

Australian Jewish Historical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER



Member of the JCA Family of Communal Organisations

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Australia Day Honours

The Society records with great pleasure the awarding of the Medal of the Order of Australia to Morris Forbes, a former President and longstanding Editor of the Journal of this Society, in the Australia Day honours.

The Society also congratulates Beverley Davis, Secretary of the Victorian branch of the AJHS, on her award of an OAM.

Together, these awards mark a public acknowledgement of the important contributions made by Morris and Beverley to the recording, writing and study of Australian Jewish History.

(A) The 1995 Committee of the Society

At the December AGM, the following office holders and committee members were elected. We offer our congratulations to all of them. Whilst study commitments precluded my standing for election, I'm very pleased to remain editor of the newsletter.

AJHS Committee 1995

RABBI R. APPLE	NONI GUTHRIE
ANNE ANDGEL	GEORGE KEEN
HELEN BERSTEN (Archivist)	RUTH MANDELBERG (Secretary)
DAVID BITEL	JULIUS MAYER
DENNIS BLUTH (President)	SUZANNE RUTLAND (Vice President)
SOPHIE CAPLAN	SYLVIA ROSENBLUM
SOL ENCEL	JUDITH SHAPIRA
MIRIAM SOLOMON (Treasurer)	NAT ZUSMAN (Vice President)

(B) Memberships For 1995

Members are asked to respond promptly to the renewal of subscriptions for 1995. This will assist in keeping down the running costs of the Society.

Members are also reminded that tax deductible donations can be made to the Society's research library and these can be made at the time of subscription renewals.

(C) From The Archives

(i) Donations of material have been received with thanks from:

- Leonard Bass through Sydney Levine: *A remarkable man, Maurice Herman (Harry) Kellerman, OBE* by Kath Price. [Mr Kellerman is joint patron of our Society.]
- Diana Ritch: tape and transcript of interview with the late Rabbi Porush.
- Jenny Berman: 16 page handwritten letter from D.H Harris to Fanny Rubinowich (Reading), November 1909.
- Justice Brian Cohen: Illuminated address presented to Samuel Cohen by the Montefiore Home, Charter of the Maccabean Hall presented to John J. Cohen and signed by Sir John Monash. Justice Cohen also allowed us to copy some valuable family photographs which include the Hollanders and Cohens.
- Miriam Shifreen: family tree of Levi, Moses, Alexander, Berlin, Schiffrin, Chalezky, Eolovitch, Levy-Price families.
- Lew Rischin: *Hebrew Standard*, January 26, 1912 and February 4, 1937.
- Mr Moss: *Our Haggadah*, a secular Yiddish Haggadah published by the Friends of the Yiddish school in Sydney, April 1963.
- Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs: *The Israel-Diaspora Identity Crisis* by Isi Leibler.
- Balmain Historical Society: newspaper clipping from *Sydney Morning Herald* re decoration of the Great Synagogue, 1883:

The decoration of the Jewish Synagogue, in Elizabeth Street, has just been completed by Mr. W.G. Hibble, of Newtown, and the effect has been to considerably enhance the beauty of the architectural design of the building. When the erection of the synagogue was completed, the interior was merely plainly plastered, and remained in that condition until a few months ago, when the work of decoration was placed in the hands of Mr Hibble, who has carried out his task to the satisfaction of the committee and the architect, Mr Thomas Rowe. The style of decoration is exceedingly chaste and beautiful, and thoroughly in keeping with the character of the edifice. Sea green, cinnamon, and white are the only tints used in the building, with the exception of the dadoes along the gallery walls. The architectural ornamentation is neatly displayed by gilding, and everywhere the colours used are light, the result being an entire absence of gaudy effect. Nearly the whole of the work has been hand painting, and in some cases, particularly along the ceiling, this has been done under considerable difficulties, expensive scaffolding having to be erected. Gilding forms an important

feature in the decoration, between £200 and £300 worth of English gold-leaf having been used. The galleries have undergone a complete change, hand-painted dadoes and chastely ornamented ceilings having taken the place of bare white walls. This is one of the largest works in decoration that has been carried out in the colony, and Mr Hibble may be congratulated on the manner in which he has performed his work.

(ii) Thanking Our Archive Helpers

The archivist would also like to express thanks to the following people who once again have provided invaluable assistance to her during the past year: Irene Rothenburg, Les Belinfante, Noni Guthrie, Sylvia Friedlander, Lisa Marx.

Thanks are also due to society member Lee Simmons who has kindly donated an Apple computer so that we may produce a data base catalogue.

(D) Meeting With Anthony Joseph

Dr Anthony Joseph, President of the Jewish Historical Society of England and this Society's corresponding member for the UK, will address a joint function of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society and AJHS on Tuesday 28 March at the Great Synagogue. The title of his talk will be "Anglo-Jewish History and Its Genealogies - A Personal View".

Dr Joseph originally gave this address at his recent installation as President of the JHSE. Dr Joseph's speaking engagements whilst in Australia will include:

- . Perth at the Dianella Public Library on 13 March;
- . Adelaide at B'Nai Brith on 19 March
- . Melbourne at Temple Beth Israel on 21 March
- . Brisbane at the library of the Queensland Family History Societies on 2 April.

Further details of these interstate speaking engagements are available from the archivist.

(E) A Bondi Discovery (by Ruth Moss)

In October 1994, Clifford Moss - a resident of a boarding house in Bondi - was handed 4 prayer books found on the premises. In actual fact they were 3 prayer books and a Haggadah. In November he passed the find to the AJHS and contact was made with Rabbi Apple who expressed particular interest in the Haggadah as it was printed in Yiddish.

The Moss connection with the Great Synagogue comes through the Symonds family. Clifford's grandparents, Queenie and Ralph Symonds, were for nearly 7 decades closely associated with the Synagogue. Earlier associations include several Synagogue Presidents and one of its earliest marriages between Morris Symonds and his wife Celia over 100 years ago.

(F) Emanuel Solomon of Adelaide - [re the Beatification of Mary MacKillop]

In the period prior to the beatification of Mary MacKillop by Pope John Paul II, there were several references to the support given to her and her Josephite Order by an Emanuel Solomon of Adelaide. These were without further elaboration except that he was Jewish.

In *Australian Genesis*, Levi and Bergman describe Emanuel Solomon and his family as having dominated the formation and continued existence of the Jewish community in South Australia (page 286). Together with his brother, Vaiben, Emanuel arrived in Van Diemen's Land as a convict having been found guilty of breaking into a dwelling house and stealing clothes. From 1818 to 1821 he received 125 lashes for minor offences until convicted of stealing clothes when he was deported to Newcastle for three years (also with his brother).

Between pages 286-9, Levi and Bergman outline Emanuel's subsequent rise, such that in 1867 he was elected to South Australia's Legislative Council. Four years later he celebrated the 25th anniversary of the foundation of South Australia, by personally inviting 500 of the 'old pioneers' to a banquet at the Town Hall.

(G) News from The Canberra branch of the AJHS
(from Sylvia Deutsch, Vice-President, ACT Branch)

1. Earle Hoffman OAM, founding president of the Canberra Branch of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, and his wife Anne Hoffman, one of our committee members, have just celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. They were married 50 years ago in the Margaret Street *schul* in Brisbane.
2. Committee member, Margaret Beadman, is a volunteer guide at the Australian War Memorial. She was deeply involved in the preparation and planning for the *Children of the Holocaust* exhibition organised by the Australian War Memorial earlier in 1994. The exhibition consisted of 58 drawings by the children of the Terezin ghetto lent by the State Jewish Museum in Prague. It was also shown at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Margaret collected a large amount of background material, for use by War Memorial staff in preparing the exhibition. She has donated this material to our branch, as well as some of the War Memorial's planning briefs and lists of Holocaust survivors who participated through the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. I have added material which I collected independently while writing about this exhibition for *The Australian Jewish News*, eg details of the official opening including speeches by Prime Minister Paul Keating and by John Glass, a child survivor of Terezin and NSW Jewish Board of Deputies deputy president.

I have organised the material in the following folders:

- Australian War Memorial planning; Terezin and Holocaust background material;
- Judaism, oral history and newspaper cuttings;
- Sydney Jewish Museum, Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, Child Survivors Conference, Melbourne 1993 (includes audio tapes); U.S. Holocaust Museum, Washington; *Schindler's List*.

In addition there is a folder containing research by Margaret Beadman on Jewish nurses in the Australian armed forces during World War I.

Margaret Beadman was honoured in July with an Australian War Memorial medallion for her work on the *Children of the Holocaust* exhibition. The medallion is normally given to heads of state, government leaders, retiring members of the War Memorial Council and staff members retiring after at least 15 years' service.

(H) Visit to Gunnedah: Roseneath Manor

During the holidays, my family and I had the pleasure of visiting Gunnedah which is situated on the banks of the Namoi River. Whilst perhaps best known as the land which inspired the poet Dorothea Mackellar, I can report that in the visitors' "what to see and do brochure" is the following item:

Roseneath Manor Restaurant

Roseneath Manor, located at 91 Maitland Street, is an historical residence that was once the home of George Cohen, the first storekeeper in Gunnedah. Now fully restored and classified by the National Trust, Roseneath offers light meals, morning and afternoon teas and dinner in a relaxed atmosphere.

Contact: Ron and Margaret Bayliss on (067) 421-906

According to an article in the *Gunnedah Advertiser* (18 February 1954), Cohen arrived in Gunnedah in the 1850s and subsequently served as its postmaster in the 1860s. He was also a member of the board formed to support the erection of Gunnedah's first public school. For many years Roseneath was the "outstanding residence of the town". In 1885, as the second oldest resident of the city, he opened what became known as Cohen's bridge which crossed the Namoi river.

Unfortunately we visited Gunnedah on a Monday, the one day of the week on which Roseneath is closed. Photos of the home follow on the next page.

Whilst in the vicinity we also visited Tamworth which also has in addition to its Levy and Cohen Streets a Jewry Street.

(I) Correction - Chevra Kadisha

The October newsletter incorrectly spelt Rabbi Kirsner's name.

Bruce Le Bransky (Editor)

Contributions to the Newsletter are most welcome.

