



B'NAI B'RITH PREVIEW

NOVEMBER

Message from the President... on knowledge of Israeli history



The B'nai B'rith Jewish Non-Fiction Book Club recently held a meeting which involved a vigorous discussion about Noa Tishby's book, *Israel: A simple guide to the most misunderstood country on earth*. The book gives a very summarised version of the history of the Arab-Israel conflict. Although it was published before October 7, 2023 the book aims to take on the arguments of so-called 'progressives', many of whom appear naive if not downright ignorant.

There was lively discussion about whether a book, no matter how well written, can ever persuade people with strong views, regardless of how little they actually know about a topic. However, there was some agreement that a few people might be willing to listen to countervailing perspectives and this led the group to ask a second question: How much history about Israel does one need to know in order to engage in a sensible debate with someone who is prepared to listen?

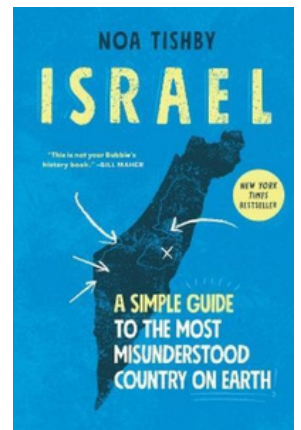
There was no consensus on this. I think in the end the group thought that it depends on who you are talking to.

My own view is that the more you know the better equipped you are as you might find yourself speaking to someone who is knowledgeable but just sees things in a different way. Having not only heard of the Balfour Declaration but knowing who Balfour was, and who he wrote his letter to and why he did so, just might prove useful.

We cannot know everything about Israel's modern history but we can try to learn more. There are several organisations providing educational opportunities for members of the Jewish community, and B'nai B'rith is one of them. Chana, our administrator, notifies members and others on the B'nai B'rith email database about upcoming Non-Fiction Book Club sessions and many other B'nai B'rith events which have significant educational components to them. I encourage you to participate in the endless journey of learning – it is enjoyable and just might come in handy one day when you try to explain to someone else, in some detail, your defence of Israel and why you proudly stand by it.

Peter Schattner

President



On Death Taxes and Childbirth



B'nai B'rith's Annual Memorial Service has been running for many years as a way to respect and remember our members who have died. I was honoured to speak at this year's function. It is always a somewhat sad day for all of us, but it can bring back fond and happy memories of those we have lost.

This year's Memorial service was especially difficult as we included our mourning for our 1,200 brothers and sisters who were murdered in Israel

by Hamas on October 7 last year, plus the soldiers and hostages who died afterwards. The brutal attack by Hamas and its allies brought back memories of the Holocaust to survivors and 2nd and 3rd generation Jews.

Denise and I experienced that at a different memorial service in April this year when we were invited to participate in an 80 year anniversary of a massacre in a small village in southern France called Tarnac.

My maternal grandparents came from Poland near Krakow but moved, due to antisemitism, to the northern part of France near Dunkirk and then again had to flee southward to Vichy France when the Germans invaded the country. They lived quietly in allocated houses in Tarnac until 6 April 1944 when the Brehmer Nazi Division arrived in the town. They encircled the town, ruthlessly shot Jewish men and deported the women and children to Auschwitz. That was the end.

Locals had forgotten or repressed this history until 5 years ago when a box of files from that era was found in the city office. A lot of research was undertaken by history enthusiasts seeking to bring the local Holocaust events out of the shadows. The researchers (especially Pierre Chavot) looked for descendants and organised a moving ceremony for two survivors and for relatives like us. It was incredibly special.

At this time of the year our family also remembers and mourns my deceased sister Dorit who died at the age of 39 from leukemia in 1992. She was a member of Unit Akiba and a popular and highly respected teacher in Special Education at McKinnon High School and Mt Scopus College.

The novelist Margaret Mitchell wrote in 1936 in "Gone with the Wind" of death, taxes and childbirth: "There's never any convenient time for any of them". Denise and I are now in our 70s, so it's a topic often on our minds. We therefore recently saw our lawyer 15 years after we made our last will. It did not need any changes, but I asked if we could add a legacy in our will to a charity such as B'nai Brith. Surprisingly our lawyer told us that this is easy and not expensive to do. They can just add a sentence to the will, called a CODICIL and do not have to rewrite the whole document. So that is what we are going to do for B'nai B'rith after we are gone and I invite you, if you can, to do the same for the organisation which has been such an important part of our lives. We want to see B'nai B'rith continue its community work and maybe even be remembered at a future Memorial Service.

Benny Monheit
President, BBANZ

B'nai B'rith

Impact through social connection

Impact through projects and programs

DONATE NOW

Tax Deductible donations can be made to B'nai B'rith Victoria through:

1. B'nai B'rith Victoria Scholarship Fund (ABN 98 467 845 195) for the
 - Bernard J. Lustig Scholarship and
 - Making a Difference (bursaries for VCE students),
2. B'nai B'rith Victoria Cultural Fund (ABN 20 660 843 685)
3. B'nai B'rith Foundation (ABN 28 635 306 970).

Note: Donations directly to B'nai B'rith Victoria and the Israel Commission are not tax deductible.

WILLS & BEQUESTS

Please consider making a gift in your will to ensure the future of B'nai B'rith is vibrant, bright and sustainable. Through the establishment of the B'nai B'rith Future Fund, grown by bequests, more grants will be made to our community's future leaders

DONATE ❤️



GET INVOLVED



B'nai B'rith Community Service Award for Ron James

B'nai B'rith is an organisation with a rich history of community engagement and community service. Its members are actively committed to the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam, through both learning and action.

One such member is Ron James who has generated a strong following, initially through his Current Affairs program and now with the B'nai B'rith Armchair Society, which is co-hosted with the Lamm Library. Pre-COVID, Ron's Current Affairs discussion group would attract about 30 people fortnightly to engage in (mostly) respectful dialogue about the latest news.

Through COVID, this group remained active via a WhatsApp group and then moved onto Zoom – an opportunity through strict lockdowns to remain connected. Post COVID has seen an extraordinary evolution of the Armchair Society audience, now attracting more than 150 attendees each fortnight to hear from a vast array of guest speakers.

As an acknowledgement for his efforts and commitment to current affairs and community engagement, Ron was presented with a B'nai B'rith Community Services Award. The President of B'nai B'rith Victoria, Peter Schattner thanked Ron for his dedication, tenacity and enthusiasm in attracting the best speakers, including politicians – past and present – journalists, activists and advocates, including the likes of Jeff Kennett AC, Bronwyn Bishop AO, Greg Sheridan AO and more.

Ron was presented his award in front of a packed audience who had come to listen to lawyer and entrepreneur Hamish Rotstein who has been a loud and staunch advocate for Israel since 7th October.



B'NAI B'RITH ARMCHAIR SOCIETY

BOOK FOR THE LAST 2 SESSIONS OF SERIES 4!

November 12 - Zach Gomo

'Despite decades of rapid population growth and fears of unsustainable numbers, most analysts now agree that we are on the cusp of a similarly steep population decline. Whilst celebrated by some, the consequences of a rapidly ageing and shrinking humanity are likely to include stark and unexpected challenges. What will this mean for the world in general, and Israel in particular? '

Zach Gomo is a notable speaker and educator, recognised for his contributions to Jewish learning and historical awareness.

November 26 - Arthur Bolkas

Prison: a glimpse into the netherworld through the eyes of one who has been there.

Arthur Bolkas is a criminologist, speaker and former prisoner who now works to help at-risk youth and prisoners reintegrate into society. After overcoming drug addiction and serving time for a armed robbery, he now shares his story of redemption, working as a mentor and facilitating programs for those in need. He is also a writer and speaker focused on rehabilitation and transformation.

TUESDAYS, 10:00AM - 12:00PM

EVENTS.HUMANITIX.COM/AS4



THANK YOU TO THE MOST RECENT AMAZING SPEAKERS



Above: Tim Wilson
Top Right: Julie Szego
Bottom Right: Prof Adiva Sifris (middle) with Ron James

BE A PART OF MITZVAH DAY 2024 ON 24 NOVEMBER!

THIS YEAR'S THEME IS STRONGER TOGETHER

Whether your project happens on the official day or any other time, we want to help promote and support your efforts. Register your project by scanning the QR code or clicking on the image below.

Make a lasting impact!

STRONGER TOGETHER



MITZVAH DAY

International | Australia

24 NOVEMBER 2024

www.mitzvahday.org.au



* Register a Project

* Volunteer for a
project



B'NAI B'RITH - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

JEWISH STUDENTS NEED YOUR SUPPORT

'Making a Difference' bursaries - providing support to financially disadvantaged Jewish students in Years 11 & 12 in State and Jewish schools for the last 28 years.

- OVER \$220,000 DONATED TO 280 STUDENTS SINCE 1996!
- DEMAND HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER
- AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST OUR YOUTH IN THEIR SCHOOLING

Donations over \$2 are tax deductible and can be made on the B'nai B'rith Victoria Website via the Scholarship Fund
www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria/donate-now/

DONATE TODAY!

CONTACT US: (03) 9523 0888 | www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria

DONATE ❤️



B'nai
B'rith

A project of Melbourne Lodge

OCTOBER 7 LANTERN MAKING

B'nai B'rith hosted a beautiful morning of lantern making on Wednesday, for the 'Illuminate October' event in commemoration of the first anniversary of October 7. Thank you to everyone who came and created these meaningful lanterns.



B'nai B'rith is pleased to invite all members & friends to

ENGAGE ENJOY &



An afternoon with **"BARBRA STREISAND"**

World class vocalist **RACHAEL GRACE**

Producer & Star of 'The Australian Barbra Streisand Show'

Sumptuous Lunch | \$50 per person

SUNDAY 1 DECEMBER 1:00 – 4:00PM

EVENTS.HUMANITIX.COM/ENJOY



9523 0888
www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria

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 **DRAWCARD**
ENTERTAINMENT VICTORIA
your entertainment is our business



**B'nai
B'rith**

B'NAI B'RITH RAMBLERS

Chair: Vardit Sacks-Davis

Secretary: Eitan Froumine

Preview Secretary: Judy Winikoff

Treasurer: Irena Blonder



enquiries@bbramblers.org.au

What's on in November:

- Sunday 10** *Morning* - Irena will lead a medium walk in Upper Ferntree Gully to OneTree Hill. Contact: irena.blonder@gmail.com
- Wednesday 20** *Morning* - An easy midweek walk will be led by Rodney along the Maribyrnong River from Essendon to Newmarket Station. Contact: r.eisfelder@gmail.com
- Sunday 24** *Morning* - Josh will lead a SOHW walk at a venue not yet decided. Contact: henzel@tpg.com.au

Urgent Appeal for Israel's Wildfire Mission

As tensions rise in Israel, the threat of devastating wildfires escalates alongside the ongoing conflict. Timothy Wainwright, an accomplished Australian firefighter with over 30 years of experience, is dedicated to protecting vulnerable communities from these catastrophic conditions. Growing up in the bushland of New South Wales, Timothy's commitment to 'Tikkun Olam'—the principle of repairing the world—compels him to act in these critical times.

Timothy first travelled to Israel in 2019 to assist communities in the Gaza Envelope, following the alarming rise in wildfire risks associated with incendiary devices, arson and rocket attacks. He has since returned in 2022 and 2024, training local first responders in wildfire management techniques and preventive strategies tailored to Israel's unique challenges. To see more about our organisation's work, please check our website at www.operationfiresupport.org.

Operation Fire Support has trained over 30 communities along Israel's borders and provided critical resources valued at over \$200,000.

With many community members evacuated due to conflict, crucial fire hazard clearance activities have ground to a halt, leaving these areas even more susceptible to wildfires. Many local responders lack the basic equipment needed to protect themselves and their communities, which can result in disasters that grow unchecked with professional help often unavailable.

In light of these urgent circumstances, Timothy is launching a preliminary one-month emergency fire support mission beginning November 1, 2024.

We are deploying in November, and we need our emergency operations budget is \$100,000 and we need your help to meet this financial need.

Your support is desperately needed. To help safeguard Israel from wildfires during this precarious time, please consider making a tax-deductible donation. Visit [Operation Fire Support] (<http://operationfiresupport.org/donate>) or contribute directly via bank transfer:

- BSB: 112-879
- Account Number: 433 508 731
- Account Name: OPERATION FIRE SUPPORT LTD

Every contribution makes a difference as we work to protect communities at risk. Thank you for your generosity and support.

All donations are fully tax deductible.



Israel Guide Dog Centre for the Blind

The Israel Guide Dog Centre for the Blind began as a dream of a young paratrooper in the IDF. A lifelong animal lover: Noach Braun. He trained dogs for military purposes.

When he left the army Noach made his mission to reestablish the guide dog school that had been attempted in 1960 by a woman Dr Rudolphina Menzl.

Unfortunately, when she passed away the program was abandoned.



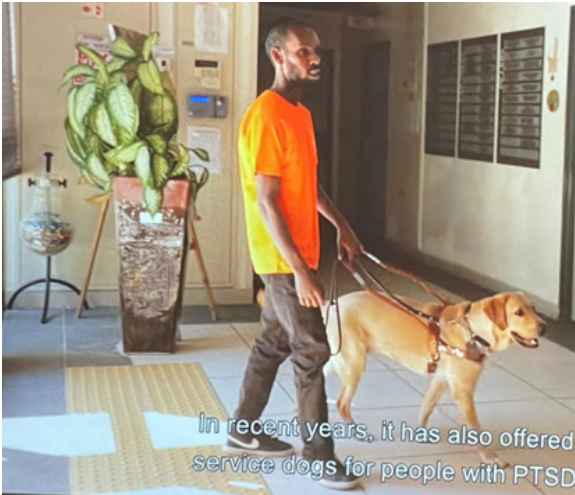
Noach's aim was to allow all blind or visually impaired Israelis to obtain the mobility, independence, self-confidence and companionship that only a guide dog can provide.

Since 1991 the Israel Guide Dog Centre has created for many life changing relationships with the help of an extraordinary network of staff, trainers, puppy raisers, volunteers and donors.

Beth Weizmann Centre was fortunate to welcome Noach Braun who gave the audience an insight into the apprenticeship of the dog from puppies to being the companion and the life changer of a blind person.



It was explained that the puppies, mainly labradors and golden retrievers, after remaining 8 weeks until they are weaned, attend a puppy kindergarten where they are exposed to a variety of experiences and sounds. Then, they stay with volunteers where they learn the basics of their training. When they are 12 months old, they return to the Centre for evaluation. Half of them will pass and advance to the Guide Dog training and those not selected "change careers" and are placed in the Emotional Support Companion Program. After the dogs are trained, they are matched with a person according to their personalities. The client and the dog train together for 3 weeks at the Centre. Thanks to the generosity of people all around the world, this life changing service is free of charge for the recipient.



More recently a new area has been opened to dogs who are not selected for Advanced Guide Dogs Training; they can become service dogs. Many IDF soldiers and veterans as well as Israelis have PTSD. They fear sleep because persistent nightmares torment and awaken them. The dogs calm them during panic attacks and provide companionship to reduce isolation. The clients with PTSD must care for their dogs, get up, take the dogs out, feed and groom them. These responsibilities give the client a sense of purpose and creates a positive routine.

It improves the client's self-image while reducing depression and isolation. Service dogs are trained to also become the loving companions to people with special needs, especially autistic children.

Specially trained dogs lift spirits in Israel. They are emerging as beacons of hope, raising spirits and proving that sometime a furry friend can be the best remedy.

To donate to this meaningful program, donate to the B'nai B'rith Israel Commission on the B'nai B'rith website via the link below.

<https://www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria/donate-now/>

Select "B'nai B'rith Israel Commission Guide Dogs Project" in the dropdown.



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

Recently we received a lovely note from a participant in the B'nai B'rith Youth Art Competition - a reminder of why we do what we do.

Dear Joey at B'nai Brith:
Thank you so much for the opportunity B'nai Brith have provided for me to display my artwork and thank you for putting this competition into the community.
Since moving to a non-jewish boarding program, I have been unable to attend art classes and am grateful to enter this competition.

Joey - thank you for being so fabulous!
Lauren

UPCOMING EVENT

We are pleased to invite the community to the presentation of the 2024 Menorah Awards.

The Awards recognise the services to the community of volunteers who have given of themselves over long periods of time.

Recipients:

**HELEN GELBER
CAROLINE HEARD
HELEN HEIMANN
DANIELLE SCHILLING**

B'NAI B'RITH

MENORAH AWARDS



SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER, 7:30PM

EVENTS.HUMANITIX.COM/MENORAH

(03) 9523 0888 / www.bnaibrith.org.au/victoria

RSVP



B'nai
B'rith

Since 1978 B'nai B'rith has been recognising the Victorian community's extraordinary volunteers who have given significant years of service.

We receive many nominations, and this year, as with all years, the Menorah Awards committee was faced with the difficult decision, but have selected Helen Gelberg, Caroline Heard, Helen Heimann and Danielle Schilling.

The awardees will be inviting their friends and family to the presentation, but we extend the invitation to all B'nai B'rith members and the wider community to attend this wonderful celebration.



2023 Menorah Award Recipients

UPCOMING EVENTS

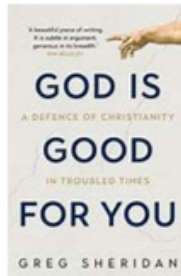
B'NAI B'RITH JEWISH NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB

Featuring "G-d is good for you" by Greg Sheridan

The book will be presented by Benny Monheit.

The Judeo-Christian tradition has created and underpinned the moral and legal fabric of Western civilisation, yet now we've reached a point in both Australia and many parts of Europe where Christianity has become a minority faith, rather than the mainstream belief. It's a situation that's fraught both for Christians and our wider society, where the moral certainties that were the foundation of our institutions and laws are no longer held by the majority.

At this point of crisis for Christianity, "God is Good For You" shows us why Christianity is so vital for our personal and social well-being, and how modern Christians - of all denominations - have never worked so hard to make the world a better place at a time when their faith has never been less valued. Sheridan also highlights the virtues of the Hebrew Bible and the strength of the Judeo-Christian heritage - hence the book's potential interest for a Jewish audience.



THURSDAY 21 NOVEMBER, 8:00 - 9:30pm

For more information on the book club and for the venue, please contact Peter at non-fiction@bbvic.org.au.



B'NAI B'RITH FELLOWSHIP CONCERT

**FREE MITZVAH DAY CONCERT
& AFTERNOON TEA!**

Featuring
**World Renowned Pianist & Singer
Warren Wills**

Venue:

Glen Eira McKinnon Bowling Club
Tyrone St, Ormond

Time:

2:30pm

**BOOKINGS
ESSENTIAL**



MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER

BOOKINGS: Deidre 0408 121 213



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SUPPORTING BBYO

B'nai B'rith Victoria supported the recent BBYO/UJEB Shabbaton, with 24 teens participating in a weekend full of engaging programs, personal growth and memorable experiences. Ellana Aarons facilitated a session about the meaning of community, its importance and the role that individuals play in building and strengthening community. With a number of participants now in their final year in BBYO, we will continue to engage and see what opportunities can emerge for the BBYO alumni



B'nai B'rith Melbourne Lodge No. 1547
(incorporating Raoul Wallenberg Unit and Melbourne Mitzvah Lodge)
and the Mayor and Councillors of the City of Port Phillip
invite you to **RAOUL WALLENBERG DAY**

17 January 2025 is of significance as it will be the 80th anniversary of the disappearance of Raoul Wallenberg in 1945. Australia's first and only Honorary Citizen, he has been characterised by the United Nations as "the greatest humanitarian of the 20th century".

Sunday 19 January 2025 - 11:00am
St Kilda Town Hall, Council Chamber, 1st Floor
Cnr Brighton Rd and Carlisle St, St Kilda. (Entry via Heritage entrance)

Keynote Speaker: Josh Burns MP, Federal Member of Macnamara



Light refreshments will be served (kosher).
Tickets are free; however bookings are essential.
Scan the QR code to book or visit www.trybooking.com/CVQVD
Queries: 9209 6762

COURAGE TO CARE UPDATE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMUNICATION TO SCHOOLS AHEAD OF 7 OCTOBER ANNIVERSARY



We are pleased that the Department of Education has taken some proactive steps by writing to all schools as the first anniversary approaches. The communication to schools was prepared in consultation with the Antisemitism in Education Consultative Group that include us and others including the Melbourne Holocaust Museum, the Jewish Museum and the Jewish Community Council of Victoria. Meeting monthly to discuss how we are collectively combating antisemitism in schools is a good step forward.

Principals and staff are asked by the Department to be especially mindful of both students and colleagues who may be distressed on this day. As always, it is vital that all members of the school community treat each other with respect, understanding and sensitivity.

Staff must ensure they engage in such discussions about the conflict in accordance with the requirements in the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and the Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct. These obligations exist to ensure that teachers maintain public trust, integrity, and impartiality, while also ensuring the wellbeing and cultural safety of all students, staff, and the wider school community.

OUR VOLUNTEER MANAGER LISA LEWIS IN THE NEWS.

Lisa has had a busy month representing us so well in the media. Click on the link below to read about Lisa's family story of being saved by an Upstander during the Holocaust and how this inspires her to keep building our volunteer program.

<https://www.australianjewishnews.com/help-turn-the-tide-against-hate-speech/>

As part of our VOLUNTER WITH US Recruitment Campaign Lisa was interviewed by both the L'Chaim Podcast on 3ZZZ and live on air with Gary Max on J-Air.

[Click here](#) to listen to J-Air interview

[Click here](#) to listen to L'Chaim Podcast



CEO Mike Zervos OAM

NOVEMBER 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
28 Oct	29	30	31	1 Nov	2	3 7:00pm GRU Trivia Night
4	5 10:30am Hatikvah Melbourne Cup Day Walk 1:00pm Akiba Cup Day Picnic	6	7 3:30pm Melbourne Lodge Executive	8	9	10 Ramblers walk
11 7:30pm ML Programming meeting	12 10:00am Armchair Society Series 4	13 7:00pm ML Regular Meeting (Convention Room 1st Floor) 8:00pm Hatikvah Activities Meeting	14 10:30am ML Manilyong Boat Trip 7:30pm BB Victoria AGM and VBBC Meeting	15	16	17 9:30am Calico Dolls 11:00am GRU get together 7:30pm Menorah Awards 7:30pm Akiba Regular
18	19	20 Ramblers walk	21 8:00pm Jewish Non-Fiction Book Club	22	23	24 MITZVAH DAY Ramblers walk 8:00pm Hatikvah Regular Meeting
25 2:30pm Fellowship Concert	26 10:00am Armchair Society Series 4	27 7:00pm Hatikvah Executive meeting	28	29	30	1 Dec

Click [HERE](#) to see the B'nai B'rith calendar which includes all B'nai B'rith and Unit Events and Jewish Holidays

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MITZVAH DAY

International | Australia

24 NOVEMBER 2024

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- * Register a Project
- * Volunteer for a project

