



## ACJC PESACH NEWSLETTER

Against the backdrop of so many challenges, both here and abroad, I'm proud to say that we've had a productive start to 2026, with ACJC staff and students conducting nationally significant research and teaching that's helping to reshape how Australians understand the Jewish experience.

As well as teaching nearly 700 students this semester, our team has been travelling the state and country, leading and supporting a range of initiatives: A Brave Conversations Leadership Summit, the Universities Australia Solutions Summit, facilitating antisemitism training, and consulting across all levels of government and community.

We congratulate our incredible Advisory Council Chair Dr Alan Finkel AC, on the naming of the [Alan Finkel Building for Technology and Design](#). We've also enjoyed seeing many of you at our events, from guest lectures to Yiddish film screenings and our International Women's Day panel.

We wish you and your family a joyful and meaningful Pesach, and thank you for your continued support that enables everything we do. May we all experience liberation, peace and democracy.

Chag Pesach Sameach and Gut Yontef,

**David Slucki, ACJC Director**

### A MESSAGE FROM ACJC'S ADVISORY COUNCIL



During Pesach we express our gratitude and celebrate the freedom of the Jewish people from slavery in ancient Egypt. At ACJC we're committed to education and research that contributes to preserving our cherished freedom, based on a deep understanding of our history, culture and contemporary Jewish life. Equally, we're committed to the research that helps us understand the nature of antisemitism in contemporary Australia, so that measures to combat it will be compelling and effective.

As Chairman of the Advisory Council, I'm pleased to see the expanding impact of ACJC's research, and the appreciation shown by government, industry and academia for the insights we've provided.

Our Council's capacity has recently been enhanced by the appointment of Jasmine Dindas and Yehudi Blacher as members who, between them, bring policy, philanthropic and community insights that will expand our collective wisdom. I take this opportunity to warmly welcome them.

There's much to be done, and no shortage of enthusiasm among the staff and students of ACJC to tackle it all. I wish them and you, our supporters, a Chag Pesach Sameach. Please enjoy your family gatherings, and pray intensely for the return of peace and world order.

**Alan Finkel AC PhD, Chair**

## A TRIBUTE TO SYLVIA URBACH



**With the tragic passing of Sylvia Urbach after a long illness, the Yiddish world has lost a staunch and devoted supporter.**

Through her leadership of the Krystal Fund, Sylvia enabled many creative projects, including several at the ACJC focused on Yiddish music, art and poetry.

These included: Nathan Wolski's work with *Di Farborgene Khalyastre*, a small collective of creatives dedicated to new fusions of art, music and Yiddish poetry; a Yiddish album recorded by The Bashevis Singers titled *Soul Joy • 1727* reimagining the oldest known Yiddish song book; a new illustrated, bilingual edition of Der Nister's 1919 publication *Mayselekh in Ferzn* with illustrations by Anita Lester; and the *Groyse Tsores* (Big Troubles) Yiddish song project led by Professor Rivke Margolis, Galit Klas and Adam Starr.

Sylvia's vision of the possibilities of Yiddish creativity inspired all who worked with her. *Koved ir ondenk.*

**Professor Rebecca Margolis**  
**Pratt Foundation Chair of Jewish Civilisation**

## MIRRA UPDATE

### Monash Initiative for Rapid Research into Antisemitism



**International Women's Day community event, March 2026.**

A recent MIRRA highlight was our panel discussion on how women leaders across the Jewish community are experiencing and dealing with antisemitism.

Held in style at the Justin Art House Museum, this event was an honest, raw dialogue about leadership post-7 October, and how women across different sectors are transforming this difficult context into constructive action.

[More about MIRRA](#)

## STUDENT UPDATE



**Benjamin Preiss, Higher Degree Research student (pictured at Grunewald station in Berlin).**

Several years ago my family received a batch of letters that upturned our understanding of our past.

These letters were written to my grandmother by her own mother and older sister – both of whom died in the Holocaust. My grandmother was already in her 90s when she saw the letters for the first time. Read more about the story [here](#).

My research examines how these letters both challenged and confirmed my grandmother's sense of her own history, and includes both creative and academic components. The creative section explores my grandmother's narrative and how it has influenced my identity, and the academic part deals

with the ethics of working with a Holocaust survivor to understand discrepancies in their own narrative.

## EVENTS



In Conversation  
**KATHY TEMIN AND  
ESTHER GYORKI**

15 April, 6:00 PM



### In Conversation: Artist Kathy Temin and Curator Esther Gyorki

*Wednesday 15 April, 6:00 – 7:30pm,  
Melbourne Holocaust Museum*

This dialogue will explore the role of museums as spaces for both learning about the past and engaging with current issues.

[Register now](#)



WHAT WE INHERIT:  
**TRAUMA, MEMORY  
AND THE POWER OF  
RESILIENCE**

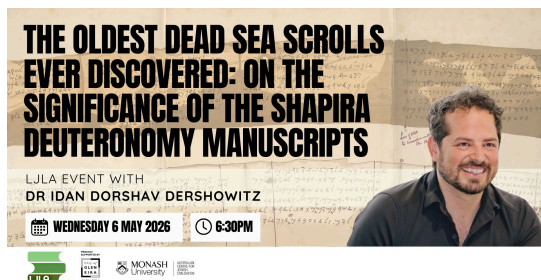
Melbourne Holocaust Museum Symposium -  
for second, third and fourth generation.  
19 April 2026

### What We Inherit: Trauma, Memory and the Power of Resilience

*Sunday 19 April, 9:30am – 4:00pm,  
Melbourne Holocaust Museum*

A symposium in honour of Yom Hashoah, including a panel discussion with A/Prof David Slucki on inherited trauma.

[Register now](#)



**THE OLDEST DEAD SEA SCROLLS  
EVER DISCOVERED: ON THE  
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SHAPIRA  
DEUTERONOMY MANUSCRIPTS**

LJILA EVENT WITH  
DR IDAN DORSHAV DERSHOWITZ

WEDNESDAY 6 MAY 2026 6:30PM



### The Oldest Dead Sea Scrolls Ever Discovered

*Wednesday 6 May, 6:30 – 8:00pm,  
Lamm Library*

Join ACJC's Dr Idan Dershowitz to examine the authenticity and extraordinary importance of long-lost fragments of this ancient text.

[Register now](#)



### Meet Max Spitzkopf, the Yiddish Sherlock Holmes

*Sunday 17 May, 6:00 – 7:30pm, by  
Kadimah, ACJC & Yiddish Australia*

Join NYC-based playwright and performer Mikhl Yashinsky for this musical whodunnit adventure in English and Yiddish. Registration details to come.

[More on Mikhl Yashinsky](#)



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