

# KOSHER KOALA

Newsletter of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society

[www.ajgs.org.au](http://www.ajgs.org.au)



May 2013



Replica ceiling panel of the Gwoździec synagogue, now installed at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews

see story p.14

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/shabbat-goy/7675404248/in/photostream/lightbox/>

## President's Report to the 2013 AGM

Last March, our AGM was held at Shalom College and followed by our All-Day Seminar. The seminar was sponsored by the online bookshop, *Booktopia*, and CEO Tony Nash, gave us an address. Guest speakers at the Seminar were Todd Knowles, head of the British desk at the FamilySearch Library at Salt Lake City, who brought us up to date on the Mormons' website, *FamilySearch*; Brad Argent, from *ancestry.com*, who gave us pointers on using that vast website; Kerry Farmer, from the Society of Australian Genealogists, who gave an excellent presentation on DNA; and Noeline Kyle, who inspired us with her talk on writing our family history. For an extra fillip to the enjoyment of the day, Rieke Nash had collated our best photos of the last twenty years, to produce a video which ran during the Seminar and is now a treasured resource.

Twice a month, year-round, we hold morning workshops to help members and visitors with their research; in addition, we hold two in the Eastern Suburbs. The workshops continue to be popular, attracting anything up to twenty visitors at any one time. We now have two computers on hand and some of our helpers bring their own – so several people can research online at once. We owe a debt of gratitude to our long-term member, Stuart Shaw, who was our host at Bondi's *Lifestyle Manor*, the wonderful venue we have enjoyed since the start of our Eastern Suburbs workshops three years ago. Unfortunately, management changes on Sundays preclude us from using the venue in future, but we have many happy memories of the afternoons we spent up there in the spacious function room. So thank you, Stuart.

Early last year, members were invited to update their research interests, which were entered into the Society's latest *Family Finder* database and incorporated into a new Resources CD, which was given to every renewing member. Our sincere thanks go to Rieke, who masterminded this initiative and produced all the CDs. Another Rieke initiative was to notify *JewishGen* of members who had died, as a note to that effect is added to their entries on the *JewishGen Family Finder*. We also advised our members to make sure that their entries were up to date.

Other activities during the year included manning a stall at the Zionist Council's Festival for *Yom*

*Ha'atzmaut*, and a moving presentation given by two members who had travelled to Poland to research their families – Gregory Sachs and Evelyn Frybort.

You may remember that, a few years ago, we approached several Jewish organisations, including the Montefiore Home, with an offer to help anyone who wished to submit names of loved ones who had perished in the Holocaust to the *Shoah Names Database* at *Yad Vashem*. Lately the Montefiore Home has reconsidered the idea and has decided to go ahead – not with our help but with that of Anna Berger, the President of the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants. That is a satisfying outcome.

You will have read in the latest *Kosher Koala* about a wonderful new arrangement which will benefit all members, but particularly those who find an Eastern Suburbs venue more convenient for research than the North Shore. We will be partnering with Waverley Library and providing a selection of reference books and resources on Jewish genealogy, which the library will include in their Reference Section and which will then be available seven days a week to anybody who wishes to do Jewish genealogical research. For arranging this coup we warmly thank our Editor and committee member Robyn Dryen. Waverley Library might become the venue of our Eastern Suburbs workshops – we will let you know if it does.

Robyn, as I've said, is the editor of our journal, the *Kosher Koala*. She receives many compliments on its interest and quality and we heartily endorse those sentiments. One of our members, Peter Arnold, works with her on the journal, and we thank Robyn and Peter warmly and assure them of our appreciation. The *Kosher Koala*, being on our website, is read and enjoyed by a much wider audience than our own members. Editors of Jewish genealogical societies across the world, including the editors of the landmark journal *Avotaynu*, scrutinise its pages and often ask for permission to reprint an article.

Two of our members attended the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies Conference in Paris last year and enjoyed it very much. This year, the conference will be in Boston

in August. Registration is now open. Some of our members will be going, so please let us know if you are going too.

Our library continues to grow. The latest edition of Gary Mokotoff's *Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy* has just arrived. It is a marvellous book for beginners and will certainly be on the table at the next workshop. We thank *Booktopia* for their donation of *The Genealogist's Internet* and for their help in sourcing all the books which we order. Thank you to all members who have donated books, USBs and other items for use in the Library. As we've mentioned before, we have a small selection of books to lend. People are finding this useful.

This year, we decided to run a survey to give you all a chance to tell us what you prefer in the way of activities. Your responses contained some helpful suggestions and comments. If you haven't already filled in your questionnaire and would like to, it is not too late.

I would like to thank our regular helpers at the workshops – Rieke and Peter Nash, Robyn Dryen, Evelyn Frybort and David Laufer, and also those who come in and help from time to time – Eva Browne and Dani Haski.

Many thanks to Gary Luke, who receives all emails sent to our [society](#) address and answers them or distributes them to us. He also moderates our discussion forum, AJGen. That list is always interesting and people often get the help they require.

Many thanks to Paul Winter, who audits our books and makes sure everything we do is done

correctly. He is also our delegate to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

We thank Frank Atkinson for representing us on the board of Friends of Maitland Jewish Cemetery.

We wish to thank:

- \* Rabbi Paul Lewin and President Ken Wolfsohn, of the North Shore Synagogue, for their continued hospitality;
- \* The Jewish Cemetery Trust under Jack Fisher, who sponsored us during the last year;
- \* The Society Committee
  - ♦ Kim Phillips, Vice President and Website Manager;
  - ♦ Sunny Gold, Secretary and Minutes Secretary;
  - ♦ Eva Browne, Treasurer;
  - ♦ Robyn Dryen, Editor of *Kosher Koala*;
  - ♦ Rieke Nash, Resources Person and my right-hand woman;
  - ♦ Annette Winter, Membership; and
  - ♦ Evelyn Frybort and Kym Morris, Committee members;
- \* Beulah Gross, our Central Coast Representative; and
- \* Steve Traurig and Summit Internet, who support us with our website.

And not to be forgotten, we thank you, our members, for your support and enthusiasm, which makes all our efforts worthwhile. It has been a privilege to serve as your President for the past year.

Thank you

**Jeannette Tsoulos**  
**President**



*Robyn Dryen and Jeannette Tsoulos*

**At  
the  
AGM**



*Rieke Nash, Kym Morris and Kim Phillips*

## Part Two<sup>1</sup>: Seeking Sophia – Ancestral Tracks in Scotland

### Caroline Josephs

The gollywog sits on my bookcase. My aunt Jessie brought it for me when I was a small child (along with the red tartan handbag I still have about 65 years later. I treasured both golly and handbag.) While my aunt Jessie was in Scotland to visit relatives, she had the Golly's jacket made out of the same green wool tartan as a kilt for herself.

'Golly' also reminds me of the stereotyping of the 'other' in a strange land – because of outer signs by skin, or dress, or by unusual mores and behaviours that may invoke fear, the fear of difference. Were Philip and Sophia Josephs, my grandparents, considered 'outsiders' subject to intolerance, in a similar way as the darker-faced black Africans who were taken as slaves to the US and became the subject of 'gollywog' popularity in the late 19th and early to mid-20th century?

The tartan jacket of my gollywog reminds me that my Jewish Latvian (Russian) grandparents had a sojourn in Scotland lasting 7 years, from 1896 until 1903, when they departed for New Zealand with four children (four more, including my father, were to be born in New Zealand).

The tartan of the Scottish clans, the intersections of the threads there in tartan – also sparks resonances with my passion for Indigenous culture and stories here in Australia in a 'strange land'. The weaving of threads in the tartan, the weaving of stories and lives with country. The intersections, the songlines of clan paintings and body designs perhaps pointing to intricate intersections of story meeting country meeting body, as here, with Indigenous cultures, as in Scotland with the clans.

I am sent a photograph by Ivy, great grand-daughter of Rose Hillman (married name Bershodsky) in the photo. Ivy Raff is a young woman related to me through the Hillman line and through Rose. Ivy lives in New York and I meet her there. She finds me through our searches for Sophia. We share numbers of long e-mails before meeting in 2011 and again in 2012.

Rose, it seems from the stories Ivy has heard from her grandmother, was somewhat of an outcast – probably as a child born out of wedlock at the time – and migrated to New York as a young woman at just 16 years of age.

The photograph Ivy sends me was taken in Glasgow in the 1950s.

My father's sister, Jessie, in light dress, is sitting next to Rose (in dark dress), whom we believe to have been the (illegitimate) daughter of Arthur Hillman, brother of my grandmother, Sophia. (Rose's father Arthur, married, but not to Rose's mother). Standing behind the lounge in the photo are June Hillman and her husband, Samuel Hillman. They all met in the 1950s when Jessie went to visit Glasgow and when she bought me the tartan bag and gollywog.<sup>2</sup>



#### **Glasgow 1950s**

Back L-R: unidentified friend, Samuel Hillman, June Hillman  
Front L-R: Rose Hillman, Jessie Josephs

<sup>1</sup> Part 1: *Seeking Sophia – Finding Anna Deitch – in Zarasai, Lithuania*, appeared in *Kosher Koala*, October 2012. The third part of the series will cover our journey tracking Sophia's origins in Latvia.

<sup>2</sup> See abbreviated family tree diagram on p.8 which makes clearer the family relationships of people mentioned in this article. Also see Sue Hillman's meticulous family tree of the Hillmans at <http://www.macfamilytree.com/suehillman/Hillman-Zolkwer/index.html>

In Glasgow in 2012 my cousin, Sue Hillman, takes me in the footsteps of my aunt Jessie – to meet June Hillman. Sue has introduced herself on email as *Susan Louise Hillman, daughter of David Hillman, son of Louis Hillman, who was brother to Arthur, William and Sophia*. Sophia married Philip Josephs.

Sophia and Philip were my grandparents, the parents of my father, Harold.

Sue's grandfather was brother of my grandmother, Sophia ... so Sue and I are second cousins. Whew! June Hillman is our relative by marriage, having married a Hillman, Samuel.

It is a warmly welcoming memorable meeting. June is in her 80s with a lively intelligence and wisdom, an open warm nature, and long and shared experience with her late husband, both as doctors in Liverpool, although of course, now retired. I feel instant rapport. Over tea and cakes, she brings out three original photos – purportedly from Latvia in 1896:

- \* Anna or Emma Deitch/Daites/Deites and her husband, Isaac Hillman;
- \* Sophia Josephs (née Hillman) in 1896, at age 20; and
- \* Philip Josephs, my grandfather who was to marry Sophia later in Scotland – aged 19 in 1896.

I am thrilled. June lends me these precious family memorabilia to have copied, and later Sue is able to mail me the original photograph of Philip – after June has consulted with her children. I treasure these records as they present some new faces, especially Anna/Emma (born Deitch or Daites or Deites) and her husband, Isaac Hillman (my great-grandparents, parents of Sophia); of Sophia again in 1896 taken in Latvia (I have one other of her at that time); and Philip as a young man.



*Philip Josephs*

I have only one photograph of Philip as an old man, probably not long before he died, so this is startling – to see the thoughtful young man, holding a book – I imagine his reading prodigiously (a conclusion I draw from what I know of his later history). Sophia Hillman, my grandmother, was the eldest child of Anna Deitch, and Isaac Hillman (originating I now am almost certain) – from Zarasai in contemporary Lithuania, erstwhile Russia.

Sue Hillman greets us as we get off the plane in Glasgow. We embrace, and laugh to think we are finally meeting after a few years of skyping and e-mailing each other.

Sue as holder of the Hillman family tree, makes an effort to trace a birth certificate for Rose. It shows Rose to have been born on 12th September 1903 to Arthur and Rachel Hillman (formerly Levi) in Leeds, UK. I send it on to Ivy Raff in NY. She responds immediately.

*Well I'll be damned. Where did you find this? When I looked at the original birth certificate at National Archives in London, there was no mother listed as mothers' names weren't printed on birth certificates in the UK until 1911. As usual in genealogy, this raises more questions than it answers. I wonder if this document was a sort of cover-up (since the original I saw had no mother's name)? Hmmmmm ... You have no idea how I wish I was there to dig with you. Going to sit down now with a cup of tea and eat your e-mails like candy.*

I forward Ivy's response to Sue in Glasgow. She replies that she agrees that the birth certificate from Leeds might be a 'cover-up'. Certainly, Ivy has heard many times that Rose was illegitimate, from her own grandmother, Rhoda – Rose's daughter.

Rhoda is now living in Florida. Ivy adds:

*The interesting thing is that Arthur Hillman and his cousin Sidney Hillman (who was Secretary of Labor to President Franklin Roosevelt and devised the U.S.'s first system of unemployment insurance) were both anarchists. Sidney grew out of the anarchist thing, obviously (but only after serving a stint in a Siberian labor camp in his youth for his political activism). Arthur struggled financially for the sake of his activism, and the story goes that in order to make money, he had a business selling 'antique rugs'. But the truth is they were new rugs that he would beat with dirt to make them look antique so he could sell them for more money!*

Aah, the 'detective work' genealogists must work through, eh! I look forward to working on this connection, perhaps through a common grandfather for both Arthur and Sidney Hillman.

Glasgow had some 20,000 inhabitants in 1740, but increased in population to about 84,000 in about 1800, developing world-wide commercial relations, in which Jews played an important part. Then, by 1870, the Glasgow population trebled to 700,000 catapulting Glasgow to being the 'Second City of the British Empire'.

According to Kenneth Collins in *Second City Jewry*<sup>3</sup>, Jewish population growth led to the creation within the Gorbals district, of an area familiar to the Jews from Eastern Europe. There were shops with Yiddish signs in the window and over the doors. There were grocery stores with barrels of herring at the door, bakeries with traditional Jewish bread and rolls, and Jewish faces and Yiddish voices in the streets. The Gorbals scene was depicted in *Scottish Scene*, by Lewis Grassic Gibbon and Hugh MacDiarmid<sup>4</sup>:

*It is lovably and abominably and delightfully and hideously un-Scottish. It is not even a Scottish slum. Stout men in beards and ringlets and unseemly attire lounge and strut with pointed shoes: Ruth and Naomi go by with downcast Eastern faces ... In the air the stench is of a different quality to Govan's or Camachie's – a better quality. It is haunted by an ancient ghost of goodness and grossness, sun-warmed and ripened under alien suns. It is the most saving slum in Glasgow, and the most abandoned. Emerging from it, the investigator suddenly realises why he sought it in such haste from Glasgow Green: it was in order that he might assure himself that there were really and actually other races on the earth apart from the Scots.*

While in Glasgow, I find a large old map of Glasgow of 1896 in the Glasgow Library, I find the street where Philip and Sophia are recorded as having lived: at 32 McKinlay Street, Gorbals, in the Fifteenth Ward.

This street in Gorbals has apparently now been demolished. McKinlay Street ran between Elgin and Devon Streets. Philip and Sophia were living there in 1901. Philip is listed as tailor. Also listed is Isaac Hillman (who was married to Anna Deitch – my great grandparents) recorded as being 50 years old in 1901,



**32 McKinlay St, Gorbals**

<sup>3</sup> Collins, K.E., *Second City Jewry : Jews of Glasgow in the Age of Expansion 1790-1919*, Scottish Jewish Archives, Glasgow, 1990

<sup>4</sup> Gibbon, L. G. and MacDiarmid, H., *Scottish Scene, or The Intelligent Man's Guide to Albyn*, National Book Association, London, 1934

a furniture maker who lived in 10 South Coburg Street.<sup>5</sup>

The library copy of the map of the old city shows that the railway is not far from McKinlay Street, and that there are a few churches and schools nearby. It is hard to imagine the life in the streets and houses of more than a century before. I long to sense its smells, its colours, shapes of buildings, interiors, the life of its Jewish inhabitants.

When I return home I buy on-line the wonderful book, *The Gorbals: An Illustrated History*, by Eric Eunson<sup>6</sup>. It is filled with old photographs of the Gorbals, mostly now demolished.

However, what has brought the period and the city alive is a book I stumbled across before departing Sydney – a novel by J. David Simons, *The Liberation of Celia Kahn*<sup>7</sup>. I find this book to be what I am yearning for – to satisfy a sense of place and context, in relation to my quest for my grandmother Sophia's story. The book centres on Celia Kahn's story, set in early 20th century Glasgow with the rise of socialism, feminism, and the origins of the use of contraception within that context. I so enjoy the quality of the writing – from a female perspective, albeit written by a male. I devour the story.

On finishing, I find the website of the author, David Simons, and e-mail him, reporting on my delight in his book and of my own connection through my grandparents. He responds immediately and we exchange e-mails. It turns out that he has been to Australia a number of times (he has an Australian partner in Glasgow) and also shares my interest in Japanese culture, as well as having a Russian-Jewish background himself. He knows of my grandfather's tailoring and living in Glasgow – through his own research for the book about a Russian Jewish tailoring family. *Celia Kahn* was his second book and he tells me of his first novel, *The Credit Draper*<sup>8</sup>. I buy and read it. *The Credit Draper* tells the story of different aspects of the same Jewish tailor's family in Glasgow. It is from the perspective and in the voice of a young male in the tailoring trade.

I can't recommend these two books highly enough to anyone looking for that period of Jewish history in Glasgow. David Simons brings place and time to life through character, setting, dialogue, and unfolding complexities of the changing attitudes that Jews were part of, and affected by, at that time in Glasgow. I was transported, caring deeply about the central characters and traversing their adventures, their meetings with anti-semitism, and the vicissitudes of life, their trials, loves, successes.

David Simons and I, with Sue, and Donald, my partner, meet over coffee in a Glasgow café during our brief sojourn in the city. David is funny, relaxed, a fine raconteur, with long experience as journalist and lawyer leading to his current full-time writing career. (He is writing a third book in the series about Celia's departure and time in Israel/Palestine). We spend a lively few hours exchanging stories of our lives.

I am searching for the background, for the smells, sights and sense of the Glasgow of 1896 to 1903, of the times when Sophia and Philip and their wider family were in the city. I come across Chaim Bermant, who wrote

*I was born in a part of Lithuania which was then Poland and is now Russia. When I was three my family moved to Latvia; when I was five I was sent to school in Poland; at eight we all moved to Scotland; at 20 I first went to Israel. In Latvia I was known as a Polack, in Poland as a Lett, and in Scotland as foreigner. In Israel, however, I was known as a Scot. In a sense I had come home.*

*Our first address was the Gorbals where Father had lodgings with distant relatives, and the Gorbals, somehow, was less intimidating than other parts of town, **for it reminded me***

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<sup>5</sup> Kaplan, H.L, *The Gorbals Jewish Community in 1901*, Scottish Jewish Archives Centre, Glasgow, 2006

<sup>6</sup> Stenlake Publishing Ltd, U.K. 1996

<sup>7</sup> Five Leaves Publications, Nottingham UK, 2011

<sup>8</sup> Simons, J.D., *The Credit Draper*, Two Ravens Press, Ross-shire, Scotland, 2008

**vaguely of Dvinsk.** There were Yiddish posters on the hoardings, Hebrew lettering on the shops, Jewish names, Jewish faces, Jewish butchers, Jewish bakers with Jewish bread, and Jewish grocers with barrels of herring in the doorway. The herrings in particular, brought a strong whiff of home. One heard Yiddish in the streets, more so, in fact than English – and one encountered figures who would not have been out of place in Barovke.<sup>9</sup>

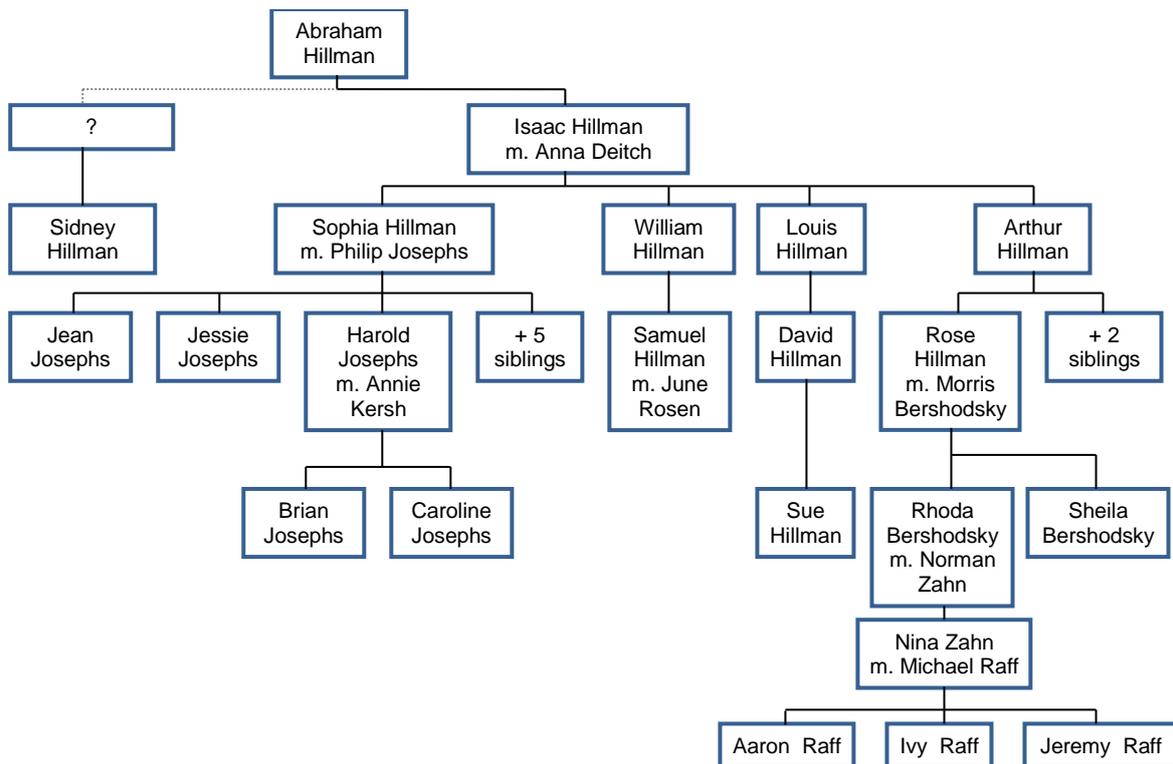
Dvinsk? Where Sophia was probably born ... in Glasgow? I hold a theory that we seek places that have strong resonances of childhood when we move – some configuration, aromas perhaps ... is this why Glasgow's Gorbals appealed to Philip and Sophia? Of course, there were many Jews in this district which would have added to the sense of 'home'. And the possibility of making a new life in difficult circumstances. There were about 2,000 Jews in Glasgow in 1891 and this increased to about 7,000 a decade later in 1901.

I am interested to read in *Second City Jewry* that there was a small anarchist group in the West End of Glasgow. My grandfather was discovered to have been the first anarchist in NZ when he was there, so I am wondering whether he might have been part of the group in Glasgow prior to New Zealand ...

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A new gollywog appears on my desk, a gift from a friend, who cannot know of my interest in these images of cross-cultural misunderstandings. It brings me complete circle – walking, searching for faint traces of long lost family lines ...

**Abbreviated Family Tree of the Descendants of Abraham HILLMAN**



<sup>9</sup> Extracts from his memoir *Coming Home*, George Allen and Unwin, 1976. Bermant was a journalist, novelist and commentator on Jewish issues in Glasgow and beyond.

## I Wish ....

### Miriam Pollak

As a genealogist, I'm sure that we have all said it – those two little words, “I wish” .... I found myself saying those words out loud on a bright and sunny day in May 2009. But what did I really wish for that day? The ideas have radically changed and evolved ever since.

I'd been caught out saying those two words before. I remember talking to a lovely lady who was the Secretary of the Historical Society in Melbourne, and I said to her those two words “I wish ....” She turned to me and said that if I wished for that particular resource, then I should go ahead and make it happen. I was totally taken aback by this challenge, but decided to think about it. That is how my first project, the *Jewish Chronicle Project: 1900-1909*<sup>10</sup> came into being.

That May day, my second project began to formulate itself. I tell people that I was struck by lightning that day in London, but I'm not too sure anymore. Perhaps I was just struck by the fact that here was something that I could do to provide myself with another resource.

Plashet Cemetery is one of a number of cemeteries owned and managed by the United Synagogue of England. The United Synagogue is an interesting organisation. It was formed in 1870 by a group of three Ashkanazi Synagogues – the Great Synagogue, the Hambro Synagogue and the New Synagogue. Between them, the three synagogues had over 1,000 seat-holders (between 7-8,000 individuals). The idea was to spread the cost of maintaining the synagogues and associated communal organisations such as cemeteries.

*So long as these members remained static, the communal organisation which served them remained adequate. London Jewry, however, was at this time very far indeed from being a static community. Both geographically and socially, London Jews were on the move, and in consequence these communal institutions were faced with a series of crises. Many Jews were moving out of the older city areas towards new centres such as Bloomsbury, Marylebone, Westminster, or Bayswater in the west, Islington or Stepney in the north or east, and this weakened the congregations and their associated bodies.<sup>11</sup>*

Plashet Cemetery is located on High Road North, just a short walk from East Ham Tube station, and is surrounded by housing. Plashet is a Closed Cemetery (even though the last burial was in 2010), and can only be visited by appointment (made through the Burial Office at Bushey Cemetery). Plashet is not a cemetery filled with famous people – the most famous person buried there is Sir John De Villiers, who was the map librarian at the British Museum (he died in 1931 and is buried next to his mother and sister).

Once inside the cemetery, the first thing that greets you is all the rows of graves – not standing neatly to attention as normal, but leaning in all sorts of directions like the teeth of someone who has never been to the dentist. The place has a definite air of being unloved and uncared for. Sitting on a park bench on one side of a section I discovered that it was missing a wooden slat so that there were only two slats instead of three – not very comfortable for a rest from grave hunting, yet quite simple and not costly to repair.

The paths are made up of small stones which make walking difficult – anyone who is wheelchair bound or has mobility issues would find it difficult to access the cemetery. Section markers are missing or have been jokingly misplaced and row numbers are almost impossible to read due to lack of consistent maintenance. The whole place has a certain air of dilapidation.

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<sup>10</sup> Pollak, M., *The Jewish Chronicle Project: 1900-1909*, CD-Rom, 2006

<sup>11</sup> Newman, A., *The United Synagogue 1870-1970*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1977

So what did I wish for in May 2009? Well, quite a lot of things, like winning the lottery so that I could institute proper maintenance. However, I didn't win the lottery (I'm not even sure that I had a ticket), so I had to stick with the things that I knew how to do.

As well as being an amateur genealogist, I am by training a Records Officer. So, as I looked at the cemetery for the first time, I realised that it contained loads of data about the people who were buried there. So began my project to make information about people buried in Plashet Cemetery accessible to Jewish genealogists and family historians.

I began by taking lots of photographs of tombstones. However, it soon became clear that there had been many more tombstones in the past. Many stones were face down where they had fallen or had been broken into pieces, and there appeared to be quite a lot of damage due to other causes. As I investigated this further, I discovered that Plashet cemetery had been the recipient of a number of devastating visits from the local louts and hoons who had quite literally torn down hundreds of gravestones.

In May 2003, around 386 gravestones were damaged in Plashet. According to the BBC News at the time, officers said they were treating the incident as a religiously motivated attack. Again in 2008, 'hate thugs' smashed up to 40 graves. This time they *broke headstones, pulled up marble surrounds, damaged railings and started a small fire*<sup>12</sup>. When the louts were brought before the courts they were given a 'slap on the wrist' and told not to do it again – so much for causing thousands of pounds worth of damage and the emotional distress caused to the families of those buried there.

Rethinking what I wanted to do, I began to check the names and dates of people buried in the cemetery. I began in Section A, which is at the rear of the cemetery. I expected this section to contain the oldest graves, but in fact Section B is where the first burial took place on 8 November 1896. I realised that I had other resources also up my sleeve, for instance [The Jewish Chronicle](#) newspaper archive (for which I've had a subscription for many years now, courtesy of my first project). Like most English newspapers of the time, it published personal notices on the front page (as did *The Times*). Now I had access to lists of Jewish deaths from the time the Cemetery opened.

When I placed *The Jewish Chronicle* (JC) archive next to the [Find a Burial](#) of the United Synagogue, I began to collect large amounts of data. Looking at the death notices, I realised that many of the notices in the JC detailed family – suddenly the information stopped being just names. The next thing to do was to check the census records for more information.

Other resources included birth, marriage and death registrations, and shipping records – courtesy of a subscription to [Findmypast](#). Then I began to check the database of the [UK National Archives](#) and discovered naturalisation records. Suddenly the person was not just a 'death', but a 'life' with highs and lows and associated information.

I gathered information about the deceased's partner, parents, children, occupation, and where they were born. This information provided an insight into the mass migration from Europe to England from the 1850s into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. There are lots of burials of people from Russian Poland, but also migrants from Holland and Germany who arrived in England in the 1850's.

Now some of the pictures that I had in my files began to make sense. Family members were buried, not just side by side (though some were), but all over the cemetery, depending on the date of death and where the next available space was to be found.

In 2012, I decided that I should publish this work – after all, I did want the material within it to be accessible. Because of the number of burials in my database, I decided to collate information about the

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<sup>12</sup> *Daily Mirror [UK]*, 3 April 2008

first five years – 1896 to 1900 (172 entries). The book, *Plashtet – Gone, but not forgotten: 1896-1900*, will be available later this year (2013).

I sincerely hope that you will all be able to make use of this new resource, and the next time you decide to visit London, please pay a visit to Plashtet Cemetery in East Ham – it is a lovely haven away from the noise of East London and well worth the effort to visit (perhaps more visitors will push the United Synagogue to spend a bit more money on this Cemetery).

As a final note, be careful about what you wish for as you might have to create it for yourself. Perhaps that's what we should all be doing – making our own wishes come true.

Here is an example of a data page – it is for Nancy Barnett who happens to have been mother-in-law of my great-grandfather's brother – she has many descendants.

#### **BARNETT, Nancy – A-13-4**

Died: 20/05/1898  
Buried: 22/05/1898  
Partner: Joshua Barnett (d. 1873)  
Aged: 75 years

#### ***The Jewish Chronicle*, 27 May, 1898**

*BARNETT – on Friday, the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, at 104A Bridge-street, Burdett-road, Nancy, relict of the late Joshua Barnett, of Harrow-alley, in her 75<sup>th</sup> year; mother of Baron Barnett, 12-1/2 Artillery-passage, E.C., Elias Barnett, 26 Cutler-street, City, Mrs White, 5 Tenter-street North, Mrs Taylor, 120 Antil-road, Bow, Mrs Wolfers, 104D Bridge-street, Mark Barnett, 60 Landseer-road, N., Mrs Benabo, 17 White Horse-lane, Sam Barnett, No. 1, Upper Montague-street, Bow, Abraham Barnett and Mrs J. Simmonds, 12 Ormside-street, S.E. Deeply mourned by her loving children, sisters, grandchildren, relatives and a large circle of friends. May her dear soul rest in peace. Amen. Foreign papers please copy.*

#### ***The Jewish Chronicle*, 11 November, 1898**

*The tombstone in loving memory of the late Nancy Barnett of Bridge-street, Burdett-road, relict of Joshua Barnett of Harrow-alley, will be set on Sunday next, 13<sup>th</sup> inst., at Plashtet Cemetery, at 3 p.m.*

**Death:** Q2 1898 [74] MILE END 1c 287.

#### **1891 Census**

Address: 77 Bancroft Road, Mile End Old Town

Residents: Nancy BARNETT – Head, Widow, b.1824 London, aged 67  
Elias BARNETT – Son, b.1854 London, aged 37, Dealer in 2nd Hand Clothes

#### **1881 Census**

Address: 14 Swan Street, Whitechapel

Residents: Nancy BARNETT – Head, Widow, b.1824 London, aged 57, Dealer in Lady's 2nd Hand Old Clothes  
Mary BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1852 London, aged 29  
Elias BARNETT – Son, b. 1854 London, aged 27, Dealer in 2<sup>nd</sup> Hand Clothes  
Fanny BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1855 London, aged 26, Tailoress



Asher BARNETT – Son, b. 1857 London, aged 24, General Dealer  
Lizzie BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1859 London, aged 22, Tailoress  
Samuel BARNETT – Son, b. 1862 London, aged 19, Tailor Cutter  
Rebecca BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1864 London, aged 17, Feather Trade  
Isabella BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1867 London, aged 14, Feather Trade

### 1871 Census

Address: 9 Harrow Alley, Aldgate, London

Residents: Joshua BARNETT – Head, b. 1816 Middlesex, aged 55  
Nancy BARNETT – Wife, b. 1824 Middlesex, aged 47  
Baron BARNETT – Son, b. 1849 Middlesex, aged 22  
Abraham BARNETT – Son, b. 1850 Middlesex, aged 21  
Mary BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1851 Middlesex, aged 20  
Elias BARNETT – Son, b. 1852 Middlesex, aged 19  
Fanny BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1855 Middlesex, aged 16  
Asher BARNETT – Son, b. 1857 Middlesex, aged 14  
Elizabeth BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1859 Middlesex, aged 12  
Mark BARNETT – Son, b. 1860 Middlesex, aged 11  
Samuel BARNETT – Son, b. 1862 Middlesex, aged 9  
Rebecca BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1864 Middlesex, aged 7  
Isabella BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1867 Middlesex, aged 4

### 1861 Census

Address: 9 Harrow Alley, St. Botolph Aldgate, City of London

Residents: Joshua BARNETT – Head, b. 1820 London, aged 41, General Dealer  
Nancy BARNETT – Wife, b. 1824 London, aged 37  
Lewis BARNETT – Son, b. 1845 London, aged 16, General Dealer  
Baron BARNETT – Son, b. 1849 London, aged 12  
Abraham BARNETT – Son, b. 1850 London, aged 11  
Mary BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1851 London, aged 10  
Elias BARNETT – Son, b. 1853 London, aged 8  
Fanny BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1855 London, aged 6  
Asher BARNETT – Son, b. 1856 London, aged 5  
Elizabeth BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1859 London, aged 2  
Mark BARNETT – Son, b. 1860 London, aged 1  
Hannah BATTEY – General Servant

### 1851 Census

Address: 11 Ebenezer Square, St. Botolph Aldgate, London

Residents: Joshua BARNETT – Head, b. 1816 Spitalfields, aged 35, General Dealer  
Mary BARNETT – Wife, b. 1824 Whitechapel, aged 27, General Dealer  
Lewis BARNETT – Son, b. 1845 Aldgate, aged 6  
Baron BARNETT – Son, b. 1849 Aldgate, aged 2  
Abraham BARNETT – Son, b. 1850 Aldgate, aged 1  
Mary BARNETT – Daughter, b. 1851 Aldgate, aged 3 months  
Ellen MURPHY – Domestic Servant

**Marriage:** Joshua BARNETT to Nancy BENJAMIN – Q2 1844 LONDON CITY 2 177.

**Death:** Joshua BARNETT – Q4 1873 [58] LONDON CITY 1c 9.  
Buried at West Ham Cemetery (reference unknown).

### ***The Jewish Chronicle, 26 December, 1873***

*On the 20<sup>th</sup> inst., at 9, Harrow Alley, Houndsditch, after a protracted illness, Joshua Barnett, in his 59<sup>th</sup> year. May his soul rest in peace. Cape, Australian and American papers please copy.*

### ***The Jewish Chronicle, 29 May, 1874***

*Mrs Barnett, of 9, Harrow Alley, Houndsditch, before to inform her relatives and friends that the tombstone of her late lamented husband, Josh Barnett, will be set at the West Ham Cemetery, on Sunday next, 31<sup>st</sup> inst., at 4 o'clock.*

## The Jewish Community in Naugard – a request

Naugard was a small town in the former German Province of Pommern. Today it is better known as Nowogard – still a small town, in the western part of Western Pomerania Province in Poland.

The town was home for a number of Jewish residents with its own synagogue and cemetery. The Jewish community was not large, with a peak Jewish population of 147 in 1871. After this, the number of residents gradually fell. In 1930, in response to the political climate, the congregation began to disintegrate. On Pogrom Night (November, 1938) the cemetery was desecrated, windows in homes and the two remaining Jewish-owned businesses were broken and the synagogue was burned down.



*Jewish cemetery, Naugard*

In 1942, the last Jewish citizen was deported and it was the symbolic end of Jewish community with the town declared *Judenfrei* (Free of Jews). Some were lucky and emigrated before the “final solution”. They safely landed in Israel, England, Argentina, Uruguay, USA and most probably in Australia.

The Jews of Naugard were living peacefully and were highly integrated in the community. They were proud citizens of Germany, German was the language spoken in their homes. Some of them died as German soldiers in WWI and some were awarded the Iron Cross for bravery. We all know from history that at the beginning of 1930's, life became very tough and unpredictable there.

After the war in 1945 there was no longer any Naugard, and there was only one Jew in the town – a Polish re-settler who was simply unable to rebuild the community alone.

The history of my former Jewish neighbours is fascinating and my great passion. That's why I would like to ask you all in Australia about your roots in Naugard. Maybe you were told an interesting story about this small Pomeranian town. Maybe your grandparents have mentioned places or people here. I plan to write a book about it. I am somewhere in the middle or the beginning of my work, still asking many uneasy questions and searching for any clue or suggestion. Even a fragment of information could be important and will be highly appreciated.

I was told that Jews here died three times– by ordinary death, by broken *matzevot* and finally by oblivion. I don't want them to die the fourth time and be totally forgotten.

Hope to hear from you soon

Piotr Mankowski  
Nowogard/Naugard, Poland  
e-mail: [piomank@gmail.com](mailto:piomank@gmail.com)

## News

### Symbolic Payment of Support to Lithuanian Jewish Survivors

<http://www.gvf.lt/english/payments/criteria.html>

The Good Will Foundation, established jointly by the Lithuanian Jewish Communities and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation announced that LTL3million (approximately \$AUD 1.1 million) shall be paid, *to persons of Jewish nationality who resided in Lithuania during the Second World War and*

suffered from the totalitarian regimes during the occupations. This is likely to mean token payments of several hundred dollars to individual recipients.

Only persons who were alive as of July 19, 2012 are eligible to receive compensation. In the event of a person's death after July 19, 2012 only an heir-at-law is eligible to receive the compensation after providing inheritance documents and a victim's death certificate.

All Lithuanian victims whose names are in the data base of the Jewish Claims Conference should have already been notified directly. Other Lithuanian victims, or victims of the Soviet occupation, will need to submit an application form along with the documentation listed above. This application form is available on-line from the Goodwill Foundation <http://www.gvf.lt/english/payments/application.html>

## Searching for A7734 – Jeno (Jolli) Gottesman



*Jeno Gottesman c.1943*



*Menachem Bodnor today*

Menachem Bodnor (formerly Elias Gottesman) is searching for his long-lost twin Jolli.

Born in 1940 in Ukraine, the twins were transported to Auschwitz in May 1944. Here, they were subjected to the horrific twin experiments of Josef Mengele, but both managed to survive. Two days before liberation, Elias was taken out of the camp and the twins were separated. Elias was adopted, his name changed to Menachem Bodnor, and now aged 72, he is searching for his lost twin.

The paper trail suggests that Jolli was also adopted, so the only clue to his original identity, may be his prisoner tattoo – A7734.

Ayana KimRon is assisting Menachem with the search via a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/A7734/499971010060858>.

The story has been taken up by many international newspapers. This has prompted various archives and welfare agencies with survivor records to re-examine their files, but as yet Jolli has not been found.

A recent photo of Menachem, may indicate what Jolli looks like today.

If you have any information that might further this search, please contact: Ayana KimRon [FamilyRoots2000@gmail.com](mailto:FamilyRoots2000@gmail.com)

You can assist by spreading this story.

## The Museum of the History of Polish Jews

While the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will not officially open until 2014, significant milestones have already been reached. In March, the museum unveiled the newly completed replica of the wooden roof and painted ceiling from the Gwoździec Synagogue. The original was lost when the building was destroyed during World War II. The replica was made using the same techniques and materials as the original. It was generously funded by Irene Kronhill Pletka who grew up in Melbourne.

The education and cultural program was launched with an 'open house' on the weekend of 20-21 April. Over 15,000 people participated in the weekend's activities which were planned to coincide with the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

## Exhibition at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance

*The Enemy Within – Internment and Prisoner of War Camps in Victoria 1939-47* is on display until 28 July 2013 at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne. The exhibition depicts life in the camps which housed prisoners of war and many Jewish civilians deemed to be enemy aliens.

## National Archives [UK] – Naturalisation case papers 1801-1871

The UK National Archives has a new searchable index for naturalisation petitions completed by individuals applying to become British citizens between 1801 and 1871. If you find a record of interest, you can buy a digital copy online.

The records include:

- \* all naturalisation applications to the Secretary of State, 1844-1871
- \* some naturalisations by private Act of Parliament, 1801-1868
- \* some letters applying for denization, 1801-1840

Denization entitled people to certain rights, but not the full rights of a British citizen.

More information at: [http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/naturalisation-case-papers.htm?WT.mc\\_id=enews0513](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/naturalisation-case-papers.htm?WT.mc_id=enews0513)

## Jewish Genealogical Society of South Africa (JGSSA)

After a hiatus of 5 years, there is now a reconstituted Jewish Genealogy Society in South Africa. JGSSA is looking for members whether located in South Africa or offshore – anyone with interest is welcome. Contact Mo Skikne, Chairman and newsletter editor, at: [moski@global.co.za](mailto:moski@global.co.za)

## IAJGS Boston Conference program

The preliminary program, including the schedule of speakers, SIG luncheons, and computer workshops, is now available on the conference website [http://www.iajgs2013.org/program\\_schedule.cfm](http://www.iajgs2013.org/program_schedule.cfm). The program can be searched by title, speaker, date, level of expertise, type of presentation (e.g., lecture or workshop), topic category and geographical focus.

## Proposal for a new Kolo-Rypin-Plock SIG

Ken A. Drabinsky is proposing a new SIG. The group is to be called Kolo-Rypin-Plock Area Research Group (KRP SIG or Community Research Group) The area covers a diamond shaped area from Kolo to Aleksandrow Kujawski to Rypin, over to Drobin, then south to Gostynin and the LARG northern boundary. A few of the larger towns within these boundaries are Plock, Wloclawek, Rypin, Lipno, Sierpc, Gostynin, Kolo, and Radziejow.

If you are interested in this group, contact Ken Drabinsky: [kenjdgen@gmail.com](mailto:kenjdgen@gmail.com)

*from LODZ Digest, 28 April 2013*

## Galicia Jewish Museum Survey of Holocaust Survivors

The Galicia Jewish Museum in Krakow is preparing for a 2014 exhibition focused on people from historic Galicia who survived the Second World War and the Holocaust. They are asking for survivors from this region to complete a brief questionnaire which can be downloaded at: [www.jgsgb.org.uk/SurveysurvivorsexhibitionfromGaliciaJewishMuseum.doc](http://www.jgsgb.org.uk/SurveysurvivorsexhibitionfromGaliciaJewishMuseum.doc).

For more information contact: Małgorzata Fus [malgorzata@galiciajewishmuseum.org](mailto:malgorzata@galiciajewishmuseum.org)

## Biographies of Holocaust Victims from Aachen, Germany

The 2013 edition of the *Gedenkbuchprojekt* contains 51 biographies of former residents of Aachen, Germany who were victims of the Holocaust. Previous editions of 88 biographies were published in 2006, 2008 and 2011.

A searchable list of names of 768 victims can be found on the website: <http://gedenkbuchprojekt.de>

Personal details, deportation and, if applicable, emigration are given. The biographies are published in German and the full text can be received electronically, on request. Russian versions are also available because there is a significant Russian-speaking Jewish community in Aachen. The biographies for Peter Nash's Burghardt family and one other former resident, Curt Hartog, are in English. The biographies were collated by a team of Aachen volunteers.

Peter Nash has a hard copy of the 2013 edition.

## Interesting websites

### Hidden objects

<http://imgur.com/a/7Rjbr#0>

For an absolute treat, take a look at this series of photos. A seemingly innocuous but very beautiful teapot ... I can't vouch for the veracity of the claim that it belonged to the poster's grandfather but the pot was made by Yossi Swed, of Swed Masters Workshop, Jerusalem. See also <http://popchassid.com/update-hidden-synagogue-just-a-piece-of-art-but-still-awesome/>

### New German collection at Familysearch

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2060204>

FamilySearch has added Jewish records from the *Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv* (Brandenburg Main State Archive). This collection includes censuses, lists of Jewish families, registers of Jewish passports and certified copies of Jewish birth, marriage and death certificates. The collection is not indexed. You have to browse the digitised records. The catalogue entries are of little assistance. If you are lucky enough to find family, there is considerable genealogical information in these records.

### Welsh newspapers 1844-1910

<http://papuraunewyddcymru.llgc.org.uk/en/home?>

The National Library of Wales has launched a beta website of digitised newspapers. It functions in very much the same way as the Trove newspaper site.

### reVilna

<http://revilna.org/map.html>

reVilna is a digital mapping project dedicated to understanding how the residents of the Vilna Ghetto lived, and how the ghetto functioned. The 'map' includes over two hundred points of historical significance, paired with hundreds of photographs, collected from archives all over the world.

### American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) – new online records

<http://archives.jdc.org/archives-search/?s=archivestopnav>

The JDC Archives' 1945-1954 Collection, is now available online. This collection chronicles the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation programs that JDC developed in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust and World War II. This collection contains over 2,800 files, including policy memos, telegrams,

correspondence generated by JDC's New York Headquarters, and eyewitness reports from JDC field staff working in Displaced Persons and refugee camps in Germany, Austria and Italy. Search by town.

### **A Town Without a Rabbi Cannot Exist – Rabbis, assistant rabbis and rabbinic candidates in the Warsaw Governorate, 1888-1912**

[http://w.warszawa.ap.gov.pl/images/aktualne2012/PROJEKTRABINI03\\_09LEKKI.pdf](http://w.warszawa.ap.gov.pl/images/aktualne2012/PROJEKTRABINI03_09LEKKI.pdf)

This is an on-line version of an open-air exhibit created by the State Archive of Warsaw. It contains historical rabbinic photos, biographies & architectural drawings of synagogues for the province of Warsaw.

It is a very large PDF file, slow to download, but a great resource. *From JRI-PL Digest, 1 March 2013*

### **Gesher Galicia has a new website**

<http://www.GesherGalicia.org/>

The site has been completely reorganised and new databases have been added.

## **Dates for your diary**

### **AJGS workshops and meetings**

Sunday June 2	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Monday June 17	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Sunday July 7	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Monday July 22	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Sunday August 4	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Monday August 19	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Sunday September 1	9:30am-12:30pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield
Monday September 16	10:00am-1:00pm	Workshop – Rev Katz Library, Lindfield

## **2013 Member Survey**

Thank you to those members who took the time to complete our survey and to provide us with thoughtful feedback. Rieke Nash has crunched the numbers and I have written the script.

Things we learnt:

- \* Sundays are preferred for workshops and activities, with a few expressing interest in weekday mornings which we might trial at Waverley Library.
- \* Lindfield and the Eastern suburbs were almost equally preferred locations.
- \* Occasional structured workshops would be desirable.
- \* 4-6 talks per year suit most people and Databases was the most requested topic.
- \* Organised visits interested about half of the respondents; other suggested activities were not particularly popular.
- \* We received several wonderful offers to write articles for *Kosher Koala*, and offers to give a talk. We will be taking up these offers – so get ready to be more involved!

**The next issue of Kosher Koala will be out in August so that those of us who are attending the IAJGS conference in Boston can bring you news that is 'hot off the press'!**

**Robyn Dryen**

Editor

Email: [ed@ajgs.org.au](mailto:ed@ajgs.org.au)

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