

# AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH STUDIES

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## Inside this issue:

- \*• Suzanne Rutland, OAM
- \*20<sup>th</sup> Annual AAJS Conference
- \*•Jewish Studies Conference, Auckland
- \* Research Grants
- \* Profile

## Suzanne D. Rutland, OAM

Congratulations to Suzanne on the distinction recently awarded to her! A great honour to an outstanding historian and educator, and a past newsletter editor, conference convenor and president of the Australian Association of Jewish Studies.

Having graduated from the University of Sydney in 1968 with a Bachelor of Arts, Associate Professor Suzanne D. Rutland is the Chair of the Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies Department at the University of Sydney, a position she has held since 1999.

Suzanne is a prolific writer who concentrates on Australian Jewish history. Hers was a pioneering work, tracing the course of Jewish settlement and its development, first in NSW and then Australia wide. Her most important book *The Edge of the Diaspora: Two Centuries of Jewish Settlement in Australia* has been published three times. Her work is also a reflection on her personal history in which many members of her family perished in the Holocaust.



The significance of Suzanne's work lies in the fact that it encompasses every aspect of Jewish life in this country: the history of Jewish settlement, the Australian government's responses to refugee migration before and after WWII, the impact of Jewish refugees, the changing Jewish community, the story of Jewish medical practitioners in Australia 1933-1956, the history of Jewish education, the history of the Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA), the history of the Jewish press, the history of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies which she co-authored with Sophie Caplan, as well as countless articles and studies published in journals.

Suzanne is not only a writer; she is also a highly skilled educator. She is responsible for raising the level of Jewish studies, Jewish history and Jewish education in Sydney over a long period of time. Along the way she has encouraged countless students, her fellow academics and the community. This is what she enjoys doing most. However, her profile would not be complete without mentioning her work as a member of the Joint Committee for Higher Jewish Education which funds Jewish and non-Jewish students in the pursuit of their studies at various universities in Sydney and the ACT and on overseas projects related to Jewish studies. She is also involved with the Jewish residential colleges: Mandelbaum House at the University of Sydney and Shalom College at the University of New South Wales and their adult education programs. Furthermore, Suzanne is also a member of consultative committees of the Sydney Jewish Museum and the education sub-committee of the Jewish Board of Deputies.

Another aspect of her activities is her contributions to interfaith dialogue, as a speaker to interfaith groups, both through the Council of Christians and Jews and Affinity. She has also been the academic coordinator for the Winter Institute at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem since 1998. This year 20, mainly non-Jewish educators, participated in the seminar – the biggest group ever.

Her prolific work is a significant contribution to the Jewish community of Australia, in particular to its history and the culture of Jewish learning. Her recognition with a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) on Australia Day 2008 is well deserved.

## **The Melbourne Conference of AAJS February 2008.**

The Australian Association of Jewish Studies held its conference in Melbourne on 17 and 18 February 2008 at Monash University. The theme of the conference: *Jews, A Nation Dwelling Apart?* This contentious issue has had many implications throughout Jewish history and remains confrontational to the present day.

During the course of the conference participants were privileged to hear some outstanding presentations from some outstanding scholars, including: Professor Yehuda Bauer, Associate Professor Yedidia Stern, Suzanne Rutland and Sol Encel, Fania Oz-Salzberger, Andrew Markus, Peta Jones Pellach, George Weisz, as well as students of Jewish Studies from the universities of Melbourne, Monash, Sydney and the University of New South Wales. The topics addressed by presenters related to interpretations of Jewish learning to the Holocaust experience, to historical, as well as contemporary issues concerning Jews in Australia, Zionism, issues affecting Israeli society, problems facing Jewish communities in the western sphere of influence, in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East, remembrance and revival of Jewish life in Germany, Jewish education, art and culture and the Jewish diaspora experience.



The analysis of these issues in studies presented by participants and the lively discussions that followed each presentation made this conference a successful and memorable one.

Looking forward to the next AAJS Conference in Sydney in 2009, which will take place at the Shalom Institute at the University of New South Wales.

**\* JEWISH STUDIES FORUM \***  
**13-14 July 2008, University of Auckland**

This Forum offers New Zealand and Australian scholars of Jewish Studies an opportunity to meet, discuss common issues and share their research. Papers may be on any aspect of Jewish Studies, including ancient and modern texts, history, language, theology, art, philosophy, etc. Participation with SBL meeting is in planning. In addition, we invite relevant SBL participants to advise us of their SBL topic. We expect the refereed proceedings to be published (see 'Anafim', Mandelbaum Publishing, University of Sydney, 2006). Please send abstracts of around 250 words and/or panel offers, as well as any enquiries, to [suzanne.faijan@anu.edu.au](mailto:suzanne.faijan@anu.edu.au) and [h.brodsky@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:h.brodsky@auckland.ac.nz) by 1 May 2008.



**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH GENEALOGY  
AND PAUL JACOBI CENTER**

AT THE JEWISH NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, JERUSALEM

**RESEARCH GRANTS**

The International Institute for Jewish Genealogy is pleased to invite proposals for ground-breaking research in six preferred areas of Jewish Genealogy, to be carried out in the academic year 2008- 09.

**Successful applicants will be awarded grants of up to \$10,000**

The deadline for the submission of proposals is 31 May, 2008, for adjudication by the highest standards of academic excellence, by 31 July, 2008.

The six research areas are: Jewish history from a genealogical perspective; rabbinical genealogy; onomastics; inter-disciplinary aspects of Jewish Genealogy; Jewish Genealogy and computer sciences; sources and resources for Jewish Genealogy.

(Proposals outside these areas are not altogether excluded)

**“Instructions to Applicants”**

(to be followed carefully)

and

Illustrations of topics within the preferred research areas are to be found on the Institute’s website

[www.ijg.org](http://www.ijg.org)

(under “Projects”, then “Upcoming Projects”, then “Call for Projects”)

## **PROFILE** **From the Editor**

### **KAREL ANČERL 11 April 1908 – 3 July 1973**

**Anna Rosenbaum**

Not many in Australia would have heard of Karel Ančerl. Music connoisseurs perhaps but I doubt that his visit to Australia in 1959 would still be recalled. Anyway, for those who want to know more, here is his story.

Ančerl was one of the great conductors of the twentieth century. Born in 1908 in the small Czech town of Tupčany, he was the son of a prosperous Jewish manufacturer of fine liqueurs. After leaving high school in 1924 he gained admission to the prestigious Prague Conservatorium of Music where he studied the violin, percussion, composition and conducting. His talent as a conductor was soon recognised after he took charge of orchestral performances in his homeland and on the international musical scene in the 1930s. He conducted famous orchestras on numerous concert tours throughout Europe. Apart from being a conductor, he was also the musical director of the Czechoslovak state radio.

The German invasion of March 1939 and the occupation of the country brought an end to his career and he was for some time forced to work as labourer. However, worse was to come. In 1942 he was deported together with his young wife to Terezín (Theresienstadt). There he conducted the Terezín string orchestra. His son was born in the camp in October 1943. In 1944 Ančerl, his wife and their baby were deported to Auschwitz, where his wife and child were gassed. Ančerl himself was transferred to the forced labour camp of Friedland where he survived.

After liberation Ančerl returned to Prague, occasionally conducting the Radio Symphony Orchestra. He also remarried. From 1946 onwards his career blossomed again. In 1950 he became artistic director of the famous Czech Philharmonic. He toured in many countries, including Australia. In 1968, following the invasion of the Soviet army which crushed the short lived Prague Spring, Ančerl decided to leave Czechoslovakia permanently and make his home in Canada. He became the chief conductor of the Toronto Symphony orchestra, conducting also the New York Philharmonic, as well as the Boston and Cleveland symphony orchestras.

He passed away in Toronto in July 1973. On 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2008 we should remember the centenary of a great artist and a remarkable Holocaust survivor.

The story of Karel Ančerl's life was based on information published by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's 2008 calendar.

## CONFERENCE ON MODERN JEWISH CULTURE (Wroclaw, Poland) and Student Bursaries

Attendees are invited to a special 3-day international conference June 24-26, 2008, on “Modern Jewish Culture: Diversities and Unities” at the University of Wroclaw, Poland. A modest registration fee covering cost of meals and materials. The conference title uses the keywords of modern and culture as a basis of focusing scholarly thinking about Jewishness as a subject and Jewish cultural studies as a field that addresses it. Much of the discussion about the modern is not just in the sense of describing contemporary conditions; it is the way that trends associated with modernization—individualism, progressivism, rationalism, cosmopolitanism—affect and are historically and sociologically affected by Jewish movements and experiences. A theme for exploration is that modernism, and now post or late modernism, is a relative term that works differently for various societies. Hence, we are looking as a subtitle for the conference the uniformities of being Jewish and the diversities across cultures. The cultural concern in the conference is in expressive evidence of, and about, Jews. Speakers will present new research on various forms of expressing identities and traditions, including language, folklore, literature, film, art, and music. Questions of authenticity, representation, and construction—especially for locations boosting their Jewish heritage but devoid of Jews as well as in new “modern” states such as Israel, United States, and Australia—will be examined in political as well as sociohistorical context. The conference is being held to mark the publication of *Jewish Cultural Studies: Expression, Representation, and Identity*, the first volume of a new Jewish Cultural Studies series being published by the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization (<http://www.littman.co.uk/jcs>) on behalf of the Jewish Folklore and Ethnology section of the American Folklore Society and the Council on the Anthropology of Jews and Judaism of the American Anthropological Association (<http://www.afsnet.org/sections/jewish>), and is being organized in conjunction with the Research Centre for the Culture and Languages of Polish Jews, University of Wroclaw, and the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization. The language of communication for presentations will be English. The conference will include cultural events and tours in addition to sessions featuring presentations and discussion.

For information on the conference site, see <http://www.judaistyka.uni.wroc.pl/>. For information on hotel accommodations and local information, contact Agnieszka Jagodzinska at [jagodzinska@yahoo.com](mailto:jagodzinska@yahoo.com).

The conference program includes sessions with the following speakers:

Why (and What) Culture? -- Moshe Rosman (Israel), Mikhail Chlenov (Russia), Harvey E. Goldberg (Israel), Jonathan Webber (UK)

Virtual and Authentic Jewish Culture -- Dan and Batsheva Ben-Amos (USA), Steve Siporin (USA), Ruth Ellen Gruber (Italy)

Creating, Displaying, and Depicting Jewish Memory and Culture-- Suzanne Rutland (Australia), Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (USA), Cilly Kugelmann (Germany)

Representing and Performing Jewish Culture--Mikel Koven (UK), Richard I. Cohen (Israel), Shalom Sabar (Israel)

Jewish Cultural Landscapes, Past and Present--Agnieszka Jagodzinska (Poland), Haya Bar-Itzhak (Israel), Karen Sarhon (Turkey)

Jewish Culture in Post-Communist Europe: A Roundtable--Andras Kovacs (Hungary), Kostanty Gebert (Poland)

Jewish and Non-Jewish Identities in Context—Joachim Schloer (UK), Michael Schudrich (Poland)

On the Past and Future of Jewish Culture and Jewish Cultural Studies--Marcin Wodzinski (Poland), Simon J. Bronner (USA)

**A limited number of bursaries will be available to individuals completing or having recently completed doctoral studies related to Jewish cultural studies.**

Preference is for scholars located in Europe. Bursaries will subsidize an amount toward travel costs, lodging, expenses, and registration fees. The number of awards offered will depend upon the number of meritorious applications in relation to the available budget, and preference will be given to applications with minimal travel costs. To apply, send the following: (1) cover letter with contact information indicating reasons for attending conference and current research interests, statement of expected travel costs and any other sources of funding, (2) a current CV of no more than 5 pages. Application materials should be sent electronically in Word BEFORE April 18, 2008, to Simon J. Bronner at [sbronner@psu.edu](mailto:sbronner@psu.edu). Notifications will be sent by May 5, 2008.

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**REMINDER**

Have you paid your membership subscription for 2007 or even 2006? Now it is time to pay for 2008. Our Association depends on members' support, and some have not paid for a very long time!

- \$50 AU regular membership
- \$60 AU institutional and overseas
- \$15 AU full-time student/pensioner

Send fees to: Dr Marianne Dacy:  
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*See us at:*

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*Newsletter edited by Anna Rosenbaum and Marianne Dacy*