

Bernard J. Lustig Memorial Scholarship

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The Bernard J. Lustig Memorial Scholarship is the longest continuing project of B'nai B'rith Victoria and the oldest scholarship in the Victorian Jewish community. It was founded in 1955 by B'nai B'rith Youth Melbourne in memory of its President, who died in a car accident in January of that year.

2019 was a year of tremendous growth. Last year, for the first time in our 64 year history, we awarded three Bernard Lustig Memorial Scholarships, instead of the usual one.

"This remarkable expansion occurred for two quite distinct reasons," chairman of trustees Dr Paul Gardner explained. "The trustees short-listed three applicants, all very diverse, all outstanding. But we couldn't agree on a single winner. So we decided to give each of them a scholarship. Our ability to do so, however, depended on an earlier development. B'nai B'rith's Unit Akiba had received a bequest from the estate of one of its past members, Peter Krafel. The unit committed to giving us a major annual donation. That allowed us to be more generous last year."

All three winners were former Mt Scopus students and are current or former Monash University students.

Jarryd Shaw is taking a combined Bachelor of Laws (Honours) and Bachelor of Commerce course. His academic record to date shows High Distinctions in most of his subjects. He has a substantial history of involvement in the Jewish community, both here and in Israel, in a wide range of activities, encompassing sport, community welfare and religious observance.

He won a Travel Grant in recognition of his work as a student leader within the law faculty, which appointed him as a tutor of first-year law students. In 2019, he was the deputy co-ordinator of the Monash Law Students Society Peer Mentoring Program. He worked as a research assistant to the Dean on a proposal to establish the Anti-Death Penalty Institute, aimed at abolishing the death penalty across Asia.

His grant was awarded to support his participation in a semester course at Pennsylvania State University, where he studied game theory and international economics in the university's business school.



Jarryd Shaw



Jonathan Heilbron

Jonathan Heilbron is an unusual Lustig winner. Now in his late twenties, he is an outstanding musician, both as a double-bass player and composer. He has performed professionally in places as diverse as Berlin, Buenos Aires, Moscow, Singapore, Porto, Oslo and Tel-Aviv. He has presented his own music at international festivals for contemporary music, and performed with several Australian and European orchestras.

He completed a Bachelor of Music Performance at the Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne and then undertook master's level work at the University of Arts at Graz in Austria. He is currently enrolled for a PhD at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music at Monash.

His Ph.D. research involves a study of the life and work of a modern European double-bassist who died six years ago. Heilbron is at present using his grant to travel to several countries within Europe. He explained that he was meeting with world-renowned performers, musicologists, composers and key collaborators with an Italian musician,

the late Fernando Grillo, whom he described as “an overlooked but important figure in 20th Century music. His music was deeply spiritual and ritualistic, influenced and informed by some of the most ground-breaking composers of the 20th Century. My work aims to bring his music out of undeserved obscurity and into the field of awareness of a wide range of musicians and audiences worldwide.”

Yoni Genende has an honours degree in Arts, specialising in philosophy. His honours thesis, for which he was awarded a High Distinction, was on Artificial Intelligence. This is the area he is currently exploring more deeply in his research. He is the first Lustig scholar ever to pursue post-graduate work at Oxford University.

When most of us hear the term ‘artificial intelligence’, we probably think of powerful computers built by engineers, machines capable of processing billions of bits of data per second to answer complex questions that might take humans months to answer. But there are also philosophical questions that can be asked: What is intelligence? Can a machine act intelligently? Can a machine have a mind?

At a B'nai B'rith presentation event held prior to his departure for England, Genende spoke about how he found philosophy to be most exciting and impactful when it was removed from its ivory tower and brought into everyday life. He said he was particularly drawn to applied philosophy. Its ethical aspects deal with “how an individual ought to act” and its political aspects “with what makes a just society”. For dealing with the new challenges presented by Artificial Intelligence, he told the audience that “we will need to construct new theories and practices to keep up with a rapidly changing world, impelled by an obsession with ‘breaking things fast’ through ‘disruptive technology’. These advances are presented as being part of the inexorable tide of history, but there’s nothing inevitable about them. We need to slow down, and think the issues and implications through. New theories can inform practice and regulation, to help us to reassert control over our future, and challenge the move towards oligopoly (through big tech companies) and threats to liberalism and democracy.”



Yoni Genende

B'nai B'rith's new motto, adopted two years ago, is **Jewish Unity. Diversity. Continuity.** The great variety in these three students' academic interests, and the Trustees' clear willingness to support their development, provides a live example of B'nai B'rith's motto in action.

The Peter Krafel Bequest. The man whose warm feelings towards B'nai B'rith led to our expanded number of awards last year was a member of BB's Unit Akiba. Born in Budapest in 1946, he came to Australia as an infant with his refugee parents. Peter worked as a dispatch clerk, was keen on sport and was a competent amateur photographer. BB members in his friendship circle recall that he was a quiet man who was a loyal and supportive member. Late in life, his health deteriorated and he spent time in various nursing homes before his death in 2016.

Passing of Dr Lewis Lustig. With great sadness, we record the death in January of Dr Lewis Lustig at the age of 87 and extend our sympathy to his widow Eve and their children and grandchildren. Lew was the younger brother of Bernard, and throughout his adult life was devoted to supporting the Scholarship. He was our longest-serving trustee and our most generous personal donor. In 2016, he was appointed as the Patron of the scholarship. He took a personal interest in the administration of the scholarship and regularly attended every annual presentation of the awards. More than that, he encouraged the next generation of his family to maintain the connection. Son Danny has served for several years as a trustee. Danny and his siblings Richard and Anne all joined our Patrons Circle when it was formed in 2017.

Lew's connection with the Scholarship lives on after his death. In his will, he left a substantial bequest that will significantly strengthen our capital fund.

A new Patron. With the unanimous recommendation of the Lustig family, the support of the Trustees and the endorsement of BBVic president Dr Benny Monheit, Michael Cohen OAM has been appointed as the new Patron of the Scholarship. His link to the Scholarship has already been recognised. Last year, at a scholarship presentation event, Dr Monheit presented Michael with a certificate of recognition to honour his involvement in the establishment of the scholarship.

Michael's connection spans his entire adult life. In November 1951, a meeting was held at the St Kilda home of the Rev. Bert Wreschner, then an assistant minister at St Kilda shule, located across the road from his home. Wreschner was a young member of B'nai B'rith Melbourne Lodge, and he gathered together a small group which resulted in the founding of B'nai B'rith Youth Melbourne. That meeting brought Michael (a Commerce graduate) and Bernard Lustig (a Law graduate) together for the first time. The two became close friends.

Michael was the foundation president of BBY, and Bernard succeeded him. After Bernard's tragic death in a car accident in 1955, the BBY committee decided to establish a scholarship in his memory. Although the driving force behind the idea was Pauline Ritcher (later Glass), Michael certainly supported the concept, and has taken an interest in the scholarship ever since.

On a sadder note, we offer our condolences to Michael and his family on the passing of his wife Mary on 28th February. They had been married for 65 years.

Professor Emerita Gilah Leder AM. Her fellow scholarship trustees were all delighted when Gilah was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia in the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours List for her significant contributions to mathematics education and community service. Lesser known is Gilah's other link to the Scholarship. Her husband Dr Jack Leder was one of the earliest winners of the Scholarship, given to assist him in his studies as a medical student in 1956.

Publicising the 2020 Scholarship. Each year, we publicise the scholarship in various ways. An ad appears in the Australian Jewish News early in March. Sometimes it's accompanied by an article. We upload information about the scholarship on to the B'nai B'rith website. Flyers have been printed this year for distribution at university orientation programs. We prepare handouts for the crowds at the In One Voice festival.

But word of mouth by loving family members also has an important part to play. Is there a bright university student in your family circle? Are they pursuing a post-graduate thesis at masters or doctoral level? Or are they still undergraduates who are actively engaged as successful student leaders? (We offer the scholarship in these two distinct categories.)

If so, please draw their attention to the scholarship, and invite them to contact the BBVic office to obtain a Guidelines booklet and an application form. Applications close on the last Friday in April.

DONATIONS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP

This newsletter is sprinkled with good news about our increased income last year. We even received an unexpected donation of \$500 from a man who many years ago received a grant from B'nai B'rith, decided he wanted to make a donation to the organisation, looked up the website, and chose the Lustig Scholarship as the kind of enterprise that he wanted to support. All this might imply that donations from B'nai B'rith units and individuals are not so important any more. Not at all. Interest rates on secure investments remain low. We have enough to guarantee one full scholarship and a supplementary grant, but as our 2019 story has shown, there are numerous outstanding university students out there. Our ability to award two, or even three scholarships depends on our receiving annual donations. We know we can achieve more. But that depends on you: our B'nai B'rith units and our individual donors.

This newsletter is our only annual appeal. May we ask you for your generous support? You can pay by direct credit to our Westpac bank account BSB 033-034, account no. 672631 (in which case you should send an email to our treasurer Irene Bud sbud@bigpond.net.au advising her of the transfer and your contact details so that she can issue a receipt.)

However, old-fashioned cheques made out to the Bernard Lustig Memorial Scholarship are still acceptable, and can be sent to her at the B'nai B'rith Victoria office, 306 Hawthorn Rd., Caulfield South 3162.

Imagine the satisfaction you'll gain from making a donation and knowing that it helped us to provide an additional scholarship to a bright and committed young student. And if one of the winners turns out to be your daughter/son/grandchild/nephew/niece (or even third cousin twice removed) think of the naches! The pure joy! You'll have something to talk about in the family for years!

If you're inclined to help, then please do it soon. There's no telephone campaign (we don't have the personnel), no appeal ads (we don't have the budget), no monthly reminders (we don't have the time), just this one annual newsletter, with this section in bold blue font on a pink background merely to highlight how important it is.

Bernard J. Lustig Memorial Scholarship. Patron: Michael Cohen OAM. **Chairman of Trustees:** Dr Paul Gardner AM
Trustees: Professor Andrew Markus, Professor Emerita Gilah Leder AM, Dr Rachel Forgasz, Danny Lustig
Treasurer: Irene Bud