

7. *South Australia*
The Registrar, Probate Office, Supreme Court, Adelaide, South Australia, 17th May, 1844. Personal search A5/- per estate. Official search A5/- per estate. Copies (photostat) A3/- or A4/- a page depending upon size or A4/- or A5/- a page if made positive. (typescript) A5/ up- to five folios of seventy-two words and A1/- each additional folio.
8. *Tasmania*
The Registrar, Supreme Court (G.P.O. Box 167B) Hobart, Tasmania, 2nd August, 1824. Personal search A2/6 per estate. Official search A2/6 per estate. Copies (typescript) for Wills A4½d. a folio of seventy-two words, estate under A£500 or A9d. a folio estate under A£10,000 or A1/6 each folio estate over A£10,000 and for grants A6d. each folio estate under A£500 of A1/- each estate under A£10,000 or A2/- each folio estate over A£10,000. N.B. Prior to 1824 records at Supreme Court for New South Wales.
9. *Victoria*
The Registrar, Probate Office, Law Courts, Melbourne, Victoria, 10th May, 1841. Personal search not available. Official search A5/- each estate. Copies (photostat) A3/- each issue.
10. *Western Australia*
The Master, Supreme Court, Perth, Western Australia, 14th August, 1832. Personal search A2/- per estate. Official search A5/- per estate. Copies (photostat) A5/- per page.
11. *England and Wales*
The Registrar General, Supreme Court of Probate, Principal Probate Office, Somerset House, London, W.C.2, England. Personal search 1/- per estate. Official search 1/- per estate (before 1863) search free. Copies 2/- a sheet photostat.
12. *Scotland and Ireland*
Information not available at present.

The 120th Anniversary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Hobart Synagogue

by MAX GORDON,

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Society.

Invitations were sent out by Clyde Epstein, the President of the Hobart Synagogue, to leaders of the Jewish communities in all parts of Australia, to attend the celebration of the 120th Anniversary of laying the foundation stone of the Hobart Synagogue on 9th August, 1963.

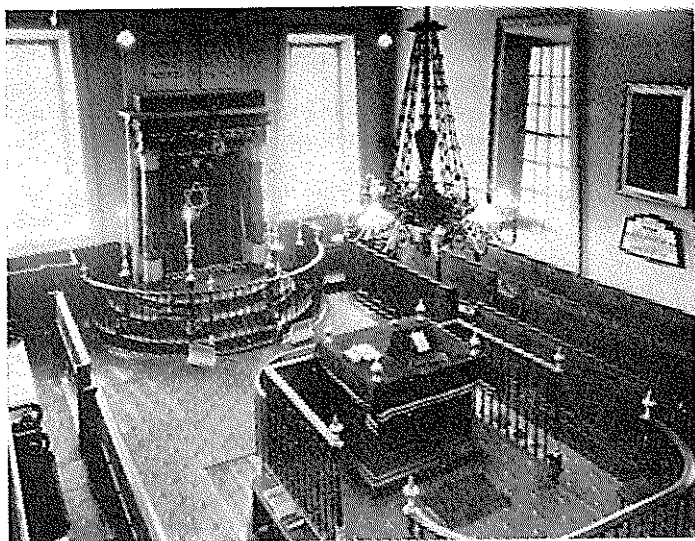
From the day when the President deposited a sealed bottle with a parchment written in Hebrew and English as part of the function of laying the foundation stone on 9th, August, 1843, much has happened in the world. The past 120 years have been momentous and significant for the world, but superficially these same events have left the Hobart Synagogue comparatively untouched.

From 9th August, 1843—the day the foundation stone was laid—the Hobart Synagogue has not changed. It has

the same frontage, the same entrance, the same interior, and the same number of seats. The Ark is in the same position, and the ancient scrolls are in the same Holy Ark.

During the 120 years many Rabbis have served the Hobart Congregation. Some Rabbis stayed for two or three years, others for many years. Several ministers accepted positions as ministers on the mainland. As early as 1828, Rabbi Aaron Levi was requested by the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire to visit Hobart Town to advise and assist the community on its problems.

In 1853, the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire appointed Rabbi Hoelzel as presiding Rabbi of the Jews of



View of Interior of Hobart Synagogue.

the Australian Colonies. He served the Hobart Congregation for three years, and accepted the position of Rabbi of the York Street Synagogue, Sydney.

Towards the end of the Century, the dwindling Jewish population could not afford to support a Rabbi, and as the mainland did not assist the Hobart Congregation there were periods when the Hobart Synagogue did not have a Rabbi.

At the present time, as throughout its long history, the Hobart Synagogue, the oldest in Australia, welcomes visitors and members of the congregation, as the doors are always open.

THE FOUNDATION AND LATER HISTORY.

On Wednesday, 9th August, 1843, people from all parts of the island were assembled to witness the ceremony of laying the first stone of the Synagogue, after the manner of their ancestors.

People of every creed were present at this ceremony, and they were led by the President, Louis Nathan, Treasurer, Judah Solomon, and Secretary, Phineas Moss. Six members of the Committee, two abreast, followed by the Architect, J. A. Thomson, with plans of the building, a silver trowel, a square, plumb, mallet, to be used in the ceremony, were followed by the whole congregation, in order. The President deposited a sealed bottle in which was enclosed a record of parchment, written in Hebrew and English. It was on the fourth day of the week, the thirteenth day of the month AB, in the year five thousand, six hundred and three, from the creation of the world, and the seventh year of the reign of Queen Victoria. The estimated cost of building the Synagogue was £717, but additional money was needed and a public meeting was called in October, 1844, and £125 was raised.

The doors of the Synagogue were opened on 4th July, 1845, by the President, Louis Nathan, in the presence of the Treasurer, members of the Committee and hundreds of Jews and non-Jews. It was a great ceremony.

The dedication of the Synagogue followed the customary traditional lines. The Scrolls were carried from the vestry to the door of the Synagogue, where three knocks were given before they called out, "Open unto us the gates of Righteousness, we will enter them and praise the Lord". The doors were then opened to the chanting of Mah Tovv, and the Scrolls were carried in circuit seven times. Then followed the prayer for the Royal Family.

A reader, Henry Jones, was appointed for the new Synagogue, on 12th May, 1844, at a salary of £12 per annum. A year later, his salary was fixed at £20 per annum. Henry Jones even performed marriage ceremonies. In August, 1845, the Congregation decided to form a library.

Moses Epstein, father of to-day's President, became the Hon. Reader in 1908.

The Jewish population in 1837 was 132. In 1847 it had risen to 452, but in all probability the Jewish population in 1843 must have been about 300.

Prior to the building of the Synagogue, the community of Hobart Town used to attend Services in the home of Judah Solomon--an ex-convict. His home was used as

a House of Worship from 1830 until 4th July, 1845. Judah Solomon presented the land, in perpetuity, for the building of the Synagogue in Argyle Street.

An article in the "Sydney Morning Herald," on 19th December, 1845, described the Hobart Synagogue as being built in Egyptian style. A similar description was given by a Hobart newspaper. Actually, there is little resemblance to Egyptian Architecture. The pillars at the entrance are Roman pillars and the interior resembles the ancient Synagogue in Venice, in the old Ghetto part of the city. The walls of the Venice Synagogue are panelled with mahogany timber and the seats of the congregation run parallel to the walls. The Hobart Synagogue is panelled with stained cedar timber.

Rabbi Gutnick and Rev. Adler, of the Elwood Synagogue—a suburb of Melbourne—accepted the invitation of Clyde Epstein, the President of the Hobart Synagogue, to conduct the service and perform the ceremony of the 120th Anniversary.

The Hobart morning newspaper, the "Mercury," published an article on 7th August last, giving the history and background of the Hobart Synagogue, and describing the celebrations which would take place on 9th August. This anniversary is not without significance. One hundred and twenty years is symbolical of good luck and good fortune. In Israel, when parting, it is customary to wish that one may live to the age of one hundred and twenty years. This hearty greeting is attributed to the memory of Moses, who lived to the age of 120 years.

Rabbi Chaim Gutnick was accompanied by the cantor of the Elwood Synagogue, Rev. Adler, Mr. Lasky, the Vice-President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, and Mrs. Lasky.

At mid-day, on Friday, Rabbi Gutnick and the President of the Hobart Synagogue were interviewed by a representative of the A.B.C., Hobart, the newspapers and TV Stations.

For the evening service, conducted by Rev. Adler, the Synagogue had practically the whole Jewish population of Hobart—men, women and children.

Rev. Adler sang the prayers with much joy. Watching the expression on his face, one could see the happiness he derived from being in Hobart and praying for the Hobart Congregation. The "Nigunim" he sang were familiar to most of the people, and some of the words were sung several times. Each time it sounded somewhat different, and this had a peculiar effect on the congregants. Some

of them looked happy and cheerful, yet some of the ladies, and men, too, had tears in their eyes, as nothing similar had ever been heard in the lovely Hobart Synagogue. The "Kiddish" made everyone feel happy.

The Sabbath morning service commenced about 9.30 a.m., most of the congregation arriving early, and it was surprising to see so many children. The Hobart Synagogue can accommodate 153 worshippers, and there were about seventy to eighty people present—which is practically the whole Jewish population of Hobart. The service was given by Mr. A. M. Hasofer, who is a lecturer of mathematics at the Hobart University. He has been conducting the services since 1956, after Rabbi Ruben left for Perth. The service was continued by Rev. Adler, whose rich, powerful voice seemed to fill the Synagogue.

When the reading of the Law was completed, Rev. Adler sang memorial prayers to the memory of the first President of the Hobart Synagogue, Louis Nathan, and the first Treasurer, Judah Solomon. Rabbi Gutnick announced that he would not give a sermon, but a recital of events which took place over two thousand years ago, the story of Alexander the Great in Jerusalem:

Alexander asked the High Priest of the Temple to tell him where the grave of Moses was. The High Priest told him that he did not know, nor did anyone else. The High Priest was perturbed and called together his brethren—the Priests and Rabbis—and related to them what Alexander demanded. One of the Priests stood up and said, "Please allow me to see Alexander and I will tell him where Moses was buried; this has been handed down to me". The High Priest consented, and after a while the Priest spoke to Alexander: "Go into the desert and there you will see many mounds of sand. Dig them up and straighten them out, and under the last mound you will find the grave of Moses."

Alexander sent hundreds of slaves with bodyguards to the desert and they worked all day long, digging up the mounds and levelling the ground. Night was falling and there was only one mound left. It was decided to come early the following morning to complete the job. During the night sandstorms blew up many more mounds, and when the following day the workmen continued digging up the mounds, they still could not complete their task, and again retired for the night. Another sandstorm blew up many more mounds, and that went on for many days until Alexander in desperation gave it up.

Rabbi Gutnick continued:—

“This is symbolical of the Jewish people through many centuries. When they were driven out and dispersed to different countries, they had to move to new cities and places where they built Synagogues. Here, in the small township of Hobart, in this island of Tasmania, far away from Israel and other European countries, brave, courageous people laid the foundation for another Synagogue—a hundred and twenty years ago—and over the many years the small Jewish population has maintained it. It makes me very happy to be with the Jews of Hobart, in this lovely Synagogue for the second time this year.”

After the service, a Kiddish was served in the vestry upstairs, and the congregation filled the vestry, and stairs leading to it.

There was a social meeting of the Hobart Congregation at the C.W.A. centre in Criterion Street, on Saturday night. Everyone was there, and everyone was in a friendly social mood. Later in the evening, several visitors arrived from Launceston, one of the ladies being the granddaughter of Samuel Benjamin, who had been President of the Hobart Congregation for many years.

A visitor from Melbourne suggested that the name of Clyde Epstein—the President of the Hobart Synagogue, who planned and arranged the festivities for the one hundred and twentieth anniversary—should be suitably inscribed on a tablet.

The President read telegrams from the Ambassador for Israel, His Excellency, Mr. David Teshler, the presidents of various Synagogues of the mainland, and many communal organisations.

Mr. Epstein officially thanked Rabbi Gutnick and Rev. Adler for coming over to Hobart and presented them with hand-beaten spoons with “*Minorah*” and “*Hobart*” in Hebrew, as a memento of the occasion.