

AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Member of the JCA Family of Communal Organisations



NEWSLETTER

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ROSH HASHANA GREETINGS

The President and Committee of the Australian Jewish Historical Society extends to all its readers its best wishes, *L'Shona Tova Tikatevu*, and hope it will be a good year for all Israel, and especially for the members of the Australian Jewish Historical Society.

A TIME OF RENEWAL

At this time we pause to reflect on our efforts of the past year and think about what we can do to improve ourselves in order to achieve our goals. For the Society, this means a period of renewal and to accept the challenge to play an even greater role in preserving the history of our community. Over the last year much of the groundwork has been laid to allow the Society to become the custodian of the community's archives and enable it to provide easier access to an ever-increasing range of information for study and research.

To appeal to a wider range of people we are modernizing our image (note our new logo, which will be incorporated into all communications in future). Our computer system has been upgraded and the office reorganized to accommodate a larger number of researchers and enquirers at the one time, whilst a completely revised website will be launched later in the year.

In preparation for the new website, all the Journals and Newsletters have been digitised and will be searchable online. Over the next months, we will be adding details of Jewish Marriages and Burials, Jewish Newspapers, Jewish Service Personnel and more.

The initial steps have been taken towards establishing a Jewish Communal Archive. We have acquired additional storage space and are preparing to catalogue the archives of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and already manage the Yiddish book collection of the former Yiddish Folk Centre. We are in continuing discussions with the Archive of Australian Judaica and the Great Synagogue Rabbi Falk Library and are commencing a survey of the community's archives, to be carried out by a professional archivist.

Most importantly, however, to keep our own house in order a full-time professional archivist will commence at the beginning of 2018.

THE VON MÜLLER MYSTERY.



Ferdinand Jacob Heinrich von Müller was born in Mecklenburg, Germany on 30 Jun 1825. He came to Australia in 1847 with his two sisters and arrived in Adelaide on 18 December 1847 on the *Hermann von Beckerath*. He moved to Melbourne in 1851 and was appointed Government Botanist in the Colony of Victoria in 1853. From 1857-73 he was director of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens. He travelled extensively around Australia collecting specimens of animal and plant life and classifying them for the scientific world. In 1855 he was appointed botanist of the North West Australia Expedition led by A. C. Gregory. On this journey of exploration that covered 8,000 km over 16 months Müller collected nearly 2,000 species of plants. He sent huge amounts of plants and seeds to grateful public gardens, herbaria, institutes and individuals throughout the Australian colonies and overseas. Blue Gums in California are one result of his international exchanges of plant specimens.

Von Müller forged an international reputation for the quality of his work reflected by the many awards bestowed on him by Australian and foreign governments. In his travels he identified about 800 botanic species new to science. He was made a baron by the king of the German kingdom of Württemberg for his large donations of botanical specimens from Australia. The unusual mountain range near Uluru now known as Kata Tjuta was originally named the Olgas in Müller's honour by the explorer Ernest Giles (the Queen of Württemberg's name was Olga). Müller was a member of the organising committee for the Burke & Wills Victorian Exploring Expedition, though he didn't want Burke to be leader. Not everything Müller did was successful; he strongly promoted the introduction of the European blackberry into Australia, which is now a noxious pest, although it is being controlled by a rust fungus and by herbicide sprays.

Von Müller died on 10 October 1896. He is buried in the Jewish section of St Kilda Cemetery in Plot No B225. He was buried on 13 October 1896. Members of the Melbourne Liebertafel gathered at the graveside to honour his memory. The Melbourne Chevra Kadisha have no record of his being Jewish or of his burial.

SYLVIA DEUTSCH – LIFE MEMBER
Adele Rosalsky



At a well-attended AJHS ACT meeting on 17 May 2017 our former President Sylvia Deutsch OAM was honoured, in her absence, with a Certificate of Life Membership in recognition of her long and dedicated service to our branch of the AJHS.

Sylvia served continuously from the inception of this branch in 1984 until her departure to live in Sydney in 2015. She was the inaugural Secretary, then Vice-President for many years, and finally in 2008 served as President for the following seven years on the retirement of Earle Hoffman who had preceded her in the President's role for 24 years. Earle valued Sylvia's advice and they had a very good relationship.

Over the years Sylvia wrote many reports about AJHS ACT's activities for Hamerkaz and was meticulously thorough and detailed in her research of all her published material. Today we have her articles as a record of the history of our branch of AJHS, and in fact, of the ACT Jewish Community.

On Tuesday 27 June, a presentation of the certificate was made to Sylvia at the home of Leonie and Richard Webb, with past and present members of the AJHS ACT committee in attendance. Thank you to Leonie for her generous hospitality.

LAUNCESTON SYNAGOGUE RESTORATION

TRUST, the National Trusts of Australia Magazine in its Spring Issue No 3, contains an article "Living Religion". The article is about the Hobart and Launceston Synagogues and along with the history there are many colour photographs of the interior and exterior of both synagogues.

The main thrust of the article, however, is to draw attention to the fact that the National Trust of Tasmania is coordinating a program to raise funds for the conservation of the Launceston Synagogue by way of fully tax deductible donations.

Anyone interested in assisting can contact Olga Stack on (03) 6344-6200 or visit the website: -

www.nationaltrust.org.au/donate-tas

NAMED JEWISH SITES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Gary Luke

On one wall of its outback themed restaurant the Narrabri RSL Club has a large mural of a few shops in the main street in the late 1800s. Featured are the businesses of two Jews, the general store of A E Collins, second building on the right, and Reuben's Royal Hotel first on the left. Albert Ernest Collins purchased the store from his brother Charles, the first mayor of Narrabri. They were sons of Joseph Collins, trustee and executive member of the Goulburn Hebrew Congregation and its cemetery. Collins Park in the centre of Narrabri and the bridge on Kamilaroi Highway over Namoi River approaching Wee Waa are named in his honour. The Reuben Brothers of the Royal Hotel included Henry Albert Reuben, trustee of the Synagogue at Maitland, with an infant son buried at the Jewish community's private property cemetery. Hundreds of tourists and the Narrabri locals who enjoy the meals at the RSL restaurant probably are totally unaware of the Jewish input into the establishment of business, council and civic affairs of the town.



About 30 km to the west of Newell Highway, halfway between Moree and Narrabri, is a billabong known as Jews Lagoon. About a year ago when I enquired with the Moree Library historian about the source of the name of the lagoon there was no record or knowledge of its derivation. It's named for Nathan Cohen and Michael Cleveland Solomon who owned the property. Nathan Cohen, born at Port Macquarie, son of Abraham and Sophia, is remembered as a founding father and well-respected mayor of Tamworth.



At Gunnedah 100 km south of Narrabri, Cohen's Bridge and nearby Cohen Park alongside the Namoi River acknowledge the influence in establishing trade and commercial life in the township by George Judah Cohen, who is buried in the heritage Jewish cemetery at Maitland.

Earlier this year in February, while leading a kayak trip on the Lachlan River, the group ate one night at the Vandenberg Hotel in Forbes. One of our crew who had taught decades earlier at Eugowra school in the district had no inkling

of the Jewish source of the historic hotel's name, nor that five of the family are buried in Forbes cemetery, and a regional cemetery needed to have a Jewish section whilst Jews played a significant part in the history of regional NSW.

These examples serve to illustrate the part Jews played in the pioneering of New South Wales when pastoral properties and trading townships spread across the state in the nineteenth century. Many are unaware that Jews were considered ordinary citizens and took part equally in the establishment of NSW as a flourishing agricultural colony of the British Empire at a time when Jews overseas were struggling to gain civic rights.

Many Local Government Councils have embarked on projects to mark with plaques important heritage sites, to inform passers-by of historical influences which formed the material and social developments of their region. I would like to list and map those sites pertaining to Jews, with the aim of eventually erecting plaques. For instance, the bridge over the creek leading north from Braidwood is known locally as Jews Bridge, named for the nearby mill of Henry Jacobs and Aaron Hendricks. Another example, Hyams Beach in Jervis Bay, named for Michael Hyam. Cohens Gully in Murrarundi is where Lewis Cohen was licensee of the Woolpack Inn. Montefiore is a locality in Wellington, named for Joseph Barrow Montefiore. A couple of mysteries, in case anyone knows the reason for the names: Cohen's Lake near Tathra, renamed as Blackfellows Lagoon, and Pollack Bridge across the Nymboida River. Plaques marking these sites might not eventuate but at least an online map with marked locations and annotations can be compiled as a reference and memorial. Those interested in assisting Gary with this project can contact him at :-

email@jewsofnsw.info

JEWISH FEMINISM: PRESPECTIVES FROM THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY.

Suzanne Rutland.

The role of the Jewish woman is encapsulated in a famous Hebrew proverb, beginning: 'A woman of value who can find? Her price is far above rubies!' Sung every Friday night by the man of the household as part of welcoming in the Sabbath, *Ashet hayil* represents to some, the forward-looking approach of Judaism to women in biblical times when a woman was considered by most other cultures as a mere chattel, incapable of learning. To others, it represents the traditional approach to women that designates an inferior position to her, ascribing only the role of wife and mother.

This debate about the role of women and traditional Judaism remains very much part of Judaism in contemporary Australia. When I wrote the article in *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal* in 2002, I sought to explore five key questions. In reflecting on this article 15 years later, I focus on how women sought to raise the status of Jewish women, both within and without the community. I consider some of the more recent developments and finally, discuss how the history of Jewish feminism in Australia compares with the general history of Australian feminism.

Suzanne's article can be found at:- **www.auswhn.org.au/blog/jewish-feminism/**

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LANDAUER MEMORIAL PARK.

Jeannette Tsoulos.



In the little township of Cudal, 40 km west of Orange in central-west NSW, the Memorial Park has received a new name, thanks to the lobbying of Cudal Progress Association. The park now sports a new sign, “Landauer Memorial Park.”

The name is appropriate and long overdue. The idea of a park with memorial gates was first put forward at the end of World War 1. The daughters of an early settler, Samuel Landauer, who had brought his family to Cudal in 1877 and remained there till his death in 1912, donated the land for the park in memory of their parents, later adding a drinking fountain. A handsome set of memorial gates was erected and inscribed, and finally unveiled in 1930. The four pillars are now inscribed with the names of all men and women from the district who have served in wars in which Australia took part, up to and including the Gulf War.

Samuel Landauer, born in Hesse-Cassel, Germany, in 1832, was the great grandson of a rabbi and the son of a silversmith and scientific instrument maker. Attracted by tales of gold to be found in Victoria, he arrived on our shores in 1852 and spent the next 25 years in the goldmining areas of Victoria and NSW attempting to strike it lucky, working as a miner, a mine manager, a quartz crusher and finally a saw miller, before abandoning his dreams and settling down as a storekeeper in Cudal. There he built and operated a flour mill and also ran the post office. By this time he had married a Scotswoman and his family had increased to eight, with the birth of two sons and four daughters. His mill did well, generating “a lot of business in the town, through selectors fetching in their wheat, and teams carrying the manufactured article to the different townships in the neighbourhood and to Orange, en route to Sydney” (*Town and Country Journal*, 23rd February, 1882).

Samuel, like so many of his co-religionists, took an active part in local affairs from his earliest years. A notice in the *Ovens and Murray Advertiser* (Beechworth, Vic.) of the upcoming anniversary ball of the Beechworth Lodge of St John in 1857 lists him as Secretary. In Cudal, described in *The Town and Country Journal*, 10th July, 1880, as “Samuel Landauer, the town’s leading storekeeper”, he was President of the local school board and became the second Postmaster in 1878. He was appointed a Magistrate in 1883. In 1890 the Municipal District of Cudal was proclaimed, with Samuel Landauer as its first Mayor. He remained Mayor until 1895. His son Joshua carried on in his father’s footsteps, becoming an alderman in 1903. His daughter Edna was a pupil teacher at Cudal School from 1885 to 1891.

Samuel was close to his religion. His family have a letter that he kept from 1884, written to him by Rev I.M.Goldreich, Minister of the Ballarat Congregation from 1868 to 1905, headed “My dear old friend” and hoping for “the exchange of a friendly line” from time to time. He was listed as a subscriber to the Sydney Hebrew Philanthropic and Orphan Society, donating three guineas in 1878 and two guineas in 1885. His son Joshua attended Sydney Grammar School and boarded with M.A.Cohen, President of the Jewish Board of Education. [AJHS Journal, Vol X Part 8].

Samuel’s wife Jane née Campbell was not Jewish, but we have it on record that the family had a Jewish upbringing, from his future son-in-law, Phillip Hart, whose courting letters to his fiancée Dora are in the family’s possession. Phillip writes from Kempsey the day after Rosh Hashanah, 1889, “I spent the day all alone ... I was thinking of you all and picturing you all at prayer and wondering if my darling was reading for the rest as it always was your lot to do so.” Phillip had spent several years with the family working in their shop. He and Dora were married in 1890 in Cudal by Rev A.B.Davis. The marriage application states that Dora, though not born Jewish, had been “confirmed.” Her younger sister Edna, who died prematurely in 1901, was buried in Rookwood Hebrew Cemetery.

Dora being her father’s mainstay in the shop, Samuel sold it after her departure to Kempsey but kept the mill. Jane Landauer died in 1906 and is buried in Cudal. Samuel died in 1912 and is buried in Rookwood Jewish Cemetery, where his age is wrongly noted as 92. It is clear from the various ages he gave on his children’s birth records that he never knew his age. He was just 80.

Of Samuel and Jane’s children, only Dora married in. Bessie and Fannie married local graziers, Joshua married a local lady and Isaac Louis (known as Louis) became a pharmacist, moved to Western Australia and married there. One of Samuel and Jane’s grandchildren was Hannah Hart, whose letter to the Hebrew Standard in 1924 led to the establishment of the Jewish interstate sporting carnivals. Descendants active in Sydney’s Jewish community include the Morrisises, Robinsons, Harts and Dreyfuses and their descendants.

Cudal lobbied hard in the 1890s to have the railway come through but lost to the town of Molong, so never fulfilled its promise of becoming a larger, thriving country town.

The memory of the Landauers is still alive in Cudal. Some years ago a young couple with two children bought the Landauers' house, which was still standing, and have painstakingly restored it. They have been interested in the history of the family ever since, and their enquiries have sparked interest in some of the local residents, whose forebears were the Landauers' contemporaries.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Rabbis of Rookwood – Sunday 29th October 2017. Join Rabbi Ben Elton for an informative walk through Rookwood Jewish Cemetery. More details closer to the date.

Annual General Meeting – Sunday 26th November 2017. 2:00 pm at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

THE BATTLE OF BEERSHEBA



Tuesday 31st October 2017 marks the centenary of the Charge by the Australian Light Horse Brigade on Beersheba which was taken from the Ottoman Turks and became a significant turning point of the WWI campaign in the Middle East. Many Australians, including descendants of Jewish and indigenous soldiers who fought in the battle will be travelling to Israel to participate in the commemoration events next month.

On Sunday 3rd September 2017 at the Sydney Jewish Museum, Sam Lipski gave an address to the Society to a large audience of some 120 people, including some of the descendants as mentioned above. The address was entitled *Audacity and Watershed, the Charge of the Australian Light Horse Brigade at Beersheba in 1917*.

In his usual erudite style, Sam described the background leading up to the Charge, the main players and the reasons for its success. As well he displayed his extraordinary knowledge of a wide variety of topics during the stimulating discussion time after the address.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The following publications, published by the Society are available for purchase.

- *Hans Kimmel Competition Essays 1979-2007*.
Edited by Russell Stern and Dr Sophie Gelski.....\$20.00.
- *The Road to the Menzies Enquiry – Suspected War Criminals in Australia*,
By Leslie Caplan.....\$25.00.
- *To My Brave Wife – Dunera Notes from an ‘enemy alien’*, by Dr. Kurt Epstein
Edited by Yoram Epstein, Konrad Kwiet, Helen Bersten, Lee Kersten.... \$25.00
- *Jews of the Outback – The centenary of the Broken Hill Synagogue 1910-2010*
Edited by Suzanne Rutland, Leon Mann and Margaret Price..... \$20.00.

Philip Moses. Newsletter Editor.

Contributions to the Newsletter are most welcome. They can be mailed to AJHS Newsletter Editor, 146 Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010, or emailed to admin@ajhs.com.au.