



JewishCare

Celebrating

175  
years

of caring for the  
Jewish community

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SOUVENIR

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EDITION

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## ***For 175 years, Jewish Care has responded to community needs and provided care and support to the most vulnerable in the Victorian Jewish community.***

The first predecessor organisation of Jewish Care Victoria was established by visionary community philanthropists. In 1848, members of the Melbourne Jewish community met at the Rainbow Tavern in Swanston Street and formed the Melbourne Jewish Philanthropic Society (MJPS) to support Jewish immigrants arriving in Melbourne. Today, it is the oldest continually running philanthropic organisation in Melbourne.

At the time the Melbourne Jewish community numbered only 200 and many migrants arrived in the newly established colony with no funds, family connections or employment.

In 1869, MJPS was granted Crown land and 500 pounds to build Almshouses on St Kilda Road. The foundation stone was laid in September 1870 with the Almshouses completed later that year, which housed those in need, primarily poor, elderly Jewish immigrants, who had no funds or relatives to look after them.

With the gold rush, the population of Melbourne boomed and during the 1880s a number of Russian and Polish immigrants escaped the pogroms in Eastern Europe and were welcomed in Melbourne by MJPS. In 1897, Montefiore Homes was built and named after Sir Moses Montefiore, the great British philanthropist.

The Australian Jewish Relief and Welfare Society ("Welfare Society") was established in 1948. Under the leadership of the late Leo Fink, it initiated a resettlement program to encourage the immigration of Holocaust survivors.

From 1947 onwards large numbers of displaced persons from Europe came to Melbourne and in 1948 the first of seven migrant hostels opened to house the new arrivals, funded by the Welfare Society.

Between 1940 and 1952, 10,000 Jewish migrants were sponsored by the Welfare Society. Support services were provided by dedicated volunteers who met new arrivals as they disembarked at Station Pier and organised financial support, accommodation and work.

Waves of Polish and Hungarian Jews followed and immigrated here to escape persecution in Europe. During the 1980s and 1990s, a new wave of immigration from the USSR arrived in Melbourne.

In 1967, the Almshouses were demolished and the new Montefiore Homes for the Aged was built on the St Kilda Rd site.

In 2001, Jewish Care Victoria Inc. was formed from the merger of Montefiore Homes for the Aged and Jewish Community Services

to meet the community's changing needs by creating a larger, more sophisticated, single-care entity that could comprehensively service the entire Jewish community.

Today, the Melbourne Jewish population numbers 50,000. Jewish Care supports the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the Jewish community with a range of services including:

- residential and community-based aged care
- accommodation and support for people with a disability
- dedicated Holocaust survivor program
- a range of social services which support vulnerable members of the community experiencing housing insecurity, unemployment, financial issues, family violence, mental health issues and parenting concerns along with a range of educational and advocacy programs designed to strengthen community wellbeing.



# OUR JOURNEY

Melbourne Jewish Philanthropic Society Founded

First meeting at the Rainbow Tavern.

1848



VICTORIAN JEWISH  
POPULATION: 200

Jewish Mutual Aid Society  
established

To provide interest-free loans  
to community members.

1863

The Jewish Almshouses  
foundation stone was laid

On the St Kilda Road site after  
Crown land was granted.

1870



Melbourne Jewish Aid Society  
established

To provide emergency financial  
loans to families in distress.

1888

Montefiore Homes for  
the Aged built



BY 1901 IT IS ESTIMATED THERE WERE  
OVER 15,000 JEWS IN AUSTRALIA

1897



Jewish Welcome Society  
of Victoria founded

1925

German Jewish Refugees Fund  
established

Following the outbreak of WWII in Europe.

1936

Australian Jewish Welfare Society  
established

After the German Jewish Refugees  
Fund changed its name.

1938



VICTORIAN JEWISH  
POPULATION: 9,000  
1938



### Frances Barkman House opened

Providing housing for refugee children and orphans.

1939



### The United Jewish Overseas Relief Fund established

Leo Fink established the United Jewish Overseas Relief Fund (UJORF) to raise money to send food and clothing to survivors in Europe.

1943



VICTORIAN JEWISH  
POPULATION: **14,910**

### The Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society established

After The Australian Jewish Welfare Society merged with The United Jewish Overseas Relief Fund to assist Jewish migrants arriving from Europe.

1948

### Jewish Community Services Inc. established

1995

### Jewish Care (Victoria) Inc. established

Montefiore Homes for the Aged amalgamated with Jewish Community Services.

2001



**JewishCare**





VICTORIAN JEWISH  
POPULATION: **45,546**

**2009**

### Gary Smorgon House opens

Providing aged care for 120 residents in a friendly, welcoming Jewish environment in Caulfield.



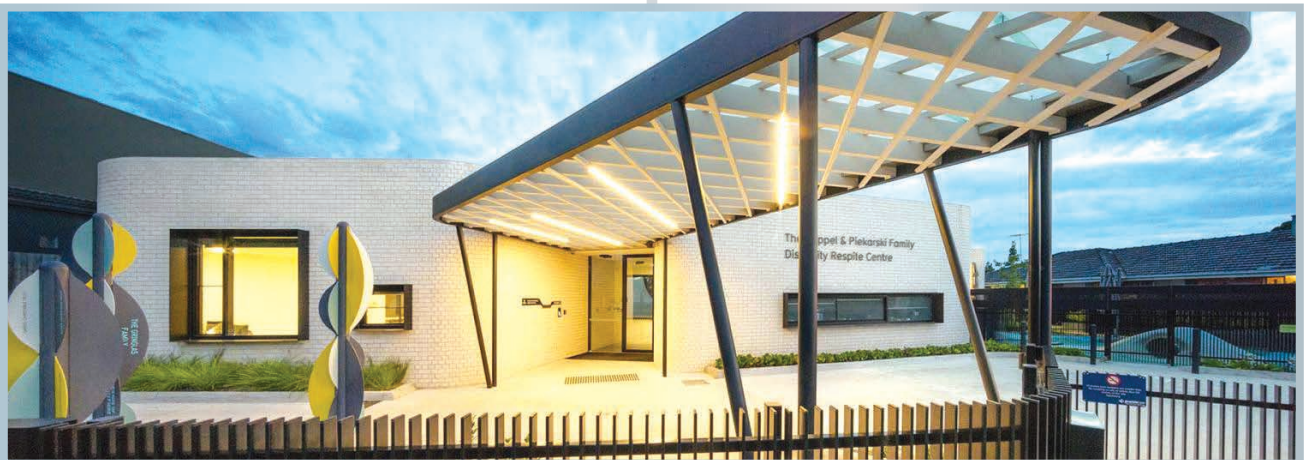
**2016**

### The Coppel & Piekarski Family Disability Respite Centre opens

Providing a safe, homely and culturally sensitive environment to children and adults with a disability.

### The Hannah & Daryl Cohen Family Building

Hannah Cohen and family donate \$5 million in memory of the late Daryl Cohen. The Hannah & Daryl Cohen Family Building in Windsor is named in their honour.



### Holckner Family Senior Living & Community Precinct

Charles Holckner OAM and family donate \$5 million. The Windsor site is named in their honour.

2019



### Residential Home Carnegie opens

Located in the Smorgon Family Building within the Thomas Ganz Senior Living & Community Precinct, it provides luxurious low-rise accommodation and aged care services for 120 residents.

2020

### Residential Home Windsor opens

Located in The Hannah & Daryl Cohen Family Building and part of the Holckner Family Senior Living & Community Precinct, it provides state-of-the-art luxury high-rise quality aged care accommodation for 156 residents.



2020

### Anne & Eric Smorgon Active Living Centre, Caulfield opens

Providing a wide range of recreational and social groups, allied health and wellbeing programs to support people living in their own homes.



VICTORIAN JEWISH  
POPULATION: **51,955**



# 50 years of volunteering with Jewish Care

*Professor John Zeleznikow has been volunteering with Jewish Care for an incredible 50 years and during that time John has contributed to a number of Board Committees.*

Volunteering takes many forms and volunteers who sit on Board Committees provide expert advice to senior management and the Jewish Care Board.

John's parents are both Holocaust survivors, his father, Avram Zeleznikow OAM z'l was a decorated war hero. His parents fled Poland separately after the war and were reunited at the Scheherazade nightclub in Paris.

John was born in Paris and his family came to Australia as refugees in 1951. The family was sponsored by the Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society which helped them to start a new life in Melbourne. Shortly after they arrived, John contracted polio in 1953 and was admitted to the Fairfield infectious diseases hospital and afterwards, he spent three years in contraction in the children's hospital to treat Perthes disease in his hip. He learnt English from the nurses and as a result, has a broad Australian accent.

In 1958, his parents opened a cafe in Acland Street, St Kilda and named it Café Scheherazade. The iconic café was opened with a loan from the Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society and became a refuge for Holocaust survivors and the wider Melbourne community serving wholesome Jewish food.

John's father, Avram made significant contributions to Jewish Care. He joined the Executive of the Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society in 1969 and held numerous roles including Honorary Secretary from 1971-1977, Co-Treasurer from 1982-1985, Vice President from 1986-1990 and President from 1990-1992.

John's mother Masha Zeleznikow OAM z'l founded the Tuesday Club which ran for 30 years, she met Russian doctor immigrants at the airport, organised accommodation and supported them to get medical qualifications to practice in Australia. Very fittingly, she was awarded the Leo and Mina Fink Community Services Award in 2015.

John was elected to the Australian Jewish Welfare & Relief Society Board in 1973 at the age of 23; at the time he was the youngest person on the Board. He has been on a number of committees including the Immigration, Frances Barkman House, Sheltered Workshop, Aged Care

(Pras and Rose Court and Fink Building), Community Education, Finance, Jewish Counselling Centre and Care of the Mentally ill.

John played a major role in encouraging involvement from the younger members of the Jewish community, organising youth programs, educational activities, social events and youth appeal meetings.

John was also an Ethnic Communities Council delegate and a Caulfield City Councillor from 1977-1979 and later Co-Chair of the Montefiore Homes Appeal.



John was mentored by well-known Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society President, Walter M Lippmann MBE AM z'l who took him under his wing.

"When I started volunteers played a major role and organised the majority of activities. Under the leadership of Walter Lippmann, there was a gradual shift and now paid professionals fill these key roles, as happens in most not-for-profit organisations," said Professor John Zeleznikow.

John now sits on Jewish Care's Quality & Service Review Board Committee.

Professionally, John completed a Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree with a PhD in mathematics. In 1979, he lived in America for six years. John is a Professor of Technology and Law, specialising in artificial intelligence and dispute resolution. He also supervises research at La Trobe University.

An avid athlete, John has completed a staggering 200 marathons since 1971 in many countries around the world including the Boston Marathon. He has raised thousands of dollars for Jewish Care in the process – what a phenomenal achievement!

In many ways, John and his family have and continue to contribute significantly to Jewish Care. John's family's involvement doesn't stop there. His daughter Eva and son Joseph have completed Jewish Care's Young Achievers Program as mentees. Eva was also an intern at Jewish Care as a social work student and then worked in the Active Living Centre for two years.

John's wife Lisa generously volunteers for Jewish Care via the Jewish Mediation Centre. Taking it full circle, Lisa's mother is a resident at Gary Smorgon House.

# In the words of our community ...



*"Translated, Jewish Care means 'Our community.' It reminds us that like the community it serves, it's a 'family of families'. And like an extended and inclusive family, it cares – especially when it's needed most. When Jewish Care says that it's there for 'young and old, rich and poor, healthy and sick, religious and unaffiliated' we know that the actions speak as loud as the words."*

**Pratt Family and Pratt Foundation**

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*Mahatma Gandhi explained 'the true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.'*

*"For 175 years, Jewish Care has helped the most vulnerable members of our community. As the community grows, the number of vulnerable and the types of vulnerability grow. As a result, Jewish Care's services are ever more required. We at the Erdi Foundation are honoured to support and partner with Jewish Care Victoria, an organisation of thoughtful and committed members delivering positive outcomes for our community."*

**Erdi Foundation Board**

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*"The Spotlight Foundation is proud to be a long-term partner of Jewish Care which has been supporting the most vulnerable members of the Victorian Jewish community for 175 years. Its longevity is a testimony to Jewish Care's commitment to delivering targeted, accessible, and inclusive programs designed to prioritise the client above all."*

**Dahlia Sable, Chief Executive Officer, Spotlight Foundation**

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*"For the Loti & Victor Smorgon Family Foundation, supporting Jewish Care's 175-year journey is an embodiment of shared values.*

*Jewish Care's unwavering commitment to addressing community needs and offering care to the most vulnerable within the Victorian Jewish community resonates deeply with our own mission.*

*Through this enduring partnership, we acknowledge and celebrate their remarkable legacy of compassion, resilience, and impactful service.*

*Jewish Care's dedication to fostering a stronger, more connected society aligns with our aspirations, making our support a testament to the enduring strength of collaborative endeavours."*

**Belinda Bardas, Trustee, Loti & Victor Smorgon Family Foundation**

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*"Jewish Care is an amazing resource for our community. The Besen Family Foundation is delighted to have supported the vital work of Jewish Care for many years.*

*We admire Jewish Care's vision to remain relevant, engaging and meaningful in the work it carries out so it can be the first choice for community services for Jewish people in Victoria. This is all made possible because of the extraordinary people who work at Jewish Care as well as those who volunteer."*

**Debbie Dadon, Chair, Besen Family Foundation**

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*"The Cher Family Foundation is proud to support Jewish Care in its many activities. Jewish Care provides an important security net to many segments of our community."*

**Nathan Cher, Cher Family Foundation**

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*"Everyone can rely upon Jewish Care, because Jewish Care cares about each one of us."*

**Philip Mayers AM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care means to me our history of arrival from Europe with the post-war migration when my family and thousands of others were assisted to come to Australia as migrants by the Australian Jewish Welfare and Relief Society. It means a benevolent and caring employer of our son Darren from 1989 to the present.*

*It means the place where we can be sure that we will be cared for, when we can no longer live independently. It means the people to whom our poor, needy, injured and our dispossessed can turn to for help in bad times. It means the face of Jewish charity in Australia of which we can all be proud."*

**Dr Dorothy Kovacs**

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*"It is our social responsibility to care for our community, to help them live the best possible life that they can.*

*Jewish Care is an organisation with a really big heart and I wanted to be part of it. That's what really attracted me to join."*

**Alan Schwartz AO, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care has given me the chance through Empower Interest-Free Loans to provide opportunity and autonomy for our clients to achieve their own designated goals. It also gave me wonderful experiences working with like-minded volunteers and a dedicated and skilled professional staff."*

**Dr John Serry, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care was able to facilitate my dream of assisting young people in their quest for realising their dreams with the Young Achievers Program."*

**Philip Brass AO, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care is a valuable organisation which provides wonderful care and support to our entire community."*

**The Nossbaum Family**

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*"I have been involved with Jewish Care for more than 40 years, both as a Board member and then as President of Montefiore Homes 1994-1996.*

*My family's connection to Jewish Care is very strong and now as a Life Governor, I am still extremely proud to be part of this fine organisation, which gives essential care and support to so many in our community. Jewish Care to me, means fulfilling its duty to look after our people's needs, of whatever nature, and providing them with a home, comfort and care.*

*MAZAL TOV and all the best for the next 175 years."*

**Graham Slade AM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care is the organisation that assists the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our community. For the past 175 years, Jewish Care has delivered excellent care and support to hundreds of thousands of people in need of a vast range of different services and procedures.*

*Well done to all past and present executives, staff, doctors and importantly the volunteers and donors. Kol Hakavod to everyone!!"*

**David Smorgon OAM**

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*"I have been associated with Jewish Welfare and Jewish Care since the 1960s as a contributor, board member, past president and constant supporter. The services provided to so many members of our community over those years have changed lives. I hope that extraordinary legacy will continue for many years to come."*

**Geoffrey Green OAM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"I was delighted to accept the invitation to join the Board of Montefiore Homes in 1983. In leading the annual appeals for many years, I was motivated by the belief that a community is measured by the way it looks after its most vulnerable people. In fundraising, I also believed that 'the manner of giving is worth more than the gift' and that is why I always closed my presentations by saying 'give until it feels good!' I never accepted the old saying of 'give until it hurts.' Helping those in need should not hurt. It should feel good."*

**Roy Tashi OAM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care is a vital support network for our community that resonates deeply with me. It is an organisation that has been supported by tens of thousands of community volunteers over its life's journey. It has touched so many people's lives, from families and individuals who are looking for assistance and to those that need care in a warm and friendly Jewish environment. Its compassion and dedication reflect values that I cherish, ensuring a stronger, more inclusive community for all."*

**Andrew Blode AM, Jack & Robert Smorgon Family Foundation and Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Our ancestors were fortunate enough to live in Melbourne since the inception of the Melbourne Jewish Philanthropic Society and our support spans many generations.*

*We feel privileged to be in a position to give back to our community, so that Jewish Care can continue to support and advocate for people in need."*

**Hannah Cohen**

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*"We all have a duty and responsibility to give back in any way we can. We can't sit around waiting for miracles to happen. Sometimes you need to be that person who rolls up their sleeves and takes the initiative."*

**Melissa Davis, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care nurtures the Jewish community – through kindness, inclusion and support."*

**Mish Kohn, Dodge Family Foundation**

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*"Jewish Care is a vital community asset committed to supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of Jewish individuals and families.*

*It provides a wide range of personal services, including aged care, disability support, counselling, and social programs, fostering a strong sense of unity and connection within the Jewish community.*

*Through its outstanding staff and dedicated efforts, Jewish Care embodies compassion, resilience, and the preservation of cultural values.*

*I could not imagine how our community could function without Jewish Care."*

**Jeffrey Appel OAM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"Jewish Care is a core part of our community, its reach and support is an essential part of the fabric and success of Melbourne's Jewish community. It brings both humility and joy for its volunteers, its team, its donors, and most importantly, its clients."*

**Bruce Rosengarten, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"To me, Jewish Care means a moral obligation to look after your extended family, in particular those in need."*

**Assoc Prof. Leslie Reti AM, Jewish Care Life Governor**

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*"I will always support Jewish Care because it is a very good organisation that helps a lot of people. They helped me and my family when I came to Australia – they do excellent work in the community."*

**Joe Szwarcberg**

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*"We believe that supporting Jewish Care should be a priority for all Melbourne Jewry.*

*Following the principles of concentric circles of giving, we feel that after our immediate family, the next most important obligation is to support our local Jewish community.*

*That is why for the last two decades we have considered Jewish Care our number one obligation."*

**Dianne and Jack Gringlas OAM**

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