

# HAYNT

PRESERVE EDUCATE PROMOTE



Australian Society of Polish Jews  
and their Descendants

SPRING 2023 ISSUE 18

**Vale**  
**Jeremy Jones AM**

Member, Order of Australia-Jun 2005.  
For services to interfaith dialogue,  
multiculturalism, religious freedom and  
promoting Australia internationally.

# Preserve Educate Promote

*“Australian Society of Polish Jews and Their Descendants  
is dedicated to preserving and promoting the historical  
and cultural heritage of Jewish life in Poland and to fostering  
understanding between current and future generations  
of the Polish and Jewish communities”*

The ASPJ coordinates with the established Jewish and Polish communal bodies, religious leadership, governmental, parliamentary and diplomatic bodies, as well as historical, cultural and educational organisations in both Australia and Poland.

Polish–Jewish dialogue in Poland today is growing, particularly among the post-communist, educated young. There is a growing understanding and acceptance of the past, both the good and the bad. A new spirit of positive cooperation has emerged. Young Catholic Poles, more than ever before, are expressing an interest in the Jewish history of their country. This dialogue and interest needs to be nurtured and encouraged.

We organise educational and cultural events that cover the broad range of Polish–Jewish relations.

Our Haynt magazine is published three times a year, showcasing cultural, social and political articles of interest to Polish and Jewish communities.

ASPJ is a resource for educational material and offers a speaker service in a variety of topics relating to Polish–Jewish relations.

The Henryk Slawik Award is bestowed by the ASPJ to a person or institution that helps foster a deeper understanding of Polish–Jewish history and relations.

ASPJ Oration invites national or international speakers who can address complex and relevant issues regarding Polish–Jewish concerns.

Based in Melbourne, Australia, we invite all people, Jewish and non-Jewish, whose roots lie in Poland, to join our organisation.

## **Disclaimer**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors.  
They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of ASPJ or its members.

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# From the President



Ezra May  
President ASPJ

Shalom, Dzień dobry and welcome to the latest edition of *Haynt*.

Pleasingly, 2023 has been full of events and activities that have seen the ASPJ expand its footprint. One of the most satisfying aspects has been the growth of the ASPJ in NSW, as we firmly establish ourselves and host NSW-specific functions. Much appreciation to our NSW board members Estelle Rozinski, Karen Pakula & Lusy Taksa for all their innovative effort, drive & commitment.

On the diplomatic front, after farewelling the previous Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Australia, His Excellency Michał Kołodziejcki in July 2022, His replacement His Excellency Maciej Chmieliński has just commenced his posting. And it is with much excitement and anticipation we look forward to welcoming him in person in Victoria on 2 November 2023 at a screening of the film *Polmission: Passport Secrets*. I'd also like to take the opportunity to farewell Agata Utnicka, who is leaving at the end of September,

after a five year posting as Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Canberra. We thank Agata for her support and encouragement of the ASPJ and look forward to working with her replacement, Marcin Kawalowski, when he arrives.

The ASPJ's Statement of Purpose is: To preserve and promote the historical and cultural heritage of Jewish life in Poland and to foster understanding between current and future generations of the Polish and Jewish communities.

The ASPJ Board, including Lena Fiszman, Andrew Rajcher, Eva Hussain & Peter Schnall, as well as our aforementioned NSW-based Board Members, have been busy planning and organising a wide range of high-class functions & events for the remainder of 2023 and early 2024, that align with the full spectrum of the historical and cultural heritage of Jewish life in Poland and engaging with the Polish community, as outlined in our Statement of Purpose.

We look forward to seeing you both online and especially in person at our upcoming functions.

As we approach the Jewish New Year season, the ASPJ wishes everyone a Sweet & Happy New Year. May it be a year full of health, happiness and peace for all.

Shana Tova, Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku, Happy New Year!

## From the New South Wales desk



Estelle Rozinski  
Co-Vice President

Dear Friends,

It is with great sadness that I acknowledge the passing of Jeremy Jones, an extraordinary man in both public and private domains.

Please go to page 7 to read a tribute to Jeremy Jones.

Over the last 6 months ASPJ held 2 significant events. In March, we welcomed Polish genealogist Michal Majewski, who gave a talk at the Sydney Jewish Museum. In August, Professor Konrad Kwiet gave a historical lecture on Jewish Poland at Waverley Library in Bondi Junction.

Michal spoke to a packed audience where he shared tips on how to research, navigate obstacles and engage professional genealogist strategies to uncover historic details of Polish ancestry. I would like to acknowledge Barbara Simon and Dani Haski of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society (AJGS), and Peter Phillipson of the Australian Jewish Historical Society (AJHS), for their hard work in facilitating this event at the Sydney Jewish Museum. It is hoped AJHS's connection with Michal and the ASPJ will be ongoing. Thanks to my colleague, Lucy Taksa, for facilitating the Q & A; and to Andrew Rajcher of the Dora and Wolf Rajcher Foundation for Sponsoring Michal's trip.

While in Sydney, Michal introduced us to the 'The Yellow Daffodil Project'. A Warsaw Ghetto commemoration using the yellow daffodil as a symbol for the Star of David, this project was initiated by the Polin Museum. This project was presented by Lucy Taksa to the Board of Deputies, and to Youth Hear by

Anastasia Uricher. Consequently, both organisations featured yellow daffodil badges at their events this year.

Professor Konrad Kwiet gave historical context to the animation project, '...and he taught the canaries to sing' which celebrates pre-war Jewish life. Professor Kwiet skilfully referenced Talmudic and historic metaphors for the canary in his introduction. He then went on to give a thorough overview of Jewish life in Poland between the wars. A clip of this talk will be available online in the next few weeks.

In the upcoming months I will be hosting academic researcher Sarah Grandke, who worked on a temporary exhibition of postcards in Lodz. More about this in the next *Haynt*.

Taking the opportunity to wish you all a happy, healthy and fruitful New Year.

With warm regards,

Estelle

# Holocaust survivor migration records at National Archives of Australia



Patrick Ferry with Holocaust Survivor Dr Henry Buch, Debbie Buch and Ezra May at the ASPJ Genealogy Open Day, April 2023.

**In April, Patrick Ferry from National Archives of Australia showcased Holocaust survivor migration records at the ASPJ Genealogy Day. Haynt spoke with Patrick to learn more about records as they will be of great interest to members.**

## What are these records?

Series B4064 - *Applications for admission of relative or friend to Australia form 40, single number series* consists of applications to sponsor Holocaust survivors to Australia in 1945 and 1946 .



The applications were made mainly by members of Victoria's Jewish community. There are 1,382 applications in the series. Many of these cover multiple people, including whole families. Just over

50% of the applications relate to Polish Jews.

## What information do the records contain?

The records provide information about the Holocaust survivors: their name, date of birth, place of birth,



Monash student Evelyn Tan adding Holocaust survivor sponsorship records to the National Archives' RecordSearch database.

present address, occupation and relationship to the sponsor.

The records also provide information about the sponsors, including their age, nationality, occupation, address and how long they were in Australia. Many of the sponsors were themselves refugees from anti-Semitic persecution, having arrived in Australia just before the Second World War.

*In your opinion, what makes these records so special?*

These applications must have meant a lot to both the survivors and their sponsors. Behind each application, there will be a deeply personal story of tragedy and survival. For example, the first application in the series is for Lipman (Leon) Jedwab, who was born in Zagorow, Poland in 1924. On his application Lipman's address is listed as "Buchenwald Camp, Germany". The application was made by Leon's father, Ide Chaim Jedwab, who with two of Leon's brothers, had made it safely to Melbourne just months before the War broke out. However, the rest of the family was trapped in Poland after the German invasion. Imagine the tremendous sense of relief, hope, excitement and anticipation Leon's father must have felt when he found out Leon was still alive and later when the application to sponsor to Australia was accepted.

Many members of the Jewish community will therefore have a strong personal connection with these records. Indeed, at the ASPJ Genealogy



Lipman Jedwab's alien registration photograph, 1946. NAA: B78, 1956/Jedwab L.

Day in April, I was privileged to meet Holocaust survivor Dr Henry Buch, who was sponsored to Australia by Melbourne businessman Harry Spatt. The original application form submitted by Harry for Henry, Henry's mother and other relatives was right there in B4064!

*How can people find out if their family is included in the series?*

Application by Ide Chaim Jedwab to sponsor his son Lipman to Australia, 1945. NAA: B4064, Schedule 1/V1

Sue Hampel OAM of the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation arranged for Monash University students to list each application individually by name (both of the Holocaust survivor/s and nominee) in the National Archives' RecordSearch database. This means that you can now search for these records online using names as keywords. RecordSearch can be accessed using this QR code.

- alien registration documents; and
- naturalisation / citizenship records.

You can search for these records using RecordSearch. RecordSearch also includes a passenger arrival index.



This indexes ships passenger lists for Fremantle (which was the first stop for migrant ships from Europe) from 1898 to 1972. It also includes aircraft arrivals for all airports from 1949 to 1964.

*Do you have any tips to help people search for their families' records?*

Gather as much information as possible before you start. Knowing the person's full name, date of birth, place of birth etc will help you to identify the right records.

- If your surname is uncommon, use that to perform the widest possible keyword search to start with. You can then refine your search results by adding a given name, date range etc.
- It is important to remember that people's names can be recorded in different ways:

- In some records they may be listed by surname and given name (e.g. Rajcher, Wolf) and by their surname and initial in others (e.g. Rajcher, W.).
- Spellings of names can also vary in the records – e.g., Moishe and Moses.
- Some Jewish people Anglicised their names after arriving in Australia – so they may be listed on their passenger arrival list under their original name (e.g. Grynszpan, Henryk) and under their Anglicised name in their later naturalisation record (e.g. Greenspan, Henry).

Although the records have been listed on RecordSearch, most have not yet been digitised. If you find your family in the series, you can either view the original record at the Victorian Archives Centre in North Melbourne (free) or purchase a digital copy (fees apply).

*What other migration records does the National Archives hold relating to Polish Jewish migrants?*

Other types of migration records in our collection include:

- passenger arrival records (ships lists and aircraft arrival cards);
- migrant selection records and immigration case files;

*What can people do if they can't find the records they are looking for?*



Not all of the records in the National Archives' collection are listed on RecordSearch. So if you cannot find records you are looking for, please contact us and we will undertake some basic searches to help you find the person you are looking for.

# Jeremy Jones AM : A Tribute



Polish Consul General in Australia Monika Kończyk with Jeremy Jones AM

By Estelle Rozinski

It was on Wednesday, 6 September, that the voice of our man, our guy, our ambassador Jeremy Jones was lost. Jeremy was director of International and Community Affairs at the Australia/ Israel and Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), former president and life member of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) and member the Australian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS). A community stalwart and remarkable individual, Jeremy dedicated his life to fighting antisemitism, promoting interfaith dialogue, and advocating for human rights. His legacy as a leader, advocate and mentor are evident in the outpouring of heartfelt words from those who knew him well in public and private life.

So revered and successful was he in his role as advocate, that a motion was passed at the NSW legislative council recognising him as a world leader on fighting racism, especially antisemitism, and in promoting interfaith dialogue. A rare combination of great mind and great heart, Jeremy was recognised for his contributions to community both locally and internationally.

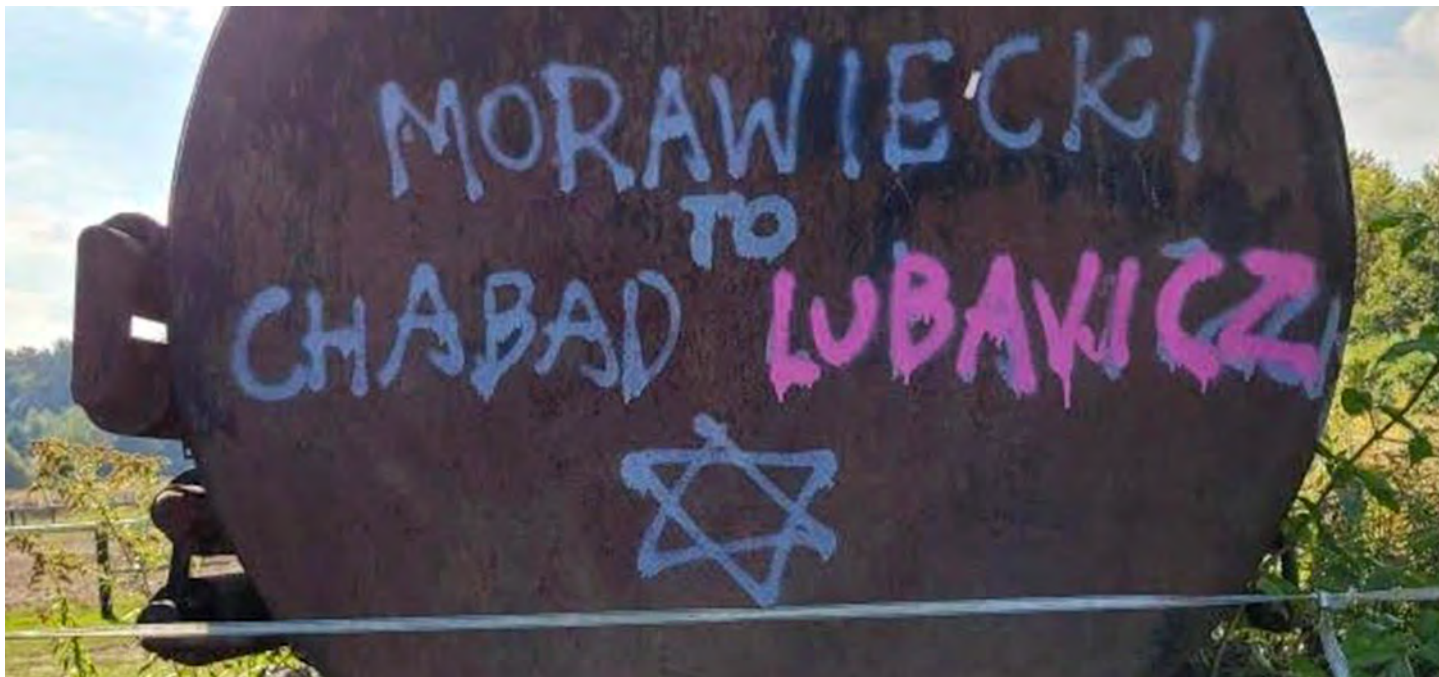
Jeremy Jones' contributions to the Australian Jewish community and to society at large are celebrated and remembered with deep respect and admiration. In 2002 Jeremy's decision to be the plaintiff in the Jones v Toben case is but one example of his unwavering courage and moral conviction. This landmark victory succeeded in proving Holocaust denial is a form of antisemitism and resulted in Toben's website being taken down by order of the High Court.

He was a person of great kindness, wisdom, and dedication. His work in supporting interfaith relations and community cohesion was recognised in 2007 by his being awarded the Australian Human Rights medal, and in 2016 with the prestigious Stepan Kerkyasharian AO medal for Community Harmony. Judaism informed his compassion towards humanity and was reflected in his advocacy for Indigenous rights. This was proudly displayed by the kippot and ties he wore, often decorated with Indigenous artwork.

For ASPJ, and for me personally, Jeremy was quick to grasp and support initiatives both political and artistic. A man of his word, he never shied away from engaging with politicians and diplomats, or from being a part of an unofficial welcome committee. Jeremy was a great conversationalist, always ready to put forward a compelling and supportive point of view. He put people at ease with his kind and considerate nature, his wit and humour always at the ready. In more recent years, Jeremy developed an interest in photography. This broadened his appreciation for the beauty of the natural world, with frequent visits to the duck pond at Centennial Park.

A devoted husband to Naomi, and a proud father to Galit and Gidon, his most impressive quality was his ability to balance his work commitments with his ability to be an ever present and loving family man. We at ASPJ offer our deepest condolences to his family and close friends. May Jeremy's lasting legacy and memory be a blessing.

## Jewish group's report finds rise in antisemitic incidents in Poland



Graffiti found in Warsaw reads "Morawiecki is Chabad Lubavitch," referring to the country's non-Jewish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and the Hasidic Chabad-Lubavich movement. (Courtesy of Czulent via JTA)

By Dinah Spritzer

*The Times of Israel*, April 2023

WARSAW, Poland (JTA) — A Jewish association has released what is being called the first report on antisemitism conducted with direct input from Polish Jewish community organizations, counting 488 incidents in 2022 submitted via an online portal and collected through extensive interviews with community members.

The incident total released on Monday by the Czulent Jewish Association is more than four times the number reported for 2021 by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

The report's lead author, Anna Zielińska, said 86 percent of incidents involved online harassment and insults. She added that the word "Jew" is frequently used online to label an "enemy" as "disloyal, an outsider and unpatriotic."

"There is not a Polish politician who hasn't been called a Jew," Zielińska told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Czulent's 2022 report detailed one violent act that

resulted in injury, four additional violent attacks, 20 threats, 34 instances of damage to Jewish property and memorial sites, 68 cases of antisemitic mass mailings and 372 instances of "abusive" behavior.

Zielińska said there was no way to know the real number of antisemitic incidents that occur because the "internet is a bottomless pit of hate."

She is convinced that Czulent, a nongovernmental organization promoting tolerance, that cooperates closely with Polish Jewish communities, has just scratched the surface.

"Time and again when I interviewed people, they told me they were reluctant to report incidents because it wouldn't change anything," said Zielińska, a member of the Warsaw Jewish Community, one of the multiple communal groups under the umbrella of Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland.

Antisemitic hate speech is more part of the public discourse than it was a decade ago, she added, and focuses on conspiracy theories such as Jewish involvement in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Czulent report documented 84 cases of public antisemitic statements that were also anti-Ukrainian.





Jews pray at Chabad house in Krakow, Poland, November 8, 2021. (Yossi Zeigler/Flash90)

When Polish President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki met earlier this month with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who is Jewish, the Polish leaders were accused online of serving Jewish causes, according to Zielińska.

“The context of the Ukrainian-Russian war was used to attack Jews more freely and seemingly legally,” said Zielińska. “In this way antisemitism is being used to discourage the public from supporting Ukrainian refugees.”

Over the past four years, some of the most high-profile antisemitic language in the political arena has been deployed by Grzegorz Braun, a leader of the far-right Confederation Liberty and Independence Party.

Braun’s most recent target has been Ukrainian refugees, whom he accuses of seeking to create a “Ukro-Poland” — a reference to “Judeo-Poland,” an expression popularized in the early 20th century by politicians who said Jews wanted to replace Poland with their own state.

In 2019, while he was campaigning, Braun said the United States was a “political and military tool of Jewish blackmail against Poland” and wrote that “Jews have waged war against the Polish nation for centuries, in fact against the whole Christian world.” His party, referred to in Poland as Confederation, is the country’s third most popular, with support from 11% of the electorate, according to a March survey by the independent polling agency Ipsos.

In the upcoming fall parliamentary elections, some analysts have predicted that the ruling right-wing Law and Justice party, which spends significant

funds on Jewish monuments and culture, will need the support of Confederation and its voters to form a government.

Over the past five years, specific political developments have fueled negative attitudes toward Jews, she noted. In 2019, thousands of Polish nationalists protested in front of the US Embassy in Warsaw against US efforts to require Poland to compensate Jews whose families lost property during the Holocaust.

Michael Schudrich, Poland’s chief rabbi, said that although he agreed that online public discourse in Poland could be antisemitic, violent acts of antisemitism were rare.

In 2006, a man who yelled “Poland is for Poles,” hit Schudrich and attacked him with pepper spray.

“Thousands of Hasidim come to Poland each year for various anniversaries and there has never been a real problem” he said. “And as for me, the only time anyone attacked me was under a left-wing government.”

He said he sees no evidence that antisemitism in Poland is on the rise, but he believes the government’s push for a nationalistic patriotic narrative of the past — focused on Polish heroism during the Holocaust — and its courting of the extreme right has had consequences.

“Antisemites today feel more empowered to say what’s on their minds,” he said.

Estimates of the number of Jews in Poland range from more than 15,000, according to a government census, to fewer than 10,000, according to the World Jewish Congress.



“Death to Jews” chanted at torchlit far-right march in a Polish city

# Hundreds of Items Hidden by Jews at Start of WWII Uncovered in Lodz.



Some of the items excavated in Łódź. Credit: Lodz Municipality

By Ofer Aderet

Haaretz. January 11 2023

Polish construction workers found hundreds of Jewish-owned items beneath a building in Łódź.

As Polish construction workers restored a building last month in the city of Łódź, they found an exceptional historical treasure while excavating the building's foundations. About 1.5 meters (five feet) below the surface were hundreds of Jewish-owned items, including Judaica and household utensils wrapped in newspapers, which had been preserved below the ground for over 80 years.

The workers called in representatives of the district's cultural heritage preservation office. Its professionals and archaeologists could not believe their eyes. The Polish city, with its rich Jewish past, has not seen such a trove since World War II. They first counted 280 items; additional excavations yielded another 70, including a soap dish and a ring.

Experts believe that Jews from Łódź stowed the items with the outbreak of World War II, in the hope that they would return to retrieve them after it ended. Most of the items are made of silver-coated metal; they include candlesticks, cups, cutlery, serving dishes and storage containers, clothing and sacred texts.

There are also two menorahs, which were used last month to light Hanukkah candles at a ceremony attended by representatives of the Jewish community at the Museum of the City of Łódź. The items will be transferred to the Łódź Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography.

The building that hid this treasure is located on Pólnocna Street, a major thoroughfare in Łódź. During

the war, the street bordered the Jewish ghetto and the main part of the city. David Gurfinkel, a member of the local Jewish community, called the findings a "Hanukkah miracle" as they were uncovered during the holiday.

"I feel like the items want to tell us something," he said, adding that one of the menorahs is decorated with an eagle, a Polish national symbol. "This is a patriotic element, which indicates that the members of the Jewish community were an integral part of the city and were proud of their origins," he said.

The workers from the Warbud construction company who found the Jewish trove told the Polish media that they are accustomed to finding historical items. They said that while working in certain districts of the city, they are instructed to be careful not to damage such items. One of the workers told the Polish website FAKT that this discovery is "the most valuable and exciting treasure" ever found during construction work in the city. "We never expected that," he added.

Archeologist Bartłomiej Gwozdź said that some of the items had corroded or were caked with soil and are now undergoing preservation. "In my work, I come across all sorts of findings, but I am overcome by these things – these items belonged to people who hid them in the hope of surviving, but they didn't make it," he said.

At the beginning of World War II, Łódź was the second-largest city in Poland. Its Jewish community counted about 233,000 people and constituted about a third of the city's residents. They were imprisoned in the ghetto that was built there in 1940, and only a few thousand survived the Holocaust.

Meir Bulka, an Israeli who works toward preserving

the heritage of Polish Jewry, posted the pictures of the findings from Łódź on social media, in an attempt to find the original owners. To date he has received several requests from descendants of Jews from the city who were familiar with the building's address.

He told Haaretz that before the items are transferred to the local museum, they should try to find the families to whom the items belonged. "Let's try to return this property to the Jewish people," he said.

## Poland's chief rabbi speaks out against LGBT-free zones: *It is against Jewish law*

By Emma Powys Maurice  
September 4, 2021

Poland's chief rabbi has strongly criticised the spread of so-called 'LGBT-free zones', saying they violate Jewish religious law.

Rabbi Michael Schudrich has been the religious leader of the Polish Jewish community since 2004, playing a central role in the country's "Jewish Renaissance" movement.

On Monday (30 August) he spoke frankly about his faith amid Poland's anti-LGBT+ backlash, as part of a panel for The Aguda's "Pride in the Living Room" series.

"As far as I can tell, [creating LGBT+ free zones] is against Halacha," Schudrich said, referring to the collective body of Jewish laws based on the Torah.

"Of course, Halacha isn't responsible for what the towns in Poland are doing... but the way I understand Judaism, as an Orthodox rabbi, is that we want every Jew to feel comfortable in a synagogue."

Poland's 'LGBT-free zones' began appearing in 2019 as towns and cities passed resolutions declaring themselves free of "LGBT ideology". There are now at least 80 of these zones in Poland, covering nearly a third of the country.

Rabbi Schudrich refused to be drawn into the growing anti-LGBT+ sentiment, explaining that it does not represent Judaism.

"Every Jew should know that they are welcome," he said, "and if someone tells them they are not welcome, that person is incorrect. Yes, we have differences, so what? Creating Jewish unity is not about agreeing about everything, it's about celebrating that we are all Jewish together."

Schudrich said that since he began working in Poland in 1990, he understood his sole responsibility as rabbi was



Chief Rabbi of Poland,  
Michael Schudrich.

to bring Polish Jews closer to Judaism and Jewish culture, not exclude them on the basis of sexuality.

"It is not my role to judge who they are," he insisted. "That is God's responsibility... I got enough to do; I don't have to do God's job. I'd like to give him or her some of my work!"

The chief rabbi is not the first Jewish leader

to condemn Poland's surge in public homophobia. Last year community leaders in Warsaw signed an open letter in protest, drawing damning parallels with attempts to whip up anti-Semitic hatred before the Holocaust.

Schudrich criticised Jews who refuse to take a stand on the issue, saying the community had a "special responsibility" to intervene when others are being persecuted.

"We Jews always complain that when we suffer antisemitism, the non-Jews don't stand up for us," he told the Aguda panel. "So that means we have a special responsibility to stand up for anyone being discriminated against."

"Anything that is a violation of civil rights, anything that's demeaning to a human being is wrong."

His inclusive approach was praised by other religious leaders on the panel. "Hearing rabbis speak about Jewish LGBTQ+ people in our lives is so important because that silence can be deadly," Keshet UK executive director Dalia Fleming replied.

# A Trip to the Jewish Past and Future of Poland



Entrance to the Jewish cemetery in Warsaw

Poland has been a meaningful place in Jewish history in which the Hasidic movement had a remarkable role. Most of it was destroyed by the Nazis during the Holocaust. However, in the past few decades there has been a growing interest there in the Jewish heritage, and many youngsters with Jewish background are searching for their roots and connecting with the revived Jewish communities and various organizations in Poland and abroad that support and encourage them.

Shavei Israel, based in Jerusalem, has been involved in this and has been actively searching for ways to expand its activities there, specifically by working with local Jewish people and entities.

In 2021 Shavei Israel was involved in Hanukah celebration in the Łódź Jewish Community and now we were thrilled to take part and participate in the Experiential Seminar in Poland on Polish Judaism and Hasidism, Past and Present. Shavei Israel was represented by Mrs. Chaya Riera, who is in charge of the Shavei Israel Polish desk.

The seminar took place around Tu B'Shevat, the Jewish celebration of nature, and included two Tu B'Shevat seders, one with the Łódź Jewish community and the refugees from Ukraine that it's hosting, and the second at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

In addition, they celebrated Shabbat with the Łódź Jewish community, and visited Jewish and Hasidic sites and museums in Kraków, Warsaw, Łódź, Brezsko, Tarnów, Lelów, Radomsko, and Aleksandrów Łódzki. They met Poles that discovered their Jewish roots, local residents and activists who are taking care of preserving and reviving the Polish Jewish heritage, and they learned about Polish Judaism and Hasidism, both past and present.

The seminar combined academic knowledge and cultural musical activities, and focused on meeting people, places, ideas, tales and leading figures of Polish Hasidism.

The seminar was created, initiated, and coordinated by Dr. Dina Feldman, an Israeli activist in preserving the Polish Jewish heritage and promoting Polish-Israeli encounters and corporations. It was led by Rabbi Dr. Zeev Kitsis, editor and writer in the field of Hasidism, one of the founders of the "Zusha – The Chassidic Story" and its editor-in-chief, teacher of Hasidic literature at various academic institutes and a performer of Hassidic and original musical work.

The seminar was a partnership between the Łódź Jewish community, the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, "Zusha – The Chassidic Story", and Shavei Israel.



Jewish cemetery in Warsaw

The seminar was open to guides, educators, researchers, as well as those interested in Polish-Jewish heritage. The seminar was held in Hebrew and English, and included imparting information, memories, Hasidic tales, and music. It was based on interpersonal, intercultural, experiential encounters.



Tu B'Shevat seder with Rav Itzhak Rapoport, Rabbi of the Warsaw Jewish community, and his wife Chaya Rapoport

Rabbi Dr. Zeev Kitsis expounded on the trip, "It was a journey of three axes; Seemingly different though actually very connected. The first axis was 'Memory' – we jumped between meetings with people who dedicate their lives and work to preserving memory and erecting/maintaining tombstones for Poland's lost Jewry.



ZIH, the Jewish Historical Institute, there they have an archive of the Warsaw Ghetto called Oneg Shabat by Emanuel Ringelblum

"The second axis, 'Hasidism' was where we saw Hasidic sites and dealt with the great teachers/scholars of Polish Hasidism. This was an important complement to the memorial sites, because in doing so we brought back to life not only the Jews, but also the wonderful Judaism that had disappeared from this complex land/country.

"And the third axis, I call it 'Am Yisrael Chai' – the meeting with the refugees in Lodz and the wonderful Tu B'Shevat seder that we held there with Rabbi David Szychovsky. Here we did not deal with the past but with the present and even the future. The seder in three languages (Polish, Hebrew and Ukrainian), and actually in One – the language of unity and love of a people who want life, a people who have not only a past, but also a glorious and exciting present and future!"

Chaya Riera, representative of Shavei Israel and the only participant in the trip who did not have Polish roots, had much to say about the trip, "The experience of this seminar was powerful. Accompanying my colleagues as we visited the graves of their ancestors, getting to know first-hand the communities with which Shavei Israel works and seeing up close how both Jews and Poles work together in order to rescue the memory of the Jewry in Poland, all this left me with a taste of hope and enthusiasm to continue working and increasing efforts to help those who want to return to their roots."

# It's Not Just Meat and Potatoes

## The Dark (and Delicious) History of Polish Jewish Cuisine



In this article, we will take a look behind the (iron) curtain at the history of Polish Jews and their one-of-a-kind cuisine. We'll explore some of the iconic dishes that have come to define Polish Jewry and learn the stories behind them.

Polish Jewish cuisine is a unique culinary tradition that has been shaped by centuries of the Jewish people's experiences in Poland.

### A Brief History of Polish Jews

Jews have been living in Poland since around the 10th century, and over the years they have formed a significant part of the country's cultural and religious landscape. At their peak, there were over 3 million Jews living in Poland – the largest Jewish community in the world at the time.

Before the rampant antisemitism and pogroms throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, Poland was one of the best places to live as a Jew due to its religious tolerance, which allowed Polish Jews to develop a close-knit community and practice Judaism freely.

This unique sense of closeness helped create some of the most iconic dishes in Jewish cuisine. It's what gives Polish Jewish food such a soul-food, homely quality that's hard to explain without biting into. So let's get right into the meat and potatoes (of which there are a lot in Polish Jewish cuisine).

These stews, pickled fish dishes, and soups were created to deal with the difficult political and environmental conditions in these areas. Jews who had been expelled from Germany, France, and Italy moved eastward to Poland and Russia, where Byzantine Jews had long since made their homes. They traveled throughout Eastern Europe and Russia, bringing with them a number of foods that originated in Germany, like challah bread and gefilte fish, and acquiring new tastes and customs.

### Iconic Dishes of Polish Jewish Cuisine

Many of the dishes that define this culinary tradition are hearty and comforting, perfect for the cold winters that are common in Poland. Take cholent for instance – a slow-cooked stew made with beef, potatoes, and beans. Cholent is typically cooked overnight, ensuring that it is ready for the Sabbath meal on Saturday afternoon. Often served with kishke, piping hot beef intestine stuffed with matzo meal, schmaltz, and spices.

Probably the most well known Jewish dish – gefilte fish, a sweet and savory fish dish that is usually served cold. Gefilte fish is made by grinding fish, mixing it with matzo meal and eggs, and then forming it into small patties that are poached in a flavorful broth. Some love it, some hate it, but its unique texture and flavor make it a dish you need to try (fresh and not out of a jar) at least once.

The first recipe for gefilte fish was written about 700 years ago in a non-Jewish German cookbook. The dish was titled "gefuelten hechden" (stuffed pike) and was ground, poached, then stuffed into the skin of the fish from whence it came and roasted.

It was originally served as a Catholic dish for Lent. At some point during the Middle Ages, the dish was adopted by German and Eastern European Jews under the name "gefilte." Each Jewish community developed its own version of the dish, with some parts of Poland making it sweet with beets, while in other areas, pepper was used for seasoning.

What makes Jewish Polish cuisine different from most of the other food enjoyed in Poland is the Jews' brilliant use of spices such as nutmeg, vanilla, and orange rind to create unique flavors in their dishes.

This blend of spices can be seen in the little-known Jewish staple *gęsi pipek* (use google translate), a dish of baked goose neck stuffed with meat and potatoes, and onions and served with apples and sauerkraut. *Gęsi Pipek* is still often served in Poland by restaurants that specialize in Jewish cuisine.

While the Jewish people in Poland experienced times of prosperity, for the most part, they kept to small villages with modest jobs. They had to be frugal and resourceful to survive, so they made sure every part of the animal and every inch of the vegetable was used in dishes.

When making *Gęsi Pipek*, for instance, the leftover goose fat would go a long way in the Jewish kitchen. With the leftover goose carcass used to make a flavorful broth or gravy.

### Polish Jewish Treats

One of the great Polish delicacies that we still enjoy today is the famous bagel. The circular treat traditionally

smear with cream cheese and covered in lox is one of those pairings that make your mouth water just imagining. Originally titled *Obwarzaneks*, the round doughy baked goods became popular amongst Jews.

The bagel was usually given to women during childbirth due to its ring shape. The unique shape of the bagel – with no beginning and no end – symbolizes the eternal circle of life and makes it possible to be held up on large poles and sold by the dozen.

The bagel's cousin, the *Bialy* (my personal favorite Polish dish), can also trace its origins to Poland. Born in the city of Lublin, the region of Bialystock, *Cebularz* ('cebula' means onion in Polish) is a wheat bun covered in caramelized onions and poppy seeds and has become a favorite for Jews around the world.

Polish Jews were also big snackers, and one of their favorite small bites was tiny pickled fish such as Herring and Smelt. Smelt were cooked in beer and vinegar, with the addition of butter, salt, sugar, and spices.

### Poland 2023

I could go on and on about the delicacies Polish Jews prepared, with classic dishes like Matzo Ball Soup, kugel, or tzimmes. It goes to show how rich and full the lives Jews created for themselves were in Poland, and makes the Holocaust even more tragic in hindsight.

But even in a Poland bereft of Jews, the lasting influence of Jewish Polish cuisine is impossible to ignore. You can't walk past a street in Poland without seeing bagels on a stick or pickled herrings sold from a stand. The Jewish legacy in Poland is one we should remember and recognize for its impact on Jewish life all around the world. So try out a dish or two and take a trip to the past to feel what it was like to be a Jew in Poland.

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# Between Worlds: Performing Polish-Jewish Continuities and Encounters.

The workshop at the Polin Museum, 5-7 December 2022



On 5–7 December 2022, a 3-day international academic workshop, “Between Worlds: Performing Polish-Jewish Continuities and Encounters” was held in the Polin Museum Warsaw. It was supported by an interdisciplinary research grant of the Global Education Outreach Program awarded by the POLIN Museum to Dr Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams (The Australian National University), Dr Agata Dąbrowska (University of Lodz) and Dr Rachel Merrill Moss (Boston University) for innovative and interdisciplinary research in Jewish studies.

The project examines the characteristics, functions and significance of Yiddish theatre in transnational, international and intergenerational contexts. It explores contact and conflict zones Yiddish theatre enforces and renegotiates in Poland – one of the most important centres of its development – and in a broader context of Jewish global diasporas. It examines theatre’s role in stimulating intercultural dialogue, and its impact on the identity of the Jewish communities with Polish roots living in Australia and the Americas.

The project engages artists and researchers of Jewish studies, diaspora and migrant cultures from Poland, the US, Australia, and other parts of the world.

The intensive program of the workshop included academic presentations and roundtables, a guided tour of the POLIN Museum, visits to The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, the Center for Yiddish Culture and the Jewish Theatre in Warsaw.

The workshop participants came from, among others, the University of Haifa, University of Lodz, The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute Warsaw, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, The Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica at Harvard University, Boston University, The Australian National University, University of Sydney, University of New South Wales and the Kadimah Yiddish Theatre in Melbourne. The final panel discussion featured Prof Anna Kuligowska-Korzeniewska (The Aleksander Zelwerowicz National Academy of Dramatic Art in Warsaw), Remigiusz Grzela (Literary director, the





Jewish Theatre in Warsaw) and Hanna Pałuba (Vice-director, the Center for Yiddish Culture)

Workshop participants:

- A/Prof Ruthie Abeliovich (University of Haifa/ Tel Aviv University)
- Prof Daniel Kalinowski (Pomeranian University)
- Dr Agata Dąbrowska (University of Lodz)
- Anna Nienartowicz (University of Wrocław)
- Prof Małgorzata Leyko (University of Lodz)
- Dr Agnieszka Żótkiewska (The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute Warsaw)
- Dr Jakub Parnes (University of Economics in Katowice)
- Prof Joel Berkowitz (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
- Dr Paula Ansaldo (The Harry Starr Fellow in Judaica at Harvard University)
- Amanda (Miryem-Khaye) Seigel (The Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library)
- Dr Rachel Merrill Moss (Boston University)
- Dr Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams (The Australian National University)
- Monika Krawczyk (The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute Warsaw)
- Prof Ian Maxwell (University of Sydney)
- Estelle Rozinski (University of New South Wales)
- Galit Klas (Kadimah Yiddish Theatre in Melbourne)

## ...and he taught the canaries to sing. Perspective on pre-war Jewish life in Poland

On Thursday, 3 August, the Australian Society of Polish Jews (ASPJ), and Waverley Library, co-presented the Australian made series of animations by artists Anita Lester, David Asher Brook and Steven Durbach. The project entitled '...and he taught the canaries to sing' pays tribute to the vast and complex world of pre-war Polish Jewry.

Emeritus Professor Dr Konrad Kwiet, resident historian of the Sydney Jewish Museum, contributed a compelling historical perspective to the project, interweaving concepts of memory and loss.

Estelle Rozinski, the project's curator and producer, presented the project's conception, evolution and development interspersed with the intimate, animated vignettes of family stories which celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of pre-war



Emeritus Professor  
Dr Konrad Kwiet



Curator and producer Estelle  
Rozinski

Jewish life.

Together they brought new perspectives to a fractured history, underscoring the project's enduring contemporary relevance.

# Yabilinya Education Project



L-Right Will Choi, Jasmine Jahani, Trayden Mundine, Anastasia Uricher, Ben Kaufman.

By Anastasia Uricher  
August 2023

Yabilinya Education Project (YEP) is a reciprocal learning platform dedicated to addressing educational disparities among young Australians. With an unwavering commitment to addressing reconciliation in this way, YEP was co-founded by six university students of diverse cultural backgrounds, including Trayden Mundine, Will Choy, Anastasia Uricher, Ben Kaufman, Jasmine Jahani and Noah Cass. YEP provides free academic support to First Nations high school students, as well as workshops facilitated by different First Nations community leaders to improve non-Indigenous Australians' understanding of and sensitivity towards First Nations cultures, histories and contemporary issues.

With the upcoming referendum, YEP recently hosted their first public event with the aim of ensuring more Australians make an informed vote. Given we're at the precipice of a landmark moment in our history and there has been such an abundance of misinformation in circulation about the imminent referendum, YEP felt an obligation to organise an event to provide the community, both First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians alike, with an opportunity to engage with the contents of the Voice and Uluru Statement more broadly.

The event, Voices Echo, commenced with a traditional

smoking ceremony by Uncle Dean Kelly, followed by a reading of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Uluru Youth Co-Chair, Bridget Cama, along with two constitutional lawyers, Dr Harry Hobbs and Dr Shireen Morris, were invited as speakers on the panel. They shared their expertise and valuable insights, as well as personal anecdotes shaped by their varied cultural backgrounds and upbringings.

The resounding message was that this referendum is significant for all Australians, as a generous gesture cultivated by First Nations peoples for First Nations peoples, in the interest of the whole country. The Voice – as the first step set out in

the Uluru Statement which calls for Voice, Treaty, Truth – is an incredibly important path forward to ensuring First Nations representatives can advise on policies relating to First Nations matters.

Facilitating an open and safe forum for dialogue encouraged audience members to continue these discussions informally after the panel. Attendees gathered on the terrace for live music by emerging First Nations artist, Blanche, and catering provided by Auntie Beryl and the team at Yaama Barrgay. Uluru Dialogue and Gleebooks both had stalls to provide further resources on the upcoming referendum.



Anastasia Uricher with Uluru Youth co chair Bridget Cama



The aim was for attendees to leave feeling empowered and equipped with the tools to engage in more informed conversations about the referendum. With the referendum fast approaching, there is great urgency to raise awareness and improve understandings of the issue, and we can all play a role in working towards this together. As Australians who have all benefited from residing here on unceded Country, it is incumbent on all of us to stand up in this unprecedented and deciding moment.

For more information: <https://www.yalbilinya.org>



Dr Harry Hobbs and Dr Shireen Morris

Talented filmmaker Esther Takac was approached by the State Library of Victoria and the Jewish Museum of Australia to create a suite of short films to compliment to their upcoming exhibition, "Luminous: a Thousand years of Hebrew Manuscripts"

Takac interviewed a total of seven men and women who each addressed an element of the Torah and how it guided/reflected in their personal lives and professional practice.

In partnership with the British Library, State Library Victoria invites you to the launch of

## **LUMINOUS: A THOUSAND YEARS OF HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS**

With rare manuscripts never before seen in public, Luminous celebrates the history and traditions of one of the world's oldest and most influential cultures, with exclusive loans from the British Library and special items from the State Library Victoria collection and the Jewish Museum of Australia.

**Thursday 12 October, 6.45–8.30pm**

Doors open 6.30pm

Hansen Hall, State Library Victoria

Entry 1, Swanston Street

Light refreshments will be served.

(Vegetarian catering)

**RSVP by Friday 6 October 2023**

**RSVP**

For enquiries, please email [rsvp@slv.vic.gov.au](mailto:rsvp@slv.vic.gov.au)



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**Australian Society  
of Polish Jews  
and Their Descendants**

# Forum for Dialogue Network

People committed to writing a new chapter  
in Polish/Jewish history



Andrzej Folwarczny  
President & CEO



Through our dedication to building genuine people-to-people connections across languages, geographies, and memories, we overcome decades of pain and miscommunication about the complexity of Jewish history in Poland, and foster relations resilient to the recurring domestic and international political turmoil.

We have built around us an extensive network of people who believe in honest and ethical research of Polish/Jewish history, understand the value of remembering and commemorating the past with empathy, and share a spirit of honesty and mutual respect.

The means of achieving those goals are multiple and thus our Network must be diverse. It includes Polish activists bringing back Jewish memory in small towns all over the country, as well as local and international benefactors whose contributions allow us to grow the Network and serve its needs.

Regardless of the type and degree of their involvement, the benefactors, activists, and other friends and allies, all identify with the mission of the Forum, and understand that only mutual reinforcement will bring on real change.

Our focus now is on growing that network in Poland and abroad. We envision the following strategic actions as the future for the Forum for Dialogue Network:

- Building an ever-growing, multidisciplinary, and robust community of people who care about Polish/Jewish relations, and fostering mutual trust and understanding between Network members of diverse cultural, educational, and national backgrounds and experiences.
- Establishing meaningful local and international connections between Jews from Poland and abroad with non-Jewish Poles, activists and benefactors, members of the Forum for Dialogue Network. We provide the space for them to meet, develop, and interact, but leave the decision on how and when to act to them.
- Creating and supporting life-long learning opportunities for all members of the Forum for Dialogue Network via study visits, educational trips, seminars, workshops, and conferences, as well as online sessions and educational materials. Our international and local partnerships with institutions ensure the quality and breadth of our educational offer.
- Increasing financial support for initiatives that align with Forum's mission and values. We believe that the activists in the Network understand the challenges they face in their communities and are best positioned to take effective action to bring lasting change on the local level.
- Expanding the Forum for Dialogue Network in Poland and abroad by identifying and admitting new people to join our endeavor. We want to ensure the sustainability, impact, and reach of our collective efforts. We welcome both new activists dedicated to Polish/Jewish history and heritage and benefactors who share our mission and choose to financially support our goals.



## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Given Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please tick the relevant box.

Full Membership

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Membership Fee: \$25 p.a.

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Taken by: \_\_\_\_\_

In making this application, I confirm that the above details are true and correct.

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