



WIZO.
Doing What
Matters

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Newsletter

WIZO KESHER

WIZO Keshar Email: keshar@wizoaustralia.org.au

WOMEN of WORTH



WIZO Keshar is delighted to honour some very special
Women of Worth





A recent luncheon was held in a special venue to celebrate Helen's 95th birthday. Helen is pictured here with family members.

Helen Honzatko:

Helen is a longstanding enthusiastic member of WIZO Keshet and her presence at meetings is always a pleasure, as she adds so much with her witty and knowledgeable insight to so many things.

Helen Kassowitz was born in 1925 in Poland. Her father was Jewish and her mother converted to Judaism to marry and became very observant. She had an older brother.

She was 13 years old when the Germans invaded Czechoslovakia on March 15th 1939. Her father died before the war. Helen worked in a mica factory sorting scraps of metal just outside Prague. Working a 12 hour shift, then another 2 hours to get a tram home to her mother was indeed a very long day. Many workers lived in barracks at the factory and she would bring food, etc, to help them, smuggled in as she was searched both in and out each day. Helen and her family had to wear a yellow star. Many of her family were sent to the gas chambers.

She always speaks of being so blessed in coming to Australia with her husband and children and enjoying the freedom and beauty of this wonderful land called Australia.

We all wish her well with good health and happiness in this new year of her life.

Joyce Elais:

In 1994 Joyce and her husband Addy, came to live in Buderim. At that time Joyce began looking for something to be involved in. She saw a 'River Cruise' advertised for WIZO, made enquiries and was soon involved in WIZO Keshar and all our activities.

Joyce was nominated to be our second "Woman of Worth" candidate for 1996. She worked tirelessly, organising garage sales, street stalls, markets, and in April of that year she opened a shop at Kallangur selling collectibles, bric-a-brac and antiques.

We again were the winner of that competition!

Many times, she opened her home to meetings and on 14th July 1996 hosted our A.G.M. where we had as guest speaker Mr Ami Segev, from Sydney, the Director of the United Israel Appeal, who spoke of his life in Israel. His wife and two sons accompanied him.

Joyce and Addy hosted another A.G.M in 1999 in their home with guest speaker, Myrna Freed, along with her husband Alan. We all enjoyed a gourmet afternoon tea, good fellowship and lots of laughter. What wonderful memories.

Joyce was soon on the Executive, becoming Vice-President, Secretary and Events Co-Ordinator, organising a fashion parade, a theatre night, stalls, raffle selling and compiling newsletters and so much more.

JOYCE, we honour and thank you for all your "labour of Love" over many years.

We greatly appreciate you and pray G-d's blessing on you.



Hanukkah, or the Feast of Dedication, starts this year on December 10th, or 24th Kislev 5781.

It commemorates the overthrow of the Seleucid armies of Antiochus Epiphanes who sought to subjugate Israel to Greek Hellenistic thought, life and worship practices. After achieving victory over the enemy, loyal Jewish priests cleansed the Temple, restored the altar, tore down pagan idols and re-established Torah-based worship.

What's often overlooked at this time is the role of women - who became women of worth due to their prowess, bravery and loyalty to Torah.

One such was Judith, who enticed we must mention Hannah, who martyrdom rather than deny their deserve to be recognised as and encouraging the men to stand

We celebrate Hanukkah for eight why eight days - tradition says the eight instead of one day; in the period of dedication - seven plus HaShem; male circumcision was day; after King Hezekiah cleansed the L-rd after eight days.

Lastly, 2 Maccabees 10:6-7 says Sukkot, being a seven-day feast



Hanukkah

and killed an enemy General. Also urged her seven sons to accept faith. These two, plus others, stalwarts of their faith, helping firm against the forces of evil.

days. Many traditions exist as to oil for the Temple candles lasted Bible eight days was always the one to dedicate the offering to performed on the eighth the Temple he rededicated it to

Hanukkah was patterned on followed by a Sabbath of rest.

Today, Jewish folk and many non-Jews celebrate Hanukkah as a testimony to G-d's faithfulness. Over the eight days eight candles are lit by a ninth candle, called the server, increasing from one the first night to eight on the final night. It is a time of much joy, good food, gifts and singing.

Dr Michael Briner OAM:

Dr Michael Briner was recently bestowed with the Order of Australia [OAM] in the 2020 Queens' Birthday Honour List. The award succinctly cites for service to the Jewish community and to ophthalmology. After spending a lifetime of dedication to both his profession and to his religion it seemed very appropriate that his nomination encompass "what makes me who I am".

"I am an Australian doctor by profession and Jewish by religion. I always try to do the best I can for people. I was brought up to respect people and to help wherever I can... **Simple!** "

Dr Briner spent more than 40 years in various ophthalmology positions in several Brisbane hospitals, including Princess Alexandra, Greenslopes and St Andrews. But it is his community work since early 2000, improving the eye health of the indigenous population that has brought him the deepest personal satisfaction.

Dr Briner's forebears were Russian Jews fleeing from the pogroms of the 1900's. They settled in Brisbane and the family has been an integral part of the Jewish congregation here ever since.

"I do wear my traditional kpar hat, but my nod to Australia is that it features a kangaroo emblem! The OAM is not just for me but for the whole community where I am a microcosm of the great microcosm of society".

On behalf of WIZO Keshet, we too congratulate Dr Michael Briner OAM on the very well-deserved award.

Rose Toms
President
WIZO Keshet



Left side: Pamela Huppert accepts the award of 'Todah' - 'Thanks' - for her role as WIZO President. Pamela took up the mantle just over 12 months ago, and is having a most positive influence in the whole state through her leadership, encouragement and wisdom.

In the middle is Linda Briner, accepting congratulations from Pamela, on behalf of Paulette Cherney OAM, President of WIZO Australia, for her husband Michael's OAM and Linda's long service to WIZO Australia.

On the right, Sylvia Lipski accepts the award of 'Todah' - Thanks - in appreciation of her consistent fundraising efforts for WIZO QLD, including her many raffles for which she shows personal generosity. She has been of invaluable assistance to Pamela, who has much pleasure in awarding this certificate.



Linda Briner:

I was born in Wellington, New Zealand. My paternal grandparents originated from Russia and Poland, and my maternal grandparents were born in Palestine and England. Quite a League of Nations! My father was born in Aberdeen, Scotland and in 1939 he migrated to NZ, to escape the constant grey, drab skies.

I often pondered his wisdom when I faced the treacherous southerlies, that characterised "Windy Wellington"! Funnily enough, when he visited me in Brisbane, he wondered if I found the constant blue skies monotonous! My mother was born in Wellington, a wonderfully warm and talented lady, but sadly she was cheated of life far too prematurely and passed away at the tender age of 39. My father was totally amazing and devoted those very difficult years, without family support, to his 3 children, aged 5, 8 and 10. One is scarred by childhood memories and the difficult times we faced. I will always remember being the only student who could not afford to participate in the school outings.

I grew up in Wellington and attended school and "varsity" there, then attended Teachers Training College in Auckland and returned to my old school to commence my teaching career. This was special as my old teachers became my colleagues.

I met Michael at a BBYA (B'nai Brith Young Adults) Australasian Convention held in Hamilton in 1965. We were both rostered on "Kitchen Duty" the very first night. I could not pull the plug out of the kitchen sink .. so the story goes! We were married in Wellington at the end of 1969, when Michael had graduated from University. I then moved to Brisbane and was "warmly" welcomed by Michael's family who were wonderful and extremely supportive. Violet, Michael's mother, had always been involved in WIZO and her outgoing, vivacious personality endeared her to all.

They were very busy years, having children, teaching and then becoming Practice Manager in Michael's ophthalmic practice.

We still made time for volunteering which has always played a very big part in our lives.

My sister and I started a Wizo group for "Young Ladies" during our Uni days in Wellington. In fact, both my mother and my stepmother were staunch Wizo supporters, my stepmother being the Treasurer for as long as I can remember. It must be in the genes!

I attended the inaugural meeting of WIZO Aviva in 1973. The name was most appropriate as Aviva means "spring" in Hebrew and so many of us were pregnant! Since then, for the last 47 years I have always held an official role on the executive .. either President, Secretary or Treasurer. I am so grateful for the sincere and special friends I have made during my years of involvement.

When our children were young, Michael and I were very involved in the Chedar (Sunday School), in either teaching or official roles. We were involved wherever the children were, i.e. schools and sporting activities. I then became involved in the Wesley Hospital and now am involved in "Courage to Care", a wonderful programme which uses the Holocaust as its background, to teach school students to be up-standers rather than bystanders in this sad world of bullying and discrimination.

Michael is now working on a "Memoirs" project for the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation and this is keeping us both very busy indeed!

We feel truly blessed and grateful to be living in this wonderful country, but saddened that our interstate visits to see our children and 5 grandsons are restricted at this time. May we all look forward to less challenging days and may I take this opportunity to wish all the amazing Keshet members good health, peace and fulfilment.

Yvette Bolaffi:

Yvette Bolaffi z'l

Yvette Bolaffi [nee Grunberg] was born in Cairo almost 91 years ago. Her love of languages stemmed from a young age when she was educated at both French and English schools in Cairo, and later in life she enjoyed studying Italian and Spanish.

Her husband Joe was her next-door neighbour in Cairo. They courted from age 15 and married in 1949 when Yvette was 19 years old. In the early years of their marriage in Egypt, Yvette worked as a personal assistant to an Egyptian prince, and an editorial assistant for an Egyptian newspaper.

When life became untenable in Egypt for the Jewish population, they emigrated to Adelaide with their parents and Yvette's sister Jacqui. They rapidly involved themselves in the Adelaide Jewish community and volunteered for many charitable organisations. They shared a love of philanthropy, Jewish culture and heritage. Throughout her life, Yvette was a well-known and active member of WIZO, JNF and the State Zionist Council.

For 11 years Yvette was president of WIZO Aviva, whose members were predominantly from Egypt. She was chair on State Council, and then President of WIZO State Council for six years. When she retired as president, she received the Rebecca Sieff award from WIZO South Australia.

When her husband passed away in 1999, Yvette stayed in Adelaide and continued her community work, ably supported by her family and friends. But following the death of her son Yvette left Adelaide to be closer to her daughter and family.

Yvette was a much loved and respected matriarch, obm.

Esther Frances Morrish:

Esther was born in Sydney in February 1930. She was the first child of Maria and Simon Isaacs, with 3 younger brothers. After leaving school she did a secretarial course before trying a career as an obstetrics nurse. She then spent 3 years travelling the world before returning to Sydney in 1956.

Much to her parents' consternation she then pursued a career in Public Relations, as well as journalism, writing for local papers and becoming a lifelong devotee of live theatre.

Public Relations became her forte and she had a very successful and rewarding career. In 1967 she became fully accredited as a member of the PR Institute. Esther married the love of her life, Terry, in 1968, who became a successful barrister. They recently celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary.

Her varied career included working at the Israeli Consulate in Sydney, and the Montefiore Nursing Home. In 1998 she was made a life member of the PR Institute.

Twenty-five years ago she and Terry moved to Mooloolaba. She passed away recently in Buderim Gardens, Sunshine Coast. obm.

Marlis Cohen:

Born in Berlin, Marlis arrived in Australia when just 8 years old. Following University, she married and joined WIZO Nathanya as a founding member. She went on to become President of Nathanya, and join both State and Federal WIZO Executives. She served as State Treasurer for many years, was President of WIZO Victoria from 1980-1988, later became Federal Treasurer. She was a member of WIZO for just over 60 years.

Marlis attended several World WIZO conferences in Israel, and is the recipient of a Life Governorship of Ahuzat Yeladim, a Rebecca Sieff Award, an Honorary Life Membership of the WIZO Federation of Australia, and most recently, the Order of Australia.

Marlis was a hero of WIZO and is sorely missed. obm.

**A Tribute to Leah Werner obm, by Pamela Huppert, WIZO QLD President**

A long time WIZO QLD member passed away on the eve of Yom Kippur this year. An appropriate passing for Leah as HaShem only takes the souls of the most righteous on the holiest day of the year.

Leah was born in 1935, and migrated to Australia with her parents and brothers in her teens, quite disappointed that she was unable to serve in the IDF as she had a deep love for her country. On arriving in Australia she was accepted into the Conservatorium of Music, developing her incredible gift of piano.

Leah was selfless and worked tirelessly for charities. For many years she was the President of WIZO Hadassim, a Group of WIZO QLD. She was very proud of her part in documenting the testimonies of Holocaust survivors. She interviewed dozens of them for hours listening to their stories of the time before, during and after the Holocaust. She also documented her husband Richard's story.

Leah was a teacher and very proud of the time spent teaching Hebrew at QLD University.

Later she and Richard moved to Brisbane to commence a new life together. Leah was married to her first husband and raised her family, with 4 grandchildren included. However her greatest love was Richard whom she was most fortunate to meet.

Unfortunately, Leah was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease - in a way it was a blessing she passed away before the full impact of that awful disease took hold completely.

Rest in peace Leah.



MEETING

Our next WIZO AGM will be held 14th February 2021, at Buderim Gardens Village. Park in the Community Hall carpark and you will be transferred to the venue. Be sure to park by 1:45 at the latest as the meeting starts at 2pm.

A reminder that your annual subscription is due January 1st. If you haven't yet paid please do so, as our paid up membership strengthens the role of WIZO at the UN, Please use the form below, being sure to include your name.

The lucky winners of our recent raffle were Jan McArthur from Dulong, who won the beautiful crystal vase, and Pamela Hunt, who won the incredible quilt. Congratulations to both ladies.

President Rose, together with the Executive of WIZO Keshet, want to THANK YOU ALL for an incredible year. Your enthusiasm, generosity, love and support have been wonderful. We look forward to another great year in 2021.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

Our annual Hanukkah/Christmas break up is on 13th December. Be sure to RSVP, and bring a plate to share. Venue is 10 Castle Reigh Court, Buderim. Please park in adjacent Tulip Lane and walk to the event address, just 4 houses away. Starts at 12 noon. Drinks provided.

cut along here



WIZO KESHER MEMBERSHIP 2021

Name _____

Date _____

Postal Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Membership Jan-Dec 2021 \$ 25.00

Gift \$

Total \$ _____

Bank Transfer: BSB 484 799
Acc. No: 022 53941
Acc. Name: WIZO Keshet
Cheques to: PO Box 998
 Buderim Qld 4556

Please include your name.

Our unique status with ECOSOC and UNICEF at the U.N. requires our membership to be 'paid up members' thus enabling WIZO to have a representative with voting rights. So please renew your membership as soon as possible.

We Value Your Support!