



Perth Jewish Roots

*Newsletter of the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of
Western Australia Inc*

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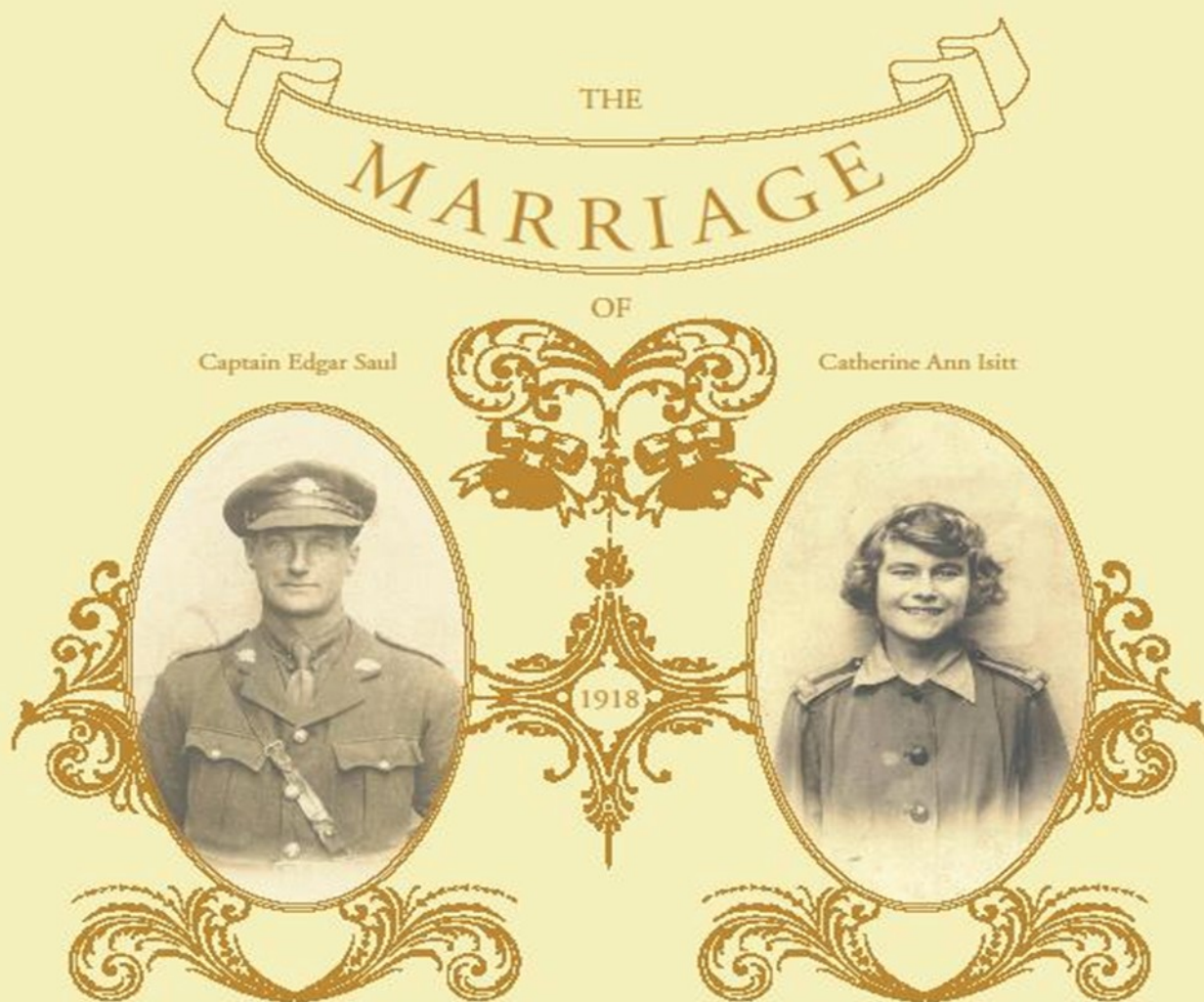
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Newsletter

Vol.17 No.1 February 2016



The marriage of
Captain Edgar Saul
and
Catherine Ann Isitt
on the
17th October 1918

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From the Editor

Michelle Urban OAM : jhgs@iinet.net.au

It is hard to believe we're in January 2016 already, but we are, and it's time to think about the start and great success in your family history and genealogical endeavours. A full and varied programme of meetings and events are planned for 2016. Watch for details in the column on our web-site at www.jhgswa.org.au and throughout this newsletter.

This edition contains a WWI story. 'A Wartime Romance' is the war-time meeting, and subsequent wedding of Marilyn Hambleton's grandparents. In the November 2015 Edition there was also a story written by Michael Anderson on his forebears, that dealt with the First World War.

What were your ancestors doing as WWI broke out? Send your stories of up to 500 words describing what they were doing as war broke out. Where were they living, working, were they married, how many children? Send photographs with your story. Contact jhgs@iinet.net.au or info@jhgs.org.au or write to 61 Woodrow Avenue, Yokine WA 6060.

Membership: Your membership accounts will be coming through the mail. Prompt payment will be appreciated.

Our Website <http://jhgs.org.au/>

Our Society has a project where we are compiling a comprehensive database of Jewish deaths and burials in Western Australia. For many of the deceased, Hebrew names are not known. There is a link to use if you can add to this database. Please see the list of those with missing information at <http://jhgs.org.au/can-you-help/>

Well known names in the community include Benjamin, Cohen (27 of those!), Freedman and Shilkin. If you can help with your information, please email docoft@hotmail.com.

Library

We have an extensive library collection available for members to borrow. The collection covers all aspects of Jewish life and history, Holocaust and Biography. We have a small Fiction section and a large range of genealogy resources encompassing most of the world and Jewish civilization.

Holocaust books and DVDs will be available to borrow on **Wednesday, 10.00am on 27th January** at the Jewish Centre, 61 Woodrow Ave, Yokine for the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.



Photo: Richard Maritzer

Perth International Fringe World

Eleanor's Story - An American girl trapped in Nazi Germany

Coming of age as an American citizen trapped in Nazi Germany during World War II was the real-life situation of Eleanor Ramrath Garner whose acclaimed autobiography has now been adapted by her granddaughter into a riveting one-woman show. *Eleanor: An American Girl in Hitler's Germany* traces Eleanor's path from the US to Berlin, where her family moved in pursuit of work during the Depression. But when war breaks out as they're crossing the Atlantic, they can't return home and instead endure hunger, fascist oppression, carpet bombings, the final fierce battle in Berlin, and the terrors of Soviet occupancy.

Ingrid Garner grew up hearing her grand-mother Eleanor's stories. So it was natural, as Ingrid received her Bachelor's Degree in Drama in California, to choose *Eleanor's Story* to be her first foray into play-writing and world-touring a one-woman show.

Ingrid spent hours conversing with her grandmother, who still lives in Southern California, to get a deeper understanding of Eleanor's emotions at the time, including the culture shock and post-traumatic stress of returning to the US after the war ended. Ingrid has created a riveting hour-long journey.

The History of the Perth Jewish Historical Society

Attendees of the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of WA (JHGS-WA) at the Noranda Chabad Shul on Sunday 29th November 2015 were privileged to hear a well-researched and articulately-presented talk by Dr Keith Shilkin AM on the story of the founding of the Perth Jewish Historical Society. Interestingly, we learned that the origins of the Society can be traced as far back as 1938 when Rabbi Freedman along with a handful of community leaders canvassed interest. Little was done, however, to set up a Perth specific association through the 1940's and even through the 1950's. Indeed those in Western Australia interested in Jewish history joined and contributed rather to the Australian Jewish Historical Society, which is situated in Sydney.



Warren Austin, Dr Keith Shilkin,
Jonathan Wolf



This is not to deny that some Perth individuals were active in having their local research published. Notably, Philip Masel's *History of the Perth Hebrew Congregation 1896-1946* which came out in the latter year. Dr Shilkin had established through his researches that the foundation date of the Perth Jewish Historical Society was 7th July 1963. It was intended as a branch of the Australian Jewish Historical Society and had an annual membership fee of around £1/11/00 (one pound and eleven shillings)!

It seems that the decade of the 1960's was not a strong one of interest in local Jewish history though individuals were continuing to have their researches disseminated through the national body's publications. Momentum definitely built up through the 1970's with efforts of David Mossenson, Louise Hoffman, Ossie Tofler and Harold Boas amongst others.



Keith & Sarah Shilkin

Dr Shilkin cited 1986 as a key year for historical interest within the Perth Jewish community since the coming Bicentennial of our nation was in sight and so was Tamara Tofler important in encouraging interest in the past. The Society, he told, us definitely "picked up speed" around this time and in May of 1987 under the Chairmanship of David Mossenson there was effectively the founding of a new invigorated Society. Dr Shilkin said he himself had been co-opted onto the Society's Committee in that year.

The pattern of the Society became that of a main speaker addressing a topic with well-researched material. Notable at the time was work by Louise Hoffman on Jewish convicts in WA. Also, 1990 saw the publication of *Hebrew, Israelite, Jew - The History of the Jews of WA* by Dr David Mossenson, a work centred on the development of the Perth Hebrew Congregation (PHC). Dr Shilkin gave in conclusion as the achievements of the Perth Jewish Historical Society, that it awakened latent interest in our State's Jewish history,



Leona Leedman; Jenny Shub;
Rose & Ron Sharp

that it produced over 20-excellent articles and very importantly, that it highlighted the contributions that Jews have made to the flourishing of WA, achievements in which we should justifiably take pride. The Western Australian Jewish Historical Society was subsumed in the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of Western Australia (JHGS-WA) in the year 2000, effectively demonstrating the tremendous growth of interest in the researching of family history - no less in the Jewish community than elsewhere.



Martin & Ruth Levit;
Eli Rabinowitz

In discussion at the close of the meeting, the important point was raised that community knowledge and understandings can no longer be left to the written word but rather, that in this modern technological age we must promote Jewish history through the many channels of the internet.

Michael Anderson

A Wartime Romance

by Marilyn Hambleton writing as her grandmother Catherine Ann Saul (nee Isitt)



As I look back on my wedding day, I mostly remember the excitement as I had met and married a wonderful man. Our wedding day had been declared a holiday and a whole village had turned out for the occasion. Later, I was to receive an official medal from the Mayor of Gowerton (my home town) in Wales, for my services in the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps during the First World War. However, not everything had run smoothly with the wedding arrangements. Not only had my fiancé's father not approved of me as Edgar's bride, but he had disinherited Edgar. He felt Edgar had married beneath him, as they did in those days. When we had to apply for our marriage licence we had issues there too. Edgar had been in Australia, and overseas in France, and therefore had not been residing in England for the specified time required prior to the wedding ceremony. We were unable to obtain the marriage licence.

I remember being very upset at the time and sitting crying in the lobby of our hotel, when I was approached by a well-dressed lady who enquired, "What is the matter dear?" When I explained the situation she said, "Leave it with me!" Amazingly, she managed to make arrangements for the marriage licence to be issued. We were overjoyed, and now Edgar and I could travel to Gowerton so he could meet my family, and we could get married.

When I joined the Corps, I had left my belongings at my mother's home on Gowerton. Amongst those items was my best dress which I had planned to wear on my wedding day. However, on returning home, I found that my younger sister had borrowed the dress and it was no longer in a fit state to be worn! I was bitterly disappointed and to this day I don't believe I really forgave her. I was left with no option but to wear my army uniform, but even this could not dampen my spirit.

I had surprised myself by agreeing to marriage after experiencing my own parents' unhappy relationship. I had endured an unhappy childhood with almost daily beatings from my father. He left home when I was 11-years old; leaving myself and 3-siblings, the youngest only 4-years old. To put food on the table, my mother had to take in other people's washing. I managed to stay at school until I was 12-years of age and then I went to work as a housemaid.

I had been a suffragette and, in 1917, I was only too happy to be recruited as a cook into the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). I was later sent to France. At that time people were 'bad mouthing' girls who joined the army, so I decided to write to Queen Mary asking her to become our patron. It was not until 9th April 1917, that Queen Mary assumed the position and title of Commander-in-Chief of the Corps as a mark of her appreciation of the good services rendered by the WAAC, both at home and abroad.

My meeting Edgar was some what unusual. I was working as a cook at the 15th Army Officer's Hostel in France and Edgar, suffering from battle fatigue, was also staying there. I had been told he had been behind closed doors all week and refused to come out. Even his meals were being delivered and left outside his door. Knowing he was not in a good state, I decided to knock on his door and suggested he might like to go for a walk along the beach front. I told him he might feel better for it, and to my surprise Edgar agreed and we set off. As we strolled along the water's edge he quietly began talking. It seemed he was English and had gone to Western Australia to work, as an overseer, on a station up north. He spoke of his desire to return to Western Australia when the war ended.

He had joined the 10th Light Horse in Guildford in Western Australia on the 8th December 1914, and was sent to Gallipoli. After being severely wounded in the left knee on 29th July 1915, he was transferred to Alexandria in Egypt to recover. He then transferred into the Field Artillery of the AIF and was sent to France.



Medals presented to Catherine Saul (nee Isitt) for her services in the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps during the First World War.

Photo courtesy of Saul family.

Cont. Pg5.....

A Wartime Romance (Cont.)



Catherine Saul with her Daughter Alice who was Called Molly by family.

It was only about a week later, after the beach walk while speaking with Edgar that he proposed to me. I was aghast. I asked him, "How do I know you are not married with six children?" So that was that. A few days later the Chaplain from the 12th Field Artillery arrived to present Captain Edgar Saul's credentials, stating that Edgar was who he said he was and that he was a bachelor and was, of course, not married! I then agreed to the marriage.

We were married in Gowerton on 17th October 1918, where I stayed while Edgar continued with his army duties. He was posted to the role of adjutant at the Australian Staging Camp (in Havre, France) until the 1st September 1919. We had previously made plans that once his term in France had finished we would sail to Perth, Western Australia. Finally, Edgar our six month

old daughter Alice (Molly born 1919), and I eventually arrived in Perth in December 1919. We applied for a War Services Land Grant which we took up in Bull's Creek Road (in Melville, WA) to run a piggery.

Unfortunately, due to a swine flu epidemic we were

ordered by the authorities to destroy all our animals. We were then unable to maintain a living and had no other option but to walk off the land.

Edgar eventually gained employment in the office of the Melville Road Board. His duties included writing out rate notices in his copperplate handwriting, a skill he had acquired as an educated young man. This lasted until the Depression came along. Again, we were faced with the foreclosure of another home which we had managed to purchase in Shenton Park.

We had four more children, Ronald in 1921, Margaret in 1923, Eric (Harry) in 1931 and Bertha in 1936. Tragically our 12 month old daughter Bertha died of diphtheria in February 1938. With Edgar's health impaired as a result of the war, it was quite often my skills as a cook and my willingness to take in washing that enabled us to feed the family. Eventually, later in life, with our youngest child still at home, we were able to purchase a piece of land in the Perth hills and set up a poultry farm. Until we were able to build the house, we lived in the feed shed. The reason we chose Kalamunda was because of the stony outcrops and hills which reminded me of my home in Wales.

NOTE : *Western Ancestor (WAGS Newsletter) have a writing competition each year. "A Wartime Romance" was submitted for this competition. The Editor has given permission for this to be published here and with the author's permission. : Western Ancestor Vol.13 No.2 June 2015*

Bibliography :

1. Certified copy of an entry of marriage.
2. War service records for Edgar Saul from the National Archives, Canberra.
3. QMWAAC quotation taken from page 27 of The Great War magazine Vol XIII, Part 244-week ending 19th April 1919.
4. QMWAAC personal records of Catherine Ann Isitt are unavailable due to being destroyed in World War II.
5. The medal bestowed on Catherine for services in the Great War is being held by members of her family.
6. Personal stories related by the writer's grandmother and mother.

Statement Issued by Buckingham Palace in April 1917.

As a mark of Her Majesty's appreciation of the good services rendered by the WAAC both at home and abroad since its inauguration, and especially of the distinction which it earned in France during the recent fighting on the Western Front, Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to assume the position and title of Commandant-in-Chief of the Corps, which in future will bear the name of Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps.

(<http://spartacus-educational.com/Wwaac.htm>)

Captain Edgar Saul

by Merrilyn Hambleton (Merrilyn is a member of JHGS-WA & WAGS)

Military information researched by B M (Mike) Galvin for Captain Saul's granddaughters
(First published in Western Ancestor (WAGS Newsletter) Vol.13 No.2; June 2015)

At the outbreak of the First World War, 32-year-old, English born, Edgar Saul was employed as an overseer on Yeeda Station in the Kimberley, Western Australia. He decided to enlist in the 10th Light Horse and sailed from the Port of Derby to Fremantle. He enlisted on 26th November 1914, and after three months training with the 10th Light Horse 'C' Squadron, he embarked from Fremantle on the *Surada* on 17th February 1915, bound for Egypt. It was not until 18th May 1915 that 'C' Squadron landed at Gallipoli. They were quickly fed into the firing line, at Pope's Hill and Quinn's Post, as well as being called upon to bury the dead during the formal armistice of 24th May 1915. In June, the regiment occupied Walker's Ridge and it was here on 29th July 1915 Edgar sustained a wound to his left knee.

He was sent by hospital ship to Mudros, and then to 15 Stationary Hospital, 19th General Hospital and 1st Australian General Hospital before entering the convalescent camp prior to returning to duty. On the 15th August 1915 he was made a 2nd Lieutenant. In October 1915 he was stricken with typhoid and transferred to Cyprus for ongoing treatment, before returning to Egypt. With the withdrawal of all troops from Gallipoli in late December 1915, he was posted to the 3rd Reserve Light Horse Regiment whilst waiting a reposting. On the 26th March 1916 Edgar was posted to the 4th Division Artillery Column and assigned to 112 Howitzer Battery. His precision experience in the Royal Field Artillery in England and skill with horses made him a candidate for such a posting. From this time on, Lt Saul became an artillery officer and severed all connections with the Light Horse Regiment. He was sent to the Western Front and arrived in Marseilles on 13th June 1916. On the 1st August 1916 he was promoted to Lieutenant after fighting around Pozieres and Moquet Farm, part of the wider Battle of the Somme. On the 18th July 1917 he was wounded (by war gas) in the Battle of Passchendaele in Belgium. In January 1918 he was promoted to the rank of Captain, and was assigned to the 46th Battery. In August 1918, five Australian Divisions, known as the Australian Corps were under the command of Lt General John Monash. It was on the 7th August 1918, at the 'Battle of Amiens, that the Corps launched a massive attack on the German army known as the 'Black Day of the German Army'. This allied offensive was also known as the 'Hundred Days Offensive', and would lead to the end of the war. The AIF was constantly moving forward from July to the end of September 1918, and the strain on the troops was enormous. Much needed respite was provided by hostel breaks. Capt Saul was sent on two such breaks from 27th July to 2nd August 1918, and again on 16th September to 27th September 1918. He was suffering from battle fatigue and on a posted break in September 1918, when he met Catherine Isitt who was a member of the Queen Mary's Women's Auxillary Army Corp. She was a cook in the hostel's Officers' Mess. After her kindness and concern for him over the week, he proposed to her! It was not until the Chaplain from his Division presented Catherine with the Captain's credentials that she agreed to the proposal.

They were married in Wales on the 17th October 1918. During his service on the western front, from 1916 - 1917, he was actively engaged in the battles of Poziers, Moquet Farm, and the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele). In 1918 he was at the battle of Villers-Bretonneaux and across the Somme fields to the Hindensberg Outpost Line. At the end of the war he was quite exhausted and debilitated. Very few 1914 enlistees were still serving on the 11th November 1918, but Captain Edgar Saul was one of them. On 10th November 1918 he presented sick to 5 Field Ambulance and was transferred to 8 General Hospital (Rouen) where he was admitted with a diagnosis of debility. Upon recovery and during the period following the armistice he was engaged in duties relating to the finalisation of AIF activities in France.



Images from the 10th Light Horse website



Captain Edgar Saul Cont.)

Captain Edgar Saul's AIF commission was terminated on the 28th March 1920. In 1978, the City of Melville named the reserve at 12 Hayward Street, Myaree the *Edgar Saul Reserve*. Edgar Saul died on 23rd August 1959, at the age of 78 years, and is buried at Karrakatta Cemetery in Nedlands, Western Australia. His wife Catherine died aged 89 years, on 14th April 1986, and is buried with her husband and infant daughter in the Anglican section of Karrakatta Cemetery.



In 1978, the City of Melville named the reserve at 12 Hayward Street, Myaree the Edgar Saul Reserve in honour of Capt Edgar Saul.
(Photograph courtesy of Saul Family)

NOTE:

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Western Ancestor (WAGS Newsletter)
and with the author's permission.
Western Ancestor Vol.13 No.2 June 2015

Merrilyn HAMBLETON

My sister Robin and I, together with my parents Harry & Molly (nee SAUL), LAWSON grew up living next door to my grandparents Kit & Edgar SAUL.

My mother, Alice (Molly) was their eldest daughter who married James Henry LAWSON in 1942. Our father was wounded while fighting in New Guinea and was lucky to survive.

Our grandparents gifted our parents a piece of their large property, and they were an integral part of our lives. My working life was in office administration. Upon retirement, a friend, my sister and I opened a bric-a-brac shop - called the Tea Rose Cottage, in Guildford. I have also exhibited art, write poetry and now live in a retirement village in Gosnells.

When retired, I had a desire to trace the name of SAUL. So my quest for Jewish ancestry began after an aunt commented that someone had once said to her, "SAUL, now that's a good Jewish name!" I eventually joined the Kelmescott Genealogy Group and also, WAGS. Eight years went by before I finally connected with a relative in England who confirmed the Jewish connection plus the family tree. The name was originally SAUL-RODRIGUES with the RODRIGUES being dropped.

The female line was Andrade DA COSTA. They were Spanish Portuguese Jews or Marranos. My desire to know more about this family line has led me to join the JHGSWA.

Women's Army Auxiliary Corps

The Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was formed in 1917 and was re-named the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1918, it was disbanded in 1921. The Auxiliary Territorial Service was formed in 1938 and was succeeded by the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1949, which was in turn fully integrated into the British army in 1992. About 57,000 women joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, performing non-combatant roles such as clerical and mechanical work. Most of these served within the United Kingdom. Many army service records between 1914 and 1920 do not exist as they were destroyed by German bombing in 1940. Only about 7,000 Women's Auxiliary Army Corps service records survive.

From the National Archives UK website : www.nationalarchives.gov.uk



Activities in 2016



International Holocaust Remembrance Day in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

Organised by the UNAA(WA), the Holocaust Institute of WA, NCJWA (WA) and the Jewish Historical & Genealogical Society of WA

On Wednesday - 27th January at 10.00am for 10.30am start. At the Jewish Centre, 61 Woodrow Avenue, Yokine

“The March of the Living”, lecture by Shirley Atlas

Litvaks On the Move: From the Baltic to the edge of the Diaspora and back!

Eli Rabinowitz, Speaker, Sunday, 28th February at 1.30pm for 2.00pm start

At Noranda Chabad Synagogue, 11 Garson Court, Noranda



My Litvak ancestors, followers of the Vilna Gaon, left Lithuania in 1811 for Palestine. 100-years later, some descendants moved from Palestine to South Africa. I emigrated from South Africa to Australia in 1986. Then 200-years after my family's first Litvak migration, I made the journey back to my Lithuanian shtetl.

This presentation compares my family's numerous migrations with the more common and direct movement of Litvaks to South Africa. Was there a pattern to these migrations? Where did they move to? How did they live and make a living? What was life like in their new shtetls, the dorps and cities? What led to re-migration from South Africa to countries like the USA, UK, Canada and Australia?

How did this affect the Jewish communities left behind and impact on those moved to? How did we study and educate our families now about their Litvak heritage?

What is your family story and heritage? Has it been documented? Contact jhgs@iinet.net.au

Bio: Eli Rabinowitz is involved in Jewish community activities, filming events, photographing, researching, lecturing internationally and blogging on Jewish life and heritage <http://elirab.me>
Eli presented at the IAJGS35 Jerusalem conference.

He manages 58 KehilaLinks for JewishGen.org, and led the first JewishGen Virtual Heritage Tour of Europe last May.

Websites: <http://elirab.me> <http://elirab.me/litvak-portal/>

Detailed bio <http://about.me/elirab>

Picture Palaces of the Golden West



Vyonne Geneve OAM & Ron Facius,

Art Deco Society, talk on Art Deco Cinemas of Perth

Sunday 20th March at 1.30pm for 2.00pm start, at

Noranda Chabad Synagogue, 11 Garson Court, Noranda

Vyonne & Ron have written and designed a Book on the Art Deco Cinemas of Perth: *“Pictures Palaces of the Golden West”* .

Do you have any memories of going to the Movies? Contact jhgs@iinet.net.au