

Garry Braude

Title: *Returning the Favour: A Rewarding Journey of Almost 60 Years of Volunteering*

Author: Garry Braude

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Cities/towns/camps: Germany: Essen; Australia: Sydney.

Note: those cities/towns/camps underlined are those which are most central to the narrative

Genre: Memoirs

Key events/experiences: Jewish refugee; child survivor.



Returning the Favour is the 184-page autobiography of German-born survivor Garry Braude, who fled Nazi Germany with his family as an eight-year-old in 1939 to build a new life in Sydney.

Pages 1-41 cover the author's family history and the history of Tilsit. Pages 42-59 recount the rise of Nazism and the family's escape to Australia in 1939. Pages 60-79 describe their early years in Sydney. Pages 80-121 outline Garry's career, marriage, and family life. Pages 122-84 detail his extensive volunteer work. The memoir is interspersed with numerous historical photographs as well as German and English-language documents.

Garry Braude was born on 7 November 1930 in Tilsit, East Prussia, to Erich Bräude and Betty Reiss. He had an older brother, Jack, four years his senior. His paternal grandfather had established a prosperous department store in which Garry's father worked, and the children were raised in a wealthy household until the introduction of antisemitic restrictions.

Hitler's appointment as Chancellor in 1933 marked the beginning of escalating persecution. By 1936, Garry remembered the streets of Tilsit being filled with Nazi soldiers. In the following years, as antisemitic measures and propaganda intensified, his brother and father were arrested and held at Gestapo headquarters for several days before their release. The family was deprived of its livelihood when Nazi authorities seized his grandfather's department store. During *Kristallnacht*, the Jewish school Garry attended was burned to the ground.

In July 1938, the Braude family succeeded, by means that are not explained, in securing Australian landing permits. While preparing for their departure, Garry's father had begun depositing funds into a bank in Holland. After extensive planning and

bribery, the family travelled by train to Berlin. From Berlin they flew to Hamburg on 29 April 1939, then by British aircraft to London. They briefly travelled to Amsterdam before returning to London, where they boarded the *Orontes* for Australia on 20 May. Six weeks later they arrived in Sydney.

With the assistance of the Jewish Welfare Society, the family lived in a boarding house for several weeks before securing an apartment and opening a small cake shop. Garry, who spoke no English, was enrolled in school. The early years in Australia were challenging: the formerly prosperous family faced financial hardship, and Garry struggled with the language and bullying.

After matriculation, Garry began an apprenticeship in pharmacy. A profound loss was the death of his mother in 1953. He married Nola in 1956, and together they had three children.

In 1944, Garry's parents became founding members of the B'nai B'rith Sydney Lodge, and Garry and Jack joined the B'nai B'rith Young Men's Lodge in 1947, which sparked Garry's lifelong commitment to community service. In 1954, he became director of the B'nai B'rith Youth Group in Sydney. In 1971, he and Nola established the North Shore Temple Community Support Group, coordinating volunteer services and activities for senior community members. Over the years, Garry received numerous awards recognising his service, including the Order of Australia Medal in 2002.

Returning the Favour is an autobiography of the author's life that offers only a brief account of Garry's early years in Nazi Germany due to his limited childhood recollections. The memoir focuses primarily on his life in Australia and his extensive volunteer efforts, providing insight into Jewish refugee experiences, the development of the B'nai B'rith organisation, and the growth of progressive Judaism in Australia. The narrative is supplemented by numerous primary-source materials – including photographs, family papers, and official documents. The memoir was written and published as part of the Sydney Jewish Museum's *Community Stories Project*.