

JOURNAL OF GENEALOGY @ AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY



KOSHER KOALA



SUMMER/ JANUARY 2024



Jerusalem, Old City, 2010 Photo: Dani Haski

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AJGS is a subcommittee of AJHS

Editor: Dani Haski Sub Editor: Peter Arnold

Email enquiries and article submissions to ed@ajgs.org.au

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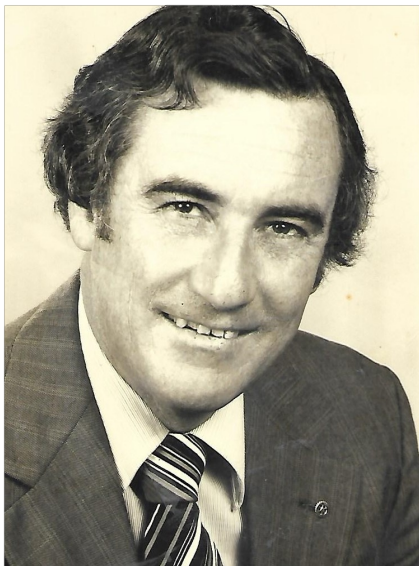


FEATURES

THE CURIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BROWNS AND THE FOGELMANS

STEPHEN BROWN

AJHS member Stephen Brown discovers a surprising connection between his father's foster family and a close friend.



My father, Errol Brown (pictured left), was born in Sydney on 16th February 1933, of a Jewish mother and an unknown father, and given up for adoption. His adoptive parents were Lillian and Adam Brown, who, unable to have children of their own, raised him in a traditional Jewish household. They owned and operated a successful women's hosiery business in Rushcutters Bay.

In 1945, not long before Errol's *bar-mitzvah* at the Great Synagogue, Lillian passed away, leaving Adam to care for Errol. Tragedy struck just a few years later, when Adam passed away in 1950.

Errol was just 17, not yet of legal age to inherit his family's assets, which included the Bellevue Hill home. My father told to me how friends of his parents, the Fogelmans, were appointed as his foster family, but would not disclose the details.

A few years ago, I acquired Adam Brown's death certificate. The informant was David Bolot, in Coogee. He was not related to the family. I was curious to find out who he was and how he was connected to Adam.

In 2022, I obtained Adam Brown's probate documents and will from the New South Wales State Archives (Ed note: [NSW State Archives](#) are now part of [MHNSW](#)).

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me ADAM BROWN of 4 Bulkara Road Bellevue Hill in the State of New South Wales Retired Manufacturer I REVOKE all former Wills and testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me and declare this to be my last Will and Testament I APPOINT DAVID BOLOT of 39 Martin Place Sydney Public Accountant and PERMANENT TRUSTEE COMPANY OF NEW SOUTH WALES LIMITED to be the Executors and Trustees of this my Will I STATE for the purposes of record that I became a naturalised British subject in 1914 and that I am domiciled in New South Wales I APPOINT JEAN FOGELMAN wife of Jack Fogelman of Bankstown to be the Guardian of my infant adopted son Errol Lewis Brown Provided that if the said Jean Fogelman should die or be unable or unwilling to act as such Guardian then I APPOINT KAY BOLOT wife of the said David Bolot to be the Guardian of the said Errol Lewis Brown

The documents revealed that David was Adam's accountant, both personally and for his hosiery business. Bolot was also an executor of Adam's will.

UPON TRUST to retain my present residence No. 4 Bulkara Road Bellevue Hill together with the whole of the furniture and furnishings and household effects and to permit the said Jean Fogelman or the said Kay Bolot whilst acting as Guardian of the said Errol Lewis Brown to reside therein and enjoy the same free of rent so as to maintain it as a home for my said son Errol Lewis Brown until he shall attain the age of twenty one

Instruction in Adam Brown's will for the care of Errol Brown

The will provided clear instructions for Errol's care if Adam died before he came of age. Jean and Jack Fogelman, in Bankstown, were to be Errol's guardians until he reached the age of 21. As an alternative, David and Kay Bolot, of Coogee, could be appointed, if necessary. The foster

family could reside in the Bellevue Hill home, rent-free, provided they maintained it in good order. Family trees in Ancestry revealed that Jean Fogelman and Kay Bolot were sisters — their maiden name was Goodman.

The Fogelmans accepted their responsibility. In 1951, Jean and John Fogelman, together with their teenage daughters, Pamela and Naomi, moved from Bankstown to Bellevue Hill to care for my father. Pamela Fogelman attended Hales Business College, in George Street Sydney, and developed a friendship with student, Pamela Pearlman, from Strathfield. They both learned shorthand and typing skills.

By December 1951, Errol was involved in the same social group as the two Pamelas, regularly visiting Luna Park at Milsons Point, in Sydney.

In 1952, the Pamelas were presented together as debutantes in the Montefiore Home Ball at the Trocadero.

In 1954, Errol turned 21 and was entitled to inherit the residence in Bellevue Hill. The Fogelman family, having completed their obligation as foster parents, moved to another residence, close by.



Souvenir photo of Errol (back left) and an unidentified friend with Pam Pearlman (left) and Pam Fogelman (right) from Luna Park in 1951

BROWN - PEARLMAN: On Sunday, January 30, at 4.30 p.m., Miss Pamela Pearlman, of 2a The Boulevard, Strathfield, to Mr. Errol Brown, of 4 Bulkara Road, Bellevue Hill. Rabbi Porush and Rev. A. Kezelman will officiate.

Later that year Errol proposed to Pamela Pearlman. They married in January 1955 at Sydney's Great Synagogue. Pamela Fogelman married Ken Weiss in October the same year, at the same synagogue.

The Brown and Weiss families didn't have all that much social contact after that, as Errol and Pam (nee Fogelman) went on to establish families of their own.

In the 1990's, I was introduced to Pam and Ken Weiss's son, Greg, by some mutual friends. It was not until early 2022 that I understood the role Greg's family had played in my father's life. Greg introduced me to his grandparents, Jean and Jack Fogelman. We exchanged photos and compared our family stories, to piece together our integrated family history. I thank Greg for his contribution to this story.

Top row left: Stephen Brown (left) and Greg Weiss (right); Top Right: Jack and Jean Fogelman
Bottom: Pamelas Pearlman and Fogelman along with their friend Claire Mishkel featured in The Truth,
Sunday 22nd June 1952, before their debut at the Montefiore Home Ball at the Trocadero.



PAM PEALMAN, CLAIR MISHKEL and PAM FOGELMAN, who will make their debut at the Montefiore Home Ball at the Trocadero on Tuesday, June 24. Twenty-seven Debutantes will be presented.

“HEBREW FOR EVERYMAN” BRINGS BACK FAMILIAL MEMORIES

EMERITUS PROFESSOR
BEN SELINGER

On ANZAC day, 2023, a day dedicated to memories and thanksgiving, Emeritus Professor Ben Selinger AM was preparing for the walk to Waverley Cenotaph. Checking his e-mails before he left, he made an extraordinary discovery.

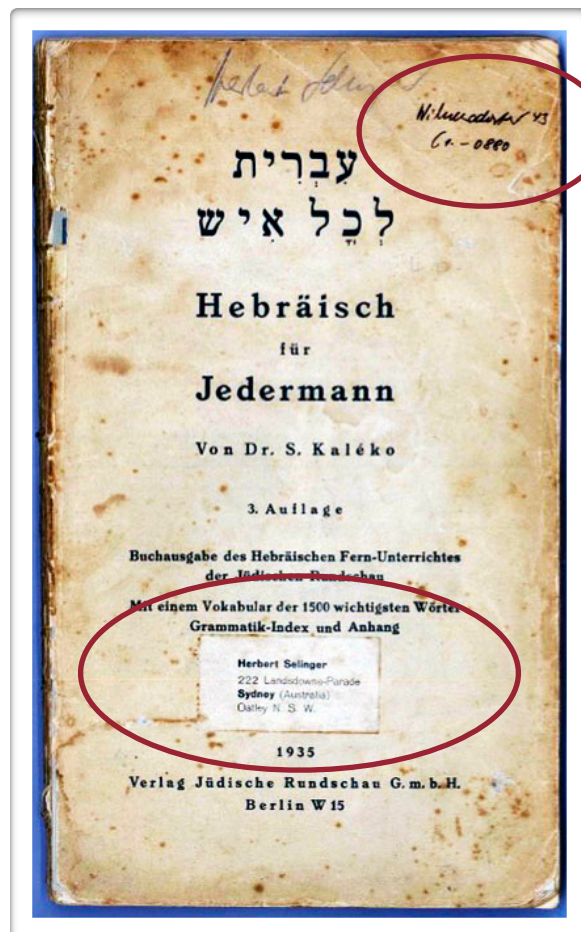
“Guten Morgen, Ben...” began the message from Dr Michael Sprod of the Jewish Studies Department at the University of Sydney “...Is there any chance you are related to the erstwhile owner of this book? I found it while acting as executor of a colleague’s estate. He was a person who had a reputation for not returning books! I am always very keen to return objects to their owners. You are the only Selinger I know”.

He was referring to an old book in an attached photo (right). All I could think was “Wow!”

They say you can’t tell a book by its cover, but this book really did tell an extraordinary story. At the top was my father, Herbert Selinger’s, signature and a Berlin address — one of many he had when he lived there, but this one close to where my mother had lived before they were married.

A business card, stuck on the bottom of the cover, gave an address in Oatley, “lot number 222” (a street number would come later) Landsdowne Pde.

On October 8, 1938 —Yom Kippur — Dr Wolf Matsdorf, of The Australian Jewish Welfare Society, collected my parents, Herbert and Hilda Selinger, and my aunt, Käte (née Selinger) and her husband, my uncle, Johnny Jacoby, from Sydney’s (then called) Semi-Circular Quay. He had arranged temporary accommodation for all of them, as well as organising a block of land, a builder and a bank loan for my parents, in a faraway place called Oatley West.



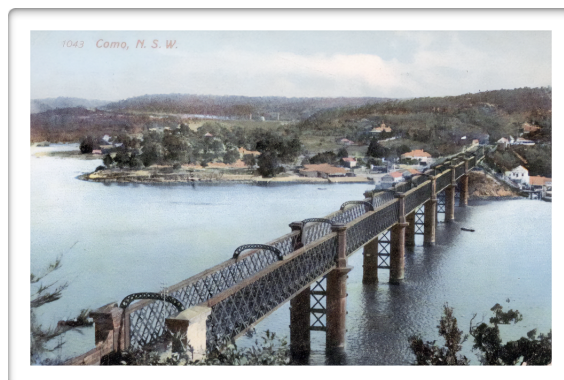


Jewfish Point Estate sales poster —
Oatley Heritage & Historical Society

Here they built our new home on an estate at Jewfish Point (!) on the banks of the Georges River, across from Sutherland Shire.

The estate was new, with dirt roads, just a few houses with outside toilets serviced by the local *dunny cart* (the cart that emptied the outside toilet/latrine before sewerage was connected), and no public transport. When war broke out the following year (September 1939), most of my family were reclassified from refugees to enemy aliens (as I was born in Australia, just, I did not receive this classification). As Enemy Aliens, we were not allowed torches. My father painted the corners of our house white so that we could find the outdoor toilet on a

moonless night. But just down the road from us, at other end of our U-shaped street, they installed an “Ack Ack” base with a searchlight and large anti-aircraft gun (which made the ACK ACK sound), to protect the Oatley-Como rail “gauntlet-chicken” bridge (just a single track served both directions!). I do remember that the military were a reliable source of chocolate for us kids.

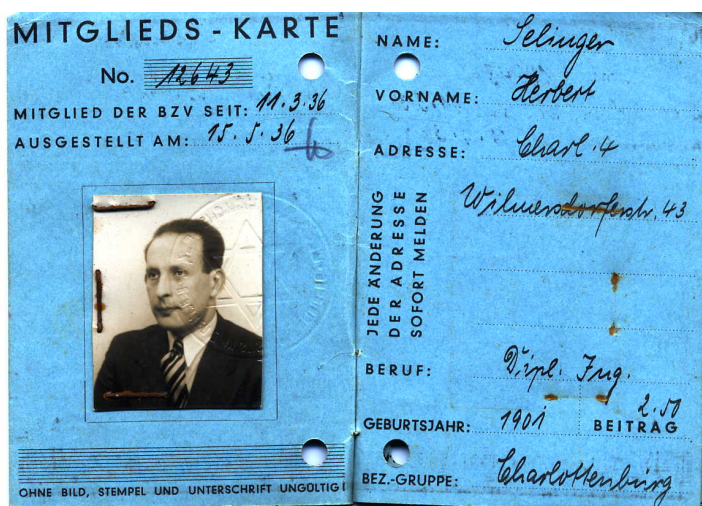


Oatley Como Railbridge in 1904.
Today it's a pedestrian bridge.

The book Dr Sprod brought to my attention — “*Hebräisch für Jedermann*” / “Hebrew for Everyman” — was published by a Berlin Jewish newspaper “*Jüdische Rundschau*”, as part of a distance-education program.

Why would Herbert have had a copy? Because my parents were members of a Zionist group and had actually intended to emigrate to Palestine.

Berliner Zionistische Vereinigung membership card of Herbert Selinger (supplied by the author)

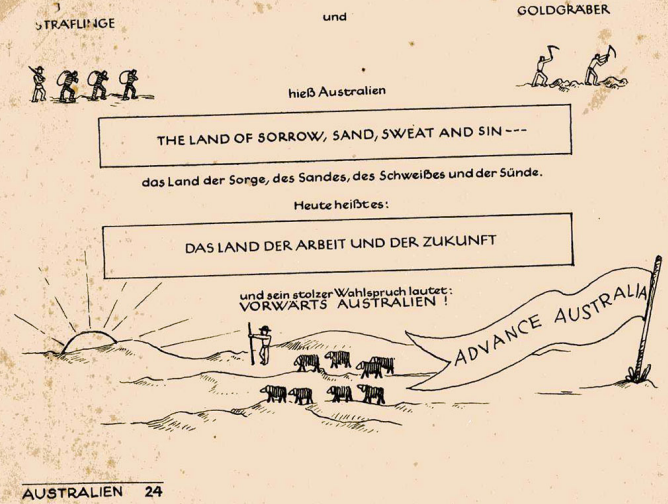


LÄNDER UND VÖLKER

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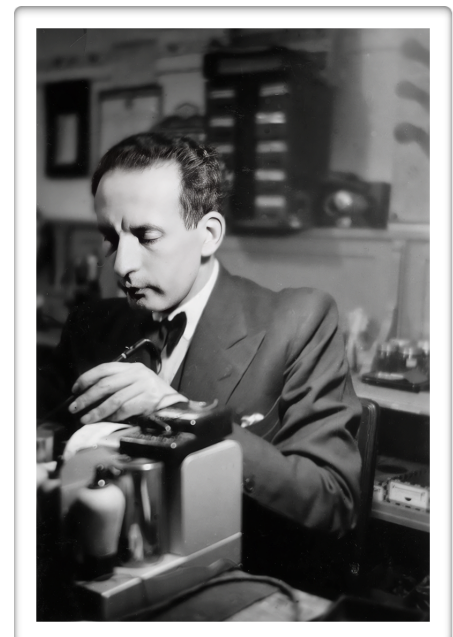


Unfortunately, the British Embassy in Berlin would offer Visa applications only to Argentina or Australia. My mother checked a map and saw that Australia was much further from Germany. The one German book about Australia (pictured above), published in 1930, provided information promising a land that had once been a place of “sorrow, sand, sweat and tears”, but was now changed to one of “work and the future.”

In Berlin, my father had run a radio repair shop. A French naval attaché was the only non-Jew allowed in. He told Herbert to leave Germany and take his invention of a sonar-directed torpedo (one of many things he invented then and later on) to the French Admiralty in Paris, and to stay and work on it in France.

Sneaking this type of technology out of Nazi Germany at that time was “courageous” to say the least. But France? “No way” said my mother, and so began our family’s Australian story.

I’m very grateful to Michael for finding this book and realising the connection. Receiving it has revived precious memories of my family and returned a keepsake for future generations to cherish.



Herbert Selinger in his radio repair shop at Gervinusstraße 2, Berlin in the mid 1930’s (supplied by the author)



The author, Emeritus Professor Ben Selinger (right) enjoying a croissant with Michael Gold on Anzac Day 2023. (Supplied by the author)

NEWS & VIEWS

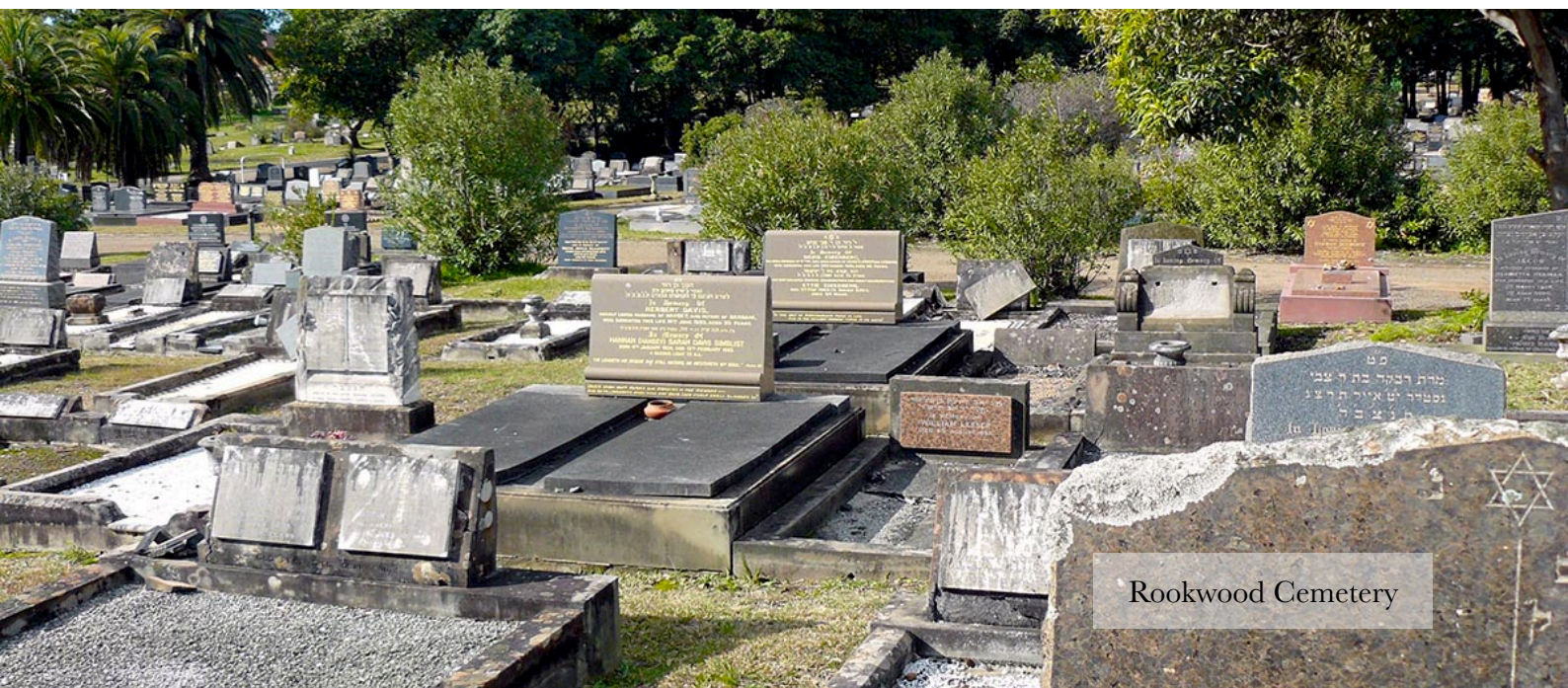
AJHS TAKES JOWBR TO THE NEXT LEVEL



In December 2023, AJHS and JewishGen formalised an agreement to enhance their collaboration in recording and maintaining Jewish burial data for Australia and New Zealand. The focal point of this partnership is the coordination of data updates, additions, and corrections to Australian and New Zealand cemeteries and burial information for integration into JewishGen's esteemed [JOWBR database](#).

Under this agreement, the AJHS will take the lead in managing all aspects of Australian and New Zealand cemetery records, ensuring their accuracy and timeliness through JOWBR's semi-annual updates. Recognising the AJHS as the local experts, this collaboration aims to keep these records up-to-date and easily accessible for researchers globally. JewishGen will continue to host a centralised database.

Researchers exploring JOWBR's extensive database for records in Australia or New Zealand will find a seamless link to the AJHS website. This link provides an opportunity to explore additional information within the AJHS's searchable journal articles, organisational archives, marriage records, and other databases, potentially including headstone photographs in our own burial database.



The initial upload of records from the AJHS has already significantly enriched the JOWBR database, incorporating data from 169 cemeteries and 37,282 records.

The AJHS burials database grew out of the extraordinary work of Beverly Davis, who collected cemetery data over several years. Gary Luke took on the job of convenor of the AJHS burials database, and special thanks goes to Nigel Meinrath, Robyn Dryen and Don Cohen for their frequent advice for amendments, corrections and additional details for burial records. AJHS volunteers are vital sources, proof readers and trouble-shooters of the information we distribute.

With this addition, JOWBR now boasts a searchable repository of 299 cemeteries, with 83,816 records for Australia and New Zealand. Importantly, JewishGen reaffirms its commitment to providing free access to these databases, which are an invaluable resource for family historians and genealogists around the globe. Researchers can anticipate a more efficient and enriching experience, furthering the mission of preserving and sharing the rich tapestry of Jewish history.

MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS HAMBURG'S HISTORY OF EMIGRATION

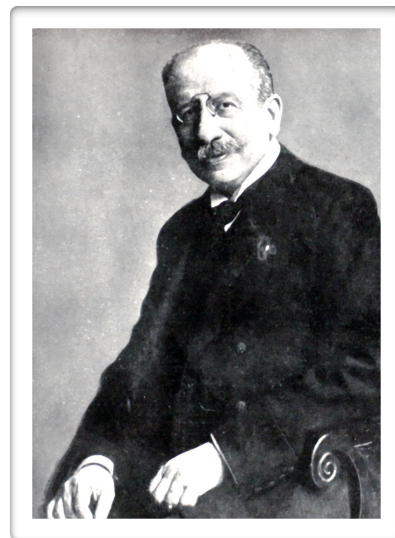


Hamburg was the port of departure for around five million European emigrants in the 19th and 20th centuries. Until 1850, Bremen was a more popular port than Hamburg and had a better reputation because of laws forcing shipowners to provide a basic minimum of space and

food. In 1847, the Hamburg American Parcel Joint-Stock Company (HAPAG) was founded in Hamburg. In 1899, Jewish shipping magnate, Albert Ballin, was appointed Director General.

Ballin, acknowledged as the father of the cruise industry, was the son of Samuel Joseph Ballin (1804–1874), a Danish Jewish emigre to Germany. Although extremely successful in developing the business, being Jewish, and only the director, not the owner of the company, he was not accepted by much of Hamburg society. He was, however, respected and admired by Kaiser Wilhelm II and was designated as being "hoffähig" (acceptable [at court]), an honour bestowed on very few.

In 1901, Ballin built Emigration Halls on the Hamburg island of Veddel to accommodate the thousands of people arriving at the port every week to emigrate to



Albert Ballin (1857-1918)
(Wikimedia)

Top: A display inside the Ballinstadt Museum; Middle: Albert Ballin's gravesite; Bottom: Emigrants at Ballinstadt 1907 (Wikimedia)



North and South America on his company's ships. The complex contained accommodation, a medical centre, a synagogue and a dining hall.

In 1913, HAPAG owned three of the world's biggest ocean liners. Noting the growing tensions between world powers, Ballin acted as mediator between Great Britain and the German Empire in the tense years prior to the outbreak of World War I. He and British financier Ernest Cassel, a personal friend, attempted to negotiate a solution to the naval arms race. Unfortunately, they failed and many of the Hamburg-America Line's ships were lost or suffered considerable damage during the war.

Facing the loss of his entire business and distraught upon hearing the news of the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Ballin committed suicide by taking an overdose of sleeping pills two days before the armistice ended World War I.

Today, the Veddel Island houses the BallinStadt Museum, with a permanent exhibition dedicated to the thousands of people who passed through its halls. The Hamburg Passenger Lists (available via Ancestry subscription) are a valuable source of genealogical information.



JEWISHGEN'S EDUCATION AGENDA FOR 2024



When the JewishGen Learning Center first opened in February 2006, Phyllis Kramer taught the only course, “Basic Jewish Genealogy” — twelve consecutive weeks of lectures with handouts. It was the first online Jewish Genealogy course, but it was not interactive.

Today, as Nancy Holden, Director of Education for JewishGen writes:

...we teach using platforms such as the private WebWiz forum, a private JewishGen Discussion Group, Zoom, or shared private posts on the JewishGen Education Google Drive, depending on the subject and students' needs. Each instructor has their personal preference.

In 2024, the JewishGen Education Division will offer 34 ways for students to interact with experts. Over time, we have developed delivery services such as classes, virtual conversations, personal mentoring, interactive lectures, self-study downloadable workbooks, and electronic research guides. We have added ‘By the Hour’, ‘By the Week’, and ‘By Request’.

You can access the JewishGen Education Platform online and filter classes to your level of skill, by subject or by budget. You can browse a calendar or search by skill level and presentation mode. Much of it is self-guided, with support and assistance from JewishGen’s volunteer tutors.

Even more will be rolled out over the coming year, so keep an eye out for updates.



JewishGen Education Home Page

And for more JewishGen goodies, there are currently 75 videos on the JewishGen YouTube channel, including Genealogical Resources in Israel, presented by lawyer and professional forensic genealogist Rony Golan; Baghdadi Jews Who Lost Their Iraqi Nationality in 1951 with Dr. Jacob Rosen, and Tips & Tricks to using JewishGen with Ellen Kowitt, JewishGen’s USA Research Division Director, plus many more.

1931 CANADIAN CENSUS INDEX NOW AVAILABLE



Library and Archives Canada (LAC) has, in collaboration with Ancestry and FamilySearch International, released a free, searchable index of the 1931 Census of Canada. This searchable index, part of the overall census search interface, replaces the temporary database of images published in June. The full index now covers census returns from 1825 to 1931.

ARCHIVING THE HORRORS OF OCTOBER 7 AND ITS AFTERMATH



On October 7, 2023, Hamas, an Islamic terrorist group based in Gaza, attacked Israel on the morning of the Jewish festival of Shemini Atzeret. Over 1200 people — men, women and children — were brutally murdered. More than 240 were captured and held hostage in Gaza. It was the single deadliest day for the Jewish people since The Holocaust. As a result of the attack Israel declared war on Hamas and the subsequent conflict is still raging. This attack is history in the making and will reverberate for generations in the psyche of Israelis in particular, and the Jewish diaspora in general. It has also sparked an increase in anti-semitic vitriol and vilification across the world.

In order to ensure that this event is remembered accurately The National Library of Israel is collecting documentation of the October 7 attacks and subsequent Gaza war, as events unfold.

In an interview with Times of Israel, Head of Collections at NLI, Dr. Raquel Ukeles, said:

By law, we are the institution for collective cultural memory of the State of Israel, the Land of Israel and the Jewish People... Everybody recognizes both the importance of this work and also how different this work is from traditional collecting. We had to ask whether the role of the library is to document in real time, or to collect after the fact... I feel that we don't have that luxury anymore to sit and wait. We need to collect now and then wait



The initial death toll was thought to be 1400 people. It was later revised down to 1200 but many victims have still not been identified (Wikimedia)



Soon after the attack Israeli artists Nitzan Mintz and Dede Banaid creates “kidnapped” flyers with the photographs and names of hostages. These posters were stuck on power poles and billboards across the world. As of 30 November 2023, the last day of the ceasefire, 105 civilian hostages had been released, which included 81 people from Israel, 23 Thais and one Filipino.

and see whose and what material has an impact and importance going forward.

The first step we took was to immediately start archiving the internet and social media because that’s very ephemeral. It was important to move swiftly. Websites and social media go up and are taken down. Hamas posted videos [of their committing atrocities] and then took them down...

While much of the material is digital, NLI is also collecting printed material such as the posters of hostages held by Hamas that have become a form

of activism around the world; as well as flyers, and cards written to soldiers by schoolchildren.

The project is supported by the Israeli Ministry of Heritage and partners, including, amongst others, the Israel Oral History Association, the Oral History Division at the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Association of Israeli Archivists, and the USC Shoah Foundation.

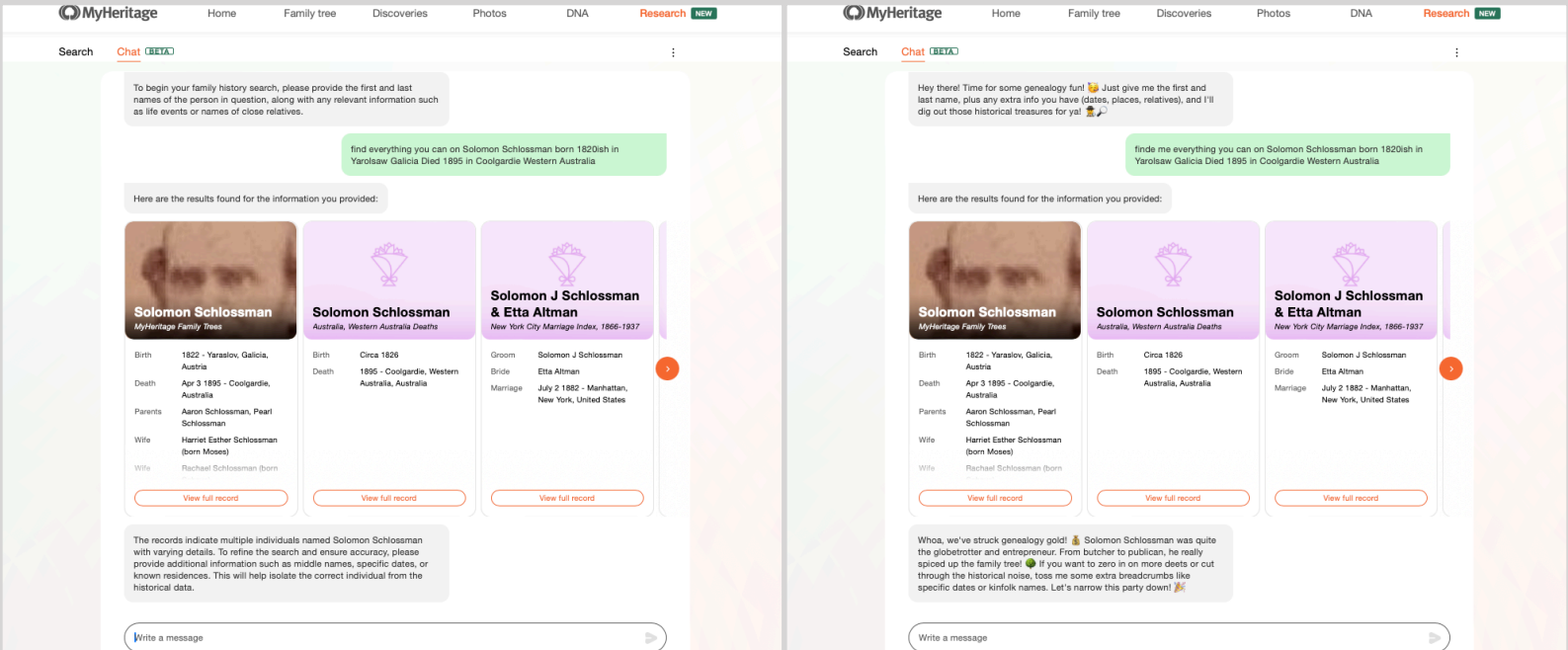
AN AVALANCHE OF AI ACTIVITY



MY HERITAGE LAUNCHES TWO NEW AI PRODUCTS

AI is already upending some areas of genealogical practice with the large online platforms developing tools to leverage the capabilities of the technology. In late December 2023, MyHeritage announced two new AI products — AI Record Finder™ and AI Biography™.

AI Record Finder™ is a chatbot designed to search the 20 billion records in the MyHeritage collection in response to text prompts from the user. The bot has two conversation modes, Casual and Formal. I’ll be honest... So far, I haven’t found the chatbot to be any more useful than searching the old-fashioned way. Casual mode produces peppy conclusions that any competent researcher would reach, punctuated by emojis. The formal responses are the same minus the pep.



On the left is a request for records on Solomon Schlossman in the formal mode; on the right is the same request in the Casual mode. AI Record Finder returned the same results but the tone of the engagement is distinctly different. Only two of these three records pertain to the Solomon Schlossman I'm researching.

In using AI Record Finder™ I did not discover any new records. It was simply a different way of searching the vast MyHeritage record collection.

The other new service is *AI Biography*™. Again, this has two modes: Standard, which only uses information from the subject's timeline, and Enhanced, which draws more information from other sources. Once again, I tested this feature on my 3x great grandfather, Solomon Schlossman, someone I have traced from cradle to grave. The result was delivered via e-mail as a pdf, and can also be [viewed online](#), in Solomon's

entry in my MyHeritage tree. The AI generated story of Solomon's life is not great. The algorithm failed to understand the migration pattern evident in Solomon's time-line and missed one of the most crucial events in his life — when he and his son-in-law, my 2x great- grandfather, discovered a large gold nugget in Victoria in 1870. This event is clearly listed as an Accomplishment in his timeline but the algorithm failed to register it as a major event. Something MyHeritage do get right in this service is a section called *Historical Context*. While quite general, it does point to further areas of research.

Historical Context

Solomon Schlossman was born in 1822 in Yaroslav, Poland. At this time, Poland had been partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria since the late 18th century, with Yaroslav falling under Russian control. The early 19th century was a period of significant social and political unrest in Poland, leading to uprisings such as the November Uprising of 1830 and the January Uprising of 1863. Poles were subject to cultural suppression and conscription into military service, which may have influenced Solomon's later decision to emigrate.

Solomon married Harriet Esther Moses from Witkowo, Poznan, Prussia (now Poland). Their marriage reflects the fluidity of borders and national identities in 19th-century Europe, particularly for Jewish communities. During this period, many Jews faced discrimination and sought better opportunities abroad, contributing to a wave of migration that saw Eastern European Jews settle in Western Europe, America, and Australia.

By 1851, Solomon lived in London, a city undergoing rapid industrialization and growth during the Victorian era. This period saw the expansion of the British Empire and advancements in technology and infrastructure. As a resident of Bethnal Green by 1861, Solomon would have witnessed the stark contrasts of wealth and poverty characteristic of London at the time. His diverse business ventures suggest he capitalized on the economic opportunities presented by this dynamic urban environment.

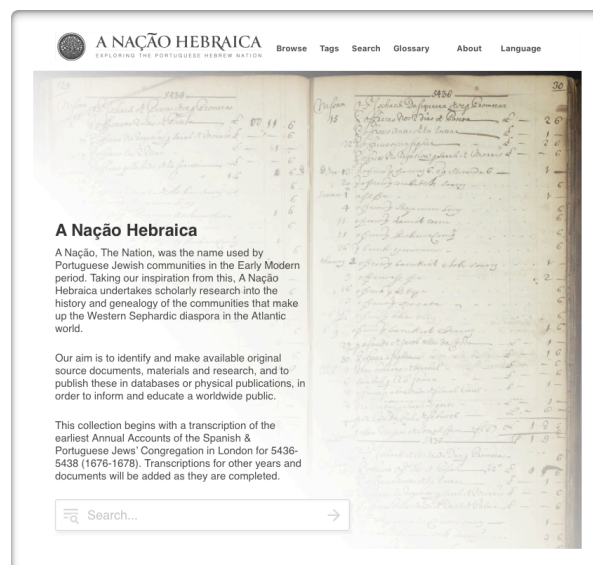
Solomon's move to Australia coincided with the Australian gold rushes, beginning in the 1850s. These gold rushes attracted fortune seekers worldwide and led to profound social and economic changes in Australia. By investing in gold mining companies and owning hotels, Solomon participated in the burgeoning economy that developed around mining towns. His businesses catered to the influx of miners and settlers, reflecting the entrepreneurial spirit that defined this era of Australian history.

TRANSCRIPTION TECH TELLS STORIES

One of the areas AI is truly excelling in is the transcription of handwriting. A company at the forefront of this effort is *Trankribus*.

An unexpected source of genealogical information can be found in the accounts of community organisations. Now, using Trankribus technology, David Silvera and his team have launched *A Nação Hebraica*, with the release of the Annual Accounts of the Spanish & Portuguese Jews' Congregation in London for 5436-5438 (1676-1678). These documents offer a unique window into the daily lives of the London Sephardi community.

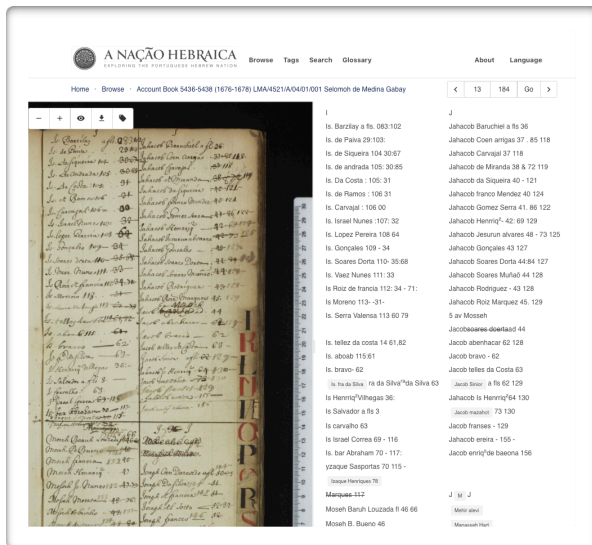
A Nação Hebraica (Portuguese: The Hebrew Nation) is a project to make the early modern archives of the 'Spanish & Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London' accessible to researchers around the world by transcribing them. The London community was part of a network of Portuguese-Jewish diaspora communities, principally in the Atlantic world. These records detail names of members, contributions for religious and life-cycle observances, aid to the impoverished, and assistance to refugees from the Portuguese Inquisition. Genealogists and historians will find in these 500+ pages much information not previously researched and published.



Using an AI-driven handwriting recognition tool, the transcriptions are available for searching and reading. The transcribed results can be copied into Google Translate to translate into English.

Most people will search by name. The authors offer some guidance in using the resource:

The transcriptions replicate the original orthography, that is spellings and abbreviations. We have prepared a Glossary that may help. Most users, especially those interested in the genealogy of their families, will be searching for names. They



are there, although sometimes difficult to recognise. Names are frequently abbreviated or spelled differently, even on the same page.

The AI revolution is moving at light speed. If you're interested in staying up to date you can join an active community at the [Genealogy and Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Facebook Group](#).

TEMPER YOUR EXPECTATIONS

AI is still an emerging field. While services such as ChatGPT have excited people's imaginations these are Large Language Models (LLMs), NOT search engines. When you ask ChatGPT to find information about someone it is not scouring the internet looking for data to return to you. ChatGPT is a creative writing algorithm. LLMs are designed to create plausible sentences, clauses, paragraphs and narratives. They are not looking for facts, they are just looking for the next best and most logical word to place after the previous one, in the context of the instructions you have given it. These instructions, called a prompt, tell the AI what you want it to write.

If you're keen to learn more about how to make the most of AI for your genealogical research there are numerous webinars and workshops offered online including a [recent presentation by Stephen Little for Legacy Family Tree Webinars](#). There is also a very active Facebook group called [Genealogy and Artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#).



SLEDGEHAMMER

THE SEARCH FOR MAXWELL ALLISON'S TRUE IDENTITY

ROSE RAYMEN

In early February 2023, Rose Raymen received an email from Michelle Urban OAM, Vice-President and coordinator of the Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society of Western Australia (JHGSWA). Michelle had received an enquiry from Mark Allison, a retired hand surgeon, asking for the Society's help to find his father's true identity. To help solve this devilish mystery Rose enlisted the help of her friend, genealogist Sally Erwood-Carryer.

Mark Allison (b. 1944) is the eldest of three sons born to Ellen (Nell) Mary Cusack and Maxwell Allison, in Bunbury, Western Australia. Ellen and Maxwell met in the coal-mining town of Collie, WA, where she worked as a matron at the local hospital and he as a clerk at the town's mine. The couple married in Bunbury, in 1943 and at the time of the marriage, Maxwell stated he was 52 years old widower, born in Christchurch, New Zealand. The marriage certificate also contained his father's name, David Allison.



Maxwell Allison enlisted in the Australian Army in Paddington in 1941

Maxwell Allison suffered from rheumatoid arthritis and died in 1959, when Mark was 15 years old. In later years, Mark recognised his father had a personality disorder, characterised by a lack of empathy for others, failure to take responsibility for his own actions and the inability to learn from past mistakes. It also became apparent that the stories Maxwell told his sons lacked consistency, and as Mark would later discover, turned out to be mostly untrue.

Mark had been unable to locate any record of his father prior to his enlistment in the Australian army in World War II, in which he stated he was born in 1902 and was Jewish. However, Maxwell had always told his family that he was born in 1891.

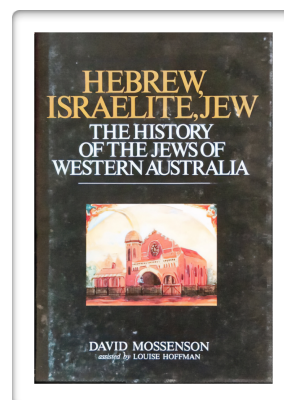
After going down many rabbit-holes, Mark concluded that Maxwell must have been living under an assumed name.

Curiously, some of the stories his father told had consistent themes. For example, that he was the eldest son of a prominent New Zealand family named Allison, who had resided in Perth during the early part of the twentieth century. The only problem was that the Allisons had never heard of him.

In 2021, Mark took a DNA test which indicated he was 50% Irish descent from his mother's side and 30% Eastern European Jewish descent from his father's side. His DNA results also revealed several 2nd or 3rd cousins and a possible half-sister.

The names da Costa and Rodrigues kept cropping up in his DNA matches, the latter often becoming the surname Rogers. Mark surmised there probably weren't too many Jewish boys born between 1890-1893 living in Perth during that time, which was why he contacted Michelle at JHGSWA.

Mark came across author David Mossenson's book, "Hebrew, Israelite, Jew: The History of the Jews of Western Australia", published in 1990 (and available in the genealogy library at AJHS). In the book, Mossenson refers to the lack of Jewish females in the colony. He also mentions a Joseph Rogers (formerly Rodrigues) who arrived in Western Australia in 1882 from New Zealand with several daughters among his large family. The name Rogers and the New Zealand connection resonated with Mark, and it gave Sally and me new avenues to search.



Joseph Daniel Rogers
Western Mail, Dec 10, 1897

Mark sent us a copy of his father's Second World War army service record, which included his photo. On Trove, we found a portrait of Joseph Daniel Rogers dated 1897. I sent Mark the two images side-by-side, comparing Maxwell's military photo with the image of Joseph Rodgers. The two men looked alike and I was confident they were related. Maxwell's enlistment form also stated that his next-of-kin was his sister, Inez Allison, but we could find no trace of her despite an extensive search.

Joseph Daniel Rogers (Rodrigues) was born in 1841 in London, Middlesex, England, to Daniel Rodrigues and Esther Costa. He married Elizabeth Ross, in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1870. Elizabeth was born in New Plymouth, Taranaki, New Zealand, in 1849.

Sally and I decided to take a closer look at Joseph and Elizabeth Rogers's children and grandchildren, who had settled in Perth. We checked Ancestry's Public Member Trees and found Esther (Ettie) Rogers (formerly Rodrigues), who married Samuel Freedman in Perth, in 1890. The couple had eight children, but none of the Ancestry researchers appeared to know when or where their eldest child, Daniel Frederick Freedman, born in 1891, had died.

Sally entered Daniel's full name on the family history site, Find My Past. There we found a police mugshot for (Ivan) Daniel Frederick Freedman, and it unequivocally matched the photo in Maxwell's WW2 service record. We were in no doubt that we had finally uncovered Maxwell Allison's true identity.

To confirm our discovery, we searched Police Gazettes from other states and found a 1936 mugshot from Brisbane, which included a similar image but a different description. Daniel's year of birth also varied from 1880 to 1886 in different records.

South Australia, Australia, Police Gazettes, 1862-1947 for Ivan Daniel Frederick Freedman

1938

1516. FREEDMAN, IVAN DANIEL FREDERICK.
See P.G., 1938, page 330, "Discharges". Native of W.A., labourer, born 1880, 5ft. 9½in. high, slight build, pale complexion, dark hair, brown eyes, scar on forehead, burn scar on chest, right forearm, and near left elbow, mole on neck and left cheek.

Adelaide P.C., on 11/4/38, for fraudulent conversion, four months; for false pretences (three charges), six months on each; and for obtaining credit by fraud, four months' H.L. (concurrent).

False pretender. This offender becomes friendly with his intended victim, impressing him that he is a man of means, that he has a large sum of money coming to him from an estate in England, that he required a sum of money to deposit on his passage, also that he has sums of money in banks in other States, and gulls his victim into lending him the money he requires. Frequents Adelaide and Dulwich districts.

59 No 43720 Name Freedman Daniel Frederick

Height	5' 9"	Sentence	
Weight	10st 10lb		
Complexion	Pale		
Hair	Dark		
Eyes	Brown		
Face			
Mouth			
Chin			
Eyebrows			
Nose			
Forehead			
Date of Birth	1886		
Native Place	W. Aust.		
Trade	Labourer		
Religion	Angl.		
Read & Write			
Previous History	10-5-34 fraudulent means 3 months. 11-6-34 as Daniel Freedman.		

Particulars

2-5-34 Daniel Freedman, June 1934, Born May 1885

At Which Station	When Received	Offences, Sentences, etc
Ballarat	8.4.35	Appealed 8.5.35 application
Ballarat	5.4.35	
Ballarat	14.5.35	
Ballarat	14.12.35	

3 different criminal records found for Daniel freedman

POLICE GAZETTE.

[29TH AUGUST, 1936.



C. I. Branch, Brisbane.—**DANIEL FREEDMAN** (photo. above), (Brisbane Bench, by J. Fraser, J.P.), charged that on 16-8-36, at Brisbane, stole a sum of money, namely, £4, the property of one **ALBERT STONE**, and that, further, on or about the 23-7-36, at Brisbane, stole a sum of money, namely £1, the property of the said Alfred Stone, and that, further, on or about 3-8-36, at Brisbane, stole a sum of money, namely £1, the property of the said Albert Stone. He is about 50 years of age, 5 feet 9½ inches high, slim build, dark complexion, dark wavy hair, brown eyes, about 10 stone 9 lb. weight. Identical with offender same name (vide Victoria Photo. Book, 27, p. 161).

On his 1943 marriage certificate, Maxwell/ Daniel stated he was a widower, so we searched for previous marriages. We found three. The first was to music teacher, Alice May Jones, in Auckland, New Zealand, in 1924. The second to JC Williamson actress and divorcee, Marjorie Amelia White, in Paddington, NSW, in 1926. The third, in 1937, using the alias Ivan Daniel Frederick Freedman, to Camelia Pearl Rowell, in Hindmarsh, South Australia. Daniel became a stepfather to Marjorie's three children from her first marriage and a father to the couple's five children (possibly six). In 1939, Daniel and Camelia had a daughter named Annette. To date, we've been unable to locate any divorce records.

On July 4, 1940, Daniel enlisted in the army at Martin Place, Sydney, NSW, using the name of David Rowell and stating that he was born in 1892. However, after being discharged on the grounds that his services were no longer required, he re-enlisted on 19th November 1940, at the Sydney Cricket Ground, this time giving his year of birth as 1902.

We subsequently traced Mark's paternal Jewish ancestors back to Kraków, the capital of Galicia until WWI, today in Southern Poland, one of the oldest cities in the country and a centre of Jewish learning and culture.

On Sunday 30th July 2023, Mark Allison gave a talk titled, 'The Search for my Jewish Father' to the Jewish Historical and Genealogical Society of Western Australia. In Mark's own words:

In the space of three months, I've gone from having two brothers and five cousins, three of whom are dead, to having all these relatives I never knew existed.

Michelle Urban presented Mark with his family tree chart, prepared by Sally, which goes back to 1840 in Kraków, Galicia. Several members of Mark's newfound family were present. Sally and I also received acknowledgement for our work with a *'Certificate of Appreciation and Thanks for our exceptional work in the research of Mark Allison's father.'*

Left: Mark with JHGSWA librarian Susan Levy in 2023;
Right: Front row L-R: Rob Cappellin, Carl Freedman & Isabel Lieftink;
Back row L-R: Tahalia, Willem, Peter and Rick Lieftink with Mark Allison.



WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

"BUT WHERE DO I BEGIN?"

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR GENEALOGICAL JOURNEY

Are you keen to explore your family history but not sure where to start?

Jewish genealogy can be complex and confusing. Come along to learn some tried and tested techniques to get you started on your genealogical journey.

This workshop will cover:

- Essential data points for genealogy
- the what, where and how of archives, websites and major genealogy platforms
- how to use photos and family stories for research
- how to collaborate and share the fruits of your efforts
- and much more!

DATE: FEB 18

TIME: 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

LOCATION: Sydney Jewish Museum, 148 Darlinghurst Rd, Darlinghurst

Enter via SJM main entry - [Please register](#)

Bring your laptop and a notebook. Internet access is available at the Museum.

This will be a 2 hour workshop with extra time for one on one support.

Head to the [AJHS website](#) to see what other events are coming up.

Where We Lived
**44th IAJGS Conference
on Jewish Genealogy
Philadelphia
Aug 18-22, 2024**



iajgs2024.org