

in his success. She predeceased him in 1984. Their two sons Geoffrey and Gordon have both become eminent professional men in their own right. To them and all their family the warmest of condolences are expressed.

Rabbi Raymond Apple

Obituary — Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky, AM

For over four decades, Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky, who passed away suddenly during Pesach, was a towering figure in the Australasian rabbinate. Born in London in 1928, he was always passionately interested in Jewish studies and had already become a proficient Torah reader at synagogue services before his Barmitzvah. During the Second World War he spent several years as a full-time yeshivah student; not until he was 17 was he able to pursue secular subjects for matriculation. However, he subsequently gained a BA (Hons) degree at London University as well as ministerial qualifications from Jews' College.

He entered the ministry as assistant to the Rev Dr Isaac Levy of the Hampstead Synagogue and then moved on to the growing suburban Jewish community of Cockfosters and Southgate. In 1957 he came to Sydney as assistant minister to Rabbi Dr Israel Porush. His impact on the Sydney community was electric; he was tall, dark and handsome, with a rich voice, penetrating mind and personal charisma. After being ordained as a rabbi as a result of a fresh period of study in London, he returned to Sydney but in 1963 was appointed chief minister of the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation.

At St Kilda, where he held office for 25 years, his preaching placed him in the top rank of Australian public speakers. He had a creative approach to synagogue programming and broadened the range of synagogue activities. He became involved in many areas of wider community activity; he held office as president of Mount Scopus College; lectured widely, including a period on the staff of the Prahran College; and was the inspirer and founder of the Jewish Museum of Australia which is situated across the road from the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation in Melbourne. He started the outstandingly successful Open University series of lectures, and for many years gave *shiurim* for women. In addition, though often critical of

trends in the rabbinate, he held leadership positions, including the presidency, in the Association of Rabbis and Ministers of Australia and New Zealand. As a spokesman for Judaism in the wider community, he shone; in the Victorian Council of Christians and Jews, in particular, he played a leading and often decisive role.

He retired at the age of 60, but filled his retirement with constant activity, including the development of his unique personal library and Judaica collection and leading Jewish-interest tours to various countries including Israel. He was in great demand as a speaker, lecturer and writer, and found ever new opportunities for the expression of his talents. Gifted with a fine voice, he founded the Melbourne Jewish Men's Choir, and enjoyed leading synagogue services.

He was an unrepentant proponent of modern orthodoxy, and he insisted that Judaism had to be understood and practised rationally and without superstition. He was a warm and loyal friend and colleague, and his countless admirers find it hard to imagine the future without him. To his wife Shirley, sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren, sincere sympathy is extended.

Rabbi Raymond Apple