

אוסטרליה
AUSTRALIA



Australia and Israel

A Pictorial History



Acknowledgements

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Foreword by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Stephen Smith MP

Israel's celebration of six decades of statehood offers an opportune moment to reflect on and celebrate the vitality of the Australia-Israel relationship – a relationship underpinned by strong community links, long-standing political friendship and increasingly robust economic and commercial ties. The Australian Parliament welcomed the 60th anniversary with a bi-partisan Parliamentary motion on 12 March 2008.

This publication presents a vivid and moving pictorial record of the strong and enduring relations between our two countries. Surveyed through four themes – shared history; a political commitment; people-to-people connections; and science, technology and trade – it details the national and individual contributions that have delivered a robust and positive bilateral exchange despite the geographic distance between our two countries.

The achievements celebrated in this book reflect Australia's long-standing support for Israel in seeking peace in its region. The book reflects Australia's historical and contemporary commitment to that objective.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Smith', with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

Celebrating 60 Years of the Australia-Israel Bilateral Relationship

Situated on opposite sides of the world, Australia and Israel have nonetheless developed a unique bond that pre-dates the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948. Indeed, Australia's military exploits in both world wars and energetic diplomacy in the late 1940's played no small part in assisting the establishment of the modern state of Israel. The close ties that were formed between the two peoples in those early years have matured and developed over the decades. Israel and Australia currently enjoy excellent bilateral relations: our trade is flourishing, our political dialogue is deepening, and the bonds of friendship between our two peoples are as strong as ever.

The photographs and accompanying narrative in this book celebrate both the historical and contemporary facets of the bilateral relationship between Australia and Israel. The story of Australia's extraordinary military contribution to the ending of Ottoman rule in Palestine in World War I is an epic rivalling Gallipoli in feats of courage and endurance, but is far less well-known. The military story is intimately connected to the publication by Britain of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 supporting the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. This was the first official step on the long road to the attainment of Jewish statehood in May 1948.

Australia's diplomatic support in 1947 for the UN plan to partition Palestine into Arab and Jewish states initiated strong political relations between the two countries which were formalised when Australia extended official recognition to the State of Israel in January 1949. Further, Australia's active Jewish community has been the bridge for maintaining a wide range of people-to-people contacts between Australians and Israelis. Trade relations between the two states continue to grow steadily together with the sharing of the fruits of scientific and medical research and technological innovations.

Reflecting on these themes in the history of the relationship between Australia and Israel, the photographic collection in this book also provides a fascinating insight into some little-known aspects of the building of both nations. In the early years of

the twentieth century, Australia was a young nation that had achieved sovereignty and political independence, but whose people's collective character and sense of identity had only begun to be defined. In contrast, the Jewish people had a strong and deep sense of their historic identity but had not as yet regained their sovereignty and political independence as a nation.

The respective national struggles of both peoples, one to establish a distinctive identity and the other to attain sovereignty, were played out in the cauldron of war. Both peoples pursued their national goals with an irrepressible confidence, resourcefulness and optimism, and a knack for improvisation. The immigrant experience, the development of land in a harsh environment, and a pioneering spirit of adventure have continued to feature prominently in the history of both nations. More profoundly, the early Zionist pioneers and the Australian diggers of both world wars shared an ethos of social egalitarianism, and a healthy irreverence for authority.

At their simplest and most human, the photographs in the following pages are evidence of a shared celebration of life, highlighting points of commonality between the two peoples as they engaged one another through the vicissitudes of history. They explain, far better than words, how and why enduring bonds of friendship between the two peoples were forged during the first half of the 20th century and have continued to flourish ever since.

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Military Engagement: World War One

The capture of Beersheba (modern day Be'er-Sheva) on 31 October 1917 and subsequent battles in which Ottoman rule in Palestine was brought to an end during World War I (WWI) are widely recognised as critical in paving the way toward the establishment of the State of Israel in May 1948. Included in the following collection of photographs of Australia's role in the Palestine campaign are rare colour images taken by the official photographer to the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), James Francis 'Frank' Hurley.

Chauvel's Desert Mounted Corps

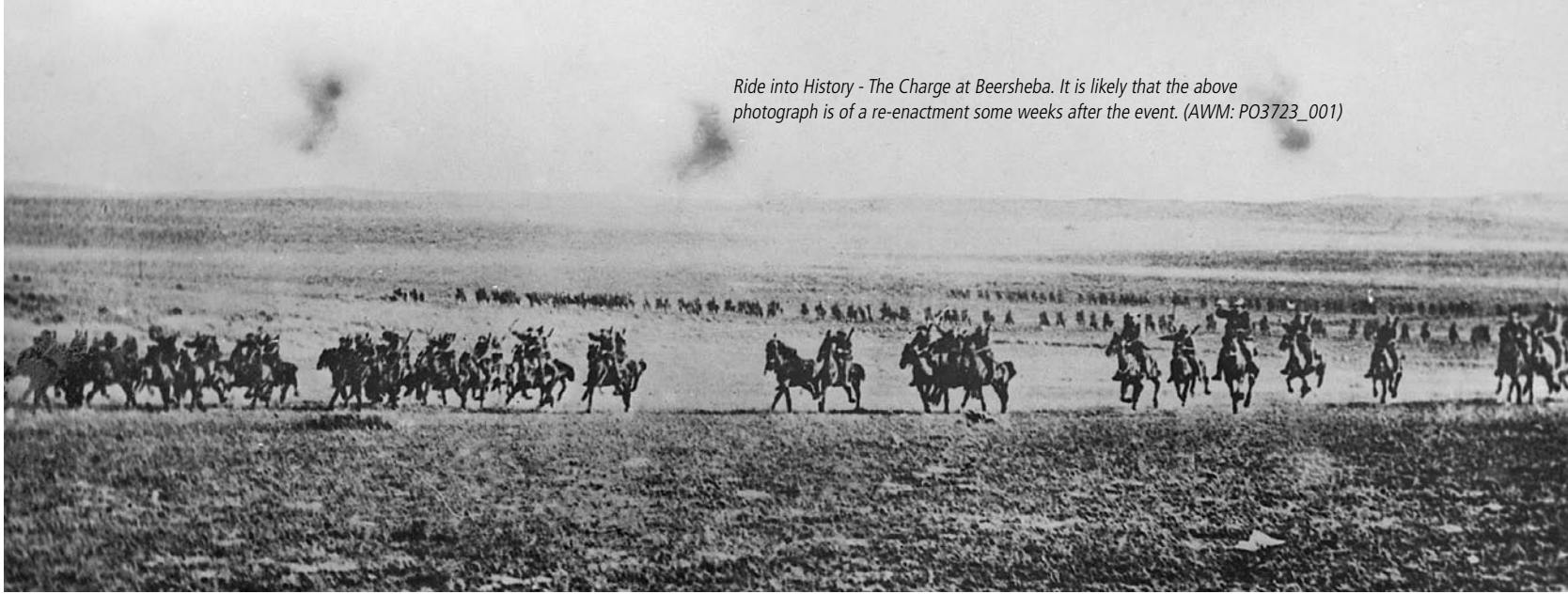
After the failure of the assault on the Dardanelles in 1915, Australian forces were evacuated from Gallipoli to Egypt. Here British and Dominion forces, including Australia's mounted infantry units, known as the Light Horse, were combined together to form the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF). In June 1917, Australian General Henry ('Harry') Chauvel was given command of all British and Dominion mounted infantry forces in the EEF, which were named 'the Desert Mounted Corps'. Consisting of the Anzac Mounted Division, the Australian Mounted Division (formerly the Imperial Mounted Division) and the British Yeomanry Division, they were the EEF vanguard that drove the Turks out of the Sinai Peninsula and eventually forced them back to a line of defence between Gaza and Beersheba in Palestine.

On the morning of 31 October 1917, the Australian Mounted Division captured Tel el Sakaty about 10km north of Beersheba. The 1st Australian Light Horse Brigade and New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade then stormed and took the strategically located and heavily fortified position at Tel el Saba (site of ancient Beersheba) in a fierce battle lasting several hours. This cleared the way for an assault on the town of Beersheba from the east later that same day.



Aussie Patriot, Proud Zionist: Saddler Sergeant Sylvester Henry Browne of the First Australian Light Horse Regiment (far left above) participated in the capture of Tel el Saba. He proudly claimed to have been the first Jewish soldier of the British and Imperial forces to enter the ancient Land of Israel. Sylvester and his three brothers (above) were among 2,304 Jewish Australians who enlisted in the first AIF, more than 10% of the total Jewish population, and among 1,214 Jewish Anzacs who saw active service abroad.

Ride into History - The Charge at Beersheba. It is likely that the above photograph is of a re-enactment some weeks after the event. (AWM: PO3723_001)



The Capture of Beersheba

The final phase of the taking of Beersheba featured an epic charge by the fast-moving Australian Light Horse, which delivered the knockout blow to the Turkish defenders. In fading light just after 4:30pm, while units of the 20th British Infantry Corps and Yeomanry Division attacked Beersheba from the south and west, 800 bayonet-wielding horsemen of the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade (made up of the 4th and 12th Light Horse Regiments) won immortal fame by charging from the east across a 5 kilometre plain over bare ground on a slight downwards slope and over-running Turkish defences before entering the town.

Speed and time were of the essence. The Australians' horses had marched through the Negev Desert for three days and had not been watered. Both riders and horses were carrying all their kit and equipment. If the wells in Beersheba had not been captured, the horses would have perished soon afterwards and any follow-up movement of EEF forces northwards to Jaffa and Jerusalem would have been severely delayed. Due to the capture of Beersheba, Gaza was taken a week later, following which the entire coastal plain up to Jaffa rapidly fell to the EEF.

The taking of Beersheba was the first crucial step in bringing an end to Ottoman rule in Palestine and began a chain of events that culminated in the establishment of Israel in 1948. On the day Beersheba was captured, the British War Cabinet approved the text of a declaration of sympathy for Zionist aspirations to be made by Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour, which was published two days later. Its terms were subsequently incorporated into the League of Nations Mandate authorising British rule in Palestine.



Head stone of Corporal J. Fielding, Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Be'er-Sheva. A total of 31 Australians were killed and 36 wounded in the capture of Beersheba. (Photo courtesy of Phil Box)

Avram Sternblitz (circa 1916)

Photo courtesy of Jack, David & Norman Stern, sons of Abe Stern.



Anzac-Jewish connections

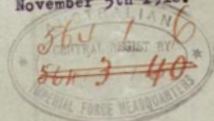
A Tale of Two Cousins: Avram Sternblitz was a member of the Jewish self-defence organisation *Ha Magen* (the Shield), an off-shoot of *Ha Shomer* (the Watchman), and lived in Kibbutz Ruhama in the Negev about 50km north of Beersheba. Ruhama's Jewish inhabitants were expelled to Egypt by the Ottomans in 1917 but Avram remained in Palestine. An expert horseman, he spoke fluent Hebrew and Arabic and had an intimate knowledge of the terrain, the customs of the local Arabs and the disposition of Turkish forces. Upon the entry of the EEF into Palestine, Avram made contact with his Australian first cousin, Max Steigrad, who was serving in the Imperial Camel Corps, and passed on intelligence to the British. The Turks put a price on Avram's head and came close to killing him twice. They got as far as putting a noose around his neck and the burn marks from the rope were visible for the rest of his life. Avram was rescued by his father, Hirsch, and other members of *Ha Magen* in a shoot out with his Turkish captors in which Hirsch was severely wounded in

the leg. On another occasion Avram escaped his Turkish pursuers by riding into the desert. He survived by drinking his horse's urine.

Avram Sternblitz and Max Steigrad were both born in Palestine in the 1890's. Their mothers were sisters, Genende and Pearl Grunstein. Max and his parents and brothers (including Max's younger brother, Joseph ('Jaffa Joe') Steigrad, who later achieved distinction as a surgeon in the Australian army in World War II and attained the rank of honorary Brigadier) migrated to Sydney in 1905. Max was mentioned in despatches in 1917 and was promoted from private to acting company sergeant major. After the war Max continued to serve in the army for another year and attained the rank of 2nd lieutenant. Avram Sternblitz and his family migrated to Sydney in 1927. He changed his name to Abe Stern and became a naturalised Australian citizen. His descendants, now into their fourth generation, live throughout Australia.

The Officer Commanding
Australian Base Head Quarters,
Sherie Shawarbi Pasha.
Cairo.

November 5th 1918.



Sir,

I herewith beg to apply that, when the time arrives for Australian Troops in Egypt to return to Australia, I may be discharged here as I now desire to resettle in Palestine.

I am a Hebrew and I was born at Odessa, Russia on July 21st 1893 and at the age of 18 months I arrived at Palestine where I resided until the year 1909 when I left for Australia. On March 8th 1915 I enlisted in Perth, Western Australia in the Australian Imperial Force of which I am still a member.

My family is still in Palestine and reside at Rehoboth (Deiran) where we have property. Whilst there with the Force I was gratified to find my Parents and sisters still alive though my Father, who has suffered so much at the hands of our enemies has aged considerably, is suffering from weak heart and is now unable to continue to work our land.

At the joyful meeting with my family we have decided that it is absolutely necessary for me to live in Palestine and it would be a great saving of time and money to us if my request be granted.

I am at present on fourteen days leave and for the period of this leave will reside at 47 Sherie Ksar el Nil, Cairo.



1048. Lt. Lion Harlap.
10th A.L.H. Regiment.
A. Details. Maascar.

| |
|---------------|
| SEEN |
| COMMANDANT: H |
| DATE: 9/8 |
| 2a |

P.A. I think you might start a file for these then will be wanted when we batant legs home

KR
2A

Letter from Lion Harlap: In early 1918, Trooper Lion (Aryeh)

Harlap (10th Australian Light Horse Regiment) was reunited with his parents and sisters who had remained in Rehovot when he migrated to Australia from Palestine in 1909. The letter shown here, written six days before the general armistice, is a heart-felt request by Lion to his commanding officer for permission to remain with his family in Palestine after the war. His request was granted. (NAA: B2455)

Friendships are born

As the EEF made its way north from Gaza, Anzacs were the first to enter Jewish towns like Rehovot (Deiran) and Rishon Le Zion. They were feted as liberators by Jews throughout the country. One Australian soldier, Ion Idriess, recorded:

'We must have seemed queer fighting men to them, for they stared as if they had expected to see supermen, not rough-clad Australians. I don't think they could realize that we actually were the men who had driven back their taskmaster of

centuries. They seem also to be on the verge of something they cannot believe, cannot understand: they tremble when they whisper Jerusalem. It appears there is some prophecy, centuries old, that one day Jerusalem will fall and will be taken from the Turk or whatever infidel holds it.'

Immediately after the entry of the Light Horse into Rehovot on 16 November 1917, Australia's Lieutenant-General Harry Chauvel set up his headquarters in the home of Lazar Slutzkin, formerly of Melbourne. Slutzkin had been among the 12,000 Palestinian Jews (out of a total of 85,000) whom the Ottomans had rounded up, robbed and banished to Alexandria in Egypt between December 1914 and March 1915. Here they had first met and established friendly ties with the Anzacs who were about to embark for Gallipoli.

Shmuel Ben Ze'ev, the son of Shimon Abramovich (Ben Ze'ev) and Beile Hirshfeld, both descendants of families who founded Rishon Le Zion in 1881-2, was born there in 1900, the third of seven children. The family remained in Rishon Le Zion during

the First World War. At the time British and Australian forces entered the country, Shmuel joined the Infantry and became a corporal. Later he was attached to the 6th Light Horse Regiment serving successfully as a translator and scout on the Transjordanian front and during the battles in and around Amman.

(Text provided by Lavi Shay and Tina Yankeloviz from the Ben Zvi Institute, Jerusalem)



Shmuel Ben-Ze'ev of Rishon Le Zion (sitting) and his friend and signaller, Roy Mannix, of the 6th Light Horse Regiment, an example of the personal friendships between Australian soldiers and the Jewish volunteers of Palestine. (Ben Zvi Institute, Jerusalem)

The Capture of Jerusalem



A regiment of the Australian Light Horse on the march in Jerusalem following the capture of the city on 9 December 1917. (AWM: B01619)

After three weeks of intense fighting, the final EEF offensive to capture Jerusalem commenced on 8 December 1917. The British 60th and 74th Divisions attacked the city from the west, the 53rd Division from the south, and the 10th Australian Light Horse Regiment from the south-west. The latter two units captured Bethlehem that same day.

On 9 December 1917 Jerusalem officially surrendered to Brig-General Shea, commander of the 180th Brigade of the British 60th Division. The 10th Light Horse Regiment was one of the first EEF units to enter Jerusalem. The Jews of Jerusalem joined Christians in giving the EEF a rapturous welcome.



Local Arabs attached to the Australian Light Horse chatting while mixing stock feed. (AWM: P03631_067)



*Australians of the Anzac Mounted Division watering their horses at the foot of Mount Zion.
(AWM: B01518)*



*Lieutenant-Colonel
Eliazar Margolin
(mounted, right) leading the
39th Royal Fusiliers through
Ben Shemen in Israel.
(Israel Military Archive)*

Lieutenant-Colonel Eliazar Margolin, was a Russian-born Jew who migrated to Palestine in 1892 and ten years later to Australia. At the outbreak of war in 1914 he enlisted in the AIF and, with the rank of captain, commanded the 16th Battalion at Gallipoli, where he served under John Monash and took part in the landing and ferocious battles like the one for Quinn's Post. One of the last to leave Gallipoli, he helped organise the evacuation. He was then sent to fight in France where he was severely wounded. He was awarded a Distinguished Service Order.

In August and September 1918, the Jewish Legion fought alongside Anzac troops in Samaria, the Jordan Valley and the Transjordanian Plateau. Margolin was appointed military governor of Es Salt following its capture by the Anzacs. One Jewish Fusilier

recorded: 'The best comrades we had among the non-Jewish troops were the Australians. They were not biased, and our boys were grateful to them for gifts of water and rations, plus the handshake and smile'.

A dashing figure who 'rides his horse like a Bedouin, and shoots like an Englishman', Colonel Margolin became a hero for his exploits in Palestine. Leading Zionist figures including David Ben Gurion, Yitzhak Ben Zvi and Ze'ev Jabotinsky served with him or under his command. After the war, Margolin became the leader of the so-called First Judeans, one element of which was planned to be an Arab/Jewish defence force in Palestine under the British, before returning to Australia.

The 'Great Ride': the Capture of Central and Northern Palestine

A feat rivalling the charge at Beersheba as a military exploit was the 'Great Ride' of 12,000 Australian Light Horsemen that began north of Jaffa on 19 September 1918. Having retrained as cavalry, the mounted Australians rode up to 100 kilometers in a single encircling movement together with the British-Indian 4th and 5th Cavalry Divisions. In the days following, the entire force wheeled eastwards, overcame Turkish resistance at Megiddo and encircled and captured thousands of astonished

enemy forces, before taking Nazareth and Tiberias and moving into Syria. Over 12 days Australian and other EEF forces managed to cover approximately 400 kilometres culminating, on 1 October 1918, in the 3rd Light Horse Brigade marching through the centre of Damascus and accepting the formal surrender of the city by Governor Emir Said. The Great Ride was described by British Chief of Staff, General Wavell, as 'the greatest exploit in the history of horsed cavalry'.



AWM: B00256

Three members of the 8th Australian Light Horse Regimental Signal Station, sit with their heliograph set up on the pier at the Sea of Galilee. (AWM: B00277)



On 25 September 1918, the 4th Light Horse Brigade, Beersheba-style, charged Turkish trenches and German machine-gunners at Semakh at the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee near Tiberias. The Australians then dismounted and engaged the Turks in fierce hand-to-hand fighting. After taking Semakh, they advanced towards Tiberias from the north. The 3rd Light Horse moved against Tiberias from the south. The two brigades took Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee in the late afternoon. The townspeople gave them an ecstatic welcome.

The Australian Flying Corps

The Australian Flying Corps (AFC) had many pilots who had begun their service as members of the Light Horse and who went on, as members of the AFC, to provide intelligence reports about enemy troop movements and air support to the Light Horse and other units of the EEF in Palestine (and Syria). The AFC later became the Royal Australian Air Force.

A pilot (left) and observer (right), in front of a Bristol aircraft of No 1 Squadron Australian Flying Corps. The observer is Lieutenant James Hamilton Traill. The pilot is either Lieutenant Leonard Malcolm Sumner Potts or Lieutenant G. C. Peters, with whom Traill usually flew. (AWM: P03631.030)



Remembering the Role of the Anzacs in Palestine, 1917-1918

There are many Anzac war sites and memorials in Israel commemorating the contributions and sacrifices of Australian soldiers in Palestine during both world wars. Memorials to the heroism of the Light Horse and other Australian forces in the Holy Land are similarly located around Australia. In October 2007 Australia and Israel celebrated the 90th anniversary of the capture of Beersheba from the Ottoman Empire with a re-enactment of the charge. In April 2008, 'The Park of the Australian Soldier' was officially dedicated near the site of the famous charge.

At the 75th anniversary of the capture of Beersheba by ANZAC and Imperial forces on 31 October 1917, a representative of Kibbutz Be'eri paid tribute to the thousands of Australian, British, New Zealand and other Commonwealth soldiers who fought and died in the Middle East theatre in both World Wars, paving the way for the establishment of the State of Israel:

'We sense the importance of living so close to this historic site of battle that took place so long ago, and yet paved the way for our own kibbutz to grow and flourish here in the northwest Negev. We honour the memory of the men who gave their lives here. We salute those of you who, in your youth, took part in either WWI or WWII. Could you, while looking over the fields of destruction, have pictured fields of life built upon the havoc of war? Was it at all possible to envision the laughter of children, the roses in the gardens? We at Be'eri thank and honour you. As Israelis, we understand the sacrifice you made here. Your fight here helped change the destiny not only of this region, but of the world.'



(Top) One of a number of Anzac memorials in Israel can be found near Kibbutz Be'eri in the northwest Negev. It is set appropriately in a eucalyptus forest (the eucalyptus is Australia's most distinctive and widespread tree). (Bottom) Detail from the Memorial. (Photos courtesy of Phil Box and Rami Haruvi)



31 October 2007. The 90th anniversary re-enactment of the Charge of the 4th and 12th Australian Light Horse Regiments at Beersheba by members of the Australian Lighthorse Association. Those who rode ranged in age from 18 to 80, and included descendants of the original Australian Light Horsemen dressed in heavy woollen period uniforms, complete with slouch hats adorned with emu feathers, and carrying WWI issue rifles.

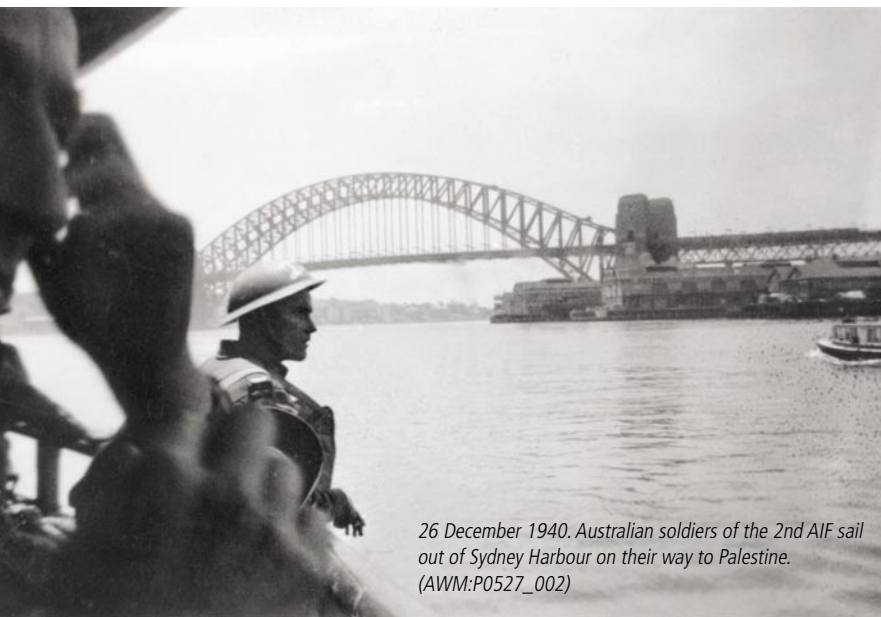
'The Park of the Australian Soldier' was an initiative of the Pratt Foundation, a Melbourne-based philanthropic trust. Sam Lipski and Major-General (Ret) W B Digger James AC MBE MC (Patron of the Australian Light Horse), together with the Pratt Foundation's Israel Director, Peter Adler, worked in partnership with the City of Be'er-Sheva and the Be'er-Sheva Foundation to build the Park in recognition of the momentous contribution of the Light Horsemen to Israel. In addition to the life-size bronze monument of horse and rider by the renowned Australian sculptor Peter Corlett, and landscape featuring Australian flora, the park contains a dual-purpose integrated playground providing specially constructed access and facilities for children with disabilities and a ceremonial amphitheatre with seating for 300 people.

20 May 2007. Sculptor Peter Corlett and Pratt Foundation's Chief Executive Officer Sam Lipski at 'Raheen', the Melbourne home of Richard and Jeanne Pratt, holding the model of the sculpture of the 'Australian Lighthorse'. The event marked the official launch of 'The Park of the Australian Soldier' project by the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Billson MP, on behalf of the Australian Government. A representative gathering of Australian Army serving and reserve forces were also present, as were Sir Zelman and Lady Cowen.



World War Two

Unlike WWI, there was no military campaign in Palestine during WWII. In the Middle East the great contest of arms between Germany and Italy and the Allies occurred in North Africa where the 6th, 7th and 9th Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) Divisions distinguished themselves. If Rommel and the advancing German army had broken through beyond Egypt, it would have almost certainly meant the end of the Jewish community in Palestine. Further, a subsidiary campaign was fought with local assistance against Vichy France in Syria.



26 December 1940. Australian soldiers of the 2nd AIF sail out of Sydney Harbour on their way to Palestine. (AWM:P0527_002)



August 1940. Portrait of Private J. C. Downes of Sydney, NSW, the youngest member of 2/4th Battalion. This photo was taken at Kilo 89 Camp in Palestine after he had returned from Haifa where he carried out anti aircraft work. (AWM:002946)



April 1941. Major Farley from NSW in charge of No. 3 Railroad Construction Company, Rafa Camp, with his two interpreters, Abbas Salahat Effandi and Kamil Hamdan Madi. (AWM:007020)

Throughout these campaigns, Palestine was both a training ground and a rest and recreation centre for Australian and other Allied forces and a centre for treating and rehabilitating the sick and wounded. Bonds of friendship that had developed between the Australian forces and the local population during WWI were renewed and deepened. The front page of *The Palestine Post* (forerunner of *The Jerusalem Post*) on 13 February 1940 summed up their return in a simple headline that read – ‘ANZACS BACK AGAIN.’ The smiles and good humour that emerge from the photographs of this time are a powerful testament to the warmth of the relationship, made especially poignant by the fact that this was a period of unparalleled tragedy for the Jewish people.

Recreation

During World War Two, the Jewish population of Palestine formed 'hospitality committees' in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa to provide recreational and sporting facilities, reading rooms, interpreter services, hot meals and accommodation to Australian service men and women. The hospitality committees also organised weekly dances, card games and sight-seeing tours. All of these facilities and activities proved highly popular with the Australians, who reciprocated by staging community sing-alongs, beach carnivals and other events.



6 June 1940. Australian soldiers on leave in Jerusalem meet a party of Australian women serving with the British army in Palestine. These women and the British forces with whom they were attached had seen active service in France a short while previously. (AWM:004038)



October 1941. Crowds gather at the beach in Tel Aviv to watch AIF troops participate in an Australian Surf Carnival. Both Australian and (what would become) Israeli flags are flying. (Central Zionist Archive, Jerusalem)

Bonds of Friendship



10 July 1940. The city of Tel Aviv celebrates 'Aussie Day'. Crowds line Ben Yehuda Street to watch the march past by Australian soldiers. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)



Australian soldier contributes to the Jewish National Fund in Tel Aviv. (Photo: Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem)

As recorded in the 21 June 1940 edition of the *Sydney Jewish News*: 'Australian soldiers on leave are welcome guests in Tel Aviv. The children in particular are delighted by the visit and patently enjoy the antics of their heroes. Many of the men have recently contributed freely to the Jewish National Fund campaign for the plantation of a memorial grove, and blue and white J.N.F. tags were seen on many uniforms. One group of men attracted a large crowd in Rehov Allenby, where they conducted community singing of wartime ditties, including "Washing on Siegfried Line", "Tipperary" and "Pack up your Troubles."'



Australian soldiers were the favourites of local residents, who remembered their part in the Palestine campaign during World War I. Here at the Jerusalem War Cemetery in April 1940, L/Corp. C. Banks shares a light moment with a young boy while recounting some of his experiences in the last war. (AWM: 001589)



2 November 1941. Australian soldiers with children from the convent attached to the Russian Church of St Mary Magdalene, Jerusalem. (AWM:010482)

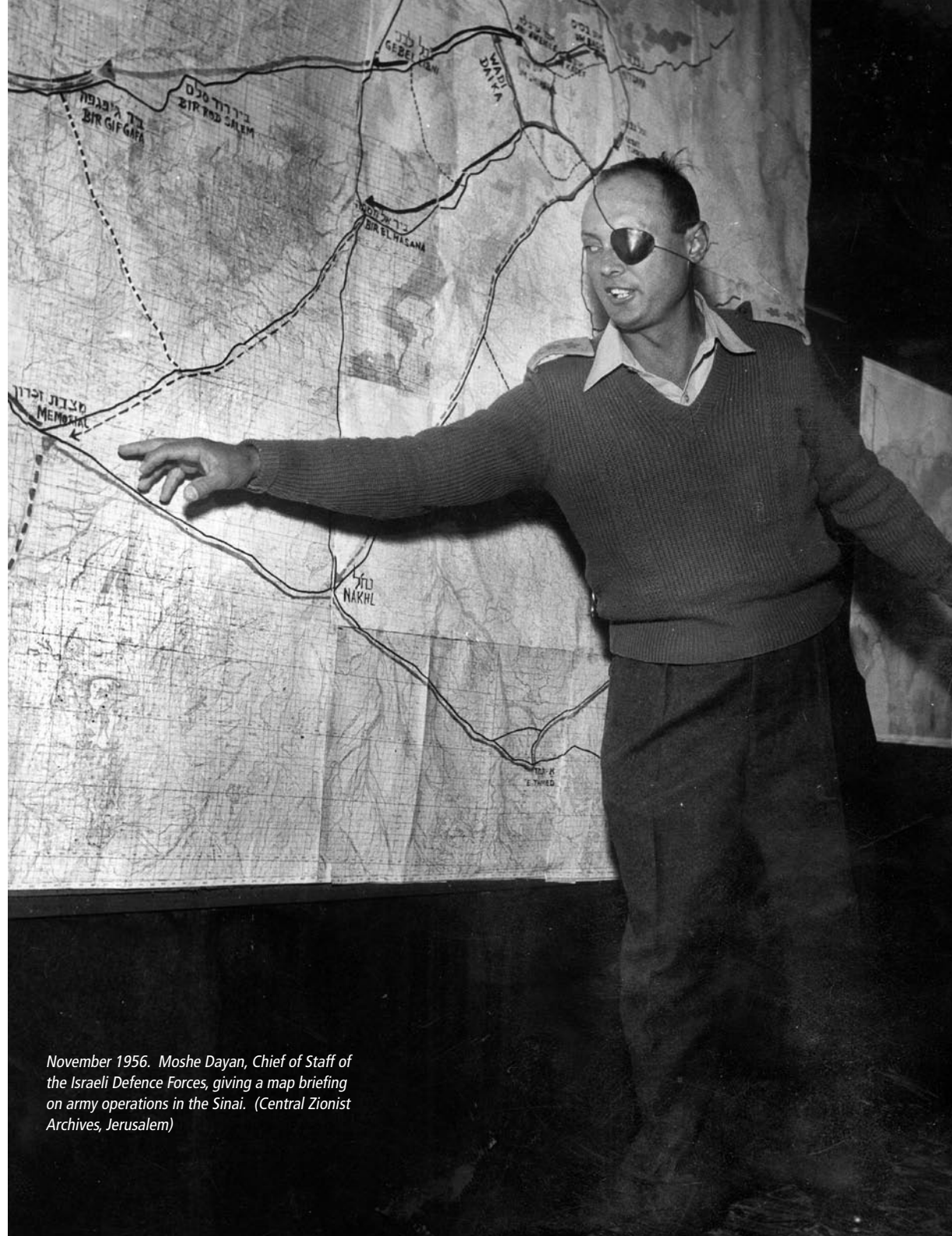


1940. Australian Soldier with young Jewish boy during Purim (Jewish festival) celebrations in Tel Aviv. (Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem)



Australian soldiers with children from Kibbutz Tel Josef. (Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem)

On 8 June 1941, British and Dominion forces invaded Vichy-controlled Syria and Lebanon. Jewish scouts recruited in Palestine led the vanguard units. As a part of the preceding preparations for the invasion, Moshe Dayan led a small group of Jewish 'guides and sappers' across the border into Lebanon from Kibbutz Hanita to provide maps of the terrain for the invading Allied forces. When recruiting for his company, a friend recalled, Dayan had offered: 'Do you want to see the Australians fight?' The day before the invasion, Dayan and his company joined a group of 10 Australians in an attempt to take two strategic bridges on the coastal road about 10 kilometres north of the Palestine-Lebanon border. In an effort to secure their location, the group attempted to seize a near-by police station which was a stronghold of the Vichy French forces. During the ensuing battle, a bullet hit a pair of binoculars which Dayan was looking through, splintering the lens and metal casing, which became embedded in the socket of his left eye, damaging it beyond repair. After the war, and on the recommendation of an Australian officer, Dayan was awarded the 'Distinguished Service Order', one of the British Commonwealth's highest military honours, awarded to junior officers only in exceptional circumstances.



November 1956. Moshe Dayan, Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defence Forces, giving a map briefing on army operations in the Sinai. (Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem)

Peace Keeping: 1948 to 2008

Australia has continued to make a valuable contribution to the quest for peace and security between Israel and its neighbours through the participation of Australian military personnel in the United Nations peace keeping and truce supervision forces that have been created at various critical points in Israel's history, beginning with the UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) established in June 1948.

Days of Uncertainty

UNTSO was established in 1948 after the United Nations Security Council passed a Resolution calling for a cessation of hostilities in Palestine and instructed a UN mediator to supervise the observance of the cease fire, with the assistance of a group of military observers. This unarmed military observer mission became known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) and was the first peace keeping operation established by the UN. Today UNTSO consists of approximately 150 military observers, supported by local and international civilian staff. UNTSO's Headquarters is located in Jerusalem, at the former Residence of the High Commissioner of the British Mandated Territory of Palestine, with observer outstations at Naquora in southern Lebanon, at Tiberias in northern Israel, at Damascus in Syria and at Ishmalia in Egypt. Australia's contribution to UNTSO, 'Operation Paladin', began in July 1956 when Australia committed four observers to the mission. Today Australia has twelve personnel employed as military observers or staff officers with UNTSO.



UNTSO Medal:
Image courtesy of Michael Wass,
Heritage Medals Group

*Opposite Page: Israeli children greet a newly landed Australian soldier of UNTSO in Tel Aviv
(Getty Images)*





The late Captain Peter McCarthy at a briefing for members of Observer Group Lebanon in 1986. (AWM:P03512_001)

Captain McCarthy was an Australian Army officer attached to Observer Group Lebanon (OGL) in Southern Lebanon. OGL provides military observers to the UN's Interim Force in Lebanon but the observers remain a part of UNTSO. On 12 January 1988 Capt McCarthy was on patrol with a Canadian observer, when their vehicle hit a landmine. Captain McCarthy was killed and the Canadian was severely injured. Captain McCarthy was posthumously awarded the RSL Anzac Peace Medal.



Australian Army officer Captain Peter Power on the deck at Observation Post 73 located near the village of Majdal Chams on the Golan. (AWM:P03530_005)

Observation Post 73 is located on the Golan towards the northern end of the Area of Separation between territory occupied by Israel and Syria. Captain Power was an Australian Army officer with UNTSO, stationed at Observer Group Golan (Tiberias). The Tiberias station provides military observers to the UN's Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan, but the observers remain a part of UNTSO. UNDOF was established in 1974 following the agreed disengagement of the Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Heights. UNDOF continues to supervise the implementation of the agreement and maintain the ceasefire.

Modern Day Cooperation

'Operation Mazurka' is Australia's contribution to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai, a non-UN organisation established in 1981 to monitor compliance by Egypt and Israel with the 1979 Peace Treaty. A founding contributor to the MFO, Australia's involvement in the force began in early 1982 with the formation of an Australia-New Zealand combined helicopter squadron. Today the MFO is maintained by 11 participating countries including Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, Fiji and France. The 25 personnel of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) assist in the peace process by monitoring the border, preparing daily operational briefings and supporting the MFO Headquarters.



The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Iroquois helicopter flies on reconnaissance in the Sinai as part of the work of the Australian Contingent to the Multinational Force and Observers - Sinai (MFO). (AWM:P01751_003)



11 November 2007. The Head of Mission UNTSO, Major General Ian Gordon AO from Australia (centre), with fellow Australians Major Carla Watts (left) and Major John Lavery (right), after the wreath laying ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem on Remembrance Day. During the ceremony Major General Gordon laid a wreath on behalf of the UN and UNTSO. Major General Gordon is the second Australian to have served as the Head of UNTSO. The first was Major General Tim Ford, from 1998 until 2000, after which he was appointed as the Military Adviser to the Secretary General of the UN.

The Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Mount Scopus is run by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The Cemetery contains the graves of 144 Australians, along with the graves of officers and soldiers from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and South Africa. The Cemetery is also the site of the Dawn Service on ANZAC Day each year.

1948 and Beyond

Since 1948, both people and technology have featured in the bilateral relationship between Australia and Israel in the area of defence. In earlier times, individual Jews, who previously had been or later became Australian citizens, played an important role in Israel's military forces and intelligence services. So, too, have the thousands of Australian Jews who have made their lives in Israel over the years, or served there as volunteer workers.



A unit of the Golani Brigade operating in the Lower Galilee in 1948. Australian business leader Frank Lowy, then aged 17, is sitting on the jeep, in the back row, third from right.

Frank Lowy AC arrived in Palestine from war ravaged Czechoslovakia in 1946. He was 15 years old. During Israel's 1948 War of Independence, he fought in an elite unit of the Golani Brigade. At 21 Frank left for Australia to be re-united with the surviving members of his family who had settled there after WWII. From humble beginnings he created and built Westfield, a publicly listed global shopping centre company, which is now one of the biggest in the world. Frank is recognised as a philanthropist and a leading Australian and international business figure.

As part of his ongoing commitment to public policy, in 2006 Frank helped to fund the establishment of the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University (incorporating the former Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies). He is Chair of the Institute's Board of Directors. The Institute's mission is to conduct independent research on all aspects of Israel's strategic issues and to contribute to the public debate on national security.



Perth-born Harry Krasenstein was a decorated RAAF fighter pilot from WWII. After the war he returned to Perth where he trained and worked as an accountant until he visited Israel in 1956. Once there, he enlisted in Israel's Air Force, becoming a squadron leader and fighting with distinction in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. After that war, Harry was recruited by the Mossad, Israel's chief intelligence agency, for whom he worked for many years. Harry died in 2007 at the age of 82. His funeral was marked by a large attendance from Israel's military and diplomatic communities. (Australian Jewish News)



Full Circle

January 2008. During WWII Australian soldiers on leave in Palestine enjoyed the beaches of Tel Aviv. These days Israelis completing their compulsory service in the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), such as Yaron (top) and Tomer (bottom) from Rishon Le Zion, enjoy the surf at Bondi Beach in Sydney.



1949. Israel's representative to the United Nations, Aubrey (Abba) S. Eban (left) and Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Dr Herbert Vere Evatt (right) at the United Nations.
(Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra)

Following the UN General Assembly's vote to admit Israel as a new member of the organisation in May 1949, Abba Eban acknowledged the contribution that Evatt and the Australian Government had made to the international recognition of the Jewish state:

'We are deeply indebted to the Australian Delegation for its consistent and effective support of our cause in the Assembly and its organs through all the stages of the consideration of our problem by the United Nations. It was under your competent and determined chairmanship that the Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, during the annual session of 1947, adopted the plan which embodied in the historic Resolution of November 29th... Finally, it was again under your chairmanship and thanks in so large a measure to your determined lead that Israel was admitted to the United Nations when barely a year old. The manner in which you steered to a vote this second historic Resolution, representing as it does the culmination of the process initiated by the first, the warmth and eloquence with which you welcomed Israel into the family of nations, have earned for you the undying gratitude of our people.'

A Political Commitment

The basic principles of Australia's political relations with Israel have remained remarkably consistent since Israel was established in 1948, regardless of changes of government that have occurred in both countries. These relations have built upon the warm friendships that were developed during both world wars between Australian men and women serving in what was then Palestine.

The Australian Government's Support for the Establishment of Israel

The Australian government played a significant role in the events leading to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Dr Herbert Vere Evatt, chaired the United Nations' Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine in 1947, which proposed the partition of Palestine into two separate Jewish and Arab states. When the proposal was brought to a vote in the UN General Assembly on 29 November 1947, partition was approved by the required two-thirds majority. Australia was the first country to vote 'Yes' to partition. The Australian Government under Prime Minister Ben Chifley extended both de facto and de jure recognition to the new State of Israel on 29 January 1949. Also, after being elected President of the General Assembly, Dr Evatt presided over the vote at which Israel was admitted as a member of the United Nations in May 1949.

Evatt recalled: 'When I was chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee at Lake Success in 1947 I was asked why Australia had a specific interest in Palestine. Well, I told them that if it had not been for British and Australian armies, Palestine might still be part of the Turkish Empire.' He firmly believed that the fundamental right of self-determination of the Jewish people and of Arab Palestinians required each of them to have their own state. In the wake of the devastation of the Holocaust, he recognised the particular urgency of fulfilling the Jewish people's entitlement to self-determination and sovereignty in a part of their ancient homeland. As a passionate advocate of the rule of law, Evatt believed that once the UN had thoroughly investigated, debated and voted on any international matter, as it had on the partition of Palestine, the outcome was binding upon the honour of all nations.

Some of the 'firsts' in official bilateral State relations



4 January 1950. Australia's first Ambassador to Israel, C. W. Fuhrman (left), talks with Israel's President Dr Chaim Weizmann (centre) and Minister of Foreign Affairs Moshe Sharett after presenting his credentials. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)

In May 1958, the official visit of Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett was the first to Australia by a serving Israeli cabinet minister. During his three-week tour he spoke of the important role that Australia had played in Israel's destiny, through its 'contribution in the military field in two world wars, and by its exertion of political wisdom in the U.N.'. Mr Sharett was honoured at a luncheon in Canberra organised by the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and Zionist Federation of Australia, attended by some 150 members of the Senate and House of Representatives.



May 1950. Mr Harry (Yehudah) Levin (right), Israel's first Consul-General to Australia (August 1949 to July 1950), explains to Dr Evatt the symbols of the 12 tribes of Israel depicted on the silver inlay of the plate given to Dr Evatt by Israel's Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)



March 1966. Australian Minister for External Affairs Paul Hasluck (left) with Australian Ambassador William Landale (centre) at an official function in Tel Aviv. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)

Minister for External Affairs, Paul Hasluck, was the first serving Australian cabinet minister to make an official visit to Israel. He was welcomed in the press with praise for Australia's friendship for Israel, and had meetings and positive communiqués with Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and Foreign Minister Abba Eban. In April 1966, the Deputy Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Office, Arthur Hourie, came to Australia together with a Knesset delegation to the International Parliamentary Conference in Canberra. From that time on, ministerial and parliamentary visits in both directions have become routine.

November 1986. The first serving Israeli President to visit Australia was Chaim Herzog, talking here with children in Melbourne. During his visit, Herzog stated that 'Australia has stood by our side on many occasions in the difficult years preceding the establishment of the State of Israel and since its establishment.' Welcoming him, Prime Minister Bob Hawke said that the 'friendship between our countries goes back to the foundation of the modern state of Israel.' (NAA:A8746, KN18/11/86/71)



The Middle East policy of Hawke's government largely mirrored that of previous Australian governments, though Hawke had a long-standing and deep personal interest in Israel and Jewish affairs. In 1986 he introduced a motion to the Australian parliament deploring the 1975 UN 'Zionism is racism' resolution and called for its rescission. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, with bipartisan support, Australia made it a priority to solicit support from its Pacific and Southeast Asian neighbours for the resolution to be rescinded by the UN General Assembly, which eventually occurred in December 1991.



January 1987. Soon after President Herzog's visit to Australia, Prime Minister Bob Hawke made the first visit of a serving Australian Prime Minister to Israel. Australian Ambassador Robert Merrillees is in the background. (NAA:A8746, KN18/2/87/154)

To honour Prime Minister Hawke's advocacy for Israel and the Jewish people, the Jewish National Fund established and dedicated a forest in Israel in his name. The Australia Israel Friendship Forest in the Galilee, which was dedicated in 1988, also bestows a general honour on all the Prime Ministers of Australia and Israel in a tribute to the Australian Bicentenary and the 40th anniversary of the State of Israel.

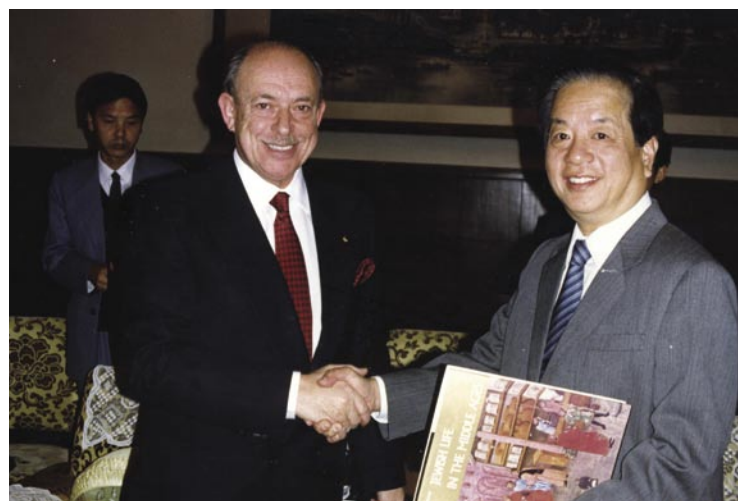
Long-term bipartisan commitment to bilateral relations and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process

Since 1949, the official policy of Australian governments of all political persuasions concerning Australia-Israel relations has been based on the principles developed by Dr Evatt in the key period from 1947 to 1949. Australia is committed to a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on Israel's right to exist in peace and security and the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a state of their own. Australia has consistently supported international efforts towards a just settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian and wider Arab-Israeli conflicts.



March 1957. US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles (left), Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies (centre) and Minister for External Affairs Mr Richard G. Casey (right) meeting at Parliament House in Canberra in the aftermath of the 1956 Suez Crisis. (NAA:A1675, SEAT05/8)

In 1955 Australia's Prime Minister Robert Menzies and Minister of External Affairs Richard Casey publicly supported an Arab-Israeli peace plan proposed by the US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. The two key points of the plan were: formal treaty undertakings to prevent any attempt by either side to alter by force the boundaries between Israel and its Arab neighbours; and an international loan to enable Israel to compensate Arab refugees from pre-state Palestine.



October 1991. Australian Jewish leader, Isi Leibler, with Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen in Beijing after presenting a book on Jewish history. The photo was taken a short time before China's formal recognition of Israel in February 1992. (Photo: Leibler Private Archives)

In his capacity as vice-president and president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, chairman of the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs, and executive member of the World Jewish Congress, Melbourne-based Isi Leibler played an important role in working with Bob Hawke (when the latter was president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions) and the Israeli Government on the campaign to allow Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel. Leibler also worked closely with Reuven Merhav, the Israeli diplomat based in Hong Kong, in developing relations between Israel and China in the late 1980s. He came to play an important liaison role in persuading both China and India to extend formal recognition to Israel in 1991/2.



April 1995. Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Australia's Defence Minister Robert Ray inspect cadet parade at Israeli Defence Force HQ, Tel Aviv.

During his official visit, Minister Ray inspected IDF bases and defence industries and participated in the dedication of a monument at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Be'er-Sheva. While reflecting on the Australian-Israeli relationship, Prime Minister Rabin expressed Israel's appreciation for Australia's participation in both the Sinai-based MFO and UNTSO. Touching on Australia's involvement in fighting the Nazis during World War II, Rabin said: 'The Australian soldiers who fought against Rommel's armies in the Western desert during the Second World War have a warm spot reserved for them in the hearts of my generation.'

As a part of Australia's commitment to the Arab-Israeli peace process that was launched in the wake of 1990/1 Gulf War and Madrid Peace Process, the Keating Government hosted a multilateral experts' meeting dealing with water issues. The event included Israeli, Palestinian and other Arab scientists and policy authorities.



April 2000. Australian Prime Minister John Howard speaks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak at a dinner in Jerusalem during Mr Howard's official visit to Israel. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)

Former Prime Minister John Howard first visited Israel privately as a young man in 1964, and became an admirer of the achievements and the spirit of the young state. During the period of his government from 1996 to 2007, bilateral relations between the two countries remained strong, reflecting John Howard's description of Australia as 'a very strong supporter, close ally and good friend of Israel'.

For his friendship with Israel and the Jewish people, John Howard was awarded an honorary doctorate by Bar-Ilan University in 2000, the American Jewish Committee Distinguished Public Service Award in 2002, the American Jewish Committee American Liberties Medallion in 2004, the B'nai Brith International Presidential Gold Medal in 2006, and the Zionist Federation of Australia's Jerusalem Prize in 2007. The Jewish National Fund announced the establishment of the 'John Howard Negev Forest' in Israel in 2007. This was the third such tribute paid to an Australian Prime Minister as forests have been named after Sir Robert Menzies and Bob Hawke. A forest has also been named after former Governor-General Sir Zelman Cowen.



March 2007. Israel's Deputy PM Shimon Peres (centre) in Jerusalem with a bipartisan Australian parliamentary delegation, (from second on left) Senator Glenn Sterle, Dr. Craig Emerson, Senator Michael Ronaldson, Helen Kroger, Senator Cory Bernardi, and Senator Joe Ludwig. The group was accompanied by Jamie Hyams (far left) from the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council and sponsored by its Rambam Fellowship Program. AIJAC, which through analysis and advocacy promotes the interests of the Australian Jewish community, sends several groups of prominent Australians - including politicians, advisors, journalists and student leaders - to Israel each year through its Rambam Program in conjunction with constituent organisations of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.



August 2007. Justice Salim Joubran of the Supreme Court of Israel at the 2007 New South Wales Supreme Court Conference with Justice Margaret Beazley AO of the NSW Supreme Court of Appeal. Justice Joubran was nominated to the Supreme Court of Israel in 2004. He visited Australia under the Australian Government's Special Visits Program. (New South Wales Supreme Court)



June 2007. Australia's then Foreign Minister Alexander Downer met with Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni in Jerusalem. Minister Downer also visited Israel in mid-1998 and again in January 2004

Continuing the tradition of bipartisan support for Israel, Foreign Minister Downer announced in 1996 after the Howard Government was elected:

'I want to state clearly that Australia has an absolute, unshakeable commitment to the security of Israel. The nation of Israel, its people, its values, its courage in adversity and its ultimate purpose as the secure homeland for the Jewish people appeal deeply to us. Australia stands with Israel in its fight against terrorism and in its determination to negotiate a just, enduring and comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East which will see Arab and Jew live and work together side by side in a genuine spirit of cooperation and harmony. The Australian Government welcomes and supports the commitment of Israel and the Palestinian Authority to put an end to decades of confrontation, and to seek ways in which to live peacefully together with dignity and security for Jews and Arabs alike.'

In response to this latter commitment, in September 2000 Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade opened a Representative Office in Ramallah in the West Bank in order to strengthen the relationship between Australia and the Palestinian Authority, to administer development assistance, and to enhance Australia's support for negotiations to secure a just and comprehensive peace.

During Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's welcome to Downer during his 2007 visit, she noted that *'Israel and Australia may be far apart geographically, but the deep friendship between our countries that has been built on shared values, as well as shared interests, is more powerful than distance... I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Australian government and to Mr. Downer personally for all that they have done to deepen and to enhance our bilateral relationship and to support the cause of peace in our region.'*



March 2008. The Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Kevin Rudd MP congratulates Israel on its 60th anniversary of statehood.

On 12 March 2008 the Australian Parliament passed a motion congratulating Israel on 60 years of statehood. The bipartisan motion was introduced by Mr Rudd and seconded by the Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson MP, Leader of the Opposition. The motion called on the house to:

- 1) celebrate and commend the achievements of the State of Israel in the 60 years since its inception;
- 2) remember with pride and honour the important role which Australia played in the establishment of the State of Israel as both a member state of the United Nations and as an influential voice in the introduction of Resolution 181 which facilitated Israel's statehood, and as the country which proudly became the first to cast a vote in support of Israel's creation;
- 3) acknowledge the unique relationship which exists between Australia and Israel; a bond highlighted by our commitment to the rights and liberty of our citizens and encouragement of cultural diversity;

During his time as Opposition Foreign Affairs spokesman, Kevin Rudd twice visited Israel - the first time in 2003, the second time in 2005. Mr. Rudd has described himself as a 'passionate' and longstanding friend and admirer of Israel. He has been vocal in support of Israel's right to self-defence against terrorism, while backing a two-state solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. As Mr. Rudd explained in 2007: *'Australia and Israel are intrinsically linked as countries that value human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Australia's involvement began even before Israel gained independence, with former Labor leader Doc Evatt playing a critical and supportive role as President of the UN General Assembly and as Chair of the Palestine Commission. Since then, Australia has been one of Israel's most consistent friends through the many difficult times as well as the good.'* Following the Labor Party's win in the Australian federal elections in November 2007, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert called Mr Rudd to congratulate the Labor leader and new Prime Minister.

- 4) commend the State of Israel's commitment to democracy, the Rule of Law and pluralism;
- 5) reiterate Australia's commitment to Israel's right to exist and our ongoing support to the peaceful establishment of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian issue;
- 6) reiterate Australia's commitment to the pursuit of peace and stability throughout the Middle East;
- 7) on this, the 60th Anniversary of Independence of the State of Israel, pledge our friendship, commitment and enduring support to the people of Israel as we celebrate this important occasion together.

People-to-People Connections

People-to-people links are at the heart of any solid bilateral relationship between states. As the following photos and stories illustrate, the links between the peoples of Australia and Israel have been deep and intricate covering many aspects of cultural, national and religious life in both countries. The images presented here are a mere snap-shot that only hint at the full extent of the strong community and cultural inter-relationships between Australians and Israelis. Since well before 1948, Australia's Jewish communal organisations have played a key role in fostering these ties.

Australian Communal Organisations



August 1927. Alexander Goldstein (with moustache), envoy of Keren Hayesod, with Jewish women in Sydney. (Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem)

Keren Hayesod (The United Israel Appeal - UIA) was established in 1920 at the World Zionist Conference in London, after which Jewish communities throughout the world, including Australia, established local fundraising campaigns under the Keren Hayesod umbrella to assist the Jewish community in Israel. Today the UIA is the central fundraising organisation for Israel throughout the world (except in the

USA). Based in Jerusalem, it operates in 46 countries, facilitating immigration and absorption in Israel, advancing education of Israeli young immigrants, providing opportunities and care for vulnerable segments of Israeli society and enhancing Israeli culture in the midst of grave security threats and economic uncertainty.



April 1968. Members of Keren Kayemeth LeYisrael (Australia) and Rotary Australia at the dedication of a re-forestation project in Israel sponsored by both organisations. (Central Zionist Archives)

Founded in 1901 at the Fifth Zionist Congress in Basel (also the year of Australia's federation), Keren Kayemeth LeYisrael (The Jewish National Fund – JNF) was created to buy and develop land in Palestine for Jewish settlement. Today, the JNF works at the creation, improvement and maintenance of forests and the preservation of natural landscapes and open spaces in Israel, and also has projects aimed at the conservation and expansion of water resources, drainage and rehabilitation of river systems, for the good of Israel and the entire region. Some of JNF's contributions include planting forests with 200 million trees over an area of 800,000 dunams, establishing 400,000 dunams of natural woodlands and building more than 20

reservoirs. In Australia, the JNF commenced activities in the early 1900's, making its first appearance in the public arena after World War I when it gained widespread popular support for its campaign to establish a forest in honour of the Australian Expeditionary Forces which fought in Europe and the Middle East. Since that time, JNF Australia has developed a series of prestigious projects, including the Australia Israel Friendship Forest in the Galil area (in Israel's north), dedicated to all the Prime Ministers of Australia and Israel as a tribute to the Australian Bicentenary and the 40th anniversary of the State of Israel.



October 2005. A group of Israelis and Australians on a hike in the Negev Desert. Among the group, who met during a ZFA-sponsored 'Zionist Seminars' in Israel, are three Australian 'olim chadashim' (new immigrants to Israel), and the Israelis they hosted in Australia when the latter visited their community in Sydney from 2002-2005.

The Zionist Federation of Australia was founded in Melbourne in 1927. Its early members included General Sir John Monash and Rabbi I. Brodie, and later Max Frielich, who worked tirelessly with Dr Evatt to foster Australia's support for the establishment of Israel. Today the ZFA is the federal roof body of Zionist organisations in Australia, responsible for the connection between Australian Jewry and Israel and in carrying out and promoting the aims of Zionism, as well as ensuring a viable, dynamic and constant link with Israel. An example of the organisation's work is the promotion of the 'Zionist Seminars', a program of the



September 2007. Members of the 'Zionist Seminars' team in Sydney, together with new immigrants to Israel and members of Sydney's North Shore Jewish Community, on the 'Bondi to Bronte' beach walk in Sydney.

Education Department of the Jewish Agency, brought to Jewish Schools in Australia by the ZFA with the aim of strengthening Jewish identity and the connection with Israel. Five teams of Israeli *madrachim* (facilitators) come to Australia every year during the third term and lead camps for high school students in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. They also conduct activities within the schools and visit smaller communities. The ZFA coordinates the program in Australia and serves as the liaison between the schools and the Jewish Agency.



The WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim School is the flagship project in Israel sponsored by WIZO Australia. Situated high on Mount Carmel, the residential school provides the opportunity for troubled teenagers to overcome their difficulties. There are currently 120 children, aged between 12 and 18, at the school, being cared for by a unique team of psychologists, school workers and teachers, in a program which includes an innovative 'Adopt-a-Pet' scheme, and mentoring with the nearby naval base.

The Women's International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) is an independent, non party organisation established in England in 1928 with the aim of providing a voice as well as a system of care and services for Jewish women and their families facing the hardships and challenges of life in Palestine. Since that time the organisation has grown with over 50 federations world-wide and holds Non-Governmental consultative status with ECOSOC & UNICEF at the United Nations. WIZO Australia was founded in 1934, and today supports and maintains a number of projects that include: WIZO Ahusat Yeladim in Haifa, Day care centres in Tel Aviv and Ranana, The Korsunsky Youth Club in Kfar Saba, Day Care Centres on Hatzor Air Base and The Aya Dinstein Women's Club in Jerusalem. Speaking at the 21st Triennial Conference of WIZO Australia, Helena Glasser, World President of WIZO stated: 'Over the years, WIZO Australia has demonstrated great love, warmth, dedication, devotion and commitment to the State of Israel and its society through its 16 projects in Israel, while preserving the Jewish culture and heritage within the local communities. No matter what the situation in Israel, we can always count on our Australian *Chaverot* (friends).'

Family Bonds Across the Seas



February 1952. New immigrants, Lez and Gennie Schub from Western Australia, join Kfar Monash, a moshav (cooperative village) in central Israel founded in 1946 by World War II ex-servicemen. The moshav, named after Sir John Monash, Australian military leader in WWI and founding member of the Zionist Federation of Australia, was intended to perpetuate the link that was forged between the Land of Israel and the Anzacs during both wars, and to represent a practical expression of the mutual friendship between the Jewish people and Australia. (Inset) Members of the Dromi-Agami family, present-day residents of Kfar Monash. Although born in Israel, they have family in Sydney.





Kelvin Crombie (centre), an Australian expatriate now living in Israel, leading a tour group visiting locations in Israel where troops of the Australian Light Horse fought in WWI.

Kelvin Crombie was born in Corrigin, Western Australia's central wheat-belt, in 1957. As a young boy he developed a fascination for the Light Horse. Kelvin moved to Israel in 1979. In 1984 he began volunteer work at the Christian Embassy and became a member of Christ Church in the Old City of Jerusalem. In time he began to lead tours he calls 'In the Footsteps of Allenby and the Light Horse', and has authored two books entitled *For the Love of Zion*, concerning the history of British involvement in the land of Israel, and *Anzacs, Empires and Israel's Restoration 1798-1948*. Kelvin's research has revealed that the earliest Australian connection with the movement for a return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland was Colonel George Gawler, an evangelical Christian and governor of South Australia between 1838 and 1841. Convinced from his experiences in Australia that barren land could be made arable and productive, Gawler influenced Sir Moses Montefiore in England to establish Jewish agricultural enterprises near Jerusalem and Jaffa. These marked the beginning of large-scale Jewish immigration to the Holy Land.



October 2007. Mark Regev (center) with Patron of the Australian Light Horse Association, Major-General (Ret) WB "Digger" James AC MBE MC (left) in Be'er-Sheva.

Mark Regev grew up in Melbourne and moved to Israel in 1982. He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1990, becoming the spokesperson at the Israeli Embassy in Washington in 1999. Upon returning to Israel in 2004, Mark was appointed spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry, and in 2007, the spokesperson for the Prime Minister. When he moved to Israel, Mark remembers that 'the first thing that struck me was that Israelis had a very positive attitude towards Australians, Jewish and non-Jewish alike. It was as if there was a prejudice, that Australians were great people. When I spoke to old timers, who remembered the period of the Second World War and the Mandate, they said things like "Oh the Australians were great". There are also many similarities between the two countries: both are very open and by and large meritocracies... I think the way Australians have succeeded in Israel is testament to these common factors'. Other Australians who have reached senior official positions in the Israeli government include Rachel Risby-Raz, advisor to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Tal Becker, advisor to the Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.



For over 30 years Rabbi Raymond Apple was Australia's highest-profile rabbi serving at the Great Synagogue in Sydney. During that time he was an Australian Army reserve chaplain for 15 years and then served as Senior Rabbi to the Australian Defence Force for 18 years. In 2005 Raymond and Marian Apple moved to Israel. This fulfilled a lifelong dream and enabled them to live closer to their three Israeli children and 16 Israeli grandchildren. They maintain their Australian connection through another son who lives in Sydney with his wife and two children. Here Rabbi Apple (second from left) is pictured at the dedication of the Rabbi Dr Israel Porush (OBE) memorial forest in Israel. Rabbi Porush was Rabbi of the Great Synagogue in Sydney from 1940-1972.



May 2001. Delegation of Australian Baha'i attending the opening of the garden terraces of the Baha'i Temple on the face of Mount Carmel in Israel.



January 2008. Rony Hassoun, joint owner with Ady Maklada of the 'Falafel Kitchen', St. Kilda Melbourne. Roni and Ady, who also own the Falafel Kitchen in Elsternwick, moved to Melbourne from the Druze village of Daliat El-Carmel near Haifa in 1991.

Sharing Love of the Arts



August 1966. The first concert of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in Sydney, with Maestro Zubin Mehta (centre). (IPO, Israel)

Founded in December 1936, the Palestine Orchestra changed its name to the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) after the creation of the State of Israel in May 1948, playing *Ha-Tikva* (Israel's national anthem) at the official ceremony of the Declaration of Independence on 14 May 1948. The Australian Friends of the IPO was founded in the 1960s by Ruby Rich-Schalit, a gifted pianist in her youth as well as one of Australia's earliest feminists, who during the 1930s also became the first Australian President of the Women's International Zionist Organisation. The IPO made its first visit to Australia in 1966, its most recent in 2008 in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary.



1971. Israeli conductor Moshe Atzmon, chief conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from 1967 to 1971, a period of great success for the organisation. (NAA:A1200/18)

(Opposite page) Founded by Albert Dadon, the Australia Israel Cultural Exchange (AICE) was launched by joint declaration on 2 December 2002 by Australia's former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, and former Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, Binyamin Netanyahu MK with the goal of promoting understanding between Australia and Israel through exchange projects in film, art, literature and other cultural media. Building on its flagship events – the annual Australia Film Festival in Israel and the Israeli Film Festival in Australia – AICE has supported numerous cultural exchanges including the Batsheva dance company to the Sydney festival in 2007 and 'Mythology and Reality: Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabiella Pizzi Collection' to Israel in 2003.

In 2007, Batsheva Dance Company and AICE launched the Australian Friends of Batsheva, to ensure the continued artistic excellence of Batsheva's creations and to promote the growth of Batsheva's audiences worldwide, mainly in Australia.



Posters from the Australia Israel Cultural Exchange's (AICE) 2006 Australian Film Festival in Israel and the Israeli Film Festival in Australia.



Seeking to Excel in Education



A Yachad Accelerated Learning Project instructor teaching children in the indigenous community of Aurukun, far North Queensland.

Using accelerated learning practices pioneered at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem the Yachad Accelerated Learning Project (YALP) aims to bring academically underachieving indigenous students up to Australian national education benchmarks. YALP founders – Helene Teichmann, Professor Marcia Langton AM and Dr. Zane Ma Rhea – with funding from Australia’s Department of Education, Science and Training, as well as state governments, corporate and philanthropic sources – have established programmes for indigenous communities in Adelaide, South Australia and Yipirinya, Northern Territory as well as far north Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria



Israeli students in a class at Kfar Vitkin conducted under the auspices of the Hebrew University’s Gandel Institute for Adult Jewish Learning. The Gandel Institute was established by The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School at The Hebrew University in Jerusalem through funding from the Gandel Charitable Trust, a Melbourne-based charitable organisation run by John Gandel and his family. Its aim is to provide education and training for Israelis, primarily migrants, in partnership with the United Israel Appeal and the Hebrew University’s Florence Melton Institute.



December 2007. Colleagues Dr Leanne Piggott (left) from The Centre for International Security Studies at The University of Sydney and Dr Leah Kinberg from the Department of Middle Eastern & African History at Tel Aviv University continue their collaboration in inter-disciplinary research of classical Islamic texts and contemporary Middle East security.



July 2006. Associate Professor Suzanne Rutland (front right) with a group of Jewish Studies teachers and two Melton facilitators during a 'Teaching Israel' program in Jerusalem. The program is funded by the Pincus Fund and is run through the Samuel Melton Center for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University.

Associate Professor Suzanne Rutland, Chair of the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies at The University of Sydney, has been active in developing links between universities and higher institutions of learning in Israel and Australia for many years. Between 1995 and 1999, Suzanne was the Chair of the Reshut (National Advisory Committee on Jewish Education for Australia) for the World Zionist Organisation. Since 1998 she has organised groups of Australian educators to study at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem. Since 2000, she has fostered the exchange program between the University of Sydney and the Hebrew University through the Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund.

In April 2007 Israeli academic Fania Oz-Salzberger was appointed to the post of Professor to the Leon Liberman Chair of Modern Israel Studies in the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University. The Centre seeks to increase opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to study at both Monash University and the University of Haifa.



Children feeding Australian kangaroos at Israel's unique Gan-Garoo Australian Wildlife Park, a four-acre landscaped park located in Beit Shean Valley (operated by Kibbutz Nir David) that features a variety of animals and plants, all of which are native to Australia. These include over seven types of kangaroos (a total of 45) and an assortment of cockatoo, flying foxes, kookaburra, cassowary, wallaby, koala and emu, as well as over 38 types of eucalyptus trees and other Australian plants. Gan Garoo Park has been recognised by the Australian Wildlife Protection Authority. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)



February 2008, Clean up Australia Founder Ian Kiernan AO (back center left) with Clean up Israel founder and member of the Australian Jewish Community, Phillip Foxman (back center right) with students from Moriah College in Sydney.



Clean up Israel has coordinated numerous clean-up programs throughout Israel since its founding in 1997. Left: Children from the Budo For Peace program participating in a clean up at Michmoret Israel. Founded by Australian-Israeli, Danny Hakim (pictured far right), Budo For Peace brings brings together young people from conflict areas to learn and practice traditional Japanese budo (martial arts) in order to learn its values and apply them toward breaking down fear and building trust.

Sporting Connections



4 December 1969. The first of two soccer matches played between Australia and Israel for a place in the 1970 Mexico World Cup competition. This game was played at the Ramat Gan Stadium in Tel Aviv, where Israel defeated Australia 1:0. The second game was played on 14 December, where the two countries tied at 1:1. Israel's victory over Australia allowed it to play in Mexico the following year. Australia made up for its loss four years later when it qualified for the first time for a place in the 1974 World Cup competition. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)



26 January 2008. It was at the Australian Open that Israel's Jonathan Erlich and Andy Ram became the first Israeli pair to win a grand slam title with a 7-5, 7-6 (7-4) victory over their French opponents. (Courtesy of Getty Images)

The Maccabia Games

אוסטרליה
AUSTRALIA

Eliyahu Honig was the first representative of Australia in the Maccabi Games, participating in the 3rd Games in 1950. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)

Eliyahu Honig's family originally came to Australia from Jerusalem and Hebron in 1904 and 1920, where they played a prominent role in the Zionist movement. Having decided to make his life in the country of his forebears, Eliyahu moved to Israel in 1955. Today he is Associate Vice President of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he has worked with prominent Australians such as Sir Zelman Cowen and the late Ron Castan in fostering academic and scientific relations between the Hebrew University and universities in Australia.



July 1997. The temporary pedestrian bridge over the Yarkon River collapses during the opening ceremony of the 15th Maccabiah Games in Israel, plunging more than seventy victims into the toxic water below. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)

Tragedy and Heartache. The bridge collapse claimed the lives of four members of the Australian team. Two of the victims, Yetty Bennett and Greg Small, drowned in the disaster. Two others, Warren Zines and Elizabeth Sawicki, died several weeks later after inhaling the toxic river water. A fifth, Sasha Elterman, suffered serious illness from a similar cause, having to undergo more than 30 brain and lung operations. The survivors, the victims' families and Jewish community organisations were inundated with messages of sympathy and support from Australians of all backgrounds.



July 2007. Australian Ambassador to Israel James Larsen at the Bridge of Remembrance at the Ramat Gan National Stadium during the tenth anniversary memorial service for the victims of the 1997 Maccabiah Games bridge tragedy.

Science, Technology and Trade



Since the late 19th century, Australian 'gum' (eucalyptus) trees have been part of Israel's rural landscape. The Australian natives were planted liberally throughout Israel, particularly in the north to assist with draining the malaria-infested swamps, but also in other parts of the country to line roads, create shady forests, and supply wood. The largest plantings took place in and around Hadera (where the eucalyptus is the town's symbol), Rosh Pina, and Petah Tikvah. The preponderance of eucalyptus trees in some areas gives a distinctly Australian aspect to the Israeli landscape, as pictured here in Ha'yarkon Park, Ramat Gan. (Photo courtesy of Dr Florian Wertenauer.)

During the early decades of the bilateral relationship, trade relations between Australia and Israel were not a significant component of the total exports or imports of either country. However, in more recent years, the trade and technology relationship has grown significantly and in 2006-2007 total two way trade was valued at A\$828 million. A large percentage of this trade consists of Australian imports from Israel, mainly of telecommunications equipment, precious stones and metals, chemical products, plastics and defence technology. Australian exports to Israel consist mostly of coal and other mineral products, although as the photos below show, Australian exporters have made in-roads into some interesting sectors of Israeli society.

The Australia-Israel trade relationship is likely to become increasingly important to both countries. The relationship highlights the growth of knowledge-based export industries, the strengthening of links between education institutions and

the commercial sector, and the exchange of scientific knowledge and technology between the two countries in the areas of communications, agricultural technology and water management, biotechnology, and defence. In the last decade, the two countries have signed agreements related to trade and joint R&D and science projects. Two way investment is also growing and in recent years Australian individuals have made significant investments in Israel-owned companies including Paz (Israel's leading oil refining and energy marketing corporation), Plastro Irrigation and Elgo drip irrigation company. In 2007 Australian investment and advisory firm, Babcock and Brown, opened an office in Tel Aviv. The work of Austrade Tel Aviv, Israel's Trade Commission in Sydney, and the Australia-Israel and Israel-Australia Chambers of Commerce (AICC) contributes much to the success of the relationship, which is also enhanced by shared values: hard-work, ingenuity, a focus on the global market and an understanding of the profound importance of education.

1954. Dr Solomon Goldberg speaks with Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, with security guard looking on.



1952 Dr Solomon Goldberg on his sheep farm in Griffith, western New South Wales.

In August 1954 Dr Solomon Goldberg, a Palestinian-born Australian doctor turned sheep farmer from western New South Wales, brought his first consignment of 120 'Corriedale' sheep from Australia to land leased from the JNF near Kibbutz Dorot in the Central Negev. The Corriedales, bred especially for their wool and meat, were trucked to Adelaide, from where they were shipped to Singapore, and from there flown to Israel via Calcutta, Karachi and Bahrain. (A direct shipment was not possible due to the Arab shipping blockade policy under which ships bound for Israel were refused passage through the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran). In 1958, when sea access to Eilat became possible, another shipment of 1200 sheep was made from Sydney to Israel.

The Exchange of Scientific and Technological Research



AISEF Fellow, Dr. Ze'ev Bomzon, and Dr. Andy Jing Liong Li, Member of the Center for Micro-Photonics (CMP), working together with the confocal microscope in the CMP lab.

The Australia-Israel Scientific Exchange Foundation (AISEF) was established in 1997 with the aim of nurturing ties between academic institutions of Australia and Israel in order to foster and support scientific and academic exchange between the two countries. Building upon a bilateral agreement between Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne and The Technion in Haifa, AISEF extended this to include all tertiary and related academic institutions in Israel and Australia. AISEF was the first

collaborative venture between the Australian Research Council (ARC) and a private philanthropic organisation, AISEF and the Pratt Foundation. In 2003, the scheme was further developed with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the AISEF and the Commonwealth of Australia to each provide funding for the Australia-Israel Fellowships, established to promote scientific exchange with Israel through reciprocal exchange at the postdoctoral research or senior research level.



February 2005. Israel's Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom (front left) and Victoria's Treasurer Brumby exchange VISTECH Memoranda of Understanding after signing. Back row (from left to right): Azriel (Azi) Hemar, Deputy Chief Scientist and Director of the International Relations and Cooperation Division at Israel's Office of the Chief Scientist; Ifat Melamed from the Legal Department of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Gurion Meltzer AO, Israel-Australia, New Zealand and Oceania Chamber of Commerce Chairman ; and Leon Kempler OAM, Australia-Israel Chamber of Commerce National Chairman.

In February 2005, the Victorian State Government signed an agreement with Israel to establish the Victoria-Israel Science and Technology Research and Development Fund, or VISTECH, to fund up to 50 percent of eligible, joint R&D costs of Victorian-Israeli market-oriented projects. The fund, to which the parties committed \$US 6 million over an initial period of 3 years, allows for Victoria-based companies to pair with Israeli firms to create productive partnerships in pursuits such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, water, environment, synchrotron and IC&T. In 2007 Australia-Israel joint venture firm, KarmelSonix Ltd, was awarded a VISTECH research grant to develop a non-invasive tool for continuous monitoring of severe asthma patients.



October-November 2007. Australian Water Trade Mission to Israel. Sponsored by AICC, the delegation looked at Israel's innovations and technologies in water recycling, desalination and conservation. Mission participants included the Ministers for Water from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria and the Shadow Minister for Water from South Australia. In addition, there were senior Australian Executives from organisations such as Rio-Tinto, Mutliplex, Transfield, United Group, Sydney Water, Melbourne Water, Queensland Water Commissioner, CSIRO, Monash University and many others.

In March 2007 the AICC water delegation from Israel to Australia, led by Israel's Minister for Infrastructure, Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, resulted in the signing of a bilateral, non-binding 'declaration of intent' on water issues.

A Snapshot of Two Way Trade



February 1969. A volunteer from Australia waters the vineyard at Kibbutz Yotvata in the Arava, southern Israel. The innovation of the early kibbutz movement has paid off in terms of enabling Israel to become a leading exporter of agricultural technology and know-how to Australia and other countries around the world. (Government Press Office, Jerusalem)



Haifa 2003. Queensland-based Aeropower, which uses helicopters to provide airborne electrical services to power companies, provides the Israel Electric Corporation with a range of services including support for cable stringing (pulling out draw wires from structure to structure), airborne line maintenance services and live-line insulator washing on their overhead power lines.



January 2008. Betty Bloch Wilkenfeld, daughter of Jacob Bloch, founder of Bloch, the Australian dance wear company. (Jacob Bloch was a migrant from Lithuania when he arrived in Australia in 1930). Now into its third generation, Bloch exports world wide including Israel, where their dance products are highly sought after by the Israel Dance fraternity.



January 2008. Israel's 'Magnolia Silver Jewellery first opened in Australia in May 2005 in Westfield Bondi Junction. Israeli Jewellery designer Michal Negrin also opened her own label store in 2005 in the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney



Tim Tams, the 'Aussie icon chocolate biscuit', are a popular Australian export in Israel. Since they were introduced to Israel in 2004, some 700,000 packets have been sold each year with instructions in Hebrew on how to eat them the Australian way, referred to as 'the Tim Tam suck'! Tim Tams in Israel are certified Kosher.



In Australia, Israeli company "Max Brenner" opened a chain of chocolate bars in 2004. The success of the chain in Australia has been used as a model for company expansion around the world. All Max Brenner products are imported to Australia from Israel.

