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YEARS



2017 Yearbook

Sydney Jewish Museum

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**Congratulations to the
Sydney Jewish Museum
on 25 years of vital work
in the community.**

**Our best wishes for the
continued success
in preserving our past
and securing our future.**

Roma & Allan Shell & family



Acknowledgements

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President's Report

The next 25 years

Prof Gus Lehrer AM FAA



The SJM intends to become the major hub for cultural interchange between the Jewish and the wider Australian community; to expand its educational activities ... and to become a major educational resource on matters pertaining to the Holocaust, ethical issues and human rights.

Overview

The SJM is an enterprise that has the support of the entire Jewish community, whether religious or secular, involved or passive, whether their interests are intellectual or cultural.

The SJM has as its underpinning the study and preservation of the memory of the Holocaust and the teaching and discussion of its moral and ethical lessons. It is also a window for the wider community into the Jewish community and provides a forum for people to discuss and interact in the context of those core subjects.

The SJM intends to become the major hub for cultural interchange between the Jewish and the wider Australian community; to expand its educational activities, both for adults and students; and to become a major educational resource on matters pertaining to the Holocaust, ethical issues and human rights. The Museum regularly hosts functions and events attended by a wide range of people who meet to debate, discuss and exchange views.

The challenge

The American museologist, Brigitte Sion, has written on the need for museums generally, and Jewish museums in particular, to remain relevant by not limiting themselves to a repository role. To be sustainable, they must be dynamic and not anchored solely in the past.

The SJM is responding to this exigency in several ways. It will:

- Focus on the education of school students.
- Universalise the Jewish Holocaust experience while preserving focus on its historical uniqueness.
- Engage with individuals of diverse backgrounds and knowledge in promoting personal responsibility for social inclusion, democracy, equality and peace.
- Interpret the Jewish experience through the lens of migration and cultural diversity.

- De-mystify Judaism by providing a window into the Jewish community.
- Become a major hub in Sydney's cultural and intellectual life.
- Become self sustaining economically and otherwise.

The need

Holocaust deniers have been active ever since the beginning of the Shoah and, notwithstanding defeats in courts of law (e.g. Deborah Lipstadt's victory over David Irving), their numbers and activities continue to grow. Holocaust denial is now a recognised tool in the kit of antisemites.

There is therefore a need to personalise the Shoah, to preserve the memory of its victims and survivors, in order to expose Holocaust denial for the sham it is. This need is acute as the survivor generation is rapidly diminishing.

We need courage to draw lessons from the Holocaust, even by comparing some aspects of it with other human rights violations. When the facts are clear, we must not be afraid to stand up for other victims.

There is a more general context for the need to address issues of rights and responsibilities, understanding and tolerance. Due mainly to the internet and ease of global communications, many societies in the modern world are, to some extent, multicultural. It is more important than ever for people to reach out to each other, and for each group to provide a window into its own community, to build confidence and trust.

The danger

It is undoubtedly the case that in today's world human rights is a hotly contested arena. The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban in 2001, was conceived by the UN in good faith, but it became arguably the largest openly antisemitic hate fest since WWII. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at the time, Mary Robinson, not a friend of Israel, said that, "there was horrible antisemitism present," but failed to make any impact to mitigate this. That conference



spawned the BDS movement, which is reminiscent of the European movement of the 1930s to boycott Jewish businesses and to deny the very human rights they purport to champion.

Much modern political discourse is couched in a faux version of the language of human rights. This vocabulary is used to assign the status of victimhood to one group, and oppressor to another. Those allegedly supporting the ‘victims’ generally do not accord to people who disagree with them even the right to express their view.

Facts are disputed and distorted, but any challenge is dismissed as unworthy of receiving a hearing. Gone are the days when opponents will defend your right to disagree with them. Lord Sacks, former Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, wrote: *Human rights have become the language of the new antisemitism.*

In such a world, should the Sydney Jewish Museum enter the marketplace of human rights which has become debased and compromised? The answer is that we have no choice but to do so. In our discussion of human rights, we shall include consideration of human responsibilities.

It is facile to simply state that one person’s rights should prevail regardless. A consideration of responsibilities could lead to a different perspective in the discourse on human rights. We shall attempt to deal with potential controversies

with integrity, give our opponents a good hearing, even if they do not reciprocate, and present facts with evidence and not aggression. If we submit to the bullying of people who do not wish to hear our case, the world would be the poorer for it.

The museum now and tomorrow

I shall briefly deal with the museum as it currently is, and its trajectory into the future.

The schools education program. We currently educate approximately 25,000 school students annually. To fulfill the objective of educating all NSW school students, the program would have to increase to about 70,000 students. This would entail increasing the in-house program to 35,000-40,000, as well as creating an outreach program extending into remote areas of NSW.

Updating the permanent exhibition space. The recent refurbishment has three main features. It introduces modern technology to enhance the museum experience; technology is applied to give a permanent voice to a dwindling population of survivors who have been the heart and soul of the museum for 25 years; and the incorporation of a new Holocaust and Human Rights section. This program of refurbishment must continue to reflect the objectives of the Museum.

... should the Sydney Jewish Museum enter the marketplace of human rights, which has become debased and compromised? The answer is that we have no choice but to do so.

President's Report

The next 25 years

Prof Gus Lehrer AM FAA

To remain relevant ... the SJM must add to its narrative an inspirational message for the future. Discussion of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the Jewish experience will act as a launching pad for discussions of cultural diversity.

Temporary exhibitions. These serve to keep the offerings of the Museum fresh, and to provide colour and variety for visitors. Subjects can be as diverse as communication between those in camps or hiding and the outside world, *Signs of Life*, and the rag trade in Sydney, *Dressing Sydney*.

Links with other institutions. It is essential that the SJM retains its eminence as a centre for Holocaust and related studies. Contact with international institutions with similar objectives is essential for this. Currently we have close links with Yad Vashem, the Washington Holocaust Museum, The Auschwitz Museum, Sydney University and other institutions.

Cultural activities. The public program of more than 90 events held annually proves there is further potential for the SJM to enhance its role as a hub for cultural and intellectual activity. Functions held at off-site venues, which incorporate a museum visit, could become a feature of this program.

Opinion-makers visits. As a consequence of the universalisation described above, politicians and journalists already have an interest in the SJM. Hosting visits by important opinion leaders will contribute to the security of the Jewish Community.

Museum sustainability. There are two aspects to the Museum's continued sustainability.

1. **Human capital.** The museum depends on many people for its continued success. The Board is continually renewed, and should have representatives from several generations to ensure its continuing effectiveness. Over the years the average age of Museum board members has reduced by almost 15 years and there is a core of varying ages working effectively together.

Key personnel are also vital for the effective running of the Museum. Succession planning for the Board, the CEO and other senior staff is vital, as is maintenance of the desirability of the Museum as a workplace for professionals

in Education and Curatorial issues. The effective running of the volunteer program, involving almost 300 volunteers, should be given full attention.

2. **Economic sustainability.** The greatest economic threat to the SJM's sustainability is its large annual operating deficit. After investment income and its JCA allocation (assumed to be approximately \$800K in 2017-18), this deficit is in the order of \$750K annually. To achieve sustainability, the SJM must implement three items of strategy:
 - a. Plan for the museum to own the site from which it operates.
 - b. Build up the endowment fund to more than \$40m, so even a conservative investment strategy suffices to cover the deficit.
 - c. Continue to make efforts to achieve recurrent government funding.

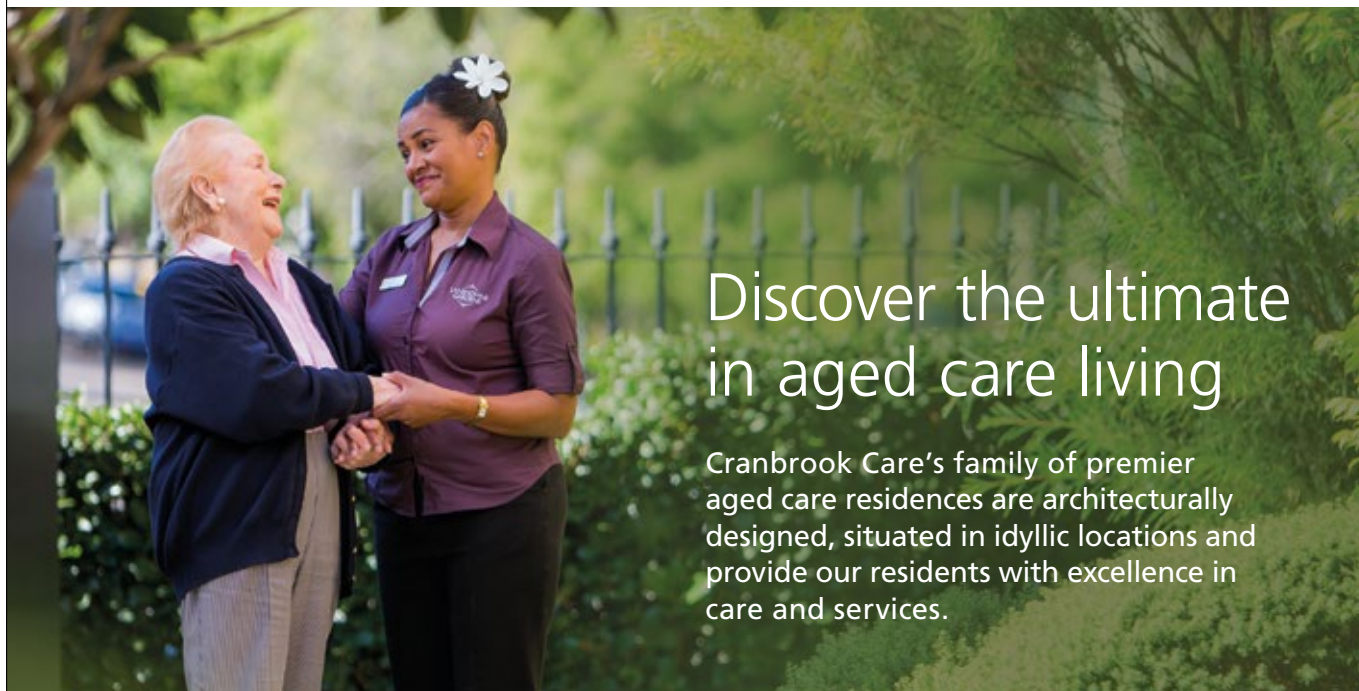
Summary

To remain relevant, visible and economically sustainable, the SJM must be dynamic in its implementation of the broad vision encompassed in the ideas outlined. It must add to its narrative an inspirational message for the future. Discussion of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the Jewish experience will act as a launching pad for discussions of cultural diversity. Programs should be implemented with care, and integrity should not be compromised.

The first 25 years have brought the Sydney Jewish Museum far further than its founders would have dreamed. It is well placed to realise bold ambitions for the next 25 years.

In conclusion, I extend my thanks to the Members of the Board for their support and commitment to the Museum. My thanks also to Norman Seligman, CEO and the dedicated members of his staff who have ensured the continued growth and success of the Museum. Kol Ha'Kavod to the many volunteers who give so generously of their time.

My heartfelt thanks goes to the Holocaust Survivors who are a daily inspiration to all at the Sydney Jewish Museum. **sjm**



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A Message from the CEO

Norman Seligman CEO



Our Professional and Community Education programs have seen excellent growth in the past 12 months, with visitors including health and aged care providers, police and military personnel, and interfaith groups.

25th anniversary

As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, it is important to remember the driving forces that gave rise to our creation.

One such force was a desire by the generation of Holocaust survivors who came to Australia. They were determined to remember and honour those who were murdered during the Holocaust. Even before the Museum opened in 1992, they had been meeting, telling their stories and gathering artefacts.

Another force was the founder of the Museum, the late John Saunders AO, whose generosity enabled survivors' dreams to become a reality. He was influenced and assisted in this endeavour by the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors together with the Australian Institute of Holocaust Studies, members of the community, including the Museum's President, Prof Gus Lehrer AM, and Holocaust survivors already active in Holocaust education and commemoration.

The year that was

It has been a remarkable year at the Museum and I am pleased to report on some of the highlights.

After five years of community consultation, academic research, curation and creative development, the upgrade of our Holocaust exhibition was completed in December 2016 and officially opened by the Prime Minister, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP on 19 March 2017. We continue to receive overwhelmingly positive responses from Museum visitors, with many saying that our Museum is amongst the best in the world.

The final part of our refurbishment, the Holocaust and Human Rights section, is due for completion by the end of January 2018.

Education

Education remains our most important mission.

Following record visitor numbers of 48,000 in 2015, including nearly 25,000 school students, visitor numbers slowed while we were partially closed for most of 2016 for our upgrade. We are now back on track and expect a new high

in student attendances in 2017, together with around 25,000 adult visitors.

While the Holocaust is included in the NSW Curriculum, it is important to note that teachers have a choice of the extent to which the Holocaust is covered. We are actively involved in teacher training programs which have attracted nearly 300 teachers in the past year, including teachers from the Brisbane and Cairns Catholic Education Department as well as Anglican Schools teachers in Perth.

Our Professional and Community Education programs have seen excellent growth in the past 12 months, including health and aged care providers, police, military personnel, and interfaith groups. Many programs have also been delivered at client premises.

The Museum upgrade necessitated intensive education for all our existing guides and in addition I am very pleased to report that 50 new guides, our highest group ever, are in the process of completing their training. This ensures the Museum's capacity to handle an increasingly larger number of student visitors.

Exhibitions and events

Temporary exhibitions are an important attraction for new and repeat visitors to the Museum. We have had six exhibitions over the past 12 months including: *Closer: Portraits of Survival* – a powerful photographic exhibition by Katherine Griffiths of 44 Holocaust survivor volunteers and their precious artefacts; *I am My Brother's Keeper* – an exhibition in partnership with Yad Vashem which profiled non-Jewish heroes, the Righteous Among the Nations, who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust; *In their steps: the Australian Light Horse and the Anzac Trail* – an exhibition in partnership with JNF marking the centenary at Beersheba, of one of the most famous horse mounted battles of all time, and *Standing Up* – a photography exhibit which featured Jewish humanitarians and philanthropists who have devoted their lives to promoting the welfare of others.

Our Public Programs Committee held a range



of innovative, thought-provoking events including public lectures, functions in support of temporary exhibitions, book launches, movie screenings, cultural events and community functions.

A series of well-attended Holocaust Commemorative events were organised jointly by the Museum, the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants and the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. The Museum also worked with NAJEX in hosting annual Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Survivor stories

One of the privileges of working at the Sydney Jewish Museum is getting to know and work closely with Holocaust survivors. We are in awe of those we have come to know so well and saddened that many are no longer with us. It is extremely difficult to comprehend the hardship and tragedy they experienced, both physically and emotionally, and I admire the way in which they rebuilt their shattered lives and the positive messages with which they inspire us. I speak for the Board members, staff and volunteers at the Museum when I say that the survivors are treasured like our own family members. The life lessons we learn from these remarkable people are also noted in the letters of thanks they receive from grateful visitors, adults and students alike.

The voices and stories of Holocaust survivors have been at the forefront of the Museum since its inception, and we are extremely fortunate that there are many Holocaust survivors who still address school students and Museum visitors daily. We have implemented a mobile app as part of our Holocaust exhibition upgrade, to keep their

stories alive and to deliver their voices throughout the Museum. Over the years, the Museum has remained a space where individuals from different backgrounds can learn about one another, a place of remembrance and commemoration, where the memories are honoured and where history is researched.

In closing

Despite our success, we cannot be complacent. We have to protect our future and ensure the long-term financial viability of this exceptional Museum. We do not receive any operational government funding and therefore rely heavily on community funding. We continue to operate at a deficit and need to grow our Endowment Fund to a level where the income allows us to fund operations without utilising capital. I urge every one of you to consider making a bequest or endowment to the Museum, thereby ensuring the continuity of our valuable work.

We are proud members of the Jewish Communal Appeal and I would like to pay tribute to them for their ongoing financial support and guidance. Thank you to our patrons, members and donors for your generous and much appreciated support and especially our major donors who have been profiled in this yearbook.

Thank you to our active Museum Board, the hard working and loyal Museum staff, and the nearly 300 dedicated volunteers who selflessly assist in so many ways and without whom we simply could not function as effectively.

The Museum family can indeed be proud of what has been accomplished and look forward to even greater achievements in the next 25 years. **sjm**

◀ Two of the temporary exhibitions held this year.

◀ *Despite our success, we cannot be complacent. We have to protect our future and ensure the long-term financial viability of this exceptional Museum.*

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Ray Crooke: Islander Village, Oil on Canvas, 40x50cm



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Robert Dickerson: Paddington Street Scene, Oil on Board, 60x90cm



Tim Storrier: The Wayfarer, Bronze, Ed: 7/8, 80x53x40cm

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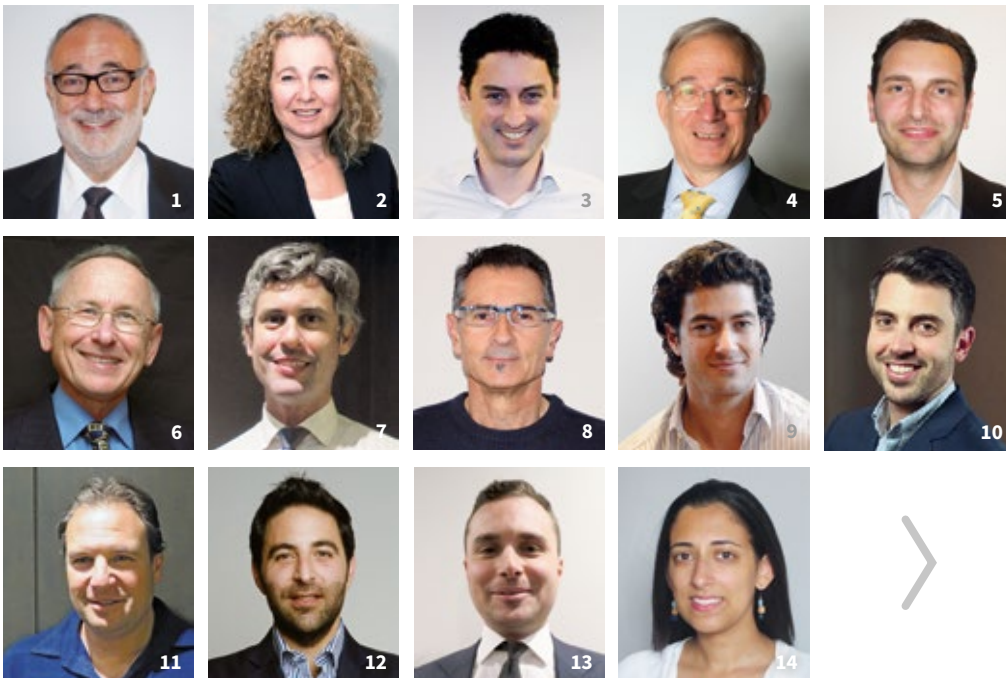
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Museum Staff & Consultants



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1500 Words

Jackie French AM Author



The year before dad died he told me a story...

Dad enlisted in World War II on his 18th birthday. He was at the railway station ready to embark to fight in New Guinea when he collapsed with a ruptured appendix. Both his enlistment and the burst appendix almost certainly saved his life. Not only was there a doctor next to him when he lost consciousness, but the friends he'd been with would die in their first days in battle.

Every night he joined the women of the kitchen, buttering bread and making sandwiches. He said it saved his sanity and possibly his life.

The stories of history give us not just the strength but the imagination and experience to survive, to fight or just to cope.

Four months later he was released from hospital and given what he described as the lowliest possible job in the armed forces for a man not even fit enough to lift a box of paper: night sentry duty at the Sydney Barracks, ending at 4 a.m. There was not much doing at 4 a.m. in Sydney – or, rather, there was a lot, but not for a nice Presbyterian boy. He ended up at the Anzac Buffet, drinking tea and eating toast. After three nights one of the women told him to stop just sitting there and to come and help.

Every night he joined the women of the kitchen, buttering bread and making sandwiches. He said it saved his sanity and possibly his life. With uncles in prisoner-of-war camps and many friends dead, survivor guilt was biting deeply. At the Anzac Buffet, he was at least doing something useful. He told me this only after I had mentioned seeing the plaque where the Buffet had been and finding out at the Sydney Jewish Museum about the women who had run it. “I never knew that they were Jewish,” Dad said wonderingly. “In all that time they never told me.”

Dad had a wide experience of people doing good in the name of religion, but they usually made it very clear what religion they were doing it for. He was too frail to travel to Sydney to give

thanks to the community and he asked me to go to the Jewish Museum, to tell them how one soldier's life had been altered.

This Museum has changed my life too.

Each time I have visited, it has given me a profound gift that I did not expect. On one visit, I met with Holocaust survivor Olga Horak, who had recently suffered an enormous personal tragedy. Yet she was still giving unconditionally to thousands of young students. “Doing this keeps me going,” she said. From Olga I learned that when tragedy strikes, doing good for others, with no thought of praise or reward, does give you strength to keep on going.

On my last visit, I had the extraordinary privilege of speaking to Holocaust survivors who told me that forgiveness is necessary, otherwise hate consumes too much of your life. I knew the necessity of forgiveness in theory, but felt unable to forgive what had been done to me when I was young. But that morning they taught me that sometimes, perhaps every day, one should wake up and forgive again, year after year.

If these extraordinary people who survived possibly the greatest and most sustained hatred the world has ever seen can forgive, surely I should be able to do that too ... and now I do.

It is impossible to quantify how much the Jewish Museum has changed my life. The Museum preserves stories, and stories matter. Information, moral judgements, are best transmitted in story form. In every story you live the life of every person in it, just for a while. A story means you understand not just yourself, but others, a little more.

Stories from the past matter, they tell us that, yes, bad things happen but as a species, if not always individually, we can survive them, surmount them, change them. Even during the worst of times there can be love and beauty.

Most people believe that tomorrow will be like today, and mostly it will be. But one day it may not be. The stories of history give us not just the strength but the imagination and experience to

survive, to fight or just to cope. The more of the past the story contains, the more profoundly it matters. The Jewish Museum's story covers a very long past indeed. Unlike many museums, at its heart are the recorded words of those who have lived the history, not just read about or deduced it. We are all history, each one of us will leave a shadow. The Museum helps us to make our legacy good.

Each year, at the Museum, I tell an audience of young people from diverse backgrounds, the story of a boy in World War II – a boy who had had his family, even his identity, taken from him by the Nazis. The boy has a choice: he can kill a helpless supporter enemy or save the man's life. What should he choose? Which is more powerful, kindness or hate? Every single young person has voted for kindness over hate. Without the Museum, they may never have thought about the questions or made that explicit choice.

There are so many stories. Not those already held in the Museum, given to those who visit it, but all the stories they will continue to collect as our history keeps on threading into the future.

I was asked for 1500 words on the Museum, but, really, only a handful is needed. 'The Jewish Museum gives us our past. This matters, deeply and profoundly.' It also gives it with a combination of deep, professional curatorship and personal commitment that may be unequalled.

I will finish with another story, of a boy from a well-educated family, who visited the Museum with his school. He returned home shocked. "I never knew about the Holocaust," he said. "I never knew." "Of course you knew," his mother answered. "We told you, we gave you the books." He shook his head, "But I didn't understand until today," he said. "Until I heard the voices, I didn't understand." His life too was changed forever.

In October I launched my latest book at the Museum. This book is possibly the best and most important I have written. It is also entirely a gift of the extraordinary people who volunteer there. The greatest gift perhaps the Museum has yet given me, though I suspect that still, with every

visit, I will be given more.

This is how the book ends:

I am Johannes. I am a man of love, not hate. I love my wife, my children, my friends, my patients. I feel the love spread from my hands across the world, to join the hands of others. I tell the story of the ogre too, the one called Mr Hitler.

There in the park, with my family and my friends, the ogre is dead at last, for me, for Frau Timmins, and for Helga. But others have had to carry him in their hearts all their lives. When an ogre swallows you it is not easy to be free.

The world has many ogres. Some, like Mr Hitler, do not even know that they are ogres, but dream they are the hero of the story.

I have learned this in the years since I was ten years old: when you see injustice, stand beside each other and seize your spears. My spears are made of words. Yours may be different. But do not hesitate or look away. If too many look away, the ogres win. To be most deeply human we must risk our lives for others. Only when we stand together can we be truly free.

It is not easy fighting ogres. No one who fights an ogre comes away unscarred, even if you cannot see the wounds. And so you owe the ogre hunters this.

When the ogre has been vanquished, sit down upon the quiet earth and try to understand the ogre's anguish and his twisted fear. Only by understanding can we stop them rising in our midst.

When you understand, forgive.

And then stand up, and live.

Live well.

To the Sydney Jewish Museum, for this, and for so much more that you have given myself and my family, and uncounted others, 1500 words is not enough to thank you.

Perhaps I just should have written 'thank you' 1500 times.

Wishing You Millennia of Happy Returns. **sjm**

There are so many stories. Not those already held in the Museum, given to those who visit it, but all the stories they will continue to collect as our history keeps on threading into the future.

Pillars of the Museum

Robert Schneider Development Director



In recognition of the generosity of these four families, the Museum has created a special category of donors called 'Pillars of the Museum'.

"As the children of Holocaust survivors, we very much see the importance of educating the broader Australian community on our history and our culture and the Museum plays a critical and irreplaceable role in this regard." – Greg and Kathy Shand

No cultural institution of the calibre of the Sydney Jewish Museum can survive purely on entrance fees and membership subscriptions alone and, since we do not receive any government funding towards our operating costs, the Museum is reliant on the generosity of donors to help make ends meet.

This year, the Museum has been extremely fortunate to be the beneficiary of some substantial donations towards our endowment fund and also towards specific projects. In addition, we have received major bequests from two estates, all of which we acknowledge with deep gratitude.

Leading the way has been a group of donors, spearheaded by the example and initiative of Kathy and Greg Shand, who committed a substantial donation to the Museum provided it was able to secure a matching amount. Our indefatigable President, Prof Gus Lehrer, not only accepted the challenge of securing matching donors, but he and his wife Nanna, committed a generous amount, along with generous commitments from Bob and Ruth Magid and Leon and Simona Kamenev.

In recognition of the generosity of these four families, the Museum has created a special category of donors called 'Pillars of the Museum'. Funds will be applied towards enhancing our endowment fund in order to ensure our future sustainability. The four families are the first donors to be recognised in this category, and we hope that their fine example of generosity in recognising the important role of the Museum, and the need to secure this for the benefit of future generations, will encourage others to come forward and contribute towards ensuring the sustainability of this vital community resource – the Sydney Jewish Museum.

The 'Pillars of the Museum'

Greg and Kathy Shand

Kathy and Greg Shand have a long history of working for and supporting the Jewish community.

Kathy served on the boards of many prominent organisations including the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation, the Royal Hospital for Women Foundation and, together with her sister Roxanne, was the owner and publisher of the *Australian Jewish News* for close to 20 years. Currently Kathy heads the area of community engagement for JCA and is a member of the Executive Committee of JCA.

Greg spent many years working for JCA with roles including chairing various committees, running JCA projects, contributing to the shape and operation of our communal organisations and also serving as a JCA non-trustee governor.

Through Greg's work for our community, he felt that there was a need to re-examine the way our community is funded and, in particular, to address the need of our communal organisations to have more secure and long-term funding. This led to Greg's role in establishing 'The Giving Forum' some two years ago. Consistent with their objective, it was Kathy and Greg's initiative to take the lead in driving the 'Pillars of the Museum' concept by committing a substantial amount to the Museum's endowment fund. Income from this fund will go a long way to covering the deficit in operating costs, and enable us to continue to present the Jewish story to the broader Australian community in ever increasing numbers.

"Our aim was to really make a difference to the sustainability of the Museum, so we developed a proposal to submit to its Board. We were not asked, it was just something we wanted to do. We wanted to make sure that our support would have an impact so, as part of our proposal we wanted other donors to join us, which is something that the Museum organised. We also attached a number of conditions related to the operations of the Museum and its governance. Finally, we



« Greg and Kathy Shand.

◀ Simona and Leon Kamenev.



« Nanna and Gus Lehrer.

◀ Ruth and Bob Magid.

wanted to make sure that there would be 'buy-in' in terms of support from the community generally and this is something that we hope will be forthcoming. The task of securing the Museum's future is not complete, but we really hope that this initiative will place SJM well down the road to being financially sustainable.

"As the children of Holocaust survivors, we very much see the importance of educating the broader Australian community on our history and our culture and the Museum plays a critical and irreplaceable role in this regard. We really wish to acknowledge the role that others have played to establish and oversee the management of the Museum and we are so happy and fortunate to now play our part in securing the Museum's future."

Through this initiative with the funds contributed by the Shands and their partner donors, the Museum's endowment fund will

grow by \$10 million over the next 10 years. The Museum salutes them for their contributions to our Community and for setting an example that we hope many others will emulate.

Leon and Simona Kamenev

When Leon first visited the Museum in 2015, he was immediately struck with the poignancy of what he saw and, in his inimitable way, then and there stated that more creativity was needed to better engage younger people in our exhibits. Leon assisted with his expertise and financial support in creating two magnificent new features in the upgraded Museum – the electronic map with interactive usage ports, as well as the Museum VOICES app which allows visitors to hear the voices of survivors at specific points throughout the Holocaust exhibitions. Leon has not been alone in befriending the Museum, as his wife Simona has struck up a very

└ *Leon assisted with his expertise and financial support in creating two magnificent new features in the upgraded Museum – the new electronic map with interactive usage ports, as well as the Museum VOICES app.*

Pillars of the Museum

Robert Schneider Development Director

"We want to be part of a collective effort to explain basic Judaism to all comers and make the Museum a place of open discussion, warmth and inclusiveness."

– Bob and Ruth Magid

"The combination of resources, events, personal involvement of a large and diverse group of people, dedication to principles that affect us all, collectively and individually, and an aura of sustainability and permanence, make the Sydney Jewish Museum a unique place."

– Gus Lehrer
AM FAA

warm relationship with Olga Horak, one of our esteemed Survivors who, like Simona, was born in Czechoslovakia. The two meet on a regular basis and on a recent trip back home, Simona went especially to find the building in which Olga had lived prior to the Holocaust. She also brought back photographs of the area and the village from where Olga's grandparents hailed.

We are very grateful to Leon and Simona for rising to the challenge set by the Shand family and committing a further substantial donation to the Museum. The Kamenevs say: "The Museum reminds us of the horrors that occurred in Europe during the Second World War – horrors that should never be allowed to happen again. We support the Museum in its efforts to educate future generations on the need for mutual respect and tolerance, and we hope that the Museum will grow from strength to strength."

Gus and Nanna Lehrer

The name of the Lehrer family is indelibly linked with the Sydney Jewish Museum going back to 1992 when the late Leon and Genia Lehrer were among the founding members and generous benefactors behind the establishment of the Museum, and their son Gus was intimately involved in its planning, design and construction as Chair of the Australian Institute of Holocaust Studies.

It is fitting that, 25 years later, the Museum should be celebrating its quarter century with their son, Prof Gus Lehrer, as our President. To quote Gus: "The combination of resources, events, personal involvement of a large and diverse group of people, dedication to principles that affect us all, collectively and individually, and an aura of sustainability and permanence, make the Sydney Jewish Museum a unique place."

Gus is not just known for his communal involvements, but also for his accomplishments in business and in mathematical research. It should therefore not come as a surprise to know that with maths as his forté, Gus would recognise the need to ensure that the Museum's numbers should stack up accordingly. And so the 'Pillars of the Museum' was born.

Bob and Ruth Magid

Bob, a successful businessman and property developer, and Ruth are well-known benefactors, not only to Jewish and Zionist causes but also to the broader community, including their support for the uplifting of Aboriginal children, children from dysfunctional homes, and for the classical music culture in Sydney. As publisher of the *Australian Jewish News* (AJN), Bob ensures that important events and viewpoints are shared with readers far and wide, and Bob himself often expresses his profound views in AJN and other media.

Ruth has been a Volunteer Guide at the Museum for many years and her groups have been extremely fortunate to gain from her knowledge and the manner in which she shares the Holocaust and other Museum highlights with them. The Magids have been longstanding donors to the SJM, but it seems that their generosity knows no bounds, as they join with the other three families in becoming 'Pillars of the Museum'.

In their words: "We have supported the Sydney Jewish Museum for many years because of our belief that it is critically important to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust, to teach the history of institutionalised racism and hatred that caused the destruction of millions, in the profound hope that such knowledge will prevent a recurrence directed against any group in our society and indeed the world. We wish to undermine the efforts of antisemites and Holocaust deniers. We want to be part of a collective effort to explain basic Judaism to all comers and make the Museum a place of open discussion, warmth and inclusiveness."

It is the hope of the Lehrers and the other three families, that more donors will follow their example and our other generous benefactors, both past and present, to help the Museum ensure its sustainability into the future, by continuing to fund our projects and in particular, the endowment fund. This is an essential tool in our efforts to plug the gap in our operating costs that cannot be met through normal sources of income. **sjm**



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Redevelopment, Rights & Remembrance

Sarah Haid Research Assistant



▶ Still from *Coming to the Table*. 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of the first Mardi Gras, when police attacked demonstrators marching for equal rights not far from our Museum.

Years of academic and field research lie at the foundations of the Holocaust and Human Rights section.

The opening of the Holocaust and Human Rights exhibition completes the Museum narrative, weaving together threads and themes from our Jewish and Holocaust history exhibitions, and culminating (as in real life) in the codification of human rights norms by the international community.



The exhibition anchors us to the present. At a time of social disruption, technological and political upheaval, this space offers fresh and diverse perspectives, challenging visitors and communities to think critically about the roles and responsibilities they have in preventing further abuses.

The process

Years of academic and field research lie at the foundations of the Holocaust and Human Rights section. This research was funded through an Australian Research Council Linkage grant, the University of Sydney and the Sydney Jewish Museum. The academic members of the project team conducted the research in universities, libraries, archives and museums, both in Australia and across the globe. They sought answers to a number of questions: What is the role of human rights museums? What opportunities and risks do they present? What 'works' in these spaces and what doesn't?

Building on this foundational research, the project team hosted an international symposium in February this year. We brought together scholars and practitioners from a wide range of institutions, disciplines and cultural backgrounds. We invited them to share their views and experiences relating to the questions at the core of the project. The symposium was an opportunity to test the ideas that were taking shape for our own human rights space.

Following the symposium and drawing on background research, intentions for the new space crystallised in a concept plan:

- It will connect the historic and thematic content in the new Permanent Holocaust Exhibition to contemporary human rights issues, debates and concerns, with an emphasis on those issues most pertinent to the Australian context.
- It will offer a distinctly Australian contribution to the growing international interest in, and proliferation of, museums focused on human rights.
- It will function as a 'learner and self-led' space for all visitors. It will be a place for questioning and inquiry.
- It will provide space for reflection and contemplation by encouraging visitors to connect the historical materials to contemporary human rights debates and violation.¹

The concept plan also described the exhibition's content and scope, thus providing a touchstone for the development phase.

The exhibition

The Holocaust and Human Rights space contains three major components.

1. Upon entering the space, visitors are presented with a timeline of major human rights developments and violations, including two long vertical screens. The timeline and its audiovisual displays chart the evolution of

1 Reverberations: The Holocaust and Human Rights – Concept Plan, May 2017, p 15.



international human rights law, genocides and atrocity crimes of the 20th and 21st centuries; and relevant events in Australian history.

2. In the centre of the gallery lies a feature dubbed *Coming to the Table*. Over four large, round tabletop projections, visitors can explore some of the experiences and issues facing particular groups in Australian society: people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ people, refugees and asylum seekers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. The final part of the exhibition is a dynamic display, regularly changing to focus on a theme of particular topical relevance. Here, visitors will be invited to reflect on and respond to the material they have just encountered in a meaningful way. In the new Holocaust and Human Rights space, nuance is not disguised, tensions are not obscured and challenges are not shied away from. The questions this exhibition raises are not easy ones – but there is much to be gained by addressing them.

The opportunity

The new Holocaust and Human Rights space comes at a crucial time. The world we live in is changing. Populations are growing, technology is connecting us faster than ever before to each other and to world news. The media confronts us daily with questions about truth, challenges

to democracy and images of atrocity from across the globe. We face significant threats, including international terror, climate change and volatile world markets. We can find ourselves lost in competing positions and accounts. At times we may wonder: do I have the full picture? To where should I turn for guidance on the issues? Am I the only one feeling confused or concerned?

The new human rights space provides a counterforce to these overwhelming effects of 21st century society. It provides a place where people are encouraged to come together in community, rather than withdraw into isolation. It promotes deep, reflective thought, even on topics that might prove irresolvable. It offers, not moral guidance through human rights, but an objective set of standards repeatedly affirmed by the nations of the world over the better part of a century.

The creation of this new space feeds into a global trend which sees museums increasingly engaging with human rights. We are not the only ones doing this kind of work, though we are some of the first in Australia. The opening of the new exhibition is the result of courageous leadership and cause for celebration. It will allow the Museum to reach new and diverse audiences, bring people together and start important conversations. In its own modest way, the exhibition will contribute to shaping a better world. I am proud to have been a part of this project. **sjm**

In the new Holocaust and Human Rights space, nuance is not disguised, tensions are not obscured and challenges are not shied away from.

If it is **precious to you**, we will value it too

Roslyn Sugarman Head Curator



With extensive growth, our current holdings number around 9000 items and increase annually by 600 to 800 items, each carefully documented, researched and preserved, safeguarding the community's heritage.

I am invariably in awe of the material I am privileged to work with at the Sydney Jewish Museum. On a daily basis I come across an item in our collection that stops me in my tracks, such as this photograph donated in 1992. With no 'traditional' white wedding gown to prompt instant recognition of the importance of the event, it took some time for me to realise that the image depicts a bride and groom outside the synagogue just minutes after their marriage.

At the wedding of Robert Steiner (later Sardy) and Suzanna Mikler, family and friends attending wore the yellow Star of David. But Robert, forced by the Rabbi to take off his Hungarian army uniform and swap it with a friend's civilian jacket, refused to wear the stigmatising star on his wedding day, a small act of protest against these discriminating measures. Nevertheless, we see him wearing an *Arbeitslaager* (work camp) armband, telling in itself. There was no honeymoon for the couple. After the ceremony bride and groom separated to find safety from imminent danger. One week later, the deportation of the Hungarian Jews to the death camps began. Thus, this photographic

evidence of celebration embodies within it the tragedy that was unfolding for Hungarian Jews.

Personal photographs and memorabilia have been donated by the Sydney Jewish community since the inception of the Museum 25 years ago. We collect in three main areas – Judaica, Australian Jewish history and Holocaust, each category providing for extensive collecting opportunities. With extensive growth, our current holdings number around 9000 items and increase annually by 600 to 800 items, each carefully documented, researched and preserved, safeguarding the community's heritage.

Pre-war photographs are integral to depicting the 'world that was', documenting the lives of the Jewish world before it was devastated by Nazi Germany and collaborators.

One of the most difficult things for curators to deal with is the donation of clearly significant images and albums of photographs, but of unknown people and places. We grapple with decisions around disposal or retention of such material. I have a fresh approach after meeting with curators at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Even without identification, photographs can help the post-war generation of Jews come to know the land of their parents and grandparents via the landscapes, holiday spots, daily life, way of dressing, leisure activities, weddings and other

▶ Suzanna and Robert Steiner wedding, Budapest, Hungary, 7 May 1944.

▶ Leopold Schalit courting Frieda Mallach, Libau beach, Latvia, 1921. They married and immigrated to South Africa in 1927. Donated by Ethel Davis (daughter).





events depicted in the images, re-creating the lost world and nudging the memory.

We always try to decipher what is written on the reverse of an image – a name or date, a dedication to the person to whom it was given. We look for the stamps of the photo studios, an indication of the city or town in which it was reproduced.

A photograph could be the only surviving memento of a person or the only sample of their handwriting. Nevertheless, the fates of many will remain unknown and unseen. That is why it is preferable for survivors and descendants to donate material to the Museum while they are able to impart the related history, stories and experiences.

There is a diminishing window of opportunity to collect from those closely associated with the Holocaust and the imperative is to collect now. We believe that there is still an abundance of material in community hands at risk of remaining undiscovered. With this in mind, we have embarked on a pro-active collecting campaign to

gather as much material from survivors and their descendants while it is still possible.

Envisaging that this would vastly increase our collection, I successfully applied for a grant from the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) to investigate how best to manage this process. This gave me the opportunity to do research at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). The USHMM has recently expanded their facilities, implicitly suggesting that there is a huge amount out there to be collected, and I gained this invaluable direction in how to proceed with this project. Though officially titled

Unidentified photographs, donated in 1992 by Max Schein (formerly Moniek Himmelschein).

A photograph could be the only surviving memento of a person or the only sample of their handwriting.

If it is **precious to you**, we will value it too

Roslyn Sugarman Head Curator



➔ Icek Feldman (marked with an 'x'), Pithiviers, France, 1941-42. Donated by Jacqueline Dale (daughter).

➔ Abraham Kaars false ID. Kaars collection.

➔ Netty Kaars and her first husband.

'Harvesting hidden treasures in the community: Advancing the science of proactive collecting', my co-curator, Shannon Biederman, has nicknamed the project 'Searching with Sugarman'.

There are survivors who have no idea that what they have saved from this period is relevant to others. Our aim is to make them aware of how important it is for them to tell their story. Boxes of material left to the Museum in a deceased estate do not help preserve the legacy of the individuals.

Survivors donate items as they feel they are ready to part with them, based on trusting that they will be precious to us. Recently Jacqueline

Dale relinquished the last picture taken of her father Icek Feldman who, in May 1941, received an encouraging letter from the local French authorities requesting he report to them, but in reality was deported to Pithiviers transit camp, and then Auschwitz where he was murdered.

Accepting large collections pose curators with unique challenges. They do not always lay bare their story willingly, nor present themselves in a linear fashion, as curator Rachel Mensforth discovered when she worked on the Kaars Collection. It was a complex, multi-layered donation, but beyond the initial sorting, we found the most incredible narrative, beginning in Utrecht, Holland and continuing 40 years later in Sydney's Lower North Shore.

The large selection of documents, photographs and letters was donated by brothers Robert and Michael Kaars. It pertains to the life of their parents, Netty and Abraham. Both survived the Holocaust, but in very different circumstances.

In 1943 Netty's first husband Jacob Van Praag was transported to Auschwitz and murdered. Netty and her parents were taken to Vught but, not long after, both her mother and father were deported to Sobibor where they were murdered. Netty was put to work in the Philips Factory, a role she attributes to saving her life. When she and the other workers were moved to Auschwitz (where they adopted the title 'Philips Transport') their





special skills were redirected to the Telefunken factory, Reichenbach. As the Russians advanced, the workers moved from camp to camp and were finally liberated in Hamburg. From there, Netty and the surviving 'Philips Transport' workers recovered in Malmo, Sweden.

At about the time Netty was rounded up for transport to Vught, Abraham was organising false identity documents. For the remainder of the war, he was referred to as Johannes Lassooij; both his false passport and identity card are now part of the Museum collection. He hid in plain site until liberation in 1945: "I lost myself among a few thousand young Dutchmen forced to work in Germany ... in part of a large factory with about 20 boys, we spent the next two years working six days a week from 7 to 7."

Netty's Shoah Foundation testimony conveys her unease with the identity of survivor. Both she and Abraham had their tattoos removed before immigrating to Australia in 1951. The couple immersed themselves in their new life; their two boys; their friends. Netty found purpose by looking forward, never backward and this is the reason she left Holland: "You can't forget it, that's impossible. But I don't want to be reminded of it."

Interestingly, the past did not always remain in the past; some questions came to be asked. Netty began researching the fate of her loved ones in 1960 and this in turn triggered her application for restitution from the companies who profited from her work during the war. These documents, spanning 40 years, will be invaluable

to researchers.

For Abraham and Netty, Australia offered hope and distance from the shadow of war. It is truly a privilege to work with the Kaars family on retelling and preserving this history; it will endure as testament to the experience of Sydney's remarkable survivor community.

One of the valuable lessons that I learned during my Fellowship is that everyone in the organisation has a role to play in the collecting process. Curators will do the intake and the processing, and undertake the research as with the Kaars Collection, but 'non-curators' can help source original material in private collections and make introductions for the curators to follow up.

In August, Sandra Eldridge produced *Kindertransport* at the Darlinghurst Theatre Company and at an accompanying forum, one of the guest speakers was Karen Midalia, the daughter of a Kindertransport child, Ingrid Ehrlich. We asked Karen, "Do you have original material from your mum?" She did. Ingrid's story relates specifically to Australia. Ingrid and her sister Marion were two of only 17 children sent on a children's transport to Australia in 1939. The sisters lived in the Larino Children's Home in Melbourne, an orphanage administered by the Australian Jewish Welfare Society, until they were reunited with their parents in 1946. The artefacts Karen donated are thus truly unique and invaluable.

You just never know what you can get if you ask. And it never hurts to ask. **sjm**

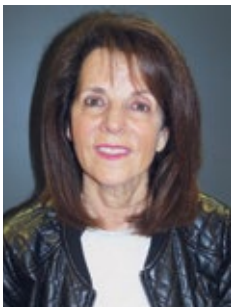
◀ The Lloyd Triestino.
Kaars collection.

◀ Netty and Abraham
Kaars, post-1950.

For the remainder of the war, he was referred to as Johannes Lassooij; both his false passport and identity card are now part of the Museum collection.

Thank You to the Volunteers

Rony Bognar Volunteer Manager



Our surveys show us that every visitor encounters at least five volunteers during their visit.



The Museum's opening in 1992 saw the founder, John Sanders AO, a Holocaust survivor himself, make one request to the Holocaust survivors: to volunteer and share their testimonies at the Museum with students and visitors. The survivors did then and they are still doing so 25 years later!

Survivor Lotte Weiss recalls: "In the beginning we came to the Museum to volunteer and we did not know many of the other survivors, but we all got on well and over time learnt about each other's histories."

Eddie Jaku, survivor, recalls: "We felt devoted to the Museum from the first day and particularly our monthly meetings with John Saunders."

Olga Horak, survivor, shares: "It was like a birth! We stepped over rubble on the Museum building site and John Saunders AO involved us in everything. It felt natural to participate and Marika Weinberger OAM with my husband and I, were at the Museum every day. It made us very happy."

Over the years there have been hundreds of people, not only survivors, that have volunteered

for various periods of time – a year, five years, and many for 25 years! Our surveys show us that every visitor encounters at least five volunteers during their visit.

What do these volunteers have in common?

- They give their time willingly and generously.
- Everyone understands that people's lives are different.
- Each one has empathy and the ability to put themselves 'in another person's shoes'.
- They have compassion and care deeply about the Museum.
- Every volunteer has patience and understands that sometimes things may not run smoothly.
- Every volunteer is dedicated to the Museum's vision – to inspire, respect and understand all individuals within our society, particularly relating to the lessons of the Holocaust.

Beginning as a small group, we have grown to 300 active volunteers assisting in all areas within the Museum.

As we mark the Museum's 25th anniversary, we salute all our volunteers, past and present. We certainly could not have achieved so much without your assistance and commitment.

Thank You! Todah Rabah! **sjm**

Music & Memory

Nicky Gluch Musicologist & Volunteer

Two Jewish ‘preachers’ sang of the dangers of the sound of silence. They knew that without words, there can be no understanding, that songs are nothing if they go unheard.

As the sons of Jewish refugees, they knew that music is far more than entertainment; that with it comes legacy, identity, culture and memory. Beware the sound of silence for with it can come an end. Embrace, rather, the wonder that is the sound of survival.

As a musicologist and occasional conductor, I have had much opportunity to contemplate the relationship between music and memory. From a neurological perspective, the evidence is clear. Emotions, especially strong ones, can enhance memory processes and, as music is known to elicit emotion, music and memory can work hand in hand. Within our community, we have become quite aware of the power of music to evoke memory as revealed in people with Alzheimer’s disease. Many of our loved ones who recognise so little in their present, are able to sing along to the songs of their past. To them, Fred Astaire is alive and well. Nurses at the Montefiore have marvelled at those who start singing in long-forgotten languages. The brain’s paths may be a mystery, but it is a mystery that seems coded in song. As awareness to this connection is increasing, so scientists are investigating whether music might be used to enhance brain function. I know no one who would not like to see this made true.

To return to Simon and Garfunkel, they were the plain speakers when it came to proclaiming the need to listen. A generation earlier, Günther Anders (born Stern) expressed the same idea in far more complex terms. It was probably personal differences and not complexity that prevented his ideas from coming to light, but contemporary scholar, Veit Erlmann, has aided in lifting the veil. Anders’ philosophy centres on the idea that Man is the only creature who does not have his own niche. Where fauna and flora have their world made for them, so Man does not. His freedom is thus his

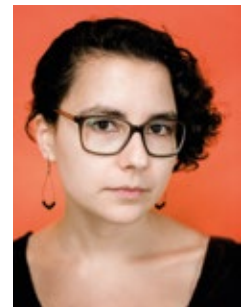
liability. He is the only creature capable of making his own world and so, because of this, he must.

Anders believed that Man could free himself from this paradox through listening. To him, music was a way to transcend the limitations of one’s personal and historical life and enter, instead, the realm of identity. Music allows one to be both in and out of time, to be oneself and simultaneously other. Why, though, does history need to be transcended to achieve identity? This question becomes particularly pertinent in relation to the Sydney Jewish Museum. Why can’t a museum just be a site of historical information? Why must it be an institute of memory?

The answer to this question is provided by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks in the speech he gave upon receiving the Templeton prize in 2016. Sacks explains that there is an important difference between history and memory. “History,” he says, is an answer to the question, ‘What happened?’ “Memory,” on the other hand, “is an answer to the question, ‘Who am I?’” History is about facts, memory is about identity ... Without memory, there is no identity. And without identity, we are mere dust on the surface of infinity.”¹

Memory is what allows us to connect with the past. Through memory we form our identity and through identity we pass on a legacy to future generations. The success of the Sydney Jewish Museum over the past 25 years has been in providing this stimulus for memory. It allows each of us in the Jewish community to find an answer to the question ‘Who am I?’ and it educates countless people on the concept of identity. While working as the Sunday Manager, I used to delight in meeting people who had visited the Museum as students and were returning with their own children. If the Museum was just a place of facts, of historical information, I believe this desire to share would be diminished. Facts line the history books and the internet has made them available at our fingertips. Instead, I believe it is memory that they wanted to pass on, for memory is something that is beautiful when shared.

To return to my opening statement and the idea that music provides us with legacy, culture,



Within our community, we have become quite aware of the power of music to evoke memory.

Memory is what allows us to connect with the past. Through memory we form our identity and through identity we pass on a legacy to future generations.

Music & Memory

*This, I thought,
is proof that we
have survived.*

*These are the
words of our
people made
music by the
mouth of a
stranger.*

identity and memory ... like Anders, I believe music to be a crucial entity for I see something unique in its ability to connect us simultaneously to our past, present and future. The difference between history and memory is that history, once recorded, need not change, but memory needs to be kept alive. This is where the idea of the sound of survival becomes so relevant.

The Museum recently hosted a symposium, *Performance, Empathy, Trauma and the Archive*, as part of the Out of the Shadows festival. The festival, led in Sydney by Dr Joseph Toltz, brought to light rediscovered compositions by Jewish refugee composers. The Jews who fled Europe before the War or resettled in far-flung places after it, brought with them the music of their heritage. Some of this music came to light in its day, but much of it was 'stored in archives, hidden in attics, or bequeathed to family members'.² In rediscovering the pieces, a lid was lifted on the past.

I was fortunate enough to attend one of these festival concerts. The room was filled with familiar faces, members of our community turning out in good form. The musicians, however, were as diverse as our city. After an organ overture came a performance of Kaddish. The Tenor was a man with his own rich cultural identity but, on that night, standing tall and proud, he delivered, with perfect Yiddish pronunciation, a stirring rendition of our memorial hymn. This, I thought, is proof that we have survived. These are the words of our people made music by the mouth of a stranger. In this instant, we are all Jews, we are all immigrants and we are all Australians. This is us and this is who we shall be. **sjm**

1 <http://templetonprize.org/pdfs/2016/20160526-keynote-sacks.pdf>

2 <http://music.sydney.edu.au/research/special-research-events/shadows-rediscovering-jewish-music-theatre/>

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*Sweet...
Kosher...*



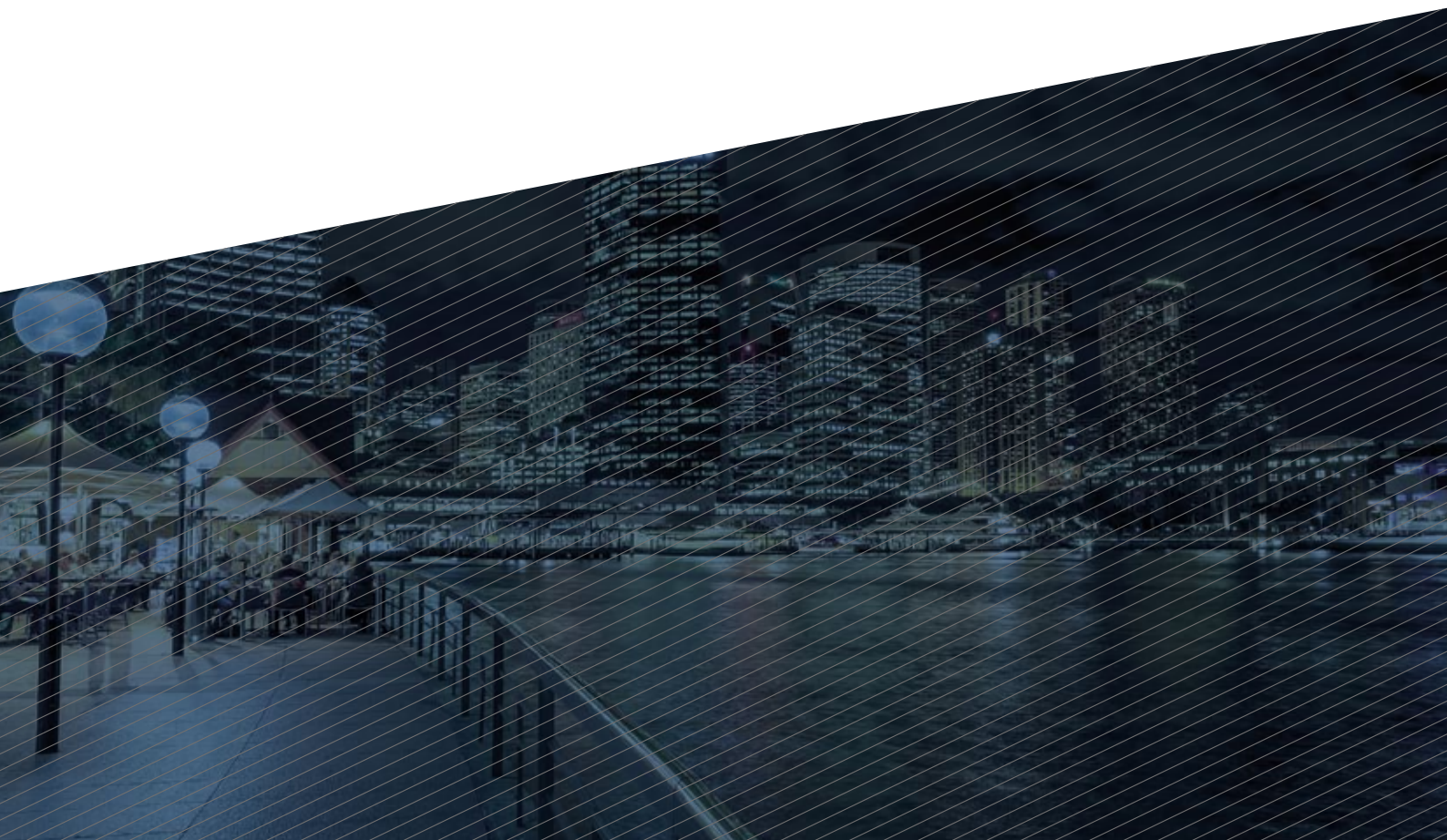
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Journey to Germany & Poland

Ariane Schneider Volunteer



From May 21 until June 1, 2017, 43 people, all associated with the Sydney Jewish Museum, travelled to Germany and Poland. Many were volunteers at the Museum, some were members who wished to expand their knowledge or family history by travelling through the landscape in which the Holocaust occurred. The aims of the individuals on the trip were varied. We were guided by Resident Historian, Prof Konrad Kwiet and escorted on the trip by three members of SJM staff, Norman Seligman, CEO; Rony Bognar, Volunteer Manager and Marie Bonardelli, Educator.

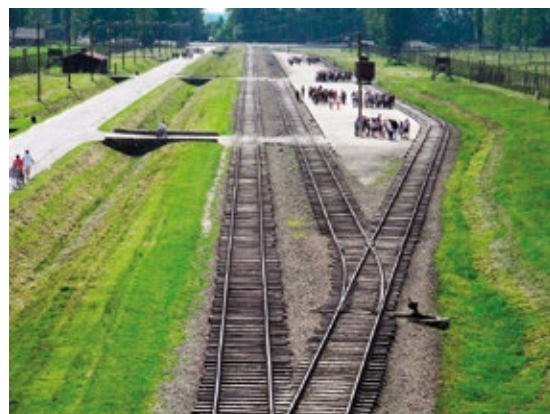
The official commencement of the trip began with a guided bus tour of the city, introducing us to both East and West Berlin and the general history of this significant city. Our three days in Berlin consisted of visiting many sites of significance, including the Wannsee Villa on the shores of Lake Havel where the 'how' of the final solution was decided. It was after this infamous meeting that Operation Reinhardt commenced and the death camps of Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor were constructed. We visited the Berlin Jewish Museum and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, and other sites of commemoration including the Grunewald Station from which 55,000 Berlin Jews were deported and the Brush Factory of Otto Weidt, a non-Jewish manufacturer who is recognised as a Righteous Amongst the Nations for his attempts to save blind and deaf Jews.

On day four, our group left Berlin and travelled

- ▶ Visiting Treblinka.
- ▶▶ Memorial at the entry gate to Majdanek concentration camp.



- ▶ Auschwitz.
- ▶▶ Warsaw Cemetery.



into Poland. Some were confronted by the fact that like many before us, we left by train. Most of us spent time during that journey thinking about those people – leaving their home, with suitcases packed with just the essentials, to destinations unknown.

Our time in Poland began in Warsaw where we had the opportunity to visit the few surviving synagogues (one was used as a stable by the Nazis). We visited the Umschlagplatz – from where the Jews of Warsaw were deported – and explored what was left of the wall which surrounded the ghetto which, during the Nazi era, contained almost 500,000 Jews. Our visit to the Jewish Historical Centre and the viewing of rare film footage allowed us to have a greater understanding of the deplorable conditions under which the Jews were forced to exist.

The following days were spent visiting more sites of Nazi atrocities – the memorial at Treblinka where 900,000 Jews were murdered and only 67 survived; the killing pits outside Tykocin where the entire Jewish community was marched into the forest and shot; Majdanek, a death camp that stands so complete, it could be up and running in 24 hours and of course the Auschwitz complex – Auschwitz I and Birkenau. The vastness of the camp is unimaginable, extending as far as one can see, but even standing there and seeing its enormity, it is hard to understand the degradation and precise process and intricacy of the murder machine that was responsible for the destruction of 1.1 million people, one million of whom were Jews. At each site we recited Kaddish, lit candles and vowed to remember.

Our trip was informative, allowing those of us who are guides to return ready to educate our visitors with more personal insights. It was also overwhelming, leaving us feeling shattered at times but even more in awe of our amazing survivor volunteers who pay honour to the dead, by educating future generations when retelling their experiences. Our group became tightly bonded as they explored past-histories – both personal and collective – and examined the impossible-to-answer question of “Why?”

Special thanks is owed to the Sydney Jewish Museum and their professional staff who crafted an informative, educational trip and ensured our wellbeing at all times.

The next trip is being planned for 2019. **sjm**

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Sydney Jewish Museum 25 Year Anniversary

1992–1995

Shannon Biederman Curator Collections



The Sydney Jewish Museum opened its doors on 18 November 1992 after more than a decade of debate about the need for a 'Jewish' museum.

At the heart of this was the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. They aspired to build an institution in the memory of those who were murdered during the Holocaust – a place in which their stories could remain alive for generations to

come, using their past to inspire moral and ethical reflection in the present. They sought to relay their stories with the goal of strengthening the democracy fundamental to Australian life.

These dreams became a reality with the generosity of one survivor, John Saunders AO, who realised the importance and urgency of preserving this history.

1992

Hundreds attended the opening on 18 November 1992. It was a particularly emotional and exciting event for the survivors whose dream was now a reality. They finally had a museum, a memorial and a home, a place to fulfil their sacred duty to commemorate and to speak for those who never could.

1993

Thousands came to see the new Museum. A dynamic program of functions, film screenings and lectures, concerts and book launches commenced. The first school groups came and Project Heritage, a program to teach Jewish Day school students oral history techniques, was launched as part of Education Week.

1994

The release of *Schindler's List* in February made 1994 even busier than the previous year, bringing an influx of visitors wanting to learn more after seeing the film. A gala charity premiere of the film was held, with part of the proceeds benefiting the Museum.

Of the many exhibits, the creation of the Sanctum of Remembrance was the most significant. Many survivors have no graves to visit and pay their respects to loved ones, and this became a place in which to do so.

The Museum won the prestigious Award of Distinction in the Cultural Tourism Division of the 1994 NSW Tourism Awards for Excellence.

▶ Construction of the SJM.



▶ Community preview of SJM plans.



▶▶ One of many well attended public programs.

▶ John Saunders AO, Alex Weinberger and Sol Schonberger affixing the mezuzah.



▶▶ Survivor Olga Horak OAM with students.



▶ Survivors in the new Museum.

▶▶ Prime Minister Bob Hawke AC opens the resource centre.



▶ Opening of the Sanctum.



▶ Gala preview of *Schindler's List*.



1995–2002

1995

A most extraordinary year in the Museum's history, with many events celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Liberation. The highlight of these events was the tribute evening at the Sydney Opera House. The audience of 2,000 people were treated to an evening of music, a stellar array of speakers, both local and from overseas – Liberators, Survivors and Descendants.

The Resource Centre was opened by former Prime Minister Bob Hawke AC.

1996 – 1998

Things began to change significantly. To this point, the Museum had been mainly funded by its founder, John Saunders AO, but it was time to look outside for wider support. This was a particularly difficult time for the Museum, requiring dramatic reduction in staff numbers and activities. A new Committee of Management was formed as part of the process of becoming part of the community. In 1998 the SJM became the 18th member of the Jewish Communal Appeal, the NSW Jewish community's major fundraising body.

1999

Within the Walls: The Theresienstadt Ghetto exhibition opened – the first major temporary exhibition by the Museum since 1996. It was also the first traveling exhibition.

A massive hailstorm significantly damaged the

building, forcing the Museum to close for a month for repairs. This did not deter record numbers of people flocking to the Museum to see the exhibition.

2000

In the year 2000 the Museum focused on preserving the survivors' testimonies for future generations. Project 120 was launched to videotape survivor guides recounting their experiences.

The Museum inaugurated its Generation to Generation guide training course which focused on the twin axes of history and memory. Future guides were matched with a survivor mentor, whose personal story gave participants a visceral connection to the material studied.

2001

The *Crossroads: Shanghai and the Jews of China* exhibition opened, making 2001 a year of exciting programs. In Sydney there were three other major institutions with exhibitions on China allowing for many interesting joint ventures and a city-wide tour between the venues. Events such as the Harmony Day Dinner were held with the Chinese Australian Forum, where an 8-course 'Kosher style' Chinese banquet was served, forging bonds with the Chinese community.

2002

The Children's Memorial, one of the most moving spaces in the Sydney Jewish Museum, was opened. Each year the memorial



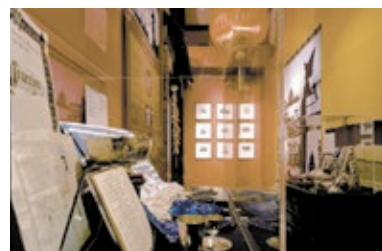
◀ The first Board of Management.



◀ Within the Walls: Theresienstadt 1941-1945 exhibition.

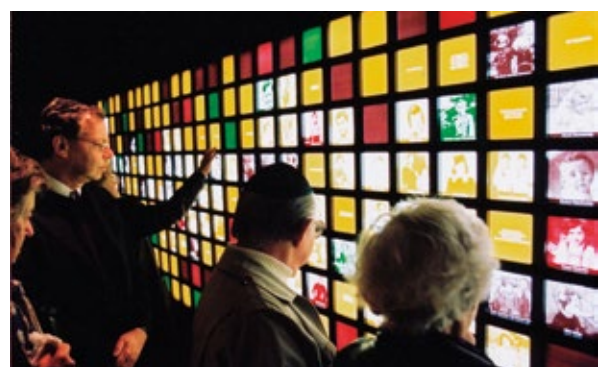


◀ Chinese Australian forum visit *Crossroads* exhibition.



◀ *Crossroads: Shanghai and the Jews of China* exhibition.

▼ The opening of *The Children's Memorial*.



Sydney Jewish Museum 25 Year Anniversary 2003–2007

Shannon Biederman Curator



2002 Capital Appeal function

First Community Stories book *Lives Lost, Lives Regained* launched.

Scheinberg Family photo from 60th anniversary of Liberation.

First primary school programs launched.

First UN Holocaust Memorial Day celebrated at the SJM.



is re-dedicated on Korczak Day, commemorating the Jewish doctor Janusz Korczak for his humanity and self-sacrifice, and photographs submitted by members of the community are added to the Memorial's wall.

The Museum had a Capital Appeal to raise funds for infrastructure expansion. A successful dinner was held with 2,000 guests to hear keynote speaker Samuel Pissar, Holocaust survivor, lawyer and author.

2003

The Community Stories Department was established with the aim of giving members the opportunity to express their individual family histories in written form and to create an archival collection of the social history of the NSW Jewish community. Mentoring and a range of publishing options were offered, as were writing workshops, the first of which produced the collection *Lives Lost, Lives Regained*.

2004

Building works using money raised at the Capital Appeal officially commenced. The refurbishments included classrooms and educational facilities, provisions for disabled access, new offices, climate controlled archival storage areas, a guide debriefing room, a vastly expanded library and resource centre, a new temporary exhibition space, new and improved public toilets and a new café area.

Despite the disruptions, the Museum had a record 10,000 school visitors during the calendar year.

A new program, Health Care and the Holocaust was launched to help aged care staff understand the special needs of survivors.

2005

The 60th anniversary of Liberation saw huge festivities planned. The celebrations, including an event, *Liberation, Life and Lamingtons*, were held at Moriah College to cope with the crowds. Survivors were photographed with their family. The permanent exhibition *The Long Journey to Freedom* was also opened.

2006

2006 was the first year that the 27th of January officially came to be observed as The United Nations Holocaust Memorial Day, commemorated together with the Liberation of Auschwitz at the Museum.

Serniki: Unearthing the Holocaust was added to the Museum's permanent exhibition. It was unique in that it showed Australia's contribution to the forensic archaeology of sourcing evidence for the trials of suspected war criminals, who had made their homes in Australia after World War II.

In addition to high school Holocaust education programs, the Museum launched a series of programs for primary school students. These consisted of age appropriate tours of the Holocaust exhibits as well as tailor-made workshops on Judaism.

2007–2012

2007

In 2007 the New South Wales Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women transferred their substantial collection into the Museum's custody. With close to 600 artefacts donated, it was an important aspect of the Museum's collection on Australian Jewish History.

Butterflies of Hope was launched, the first Holocaust exhibition developed by the Museum for a younger audience and the first exhibition to include other genocides.

2008

The first refurbishment of the Museum's permanent exhibition space took place with the opening of *Culture and Continuity: Journey through Judaism* on the ground floor. Australia's Governor General, Quentin Bryce AC, officiated at the opening.

The arrival of the *University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute Visual History Archive* exponentially expanded the holding of testimony at the Museum's resource centre.

2009

The culture of South Africa coloured the year 2009 with the exhibition *It's Not All Black and White: the South African Jewish Story*. A dynamic array of programs brought record numbers of first time visitors to the Museum to enjoy films, discussions, music and South African delicacies.

This year was the inaugural 'Poland tour'. The Museum's



Resident Historian, Prof Konrad Kwiet, led a group of 25 on a journey through Berlin, Poland and Israel celebrating the richness of pre-war European Jewish life, to remember and mourn its destruction and witness its regeneration.

2010

The Museum took the opportunity of expanding its permanent exhibition space with the opening of *Serving Australia: Jewish Contribution in Australian Military History*.

The Museum was approached by the Australian Institute of Police Management to develop a program for their middle to high-ranking police and emergency staff enrolled in a Graduate Certificate of Executive Management.

2011

A crucial and long awaited addition to the permanent exhibition on Jewish resistance, *Amidah: Standing Up*, was opened. This was welcomed by both the survivors and the Jewish community at large, as putting to rest the myth that all Jews went 'like lambs to the slaughter' during the Holocaust.



Collection items donated by NAJEX.

Butterflies from the *Butterflies of Hope* exhibition.



Her Excellency Quentin Bryce AC officially opens *Culture and Continuity*.



African drumming as part of *It's Not All Black and White*.



Serving Australia, launched 2010.



George Grojnowski speaks as part of the police program.

Sydney Jewish Museum 25 Year Anniversary 2012–2017

Shannon Biederman Curator

▶ Unpacking of the material on loan from the Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum.



▶ Dressing Sydney: The Jewish Fashion Story exhibition.



▶ Remember Me with Lena Goldstein OAM.



▶ The Honourable Christopher Pyne MP launches the new Education and Resource Centre.

▶ Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull opens the new Permanent Holocaust Exhibition.



▶ SJM Survivor Guides receiving Lifetime Achievement Award.

2012

One of the most exciting temporary exhibitions *Dressing Sydney: The Jewish Fashion Story* opened 14 October 2012 to much fanfare. It received visitors from all over Sydney and greater NSW.

After many years of negotiating the curatorial department procured its first loan from the Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum, Poland.

A very successful Capital Appeal was held, securing funding for an Education and Resource Centre and the upgrade of the Holocaust Exhibition.

2013

The *Moving Image and Sound Archive* was launched as an initiative to ensure that survivor testimony was preserved and proactively collected. This same year the hugely popular *Remember Me* public program series was launched to allow the public the opportunity to hear first-hand survivor accounts.

2014

During 2014, the Museum hosted almost 100 public functions, making the Museum a true community hub, contributing to the cultural, artistic and

intellectual landscape of the city. Notable academics who presented include Prof Christopher Browning, Prof Deborah Dwork, Prof Dan Michman, Prof Alan Rosen and Prof David Silberklang.

2015

The SJM continued to grow into new spaces, creating the NAB Education and Resource Centre. This new space has not only allowed for increased student numbers (a record 25,000 attended in 2015) but provides a dynamic space for many events and cements the Museum as a cultural hub for the Jewish community. The Sydney Jewish Museum survivor volunteers won the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award at the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award, a testament to their contribution to the community.

2016

Despite working at limited capacity for most of 2016 due to the upgrade, the Museum programs continued, keeping pace with the previous year's record visitor and student numbers. The Museum guides underwent extensive training in preparation for the new Permanent Holocaust Exhibition.

2017

After nearly five years of development, the new Permanent Holocaust Exhibition was officially opened by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on 19 March 2017. The exhibition has received rave reviews from visitors. School student visitor numbers are expected to reach an all-time high this year. [sjm](#)



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The Children's Memorial

Jacqui Wasilewsky Community Stories Manager



There are 432 tiles that make up the wall. As of this year all are filled.

According to visitor surveys, the Children's Memorial is consistently referred to as the most haunting and emotionally moving space in the Sydney Jewish Museum. This is because of its content as well as its sombre, commemorative design. The 1.5 million children who were murdered during the Holocaust are memorialised here.

The Memorial was established in 2002, inspired largely by Mary Ziegler, a long-term volunteer guide at the Museum, wanting to find a way to ensure that her half-sister, Malka, and all of the other child Holocaust victims were never forgotten. Mary had spent much of her life not knowing about the existence of Malka and her father's first wife because, like so many other

survivors, this memory was too painful and too raw even to speak of.

The Memorial was designed by Desmond Freeman and is placed in a small room at the back of the Holocaust exhibition space. It contains a wall of photos and names of children, a large glass dish into which individual drops of water continuously fall (representing the tears of the children), a sculpture of a pile of children's shoes, some display cases and, most recently, a screen which provides an interactive digital display of the names and photos on the wall itself.

There are 432 tiles that make up the wall. As of this year all are filled with either photos or names of child victims who were relatives or friends of members of our community. I have worked on updating the wall annually and it remains a truly harrowing experience. Each photo raises emotions in me, and questions about the child – how, when and where they lived as well as when and where they were murdered. I have

also wondered what people who knew and loved them remembered about them. As someone so removed, both in time and place from what happened, I wanted a way to access their individuality and their humanity.

I set about contacting the donors and requesting any additional information that they had about the children. I realised that whilst the message of the wall was already very strong, a message which was deeply relatable for students and visitors alike, young people today require that all of their experiences be personalised. In their world, their experiences are enhanced by bringing them one step closer to their own lives. I wanted them to see the children as people who had lived, but for whom all opportunities to grow up, have careers and lives, had been extinguished.

Many donors had spent time searching for more information on their lost family members and had discovered their dates and places of death and sometimes even the circumstances under which they were murdered. Others, however, had little or no information. We collated it all and decided that the best way to enable visitors to interact with the knowledge was to create a digital version

of the wall on a screen with a search function. As part of the upgrade of the Holocaust exhibition space this year, the digital representation was installed in the Memorial itself.

Only when speaking to one of our guides did I realise the true strength of the digital representation. According to her, students are standing at the wall and telling the names of children to other students standing at the screen. They are interacting with the information in a new and valuable way, and the names and photos are becoming real people who lived, were loved, were lost, but are now remembered.

2017 saw the last spaces on the wall filled. It is both remarkable and incredibly sad that our community was able to contribute so many names and that we are still being approached by people providing more names and photos. Going forward we will not be adding names to the Children's Memorial, but can add them to our new electronic memorial which will be located on the top floor of the Museum space. This will be unveiled towards the end of this year, so that any children, not yet included on the wall, can be immortalised there. **sjm**

They are interacting with the information in a new and valuable way, and the names and photos are becoming real people who lived, were loved, were lost but are now remembered.

Community Stories

Since its inception in 2003, Community Stories has gone from strength to strength. Originally publishing only Holocaust memoirs, it has grown to include the stories of many different members of our community. We have published books about Australian Jews, South African Jews, Jews from Arab lands and those from Singapore and Shanghai.

We have extended our services to include oral histories and have recently published and launched our 70th book. Last year we produced

our first illustrated book for younger readers and are working on our second one at the moment. We have another five books between the editing and design phase and we anticipate that they will all be published within the next 12 months.

Additionally, Rosalind Sharbanee Meyer's second edition of her book *Rosie's War – Escape from Singapore 1942* won the best non-fiction award for 2016 from the Society of Women Writers. The first edition of this book was published by the Museum in 2007. The revised edition explores the Jewish community of Singapore, Changi and the brutality of the Japanese. This book is now available for sale from the Museum shop. **sjm**

A Tribute to our Major Benefactors

Rob Schneider Development Director

» Maurice Segura with Rob Schneider in the Sanctum. Maurice is pointing to a plaque in memory of his uncle Isaac who perished at Auschwitz.

Remembering Maurice

Shortly after I took up my role as Development Director at the Sydney Jewish Museum, I was intrigued to learn that the Museum had a supporter, a Greek Jew who had also lived in South Africa where I was born.

With this common history and many friendships with Greek people going back over the years, I really wanted to meet **Maurice Segura** and learn more about this man and why he was a friend to the Museum.

Maurice was a man of many facets; a man with an encyclopaedic knowledge of a broad range of topics from military history through to music and entertainment. He had a dry sense of humour, a wry grin and a twinkle or wicked gleam in his eyes that I will never forget.

I soon learned that it was difficult to stop Maurice once he started talking, and that he could literally talk for hours. Many times I heard his wife Elaine shout, "Maurice, stop talking and have your tea before it gets cold," but cold tea was the last thing on Maurice's mind as he regaled me with stories. Tales of his childhood in Salonica, his time in the Greek army, the loss of family in Auschwitz and his audacious enterprise selling curios to German soldiers in Athens. While more than 90 percent of Salonica's Jewish population was murdered by the Nazis, Maurice managed to obtain false identities for his mother, his three sisters and himself. After the War, he arranged for himself and his immediate family to migrate to South Africa where he set up an enterprise in Johannesburg manufacturing leather goods.

In 1961, following the Sharpeville riots, Maurice had the foresight to once again relocate his family, this time to Sydney, where he established a thriving manufacturing business. As the family 'godfather', all Maurice's sisters and brothers-in-law were employed in this enterprise, which was sold to the factory manager when Maurice decided to retire and focus on the stock market.



In his inimitable and analytical way, he became a master at this game and loved to talk about his strategies for making the most out of his investments.

In the knowledge that many of his family members did not survive the Holocaust, Maurice read extensively on the history of WWII and was particularly interested in how a person like Hitler could come to power and maintain his power. Maurice accumulated a substantial library of books, many of which he donated to the Museum's library. Maurice also erected a plaque in the Sanctum of Remembrance in memory of his uncle Isaac who was murdered at Auschwitz.

Elaine passed away in February 2015 and it became increasingly difficult for Maurice to remain in his beautiful Cronulla apartment. Together with his niece Shirley, I set about looking at suitable facilities for Maurice. After viewing and rejecting a number of facilities, we hit the jackpot when Maurice visited the Montefiore in Randwick and felt comfortable enough to agree to move in. Whilst Maurice was always proud of his Jewish roots, he was not observant, but I do believe that at Monte, he rediscovered his roots. It was a great joy for us to celebrate and discuss the Jewish holidays that he again became aware of once he became a resident at Monte. In fact, such was Maurice's memory of his childhood Hebrew lessons back in Salonica that, one day, when I asked him whether he remembered the Sh'ma, he promptly recited the opening sentence:

Maurice accumulated a substantial library of books, many of which he donated to the Museum's library.

“Sh’mā Yisrael, Adonay Eloheinu, Adonay Echad.”
I then recited the rest of the prayer with Maurice repeating the words after me. It was a very moving experience for both of us!

Maurice never forgot his roots; never forgot his family who were murdered in the Holocaust and never forgot the Sydney Jewish Museum which is the beneficiary of a substantial bequest from his estate. May his dear soul rest in peace. I will never forget Maurice either.

On 24 October, the Museum launched a temporary exhibition entitled *The Jews of Greece* dedicated to the memory and generosity of the late Maurice Segura. The exhibition runs to 18 February 2018.

In memory of Vera Clarke

Vera Clarke was born in Budapest in 1923 and managed, in difficult circumstances, to survive the war in Hungary. She met her husband George in 1939 when she was 17, and they married three years later. Vera’s uncle helped her family survive the last year of the war after Germany occupied Hungary. Vera and George wanted to leave Europe behind them and arrived in Australia in 1949.

In Australia they were diligent and worked hard. In her spare time Vera went to a language school and watched foreign films with English subtitles to learn the language. George started with cabinet-making and taxi driving and Vera learned to be a



 Vera Clarke.

Arnold Bloch Leibler

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A Tribute to our Major Benefactors

Rob Schneider Development Director

In their own quiet way, Miriam and Egon Sonnenschein have made a big difference to Jewish communal endeavour both locally and in Israel.

machinist in leather goods and later clothing.

In 1960 they opened a sandwich shop in Ashfield. Vera filled the shop with her Hungarian cooking, attracting many patrons including Germans, Greeks and Hungarians. The business was successful, but required long hours and hard work. Following the sale of the shop in 1974, it was now their time to 'smell the roses' and they began to travel extensively, both in Australia and other parts of the world. With Vera everything was done well, once she decided it was worth doing.

George passed away in 2003 leaving Vera bereft. She spent her last years at the Montefiore, Randwick. All who knew her described her as wise, empathetic and upbeat till the end.

At Vera's funeral, it was said, "People seek 'mindfulness' in their busy lives and our ever busier world. Vera had these innate skills and those who knew her learned and grew by her example."

The Museum is extremely grateful to Vera for remembering the Museum in her will. It is generous bequests such as hers that enable the Museum to continue to fulfil its mission.

Bringing 'sunshine' wherever they go

The last year has also seen a couple come forward with an extremely generous donation to the Museum. In their own quiet way, **Egon and Miriam Sonnenschein** have made a big difference to Jewish communal endeavour both locally and in Israel and, to the Museum's delight, they

have endowed two galleries in the refurbished Holocaust section in their own names and a third in the name of their late daughter, Vivienne Sonnenschein Weinstock.

Egon and Miriam Sonnenschein are no strangers to the Museum with Egon, a Holocaust survivor from Yugoslavia, regularly speaking to groups here, and Miriam recently completing the Museum Volunteer Guide Course.

The Museum is extremely grateful to the Sonnenscheins for their generosity in word and in deed.

In the 'order' of things

The Sydney Jewish Museum salutes our generous benefactors, **Isaac and Susan Wakil** who were made Officers in the Order of Australia in this year's Australia Day Honours Awards. In 2015, the Wakils generously sponsored the Mark and Anna Reznik Centre of Learning on the Museum's lower ground floor and they are now extending their amazing support by endowing the Museum's Chair of Education starting from 2018. **sjm**

▶ Egon and Miriam Sonnenschein.

▶ Isaac and Susan Wakil being toasted by Museum Development Director, Rob Schneider, at the investiture ceremony where the couple were made Officers in the Order of Australia.



Chain of Memories: Recollections from 1995 to 2017

Rita Prager Community Liaison Manager

In April 1995 I started working at the Sydney Jewish Museum. Alan Jacobs, our first CEO, gave me the chance – a new migrant from South America with little English – to work in this inspirational workplace.

In the early days we had a small office with a skeleton staff and a large number of volunteers, most of them Holocaust survivors. They held jobs in different areas such as Education, Curatorial, Office, Shop, Library and Fundraising.

The work was carried out with love and passion. Every survivor had their own voice and they all felt the Museum was part of their lives. I felt like I belonged to a big, extended family.

In the year I started, the Museum held a major event at the Opera House commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Survival and Liberation. Holocaust survivors and their families gathered, with a total of 2,000 guests present. A special audio-visual presentation with messages from all over the world, including a message from then US President, Bill Clinton, were read aloud.

In the same year, then NSW Premier, Bob Carr, opened the *Liberation* exhibition. In the following years other temporary exhibitions were created around the old cafeteria and the Benefactor's Hall. One that comes to mind was the *Chocolate Panels* exhibition. Some of our Holocaust survivor guides were also artists. Babette Rich painted beautiful porcelains and Alex Ferson carved wooden sculptures, and they both exhibited in-house and gave the proceeds of their sales back to the Museum.

Our means of communication were a long way from today's email, Facebook, WhatsApp and other digital media. Monthly newsletters were produced and printed in-house on A3 paper. They were taken home by our office volunteer Vera Faludi, to fold on weekends and post out by the following week.

Members and donors in 1995 totalled 1,500. During John Roth's presidency a membership committee was established. It included John

Roth, current volunteer John Lowbeer (who was then a Board member) and myself. Under their direction, membership and donor numbers grew steadily and now stands at 5,000. This annual commitment by our dedicated supporters is a major source of revenue for the Museum. I want to thank each one of you for your ongoing financial support. Many members and donors have been with the organisation since we opened our doors 25 years ago. As with anything in life, there is always room for improvement and we urge the community to continue to rally behind us.

Sanctum of Remembrance

The Sanctum of Remembrance was a small alcove on the second floor. Marika Weinberger OAM, President of the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants at the time, was the force behind this project. People could purchase plaques to remember relatives who perished during the Holocaust. In 1995 there were less than 100 plaques in the Sanctum. As part of renovations made possible by the 2002 Capital Appeal, a new room was dedicated and the Sanctum now has close to 500 plaques. This initiative has provided the Museum with much needed funds.



1995, our first CEO Alan Jacob's farewell. (l-r) Front row: Sol Schonberger, Rita Prager, Charlotte Zettel, Marika Weinberger, Sylvia Eisman, Eva Gertler. Back row: Michelle Steele, Glen Gordon, Leon Zettel, Suzanne Blake, Alan Jacobs, Samantha Feldman, Marcelle Jacobs, Adrienne Sobel and security guard.



Chain of Memories: Recollections from 1995 to 2017

Rita Prager Community Liaison Manager

Many members and donors have been with the organisation since we opened our doors 25 years ago.

In March 2017, at the opening of the new permanent exhibition, Dr Avril Alba, Redevelopment Project Director, spoke about her views regarding remembering and reflecting on the past and the future, and by doing so creating what she called a *Chain of memories*. So how do we, the next generation, do so in a way that is relevant to all ages? Avril mentioned that in the Jewish tradition, names hold deep personal and communal resonance.

The Sanctum of Remembrance is one of those spaces in the Museum where names have a profound meaning for those placing a plaque. In Avril's words, "By doing so, we are continuing the *Chain of memories*."


Over all of these years, I have come to admire

the survivors' resilience and spirit. Their major concern and a common question was and is, "Who will carry on our stories once we are no longer here?"

Today, as I reflect upon my amazing journey at the SJM, I am confident that we continue to ensure that the voices and experiences of the Holocaust survivors are not only never forgotten, but that they continue to enrich the lives of all the visitors who come to our Museum. Our work of *Chain of memories* continues to be transmitted from generation to generation.

The importance of 'our' Museum is to show what the face of history looks like when it is allowed to come back to life, to flourish and fulfil its destiny. The flame is allowed to burn once again. It is the *Chain of memories* that matters. **sjm**

Some meetings are unforgettable



Your major gift or endowment will help the Museum to expand its education programs and ensure the victims of the Holocaust are never forgotten. Contact Rob Schneider on 02 8036 0136 or email rschneider@sjm.com.au for a confidential discussion about how you can help.

Gift certificates

In lieu of giving a gift for an anniversary, milestone or special occasion, please consider making a donation to the Sydney Jewish Museum. The recipient will receive a beautiful card advising that a donation was made by you in their honour (the amount is not stated). You will be acknowledged for your generous support.

All donations are tax-deductible.

**To organise a donation
please call the Museum
for further information**

02 9360 7999

Sanctum & Plaques

The Museum's Sanctum of Remembrance is dedicated to the memory of the six million martyrs and the heroes who survived the Holocaust but are no longer with us. We invite you to remember a loved one by dedicating a plaque in their honour.

**Contact Rita Prager on
02 9360 7999 or email
communityliaison@
sjm.com.au for further
information.**



IN MEMORY OF SIX
MILLION MARTYRS
AND HEROES

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR FRIEND
MARGOT SCHMELZ
SURVIVOR OF AUSCHWITZ
SIMON SCHMELZ
HUSBAND - PERISHED IN THE SHOAH
REMEMBERED BY
LOTTE DESSEN & JOE BEHRENS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR PARENTS
LEA & DESIDER KLEIN
AND OUR BROTHER PETER
WHO PERISHED DURING THE SHOAH
DEDICATED BY THEIR SONS & BROTHERS
ERIC & LESLIE KORDA

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY MOTHER
LOLA LIPSCHÜTZ
& **SISTER POLA**
&
FAMILY ATTESLÄNDER
WHO PERISHED IN THE SHOAH
REMEMBERED BY ANNA REICH & FAMILY

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY PARENTS
HERMAN & ALWINE HOLLANDER
SISTER DORA
WHO PERISHED IN THE SHOAH
REMEMBERED BY
FREIDA ROSENBERG nee HOLLANDER
AND HER BROTHER ROBERT & JACOB HOLLANDER

IN MEMORIAL OF
BLUMA & MENDEL WARGON
PERISHED IN THE PRIME OF THEIR LIVES - 1943
REMEMBERED WITH LOVE & REVERENCE BY
THEIR CHILDREN WHO SURVIVED THE SHOAH
GRANDCHILDREN & GREAT GRANDCHILDREN
DEPRIVED OF THE PRIVILEGE OF KNOWING THEM
AND ENJOYING THEIR LOVE AND ATTENTION

HILDE KUSZNI
nee **JACOBSON**
WHO ESCAPED TO ARGENTINA
NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN
DEDICATED BY MYER & KATH

IN MEMORY OF MY BABY BROTHER
EDWARD WILLIAM JACOBSON
WHO I NEVER REALLY GOT TO KNOW
BORN 16-04-40 DIED 1941
IN SHANGHAI
NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN
DEDICATED BY KATHRIN

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY PARENTS
EMMA & HERMAN FOX
HUSBAND **HENRY TISCHER**
SURVIVORS OF THE SHOAH
REMEMBERED BY WIFE MARIE
CHILDREN IAN & SANDRA TISCHERMAN

IN LOVING MEMORY
IRENA (SZUMSKA) IN
1919 - 2003
RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS
HONoured BY HER ADORING
BERNARD (HELLREICH) IN
AND HER CHILDREN
CHRISTOPHER AND VIVIAN

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
BERNARD (HELLREICH) IN
1913 - 2008
SURVIVOR OF THE SHOAH
ADORED AND HONoured BY
CHRISTOPHER AND VIVIAN

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
KATARINA NEUKAM
and
ULRICH NEUKAM
WHO PERISHED IN THE HOLOCAUST
and
CLAUDE NEWCOMB
SURVIVOR AND MEMORIAL VICTIM
REMEMBERED BY JARNA, RUTH, JANE

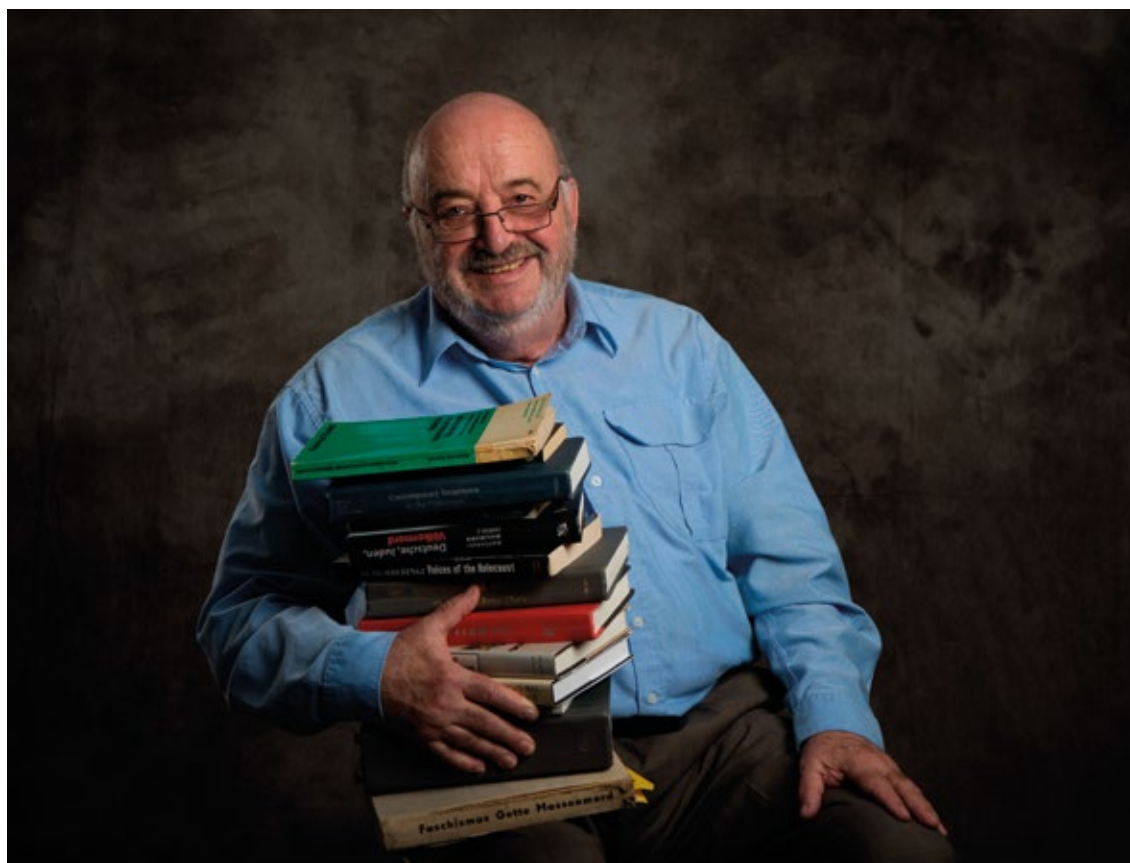
Professor Konrad Kwiet

First-rate historian, Jewish humanist, pioneer

Yotam Weiner Education Manager



▶ Prof Konrad Kwiet with a small selection of the books he has published and contributed to.
Photographer: Katherine Griffiths.



“Konrad is a first-rate historian, having dealt with Nazi policies in the Netherlands, German-Jewish reactions to the Holocaust and other equally central topics.” – Yehuda Bauer

Those of us who work at the Sydney Jewish Museum feel lucky for many reasons. One of them is the opportunity to be named ‘colleagues’ of our Resident Historian, Prof Konrad Kwiet. What fascinates me is how the vast majority of Australians have never heard of Konrad. He is one of Australia’s greatest historians and undoubtedly one of Australia’s greatest minds. A true living treasure.

Historians have assessed Konrad in the highest terms:

Raul Hilberg wrote: ... [Konrad Kwiet is] a researcher from Australia whose knowledge of archival resources in the field of Holocaust studies is unsurpassed.

Christopher R. Browning said: “Konrad Kwiet was a pioneer in researching the newly-opened East European archives after 1989 and provided invaluable assistance to Australia’s Special Investigations Unit in its belated attempt to bring Holocaust perpetrators residing in Australia to justice.”

Yehuda Bauer: “Konrad is a first-rate historian, having dealt with Nazi policies in the Netherlands, German-Jewish reactions to the Holocaust and other equally central topics. His work as the Chief Historical Consultant to the Australian commission dealing with Nazi war criminals in Australia led him to deal closely with survivors’ testimonies, and exposed him to that combination of detailed historical research and individual experience that has become a hallmark of his work ... He is a Jewish humanist, not only an important historian.”

I asked Konrad about his life and the last 25 years at the Museum.

Yotam Weiner: When did you hear of the idea of starting a Museum?

Konrad Kwiet: I was asked by David Dinte, who called me in to early discussions about properties and the site of the Museum. The initial questions were: 'Who will design the museum? Who will be the sponsors? John Saunders AO almost single-handedly covered the costs and was also involved in the conception of the design. Once he had made his initial contribution, he pulled back a little and left it to others. In the beginning, apart from the architects and curators, there were hardly any professionals. John asked me if I would volunteer and I agreed.

YW: What was your role, in the beginning?

KK: To provide the historical framework: I composed captions, looked at images and ensured there were no mistakes. At that stage we hardly had any educators, there was no training for guides or visiting schools. All the volunteers were Holocaust survivors and they were dedicated and committed.

YW: Why did you want the Museum to exist?

KK: I thought it was a community that still had many survivors. I said, "This is the place where it should be done." I could combine it with my academic position. I had an academic life at the university, and this was something new that could enrich my working life.

YW: Were there people opposed to the founding of the Museum?

KK: For many survivors, you can imagine that they thought this was a forgotten and closed chapter in their lives, and so did not want this reactivation of their memories. In the late 70s and early 80s, when the idea of the Museum started to emerge, there was a kind of awakening and some survivors thought they had to organise themselves and keep the memory alive, but it was still a minority.

YW: What did you want the Museum to achieve?

KK: To keep the memory alive and to teach visitors about the Holocaust; to make people aware that

this is an important event in history. I think it was even more important for the survivors to have this place. For them it became a second home – where they could mourn, where they could meet – that was important for them. For the wider audience, most Australians had no clue about what happened in Europe during that time.

What I liked from the beginning was identifying objects, not only to see documents and photos but something from history that I could touch. If I get an object that is related to a story, it's related to a person. I find it more exciting to be in an archive and touch an original piece of paper ... it's great!

YW: What are your fondest memories from the last 25 years?

KK: That's difficult. There are many of them. There were two or three survivor speeches I found very intriguing. Yehuda Bauer's visits were always illuminating. Yehuda's wife, Ilana, introduced him on stage, musically, by playing the flute.

My wedding was not bad either! (35 years ago, Konrad and Jane were married in a civil ceremony. In 2016, officiated by a Rabbi, they wed at Emanuel Synagogue and celebrated at the Museum.)

What I always found interesting was when there were visitors from Israel, such as the President, that the survivors would queue and want to be greeted personally – for them it was unbelievably important to be recognised after all the humiliation. They had experienced such humiliation and degradation, it took a long time before they regained a kind of self-confidence. At the end of the day they found that the Museum gave them official recognition.

YW: How many testimonies have you read and do you have concerns about testimonies?

KK: More than 1,000 and I am still collecting. I have learned not to discuss or question survivors. 10 or 20 years ago I was a little more critical and let my thoughts be publicly known. Now I don't question anymore. I've learned it doesn't matter. I have a way of pushing these concerns aside.

Professor Konrad Kwiet

First-rate historian, Jewish humanist, pioneer

Yotam Weiner Education Manager

I think the real lesson is to understand why ordinary people did what they did; why Jews were not in a position to resist; and why the vast army of onlookers played an equally important role in allowing the Holocaust to happen.

At the end of the day, I think that younger people should take over. It's as simple as that.

YW: What is the purpose of survivors sharing testimony today?

KK: School students who visit the Museum today need to meet a living witness. They can google and see films, but here they see someone. It's the most significant experience during their visit to the Museum. That can't compete with any lecture or display or virtual reconstruction. It is meaningful because there is a real person outside their traditional learning experience who can speak about what they experienced. Telling a story is much better than reading a book or a film; having a living witness about whom people can say, "They went through something and they survived."

YW: Do you believe in the lessons of history?

KK: Only if you ask the right questions! The invalid, easy answer is, "Never ever." That is easy. I think the real lesson is to understand why ordinary people did what they did; why Jews were not in a position to resist; and why the vast army of onlookers played an equally important role in allowing the Holocaust to happen. Thereafter, we need to pay homage to those who risked their lives and stood up. These are lessons. At the end of the day, having almost exhausted what I can learn from history, the fact is that I still can't explain certain things. The more I have learned, the more I have researched, the less answers I have.

YW: What do people learn when they come to the Museum?

KK: That everything is much more complicated than historians or educators tell them, what kind of alternatives people had and why they chose what they chose. As a historian, I know how short my view is. There is no absolute truth which remains forever. In the future, if contemporary concerns change, if the context in which we are working changes, then we may change our view and our interpretation of history. If you look to the historiography of the Holocaust from 1945 to today you will see there are waves of different approaches, different answers which show that

historical findings are not sacrosanct forever.

If Timothy Snyder is right, that '*History does not repeat. But it does offer us examples and patterns, and thereby enlarges our imaginations and creates more possibilities for anticipation and resistance*', then the Holocaust is a warning for us. In 20, 30, 40 years, other catastrophes may occur that cause us to view the Holocaust differently.

YW: So, the lesson learned is?

KK: That what is more important than teaching people facts, is making them aware of what they themselves derive or conclude from the facts. We need to build and enhance critical awareness so that people question, try to find answers and develop the capacity to think critically. The Museum provides this trigger to think, question authority, question the past and question tradition.

YW: What has the Museum done for the Jewish community in Sydney?

KK: It follows that old Jewish principle, which I think is a mitzvah; to 'keep the memory alive'. There is a religious obligation to remember and to mourn, rather than to fear that if you deviate you will be punished.

The message is to recognise that Jews stood up as much as they could, but Jews on their own were not in a position to resist completely as resistance required the cooperation of non-Jews. Without non-Jews, Jews are lost. It is the same with antisemitism. Jews on their own can't combat it successfully, they need non-Jews. Another lesson the Holocaust provides is that despite the huge and traumatic loss and destruction of Jewish life, Jews showed resilience and ensured continuity. The Museum is an example of that.

YW: And your future after 25 years?

KK: I think I am slowly preparing for my departure, because I believe that even this Museum could exist and continue without an historian now. At the end of the day, I think that younger people should take over. It's as simple as that. **sjm**

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Beyond Godwin's Law: Exploring the significance of the Holocaust for contemporary bioethics

A/Prof Michael Robertson SJM Professorial Fellow

▶ Stairs to the Gaschamber – Hadamar Gedenkstätte Germany. Photo Edwina Light, 2015.

In the early 1990s a US lawyer, Mike Godwin, outlined an axiom about the problem of glib comparisons of current events to the Nazis or the Holocaust.

The renaissance of right-wing political populism, ethno-nationalism and racism in geopolitics reminds us of the importance of a sophisticated grasp of history to understand our current times. Canonical events in human history, none more so than the Shoah, must be continually re-examined in the present context.

The necessity to do so is underscored by philosopher Zygmunt Bauman's compelling argument that the Holocaust remains an ever-present potential in modernity and that the culture that produced Auschwitz persists. In the early 1990s a US lawyer, Mike Godwin, outlined an axiom about the problem of glib comparisons of current events to the Nazis or the Holocaust. What is now recognised as 'Godwin's Law' avers that 'as an online debate increases in length, it becomes inevitable that someone will eventually compare someone or something to Adolf Hitler or the Nazis'.¹ Godwin's corresponding observation is that not all comparisons are inappropriate, and he implores us to provide a 'meaningful and substantive'² analysis of the Nazi period and the Holocaust. Applying this to the field of bioethics, Israeli physician Tessa Chelouche wrote that, "Any suggestion that there may be analogies between the way the Nazis were and the way we are, between what they did and what we are doing would be held by some to be absurd. In their view what transpired during the Holocaust was unique and therefore unusable in the present discourse on bioethics. Others would state that inquiry into the value judgments and



moral actions of the Nazi doctors can inform current debate and practices and furthermore prevent the use of inaccurate analogies in current bioethical debates".³

In 2015, the Sydney Jewish Museum (SJM) and Sydney Health Ethics (SHE), from the University of Sydney's School of Public Health, established the SJM-SHE visiting fellowship program. They appointed Prof Garry Walter AM, Dr Edwina Light and Associate Professor Michael Robertson as inaugural fellows. Throughout 2017, the SJM-SHE partnership has focused on academic and community activities seeking to advance understanding of the contemporary significance of the Holocaust to biomedical ethics. These activities included expert panel discussions conducted as part of the Jewish International Film Festival, regular presentations in the SJM's

1 Oxford English Dictionary, Third Edition, 2012

2 Godwin, M (2015). "Sure, call Trump a Nazi. Just make sure you know what you're talking about." *Washington Post*, 14 December 2015. Accessed online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/12/14/sure-call-trump-a-nazi-just-make-sure-you-know-what-youre-talking-about/>

3 Chelouche, T, Brahmer, G (2013). *Casebook on Bioethics and the Holocaust*. UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, University of Haifa, Israel

Wednesday education programs, relevant publications in prestigious scientific journals and periodicals, and presentations at international scientific meetings, including the World Psychiatric Association meeting, the Second International Scholars Workshop 'Medicine in the Holocaust and Beyond', and the MHS meeting in Sydney.

SJM-SHE fellows continued their program of field work in Western Poland, Nuremberg and Berlin as part of an ongoing empirical ethics study about the values of the German psychiatric profession under the National Socialist regime. Two SJM-SHE fellows, Edwina Light and Michael Robertson, have completed a book project

in collaboration with Dr Astrid Ley from the Brandenburg Memorials Foundation in Germany on the topic of the Nazi 'euthanasia' program and its complex relation to the Holocaust.

The next 12 months will see SJM-SHE fellows coordinate the Australian visit of a travelling exhibition from Germany, *Registered, Persecuted, Annihilated – The sick and disabled under National Socialism*. This exhibition will provide the focus of several community, academic and cultural activities that will enable the SJM to form relationships with many new community groups to ensure that the project of deep engagement with the legacies of the Holocaust evolves and flourishes. **sjm**

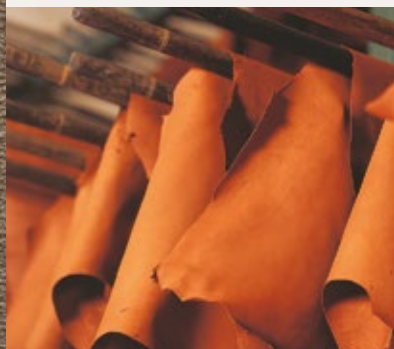
Throughout 2017, the SJM-SHE partnership has focused upon academic and community activities seeking to advance understanding of the contemporary significance of the Holocaust to biomedical ethics.



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Public Programs & Events

Aviva Wolff Operations Manager



The Museum has gained an excellent reputation for the well-presented and informative programs continuously on offer.

The Public Programs at the Museum continue to expand exponentially in all aspects; the number of events hosted, the large number of attendees at each event, and the diversity of the programs on offer.

Hardly a week goes by without a program of some description on offer, not only for our Museum members, but also for the wider Sydney community. The Museum has gained an excellent reputation for the well-presented and informative programs continuously on offer.

I am proud to say that numerous authors have contacted me as they feel the Museum is the perfect venue to launch their books on diverse ranges of interesting topics. To name some of

those books launched this year: *Jewish Anzacs* written by Mark Dapin; *The Red Danube* by Vera Harlley; Colin Tatz's *The Magnitude of Genocide*; Jackie French's latest book for young readers, *Goodbye Mr Hitler*; and *When Freedom Beckons: The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and the Jewish Journey to Australia* by Vasilios Vasilas.

We have also held book launches for three Holocaust survivors who wrote their memoirs: Francine Lazarus (Dame Marie Bashir launched her book), Peter Nash and Eddy Boas.

The talks by Holocaust survivors continue to draw large crowds and the presentations are quick to sell out. Olga Horak OAM and Eddie Jaku OAM both gave their third presentations and once again both events were packed to capacity. As part of History Week we arranged an excellent survivor panel with Kuba Enoch, George Grojnowski and Jack Meister entitled *The Buchenwald Boys*.

▶ Launch of *Jewish Anzacs*: Norman Seligman (CEO), Charles Aronson (NAJEX), Lt General Ken Gillespie AC (keynote speaker), Mark Dapin (author) and Peter Allan (NAJEX) at the launch of Dapin's book *Jewish Anzacs*.

▶▶ Holocaust survivor Egon Sonnenschein gave a presentation – pictured with his sister Aviva Fox.

▶ Dr Simon Longstaff AO – keynote speaker at the Janus Korczak Children's Memorial Commemoration.

▶▶ Holocaust survivor Olga Horak OAM gave a presentation – pictured with her granddaughter Kirsty Green.





◀ Hilton Immerman OAM featured in the *Standing Up* exhibition pictured with his wife Marilyn.

▶ Gary Samowitz – CEO of Stand Up at the launch of the *Standing Up* exhibition.



◀ Dame Marie Bashir AD, CVO with Francine Lazarus at the launch of Francine's book *A Child in Belgium*.

▶ Beate Hammett at the launch of the book about her journey on the Kindertransport.

For a change of pace we hosted two sold-out performances of a one woman cabaret show with Alexis Fishman entitled *Club Gelbe Stern*, the story of a Jewish cabaret performer in Berlin in the 1930s. We were also honoured to have the very talented singer *Lior* entertain a packed to capacity audience with his beautiful arrangements of songs.

A number of entertaining events with compelling keynote speakers were arranged to launch various exhibitions – *Closer: Portraits of Survival*, *In their Steps: The Australian Light Horse*, *I am My Brother's Keeper: Righteous Among the Nations*, *Standing Up* and, of course, the cherry on the top, the launch of the new Permanent Holocaust Exhibition with keynote speaker being the Prime Minister, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP.

We annually participate in the Sydney Writers Festival and this year we hosted an outstanding

event entitled 'Gratefully Yours'. It was an event where people told the audience of how their lives were saved by, or perhaps how they saved, the life of a stranger. Speakers included two of the Bondi Rescue lifeguards – Bruce Hopkins (Hoppo) and Trent Faslon (Singlets), Allan Sparkes CV OAM AV (Cross of Valour, Order of Australia, Commendation for Brave Conduct), Brian Myerson (transplant recipient), Michaela Kalowski (moderator), Noel Zihabamwe (Rwandan refugee), Mendy Litzman (Hatzolah) and Maarten Joustra (Holocaust survivor).

We are very proud of our 2017 calendar of programs and are already busily planning entertaining and educational events for the year ahead.

Thank you for your ongoing support – we hope to see you in the audience! **sjm**

Public Programs & Events

Aviva Wolff Operations Manager

▶ Eddy Boas with his family at the launch of his book, *I am not a Victim, I am a Survivor*.

▶▶ The Buchenwald Boys panel: Jack Meister, George Grojnowski and Kuba Enoch.

▶ Sam Lipski AM gave a talk about the Light Horse Brigade at Beersheba.

▶▶ Holocaust survivor Eddie Jaku OAM giving a moving presentation.

▶ Robert Swieca, Anna Berger and Charles Aronson at the talk on Beersheba.

▶ At the launch of the *Closer* exhibition: photographer Katherine Griffiths with Ruth Eckstein.





“ At the launch of the *Closer* exhibition: Eva Engel OAM, Ana De Leon, Lena Goldstein OAM, Gaby De Leon.



“ At the launch of the *Closer* exhibition: Susan Warhaftig and Egon Kennedy.



“ At the launch of the *Closer* exhibition: Jacquie Dale receiving her gift from Lisa Eckstein and Donna Lopata.



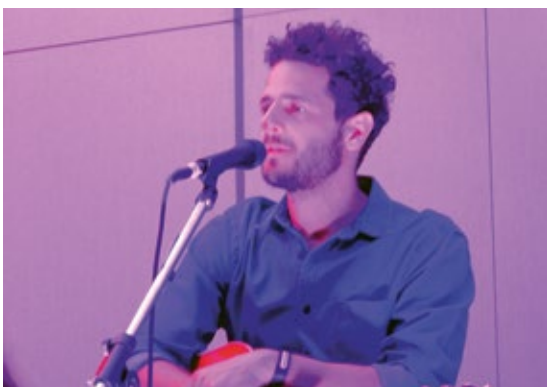
“ At the launch of the *Closer* exhibition: Litzi Lemberg and Vera Kertesz.



“ Attending *Gratefully Yours*: Joe Symon, Jane Kwiet, Avril Symon.



“ Speakers at the *Gratefully Yours* panel discussion: (l-r) Bruce Hopkins 'Hopppo' (Bondi Lifeguard), Brian Myerson (transplant recipient), Allan Sparkes CV OAM AV, Michaela Kalowski (moderator), Noel Zihabamwe (Rwandan refugee), Mendy Litzman (Hatzolah), Trent Faslon 'Singlets' (Bondi Lifeguard) and Maarten Joustra (Holocaust survivor).



“ Lior singing.



“ Vasilios Vasilas at the launch of his book *When Freedom Beckons*.

Public Programs & Events

Aviva Wolff Operations Manager

▶ At the launch of *I am My Brother's Keeper* exhibition: Greta Allen telling her history of being saved by a 'Righteous' person.



▶ At the launch of *I am My Brother's Keeper* exhibition: Chanan Mowszowski (left), George Sternfeld (centre) with the family of Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara.



▶ At the launch of *I am My Brother's Keeper* exhibition: Jack and Regina Feiler with members of the Churcherko family whose grandparents were honoured for saving Jack's life.



▶ Jovan Vraniškovski, the head of the Orthodox Ohrid Archbishopri, gave a talk at the Museum. Pictured with Ana and Gaby De Leon and Egon Sonnenschein.

▶ The Hon. Julian Leeser MP – the keynote speaker at International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 2017.



▶ Rachel Flitman representing 'Gen 3' at International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 2017.



▶ Israeli Ambassador Shmuel Ben Shmuel, handing the Righteous Among the Nations Certificate to Maarten Joustra and his nephew at the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 2017. Maarten honoured his adoptive parents for saving his life.

▶ At the launch of *I am My Brother's Keeper* exhibition: Searle Brajtman representing Yad Vashem.

▶ David Gonski AC at the launch of the Standing Up exhibition.



- ▶ Opening of the new Holocaust Exhibition.
- ▶ Opening of the new Holocaust Exhibition: SJM CEO Norman Seligman (right) with Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, officially unveiling the plaque.



- ▶ Opening of the new Holocaust Exhibition: Dr Avril Alba, Project Director.

- ▶ Prof Gus Lehrer AM FAA (President) and Roma Shell (Vice President) with the Prime Minister.

- ▶ The Holocaust survivors being honoured at the opening of the new Holocaust Exhibition.

Walking the Red Carpet

Christiane Delacroix Survivor

...I cried walking
on the red carpet,
overwhelmed
by an immense
sadness, as I
am crying now
writing these
lines.

► This article is an extract from a letter by Flore Jaku. She survived the Holocaust by adopting the persona Christiane Delacroix as her ID card from 1940 shows.

On this 25th anniversary of the Museum I want to share with you a small event which left a lasting impression.

As survivors we were invited to the screen preview of *Schindler's List* made by Steven Spielberg. We first gathered at the Hilton in Pitt Street opposite the picture theatre for cocktails and canapes. Ben Kingsley, one of the main actors, was present as well as personalities, journalists and photographers. After that, we were ushered downstairs to the street and an amazing sight.

We, the Jews, were to walk on a red carpet stretched across the street with a row of mounted police in their best on each side and the passers-by clapping. For a split second, I could not help feeling the irony of the moment, and almost immediately I started to think of all those unfortunate Jews who did not make it and I cried

walking on the red carpet, overwhelmed by an immense sadness, as I am crying now writing these lines.

From its beginning in 1992, the Museum has been a Museum with a difference; a Museum with a soul. The presence of the survivors gave the place a special meaning and offered the visitors an unforgettable experience which often helped to build a friendly bond expressed in hundreds of grateful letters.

A lot of work has been carried out recently, upgrading the Museum to modern standards and also planning for when the survivors will be no more, although their voices as well as their pictures will remain.

Maybe, some day, as a visitor presses a button to listen to a particular survivor, someone will be passing by and say: 'He was my father or she was my grandmother', and they might engage in a conversation, glad to have met one another. **sjm**

<p>N° 321 602.</p> <p>N° Delacroix</p> <p>Nom Christiane</p> <p>Naam Voornamen</p> <p>Prénoms</p> <p>Voornamen</p> <p>Etat civil célibataire</p> <p>Ruggerstand</p> <p>Nationalité : BELGE.</p> <p>Nationaliteit : BELGISCHE.</p> <p>né à Liege</p> <p>geboren in</p> <p>le 28 juillet 1922.</p> <p>den</p> <p>Profession sans</p> <p>Beroep</p> <p>Résidence précédente rect 30.</p> <p>Vorig verblijf</p> <p>Seconde résidence</p> <p>Tweede verblijf</p> <p>Inscrit Vol. 108 Fol. 48.</p> <p>Ingeschreven boek Bfd.</p> <p>Rue Basa Jubile n° 118</p> <p>Straat</p> <p>le 20 mai 1940</p> <p>den</p>	<p>N° du compte de retraite</p> <p>N° der lijfrentekening</p> <p>Signature du porteur</p> <p>Handtekenen des dragers</p> <p>Delacroix</p> <p>Taille : 1 mètre 60 cent.</p> <p>Lengte : 1 meter 60 cent.</p> <p>Molenbeek-St-Jans</p> <p>Sint-Jans-Molenbeek</p> <p>1940.</p> <p>L'Officier de l'Etat civil (ou son délégué) :</p> <p>De Ambtenaar van den Burgerstand</p> <p>(of zijn afgevaardigde) :</p> <p>Beun</p>
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Thank you also to our clients, who include many prominent and successful families who support us and have been clients of ours since arriving in Australia over 60 years ago and to our more recent clients who display the same ethics and qualities of loyalty and trust. We value all our clients most highly.

With warmth and appreciation

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John Leece, Alan Moffat, Steve Wearne,
Brendan Hughes, Stephen Austin, Chris Allen, Brian Vogel,
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Voices from the Ashes: Shoah survivor testimony in the Sydney Jewish Museum

Dr Ari Lander Education Officer



▶ Olga Horak OAM sharing her story with students.



What did it mean to work in a Museum that was set up by Holocaust survivors? How did working in the Museum change the way I thought about the Holocaust? How did it change the way I taught the Holocaust?

In 2013 I completed my doctorate in oral history at the University of New South Wales, examining the history of Zionist youth movements in Australia. Looking back, I realised that the most rewarding part of the experience was carrying out interviews with an eclectic group of Jewish men and women who now live all over the world. They shared wonderful memories of their times in the youth movements. They were all wise, funny, eccentric and full of life. What I remember most are their voices.

I knew that joining the Sydney Jewish Museum would provide a unique opportunity to work in a space that honoured the voices, memories and stories of Australian Holocaust survivors. I had interviewed many people for my thesis who were either child survivors themselves, or the children and grandchildren of survivors. I was aware of how the events of World War II were palpable living memories. The destruction of European

Jewry was a trauma that had been transported across the globe. It had irrevocably shaped the lives of individual survivors as well as the whole of the Australian Jewish community.

I asked myself these questions: What did it mean to work in a Museum that was set up by Holocaust survivors? How did working in the Museum change the way I thought about the Holocaust? How did it change the way I taught the Holocaust?

I quickly recognised that when I had taught the Holocaust at university, I had not made enough use of survivor testimony, or the written testimony of murdered Jews and Roma. In the time that I have been at the Museum, I have personally witnessed thousands of school students and teachers listen to the testimony of Holocaust survivors. One question that has not been adequately examined is what impact hearing survivor testimony has on these people. But it can be intimate. The Education team has the privilege of listening to the questions that both students and teachers have asked and we have all listened, and learnt, from the survivors' responses.

It is a profound privilege and honour to watch this human interaction take place. I am aware that what is occurring is delicate and difficult, and it is almost impossible to adequately describe.

The survivor is sharing their story and when they do so, they sometimes relive their memories. The audience is also transported by the story. Listening to the survivor, the students are forced to confront the fact that the Jews who were persecuted and murdered under the Third Reich, over 70 years ago, on the other side of the world, are not ink on a page but are human beings made of flesh and blood, just like the human being talking to them.

When visitors listen to a survivor they are listening to a person who is often many decades older than them. The survivor, whether from Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia or Germany, grew up in a very different cultural milieu. I strongly believe that interacting with a person from a different background is crucial in enabling

students to understand the horror and cruelty of genocide. The people listening to a survivor realise that we are not all alike, and we should not seek to limit our differences. Our differences speak to the richness and diversity of the human experience. What the audience also hopefully realise is how much they have in common with the survivor. The survivor, just like their audience, knows what it means to be a child. They had parents, they had friends, girlfriends, boyfriends, and they played with dolls, or played a guitar, or loved playing sport. Facilitating that human connection is fundamental to making the Holocaust relevant to Australian school children in the 21st century. Nazism defined itself by the way it excluded groups. What our Museum seeks to cultivate is a space that is inclusive and in doing

The people listening to a survivor realise that we are not all alike, and we should not seek to limit our differences. Our differences speak to the richness and diversity of the human experience.

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Voices from the Ashes: Shoah survivor testimony in the Sydney Jewish Museum

Dr Ari Lander Education Officer

so, our Museum rejects everything that Nazism stood for. Our visitors are invited to celebrate the fact that there are distinct Jewish cultural and religious identities and that our differences are something we should celebrate, not annihilate.

In July this year I attended a conference in Brisbane for the International Association of Genocide Studies. The theme of the conference was “Preventing Genocide” and I delivered a paper titled: ‘Voices from the Ashes: Survivor

 Holocaust survivor
Eddie Jaku OAM.

testimony and the possibility of education playing a role in genocide prevention’. It was a speculative paper in which I argued that survivor testimony must play a crucial role in genocide education. Furthermore, I contended that education about genocide that fully incorporates survivor testimony, is a way to help foster empathy and in doing so, could help prevent future acts of genocide or violations of human rights.

When schools visit the Museum, teachers repeatedly provide feedback as to the impact of survivor testimony. Hearing the testimony of a Holocaust survivor has a profound emotional impact and helps cultivate empathy for the victims of the Holocaust. The work carried out by the Sydney Jewish Museum takes place in a very particular cultural milieu, specifically, a democratic and liberal society that is not experiencing dramatic social, or economic, upheaval. Nonetheless, I believe the programs run by the Sydney Jewish Museum could provide a blueprint for creating educational programs that cultivate emotional and intellectual empathy for victims of genocide, and other violations of human rights.

Each year, the Education team runs four teacher-training seminars in order to assist teachers with their Holocaust education program. At the end of the seminar we ask the teachers to provide us with anonymous feedback on the seminar. When the teachers are asked: “Which session did you find most interesting and why?” they invariably reply that the session with the Holocaust survivors is the most meaningful. A teacher who attended a recent seminar wrote the following response:

“The session with the survivors was so empowering (and emotional). Something special that will stay with me always.”

Hearing the testimony of a Holocaust survivor is, in some respects, even more important for teachers. When teachers form a personal and emotional connection with the Holocaust, it means that they will understand the necessity and complexity of Holocaust education. As this individual teacher wrote, hearing, as she did,



three Holocaust survivors in conversation on a panel was an emotional experience. But it was also empowering.

What impact does hearing the testimony of a survivor have on a school student?

The survivors all receive dozens of letters from students who make the time and effort, often out of their own initiative, to share what it meant to them to have a survivor share their story.

Let me use just one response that Eddie Jaku OAM received from a student in order to illustrate how profound the impact can be:

“I had the extraordinary honour of hearing the incredible and touching story of Eddie... Eddie has such an inspirational story. I have heard

many versions of Holocaust recounts, but none that have touched me like this. Eddie moved me in such a way that my heart was crying in awe and admiration of the strength and perseverance he engrained into himself throughout his experiences... I went home and retold Eddie's story almost word for word to my family and, just as I was brought to tears in that auditorium, I was brought to tears in the living room of my house.”
K.M., Wyong Christian Community School

The voices of our Holocaust survivors are crucial in enabling students to grapple with the human legacy of the Holocaust. While we have their voices we must cherish their humour, their wisdom and their insight. But we must also never forget that their words are drenched in tears. **sjm**

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The three month job **that's lasted 23 years**

Tinny Lenthen Library Manager



The collection is now such a central part of the Museum's activities, that it is surprising to recall that there was no library when the Museum opened its doors 25 years ago.

In 1994, my cousin Eva Reed, a child survivor and volunteer at the Sydney Jewish Museum, told me that the Museum was about to establish a library and was looking for a librarian. "They want someone for just a few months," she said, "... just long enough to set up the library. Then the volunteers will take over and run it."

It didn't quite work out that way. The Museum soon recognised that the volunteers would need the continuing support of a qualified librarian. It's been my good fortune to fill that role.

The focus of the collection is the Holocaust, a seemingly inexhaustible subject that generates an ever-increasing number of books, journal articles and other material. The collection also covers Australian Jewish history, German history and – sadly but inevitably – the long history of antisemitism.

The collection is now such a central part of the Museum's activities, that it is surprising to recall that there was no library when the Museum opened its doors 25 years ago. Fortunately, the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants decided to remedy that.

Encouraged by the Museum's founder, John Saunders AO, members of the association – notably Alex Weinberger, Maurice Shell and Stan Grossman – set about raising money for a sizeable collection of Holocaust-related material suitable for all ages and educational levels to complement the work of the Museum.

The Association also gathered relevant books, personal testimonies and other items from its own members as the basis of a collection. The material was housed in bookshelves lining the walls of the Museum's original boardroom and was officially opened as a library by former Prime Minister Bob Hawke AC in April of 1995.

Initially, however, it was a library without a catalogue; not so much as a single index card.

Thanks to the generosity of the Fulop family and a sizeable grant from the NSW government, the library was soon able to acquire a computer – the Museum's very first – and specialised software for a user-friendly catalogue system.

The library now styles itself as a 'Resource Centre', and its collection numbers more than 8,000 items, including books, journals, audio-visual material, newspaper articles and education kits.

The collection offers access to The Shoah Foundation's massive repository of survivor testimonies as part of the centre's extensive oral history collection. The oral history section also includes the Caplan-Kwiet collection of interviews with local Holocaust survivors recorded in the 1980s, as well as the more recent oral histories gathered by Jacqui Wasilewsky for the Museum's Community Stories Program.

Our electronic resources include access to a Yad Vashem database in which several fundamental questions regarding the Holocaust are discussed by eminent scholars. The Museum was the first institution outside Yad Vashem to be granted access to this database.

At the same time, the collection has broadened its outlook, expanding beyond the Holocaust to cover other genocides, including the Cambodian, Armenian and Rwandan, in preparation for the Museum's Holocaust and Human Rights Centre.

The entire collection is accessible via the Museum's website, opening the Resource Centre's treasures to a vast number of potential users who might otherwise have not even been aware of their existence.

The increasing ease of digital access has been paralleled by the growing number of people who visit the Museum in person. The centre has become an increasingly important resource for students ranging from primary school children to post-doctoral researchers. The library has extended its scope to reflect changes in school curriculums, which are now concerned with more general subjects such as racism, multiculturalism, civics and human rights.

Over the decades, the centre has been used extensively by the Museum's staff: its education



◀ Students in the library.

◀◀ Clipping from the *Australian Jewish News*, 21 October 1994: Librarian Tinny Lethen (right) with volunteer Zipi Neustadt.



◀ The new Education and Resource Centre.

department, resident historian Prof Konrad Kwiet, and curatorial staff, to research new exhibitions. The centre's Holocaust Survivor Registry has proved an extremely useful tool for the Museum's education and curatorial departments and can also be used in conjunction with the Visual History Archive.

The Resource Centre is also the first stop for many family history buffs, particularly those whose families have been touched by the Holocaust. Members of the Sydney Jewish community who have come from South Africa and Zimbabwe, for example, are now exploring what happened to members of their extended families who remained in Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. Reuniting families separated by time and the Holocaust is deeply satisfying for the library's still largely volunteer staff.

Beyond family history, we receive an extraordinary range of inquiries from the public here and overseas via email, phone and letter as well as personal visits. Do we have information on the Gross-Breesen Training Camp for Jewish

Children in Germany in the 1930s? What happened to the Jews of Fiume, Italy, during the war? Would we help a student from Keio University in Japan with his studies of Holocaust literature? Could we help an actress researching a TV role learn about the experience of German Jewish women who came to Australia in the 1950s?

In the past quarter of a century the library has moved twice from its cramped beginnings in the boardroom, firstly to what were once the administrative offices and now to its present location as part of the Education Resource Centre.

Over its relatively short life, the centre's collection has become a unique resource, informing the Sydney community, both Jewish and non-Jewish. The Jewish community's recognition of the collection's value is reflected not only in gifts of money to fund acquisitions, but also through the donation of personal libraries.

As the Museum becomes more and more the public face of the Jewish community, so will the Library and Resource Centre grow in importance as a centre of learning. **sjm**

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Visitors' Comments

From amongst the many received this year...



This museum displayed wonderful historical aspects of the culture and life of Jewish people throughout history as well as covering the harrowing tragedy that is the holocaust ... I strongly recommend going! *Jamai O'Malley ★★★★★*

Taught our children the evil of war and the devastating things that can be brought about by either man's action or inaction. Talking with Lotte who survived Auschwitz was such a moving experience. We will never forget.

Paolo Hernando ★★★★★

Total experience really worthwhile. Lucky enough to view updated museum with excellent volunteers and in particular to listen to the story of a survivor. *Suzie Rooney ★★★★★*

Great museum, spent four hours in the museum and I would surely go again since there are plenty more things to see. *Hugo St-Amant ★★★★★*

Really informative and the design layout is spectacular. *Vimbai Murambi ★★★★★*

Wonderful place to learn about modern Jewish history and particularly Australian Jewish history. *Motti Seligson ★★★★★*

A must for parents wishing to teach their children about humanity and the importance of living beyond face value. *Deanna Gingell ★★★★★*

Was here five months ago. Very informative and one of the best museums in Sydney. *Marizel Pabuyan Cabantog ★★★★★*

Very touching experience. It's so dense and filled with information that I'll have to go back to absorb more. Loved it. *Bruno Moulin ★★★★★*

It was amazing and overwhelming at the same time. The wall art of the various shops where people brought skills and traded in Sydney is lovely. Museums like this need to be here to remind us of just how evil the world can be. It saddens me that a people/a tribe experienced this hatred, it truly breaks my heart.

Lachelle Uzcategui-Gaymon ★★★★★

This museum is like no other. I took the guided tour with Gerald who gave great insight into the horrors and the courage of the past. I stayed after the tour as there was so much to see. You could not see this museum without being moved greatly. I highly recommend it. *Jackie Bee ★★★★★*

Such a heartbreakingly beautiful testament to the Jewish faith and its people. Very informative and inspiring place with wonderful volunteers. *Kelly Cox ★★★★★*

Privileged to have taken my family to this wonderful place. Both enlightening and heart wrenching to learn of the plight of the Jewish people. *Henry Wise ★★★★★*

Enjoyed every minute ... so well laid out ... very interesting ... loved all the history in the place xx *Lyn Williams ★★★★★*

Thank you to Olga! You spoke to the Kambala students so candidly about your experiences during the Nazi Occupation of Czechoslovakia and the terrible treatment that you received during WWII in the concentration camp. As a Holocaust survivor it is so important that you courageously share your story and that of your beautiful family. God bless you. *Leanne Claringbold ★★★★★*

They say: If we do not learn from the past – we are doomed to repeat it. This Jewish Museum will open your eyes to the Truth of our past so together we can learn to make our futures safer

and much kinder ... A Must Visit for all who want to live Respectfully in Peace. *Wayne Perkins ★★★★★*

We spent a very confronting afternoon at the museum. It has recently been refurbished and the displays were excellent. We had a guided tour around the museum and the guide was very knowledgeable. This museum should be visited by everyone, so they can witness and appreciate the horrific things mankind can do to one another. *Teresa Malyon ★★★★★*

Absolutely excellent! So informative and touching, a great way to spend an afternoon. Our guide Stella was absolutely incredible! I can't

believe someone so articulate and passionate can run such an in-depth tour with such gusto without even being paid for the amazing work she does! Absolutely fantastic museum, will definitely be back. *Kal Slater ★★★★★*

This is a magnificent collection, stretching from Biblical times right through to the current Australian Jewish community. Particularly fantastic are the street schema of old Sydney Town and the (current) 'Closer' exhibit. Any empaths need to be thoroughly prepared before braving the stories contained here. Will return! *Sarah Spear ★★★★★*



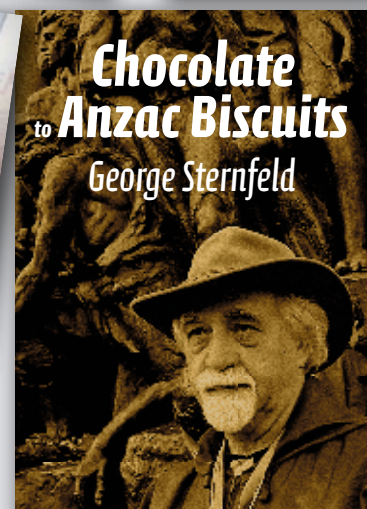
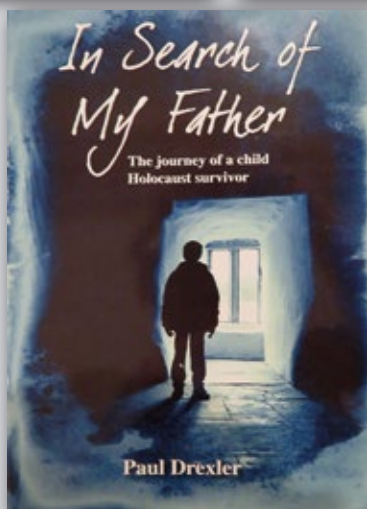
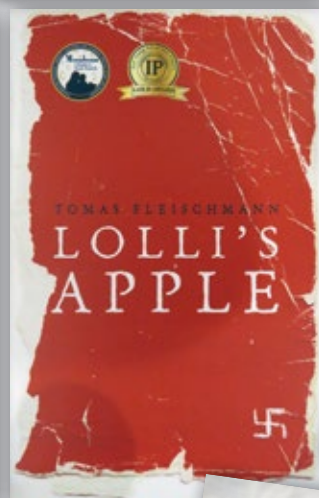
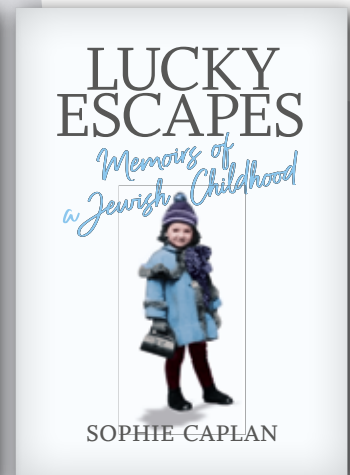
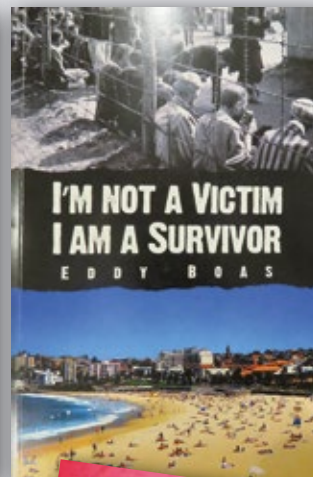
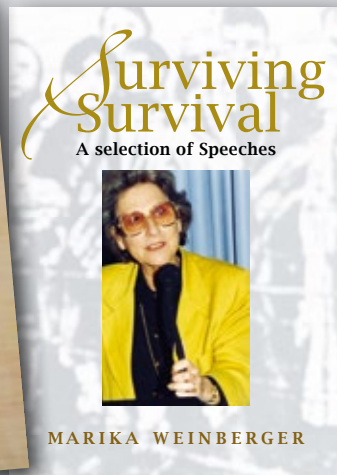
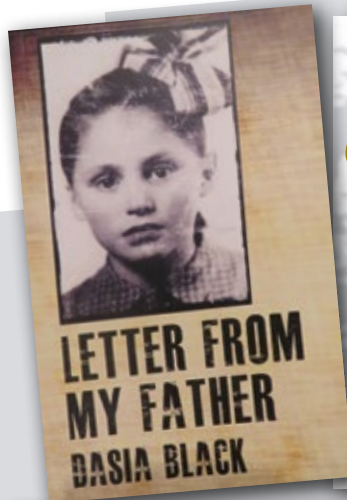
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Your major gift or endowment will help the Museum to expand its education programs and ensure the victims of the Holocaust are never forgotten. Contact Rob Shneider on 02 8036 0136 or email rschneider@sjm.com.au for a confidential discussion about how you can help.



There is a large selection of books available at the Musuem shop

Pictured are some of the books written by Holocaust survivors



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