed various town planning schemes for Victorian country towns including Wangaratta, Horsham, Seymour and Ballarat. He was the author of various town planning publications and lecturer at both RMIT and Melbourne University.

In 1948 Dr Fooks opened his own practice as architect and town planner, covering residential, industrial, educational and commercial work.

Ten Years of Architecture and Arts in Australia: 1952-1962 states that Dr Fooks became a specialist in building two and three storey 'own your own' flats in Melbourne and became the design setter in this field which burst into full bloom between 1956 and 1960. Fooks pioneered the modern town planning movement in Australia.

In 1956 he received a bronze medal for architecture, Olympic Games in Melbourne; in 1966 a House of the Year award, *House and Garden*; and an award for his own residence in 1967.

Many of his building designs are published in books and magazines around the world. He was an ex-president of the Jewish Society of Artists, and held many exhibitions of his own art works. Two of his works are in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia.

Before his death in 1985 Dr Fooks was a past president of B'nai B'rith, Melbourne Lodge.

Adele Rosalky



• DR. ERNEST FOOKS



NJMC, early 1980s



NJMC, early 1980s

18C Opponents Don't Get It

Those who want section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act removed or amended most likely will never experience the type of vilification or abuse the law is designed to prevent.

Under 18C, it is unlawful to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of people because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin. But some are offended by this law, claiming it impinges on *their* rights – an apparent ‘right’ to abuse and humiliate others. Ironically, the shrill cries from some in the media and politics about ‘freedom of speech’ emanates from citizens who, luckily for them, will never be the subject of racial, religious or ethnic abuse. Nor will they ever understand that to call someone an ‘angry white man’ is not, and never will be, on a par with terms that reinforce racial, ethnic and religious bigotry.

These right-wing shock jocks and politicians, insulated from aspects of society in myriad ways, including gender, privilege, and race, cannot conceive how words, insults and exclusion can threaten people and groups.

Being the victim of religious or racial vilification hurts in a way that is not often comprehended by the ‘free speech’ brigade. At times, it leads to physical abuse, as we’ve seen with the violence perpetrated by the ultra-Nationalistic and neo-Nazi groups.

The consequence of removing or changing these protections will be an unfettered licence for discrimination, prejudice and exclusion. Those who argue that people should ignore, dismiss or shrug off insults and abuse fail to grasp the consequences on young and often vulnerable people.

My own experiences of anti-Semitism began in country NSW in the 1970-80s; however, the rise of anti-Islamic sentiment and far-right race-hate against other ethnicities and religions reinforces the need for legal protection against discrimination.

I hated school. I hated it because those who had differences – different skin colour, religion, ethnicity or even sexual preference – could never escape the language of ridicule, humiliation, abuse and insult. For some students, being victimised is character building; for others it destroys self-confidence and can result in long-

lasting problems.

No schoolchild likes to be excluded, singled-out, made an example of, or be picked on for their differences. Yet my Primary years were spent as the ‘Jew’, the only boy who was not the same and was not to participate with others – sent out of class during ‘Religion’, told (seriously) by a teacher that ‘my people’ were ‘Christ killers’.

High School was worse, possibly because ‘otherness’ is often unacceptable in a microscopic world of peer pressure and conformity.

My ‘mates’ couldn’t understand why I didn’t get Christmas presents. They mocked the food I ate (let’s face it, Matzo sandwiches don’t look very appetising after being crushed in a school bag) and whenever teenage disputes broke out, the words “f**king Jew” were almost always used.

At lunch time, two scenarios unfolded. First, the tough boys would demand I give them money to spend at the canteen. When I refused, they would yell out: “See, he’s tight with money, like all Jews!” Regardless that I mowed an enormous lawn and caddied twice a week to earn my pocket money; one day I relented and handed over a dollar. This is exactly what one student said as he took my pocket money: “My dad said Jews have *all* the money”.

With vilification you can’t win.

What’s more concerning is that those who want 18C removed are in positions of power. They appear in the media or have a platform in parliament; they have a voice, whereas the vilified only have recourse to legal mechanisms.

At a Canberra newsagency, the man in front of me told his wife the Scratchy tickets were “being Jewish today”. That’s not religious vilification, and as an adult I understand base ignorance and intent, but we also need laws to safeguard those who are being deliberately targeted and victimised.

The ability to combat anti-Semitism or anti-Muslim hatred are not tools a

teenager necessarily has; especially when there are no other children of the same faith or colour to protect you, or to share the burden of 'otherness' with. Or to form a clique and to fight back.

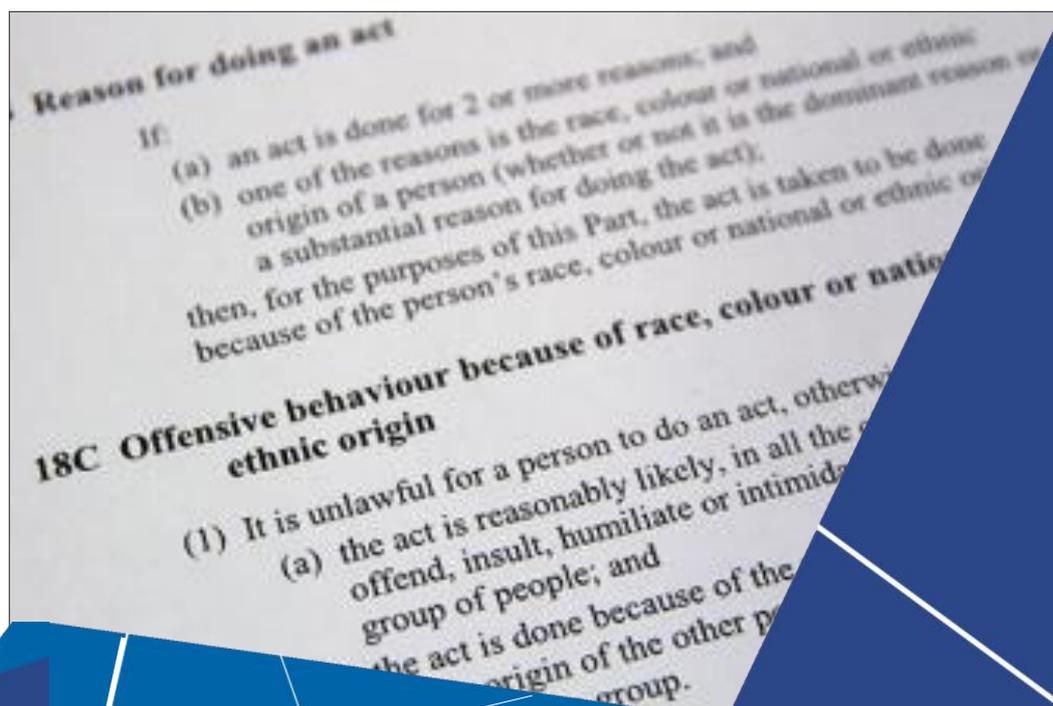
Interestingly, with a strong and righteously proud Aboriginal population at my high school, the 'tough' white boys would never dare say racist comments out loud – for the response was often swift and violent. That's a response bullies do understand.

The opponents of 18C will say that kids can be cruel but you need to build resilience or just dismiss their comments, or offer other excuses that victims of racism, bigotry and prejudice (and sexism) are told whenever they speak up.

Perhaps in a diverse, multicultural and inclusive city like Canberra, school students are less likely to experience vilification, but I suspect that in many other places young people are still victims of racial, religious and sexual abuse and insult.

18C may not be the option or avenue for every person, and for young people it may not be a weapon to repel when being abused and offended, however having legal protection and laws does provide both a strong deterrent and a standard of what is acceptable and what isn't.

Simon Tatz



Three Documents developed by Adele Rosalky for the Australian Jewish Historical Society (ACT)

I've been invited to write a review of three documents which I've been developing, so that members of the ACT Jewish Community know that these sources of information exist and can be referenced when required. I've done this work as a member of the committee of the Australian Jewish Historical Society (ACT), one of whose aims is to collect and archive material relating to our own Community. The documents are:

1. **Obituaries and Consecrations extracted from *Hamerkaz*.**
2. **Historical Sites of Jewish Interest in Canberra.**
3. **Catalogue of Provenance of Donations to the ACT Jewish Community.**

The first volume, *Obituaries and Consecrations*, is a record of all deaths and consecrations that were published in *Hamerkaz* since the first volume in August 1965. Most are of members of the ACT Jewish Community, but some people also published obituaries of their parents or friends. The obituaries offer a fascinating record of the lives of people whose full life stories are only revealed at the time of their death. At this stage the collection is in hard copy format, but it is hoped to digitize the material in the future to make it more accessible.

The second volume, *Historical Sites of Jewish Interest in Canberra*, began when Earle Hoffman, my father, was still alive. One night when he was at my place for dinner, we sat down and compiled a list together, drawing on his memory of the early Jewish sites which should be recorded. My early lists and reference material are in his copper-plate handwriting and the volume has grown over time as I have researched the National Archives, the Canberra and District Historical Society, books on early Canberra, and other sources located on the internet.

- The volume starts by recording sites used for weekly services, high-holydays and other communal activities before the National Jewish Memorial Centre (NJMC) in Forrest was constructed.

- This is followed by a section listing the sites that were offered by the authorities for a Jewish Centre, but not considered suitable. Finally, 31 National Circuit was offered and accepted. Documentation relating to the laying of the foundation stone in February 1962 and the opening of the building in December 1971 is included.
- Next is a section with portraits of the early members of the Community whose efforts led to the building of the NJMC. It also includes pictures of their homes where meetings were held and where many important decisions were made.
- The next section is on commemorative plaques and sculptures located around Canberra which relate to Jewish individuals and organizations.
- The final section deals with locations of general historical events such as laying of the foundation stone of the Israeli Embassy in 1958, the site of the refusenik demonstrations in the 1970s, Christian/Jewish Dialogue, outreach programs and Jewish cemeteries.

This volume is being added to as new material comes to hand.

The third volume, *Catalogue of Provenance of Donations to the ACT Jewish Community*, is a chronological listing of the donations of items from the time of the consecration of the NJMC in 1971, to the most recent donation of items presented to Australian dignitaries, which will eventually form the nucleus of a Jewish Museum at the NJMC. This listing includes many familiar items around the building, and some less familiar. Photos of the donations are accompanied by extracts from *Hamerkaz* relating to the item at the time of donation. This volume also includes provenance of art works seen on the walls around the building.

If anyone has material in their possession that they think would enhance the records listed above, it would be gladly received. If you would like to view these documents, I can be contacted by phone 62731927 or email davros@webone.com.au.

Adele Rosalky

Since last Rosh Hashanah we have done the following.....



Education

120 Adult Education Classes
252 Youth and Teen Classes



Membership

16 New Young Adult Members
5 New Family Members



VIP Functions

17 Embassy Functions
5 Parliament House Events
9 Meetings with
Government Ministers



Capital Appeal Campaign

\$400k Raised from the
ACTJC for our Capital
Campaign (and rising)
43% of our total target
raised



Campaigns

2 Telethons



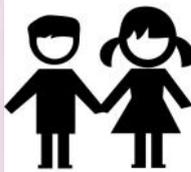
Educators

2 Shlichim
1 Scholar in Residence



Celebrations

9 Social Events



School Visitors

1294 School children
visited the Centre



Meetings

18 Interfaith
Meetings and
Events



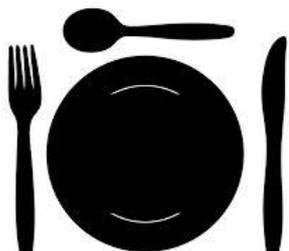
Infants

2 Baby Namings
2 Brit Milah



Toddlers

30 Tots Shabbat-ers



Meals

169 Seder Meals
cooked
1600 meals served
during Shavuot



Young People's Activities

3 Senior Madrichim
2 Junior Madrichim
26 Youth Movement
activities



COMMUNITY

DINNER

IN THE SUKKA!

OCTOBER 16 06:30PM

CATERED BY SASHA WEISMAN

MEMBERS: ADULT \$30, CHILDREN \$15
NON MEMBERS: ADULTS \$40, CHILDREN \$20
CHILDREN UNDER 3 FREE

PLEASE RSVP BY 10 OCTOBER
FOR CATERING PURPOSES

