

Annual Review 2024



MELB[✶]URNE
HOLOCAUST
MUSEUM

Judy & Leon Goldman Learning Centre

Thank you

We exist to amplify the voices of Holocaust survivors as a catalyst for greater understanding and acceptance of difference, to inspire a better future.

To our community of supporters – we say thank you. We could not do the work we do without your ongoing support.

OUR PURPOSE

We are a place of learning, amplifying the voices of the Holocaust through education, memorialisation and research

OUR VISION

To inspire a world free of hate, discrimination and antisemitism.

OUR PRIORITIES

- Enhancing our Advocacy and Impact
- Expanding our reach as a Centre of Excellence in Holocaust Education, Memorialisation and Research.
- Conserving the Voices of the Holocaust
- Completing the transition from the 'Jewish Holocaust Centre' to the 'Melbourne Holocaust Museum'

OUR VALUES

Integrity, Empathy, Responsibility, Respect, Inclusivity

Melbourne Holocaust Museum

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Cover: Student attending the In Touch With Memory education program. Photographed by Simon Shiff.

Highlights

73
events
hosted

New online
collections
database
launched

120
new volunteers
onboarded

**New CEO
commenced**

42,803
VISITORS TOTAL

40

YEAR ANNIVERSARY

**MELBOURNE
HOLOCAUST
MUSEUM**

**Inaugural
special exhibition
opened –**
*Underground:
The Hidden Archive
of the
Warsaw Ghetto*

27,000
students
participated in
our education
programs

**Online library
catalogue
launched**

**Inaugural annual
lecture series with
Jayne Josem –**
*On Moral
Complexities and
the Holocaust*

2,747
participated in our
corporate, adult and
B'nei Mitzvah programs

28
collections
of significant
artefacts donated

269
schools
attended our
education programs
132 government schools and
137 independent schools

212 teachers
from **63 schools**
participated in
our professional
development
program

RAISED OVER
\$3,676,077.85

**Launch
of FutureGen**

18
new survivor
testimonies
recorded

**Launch of
*Critical
Thinking
is Critical***

Acknowledging achievements

The year commenced with a moment of transition, as the Melbourne Holocaust Museum welcomed Dr Steven Cooke as its new Chief Executive Officer. This followed the departure of Jayne Josem, who served the Museum with distinction for over two decades, including five years as CEO during which she led the organisation through a major redevelopment, completed in late 2023.

In recognition of her outstanding service and lasting impact, the MHM Board established the *Jayne Josem Annual Lecture*. The inaugural lecture, held in 2024, focused on the moral complexities of the Holocaust, setting a thoughtful and reflective tone for this important new initiative.

MAJOR MILESTONES

In 2024, MHM turned 40 years old. We acknowledged this major milestone throughout the year with thematic branding and content across our channels, and a special survivor talk by Joe Szwarcberg, to which visitors were invited to attend free of charge.

We were thrilled to celebrate two incredible milestones: Holocaust survivors Andy Factor OAM and Abram Goldberg OAM both celebrated their 100th birthdays - Andy in January and Abe in October. It was an honour to celebrate their immeasurable contributions to MHM.

With support from the Federal Government, we launched *Critical Thinking is Critical: Advocate, Innovate, and Educate Against Antisemitism* to address the rise in antisemitism and the erosion of social cohesion in our communities.

In November 2024, we unveiled our first special exhibition in the Alter Family Special Exhibitions Gallery, *Underground: The Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto*. This exhibition featured key documents from the rare Ringelblum Archive, coming from the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland.

CONGRATULATIONS

At our AGM in May, Michael Debinski OAM joined Suzanne Hampel OAM as Co-President.

We also celebrated the appointment of Elly Brooks OAM and Helen Mahemoff OAM as Life Governors of MHM in recognition of their significant contributions.

Daniel Kave was appointed to the MHM Board of Directors.



Above: Abe Goldberg's 100th celebration.



Above left: Dr Breann Fallon at the Amaga Awards ceremony.

Above right: Holocaust Survivor Andy Factory and MHM's Senior Education Officer, Melanie Attar.

AWARDS

Following the public reopening of our museum and the launch of new exhibitions and experiences in late 2023, we were honoured with several prestigious awards throughout 2024.

Most notably, our immersive exhibition *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* received both a Social Impact Award at the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Awards and the Large Project Award at the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victorian Awards.

Judges praised *Hidden* as “an innovative and experiential exhibition that powerfully conveys Holocaust stories. It is a mindfully, artistically, and rigorously presented project that leverages first-person storytelling to achieve impactful outcomes within strong learning frameworks and audience safety strategies.”

Commendation Victorian Community History Award for *In the Footsteps (Digital)* (Category: Oral History)

Finalist Australian Graphic Design Award for *Everybody Had a Name* (Category: Spatial)

Winner Australian Good Design Award for *Everybody Had a Name* (Category: Architectural Installation Design/Built Environment)

Winner Australian Good Design Award for *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* (Category: Architectural Installation Design/Built Environment)

Winner Australian Museums and Galleries Association National Award for *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* (Category: Social Impact)

Shortlisted Australian Museums and Galleries Association National Award for *Everybody Had a Name* (Category: Exhibiting Excellence)

Winner Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria Award for *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* (Category: Large Project)

Runner Up Core77 Design Awards for *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* (Category: Built Environment)

Winner Gold Muse Creative Award for *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* (Category: Experiential & Immersive - Exhibitions)

Winner Think Brick Awards for *Melbourne Holocaust Museum* (building) (Category: Horbury Hunt Commercial Award)

Mazel Tov to Holocaust survivor Peter Gaspar, who received an OAM at the 2024 Australia Day Honours, and to Dr Henry Ekert AM, who was honoured with a Life Membership Award from the Australian and New Zealand Children's Haematology/Oncology Group.

CONDOLENCE

We were saddened by the passing of two instrumental leaders in our organisation. Holocaust survivor and long-term MHM volunteer Irma Hanner OAM passed away in July. Irma began volunteering at MHM in 2000. She inspired thousands of students and visitors, and all of us at MHM, with her incredible experience of survival and her dedication to educating against hate.

Ursula Flicker, who devoted more than two decades to the museum, also passed away. Her contributions to the management of our archives were invaluable, and MHM owes much of its current success to her unwavering commitment. Her legacy will live on through the Ursula Flicker Archive.



Michael Debinski OAM,
Co-President



Suzanne Hampel OAM,
Co-President



Dr Steven Cooke,
CEO

A Message From the CEO and Co-Presidents

2024 marked a significant milestone as we celebrated 40 years of the Melbourne Holocaust Museum's vital work.

This anniversary year gave us an opportunity to reflect on our journey from our small beginnings as the Jewish Holocaust Centre to today's world-class institution, while simultaneously facing unprecedented challenges that underscore the ongoing importance of our original purpose.

Throughout this milestone year, we have witnessed the continued rise of antisemitism globally and within Australia, reaffirming that our educational work remains as crucial as ever. Our expanded facilities and dedicated team have enabled us to reach more students, educators, community members and corporate organisations than in any previous year. This gives us the opportunity to share the testimonies of Holocaust survivors and the lessons they impart for contemporary society.

Under the leadership of new CEO Dr Steven Cooke, we have built upon the strong foundation established during our museum's redevelopment, implementing innovative educational programs, new special exhibitions such as *Underground: the Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto*, and expanding our range of public programs. Our survivor community continues to inspire and guide us. The warm reception from visitors to our new museum has been overwhelming, with record attendance figures and positive feedback. We have hosted distinguished guests from government, education, and international organisations who recognise the significance of our work in combating hatred and promoting understanding.

Late last year, the Board endorsed a new strategic plan with the following focus areas:

- 1** Expanding our reach as a Centre of Excellence in Holocaust Education, Memorialisation and Research
- 2** Enhancing our Advocacy and Impact
- 3** Conserving the Voices of the Holocaust
- 4** Completing the transition from the 'Jewish Holocaust Centre' to the 'Melbourne Holocaust Museum'

As we look to the future, we remain committed to honouring the legacy of Holocaust survivors by being, in Peter Gaspar's words:



Above: Dr Steven Cooke, chairman Dani Dayan, Sue Hampel and Michael Debinski.

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We all have the ability to make a difference in the lives of others. What kind of difference you make will depend on the choices you make... The choices you make will define you.

Peter Gaspar OAM

We stand firm against antisemitism and all forms of racism and discrimination, working toward a more just and compassionate society.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our Holocaust survivors, dedicated staff, volunteers, donors and community supporters whose contributions make our work possible. Your commitment to Holocaust education and remembrance sustains our purpose and empowers us to face the challenges ahead with determination and hope.

Together, we continue the essential work of ensuring that the Holocaust is never forgotten, and its lessons never lost.





My first 100 days as CEO

Dr Steven Cooke, CEO

This is my first annual report as CEO of the Melbourne Holocaust Museum, and I find myself reflecting on a meaningful and transformative first year.

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This first year has reinforced my belief in our museum's essential role in building a more compassionate society.

We continue the vital work of ensuring “Never Again” remains not just a phrase, but a lived commitment.

The transition began with a comprehensive handover period with my predecessor, Jayne Josem, who shared her experiences of decades of dedicated work at the museum. Jayne's patient guidance and institutional knowledge proved invaluable, ensuring continuity in our vital purpose.

My immediate priority was getting to know our dedicated staff, volunteers, and especially our Holocaust survivors. Their powerful testimonies and unwavering commitment to education always have been and always will be at the heart of our institution. This was all the more important given we effectively opened a completely new museum at the end of 2023, albeit one with a 40-year history. These ongoing conversations shaped my understanding of how we honour that legacy while at the same time engaging new audiences with the lessons of the past.

This included the development of new partnerships, including with the ABC, our first special exhibition *Underground: the Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto*, and informed the development of the new strategic plan towards the end of the year.

Of particular note in 2024 was the visit in November of Dani Dayan, Chair of Yad

Vashem, to give the annual Rosenkranz Oration. His profound words on the role of a Holocaust Museum and unwavering focus on our primary purpose of commemorating the six million and helping all learn about the lessons of past, was an inspiration.

At a time of great uncertainty and soul searching the exhortation to remember why we are here was timely.

The efforts of all at the museum were evidenced through record numbers of general visitors, increased numbers of school students visiting the museum and – in a time of global uncertainty and cost of living pressures at home – a record fundraising total.

Challenges remain, particularly in addressing rising antisemitism locally and globally. We launched our initiative, *Critical Thinking is Critical: Educate, Innovate and Advocate against Antisemitism* and strengthened partnerships with government, community leaders, and cultural and educational institutions to develop unified responses to hatred in all forms.

FORMING meaningful partnerships

As a museum dedicated to Holocaust remembrance, preservation and education, we are committed to building meaningful partnerships that expand our reach and amplify our impact. With the reopening of our museum to the public in late 2023, 2024 presented us with remarkable opportunities to collaborate with prestigious museums, organisations and institutions.

INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCES

We have continued to strengthen our relationship with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) throughout 2024. Our CEO Dr Steven Cooke, who holds the chair of the museums and memorials working group, attended meetings throughout 2024 to collaborate with peak bodies in addressing key challenges facing Holocaust museums and memorials in today's world. By providing our localised perspective on an international stage, we have adopted best-practice approaches that address the nuanced challenges we face.

Additionally, we proudly joined the TikTok Education Initiative in 2024. With antisemitism reaching a new height on social media platforms post 7 October 2023, this initiative enabled us to engage with Holocaust museums and Jewish organisations worldwide in an effort to fortify our presence on the widely used TikTok platform.

In November, we participated in an onsite conference that brought together organisations from Europe, South America, New Zealand, Africa and Australia. This event provided an invaluable opportunity for us to share knowledge, build meaningful connections, and enhance our capacity to engage and educate younger audiences in the digital age.

CULTURAL & ARTS SECTOR

Throughout 2024, we partnered with numerous cultural institutions to deliver enriching experiences for both our loyal audiences and new visitors. Earlier in the year, we collaborated with the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) to offer exclusive "after-hours" tours to their members, drawing a diverse audience from the arts and culture community.

In mid-2024, we began the Journeys of Hope partnership education project with ABC Education, bringing the migration stories of five Holocaust survivors directly into the classroom. After a successful soft launch in late 2024, we expect this project to be a popular educational tool in schools in 2025. In August, we joined forces with the Shrine of Remembrance and Melbourne Jewish Book Week to discuss the award-winning book *The Dressmakers of Auschwitz*, featuring author and historian Lucy Adlington. We are eager to continue nurturing our relationship with Melbourne's cultural and arts community.

Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited to explore further partnership opportunities and to continue to strengthen our impact as one of Melbourne's premier cultural institutions and museums.



Above: Images from the inaugural Special Exhibition - *Underground: The Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto*.
Photographed by Simon Shiff

Exhibits & experiences

At the heart of the Melbourne Holocaust Museum's vision is the amplification of survivors' stories to foster education, acceptance and understanding.

2024 has been marked by significant milestones and achievements as we fully settled into our new building, continued to grow our education and corporate programs and reinforced our position as a vital cultural hub.

Our expert education team stands at the forefront of Holocaust education, crafting experiences that combine excellence in pedagogy with profound emotional resonance. Each year, tens of thousands of participants—from young students to educators to adult learners—engage with our carefully designed programs that transform historical understanding into meaningful lessons of hope, resilience and humanity.

Through our diverse range of programs and exhibitions, the MHM has continued its mission to inspire, educate and engage audiences of all ages. The educational impact has been particularly noteworthy this year, with the schools' program experiencing remarkable growth. In 2024, the MHM welcomed more than 27,000 school students from across the state to participate in our acclaimed *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* exhibition and *In Touch with Memory*, the MHM program aimed at secondary students.

Our adult education programs have also flourished, with the MHM corporate programs experiencing increased demand and growth. More than 870 professionals participated in our bespoke educational experiences, demonstrating a growing recognition of the importance of Holocaust education in professional development contexts. Across our Hidden and ITWM programs we also educated 2000 teachers who came with their students.



Through our diverse range of programs and exhibitions, the MHM has continued its mission to inspire, educate, and engage audiences of all ages.

Hidden: Seven Children Saved continues to inspire audiences across demographics. Thousands of students across Levels 5 – 8 experienced *Hidden: Seven Children Saved*, as MHM continues to foster the enduring impact of the lessons at the heart of our learning framework and programs. *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* has also garnered recognition from across the museum and cultural heritage sectors, receiving multiple prestigious accolades and awards that affirm its innovative approach and profound impact. These awards not only support our curatorial vision but also recognise our commitment to honouring survivors' stories through exhibition design and practices.

The Museum's new Alter Family Special Exhibitions gallery made its debut with ***Underground: The Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto***, a carefully curated display that brought together rare treasures from the Oneg Shabbat (Emanuel Ringelblum) Archive alongside Warsaw Ghetto artefacts generously donated by Melbourne Holocaust survivors. This exhibition was in partnership with the NS-Dokumentationszentrum Munich and Jewish Historical Institute.

Underground represents a significant achievement for the Museum, not only as the inaugural exhibition in our new space but also as a powerful testament to historical preservation and remembrance. The exhibition resonated deeply with the public, drawing significant attendance, with 3000 visitors experiencing this important collection during its run.

The thoughtful combination of international archival materials with local survivors' contributions created a uniquely

meaningful experience that connected our Melbourne community directly to this pivotal chapter of Holocaust history, embodying the MHM mission to preserve memory and promote understanding through authentic historical artefacts and testimonies.

The MHM also partnered with ABC Education to create a new resource for secondary school students and teachers. This new educational resource, *Journeys of Hope* consists of five short video interviews with Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Australia as children.

The short films are designed to be an enduring resource for use in the classroom and explore a number of themes relevant to Australia's rich migrant history - the struggles of adjusting to life in a new country, and the triumphs and successes of building a new future in Australia.

What distinguishes the MHM approach is the seamless integration of evidence-based pedagogy with the authentic voices and experiences of Holocaust survivors. This methodology creates learning opportunities that transcend traditional education, leaving lasting impressions that shape participants' worldviews and ethical frameworks.

The MHM remains steadfastly committed to the founding vision of our survivor community. Their mandate to educate future generations continues to guide our work, ensuring that education remains our fundamental purpose and enduring legacy.

MELBOURNE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM FUTUREGEN

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It's hard to choose which part of the new museum I am most drawn to.

It's a toss-up between the beautifully understated library, where hundreds of books trace the history of the Holocaust and preserve the haunting memories of survivors, and the digital donor board, which proudly guards the central foyer.

The donor board tells a compelling tale of a different kind – a story of a community that, through ingenuity and tenacity, has prospered in Australia. As I cast my eyes across the board, I silently acknowledge and thank these donors, who over the past 40 years have so generously ensured the continuity of MHM, ever mindful of the responsibility to honour the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, to preserve the museum's precious collection and to educate against hate.

A close inspection of the names also reveals a striking absence of people under the age of 60. My generation, it seems, has been overly reliant on our elders when it comes to supporting this vital institution.

This is the issue that the FutureGen initiative is hoping to address. Our committee plans to harness the

excitement generated by the new, award-winning building and the deeply moving permanent exhibitions, to promote engagement with MHM and to ensure it continues to have a profound impact, well into the future.

We are the new custodians of survivor stories. For me, this privilege and the accompanying responsibility has been underscored by the recent passing of my grandmother who was a Holocaust survivor.

FutureGen will support MHM in its quest to amplify survivor stories and educate about the dangers of antisemitism. I hope everyone will feel inspired to take up the mantle of this important mission at this critical time in our community's history.

Romy Moshinsky is a memoirist and publisher. She is a proud member of the FutureGen Committee.



Above: Images from the FutureGen launch event. Photographed by Jarrod Freedman.

School Visits & Virtual Workshops 2024

Over the last year, more than 26,730 students from schools and other education institutions visited the MHM. We are very excited to see this number continue to grow as we plan to welcome more students than ever before.

Academy Of Mary Immaculate	Emmanuel College Warrnambool	Melton Secondary College-CaLM	St Albans Secondary College
Aitken College	Emmaus College	Link up Campus	St Aloysius College
Alamanda K-9 College	Epping Secondary College	Mentone Girls' Grammar School	St Andrews Anglican College
Albert Park College	Fairhills High School	Mentone Girls Secondary College	St Andrews Christian College
Alexandra Secondary College	Fitzroy High School	Mentone Grammar School	St Bede's College
Alice Miller School	Frankston High School	Mercy Regional College	St Catherine's School
Alphington Grammar School	Geelong High School	Mernda Hills Christian College	St Columba's College
Altona College	Geelong Lutheran College	Methodist Ladies' College	St Joseph's College Geelong
Ararat College	Genazzano FCJ College	Mill Park Secondary College	St Leonard's College Brighton
Ashwood High School	Gilson College Taylors Hill	Mirboo North Secondary College	St Mary MacKillop College
Ave Maria College	Gisborne Secondary College	Monbulk College	St Mary of the Angels Secondary College
Bacchus Marsh Grammar - Maddingley Campus	Glen Eira College	Montmorency Secondary College	St Michael's Grammar School
Bacchus Marsh Grammar - Woodlea	Glen Waverley Secondary College	Mordialloc College	St Monica's College
Baimbridge College	Gold Creek School	Mount Lilydale Mercy College	St Patricks College
Ballarat Christian College	Goulburn Valley Grammar School	Mount Rowan Secondary College	St Paul's Anglican Grammar School
Ballarat Grammar Schools City Cite	Greensborough Secondary College	Mount Scopus Memorial College	Star of the Sea College
Balwyn High School	Hallam Senior Secondary College	Mount St Joseph Girls' College	Staughton College
Bass Coast College-Community VCAL Program Campus	Hampton Park Secondary College	Mount Waverley Secondary College	Strathcona Baptist Girls' Grammar
Bayside Christian College	Hawkesdale P12 College	Mountain District Community College	Strathmore Secondary College
Bayswater Secondary College	Hazel Glen College	Mullauna College	Sunbury College
Beaconhills College - Berwick Campus	Heritage College	Murtoa College	Sunbury Downs Secondary College
Beaufort Secondary College	Heritage College Knox - Main Campus	Myrtleford P-12 College	Sunshine College West Campus
Beaumaris Secondary College	Hillcrest Christian College	Nagle College	Suzanne Cory High School
Belgrave Heights Christian School	Holy Trinity Lutheran College	Narre Warren South P-12 College	Swinburne Senior Secondary College
Belmont High School	Hopetoun P-12 College	Nazareth College	Sydney Road Community School
Benalla Flexible Learning Centre	Hoppers Crossing Secondary College	Northcote High School	Tarneit P-9 College
Bendigo South East College	Indie School Greensborough	Northern College of the Arts and Technology	The Grange P-12 College
Bentleigh Secondary College	Ivanhoe Girls' Grammar School	Northside Christian College	The Hills Christian Community School
Berwick Secondary College	John Monash Science School	Norwood Secondary College	The King David School
Beth Rivkah Ladies College	Kambrya College	Nossal High School	Thomas Carr College
Bialik College	Kew High School	Notre Dame College	Thornbury High School
Birchip P-12 School	Keysborough Secondary College	Nunawading Christian College	Tintern Grammar
Boort District P-12 School	Kilvington Grammar School	Oberon High School	Toorak College
Bourke High School	Kings Christian College	Officer Secondary College	Trafalgar High School
Box Hill High School	Kingswood College	Our Lady of Sion College	Trinity Anglican College
Brentwood Secondary College	Koonung Secondary College	Overnewton Anglican Community College	Trinity College Colac
Brighton Secondary College	Kurnai College - University Campus	Pakenham Secondary College	University High School
Broadford Secondary College	Kyneton High School	Parkdale Secondary College	Upper Yarra Secondary College
Brunswick Secondary College	Lalor Secondary College	Pascoe Vale Girls Secondary College	Upwey High School
Buckley Park College	Launceston College	Patterson River Secondary College	Victorian College for the Deaf
Camberwell Girls Grammar School	Lauriston Girls' School Armadale	Peninsula Grammar	Victorian College of the Arts School
Camberwell Grammar School	Lavalla Catholic College	Penleigh & Essendon Grammar School	Victory Christian College
Camberwell High School	Laverton P-12 College	Keilor East	Victory Lutheran College
Carey Baptist Grammar School	Leongatha Secondary College	Phoenix P-12 Community College	Viewbank College
Carrum Downs Secondary College	Lilydale High School	Point Cook Senior Secondary College	Wangaratta High School
Castlemaine Secondary College	Loreto College Ballarat	Prahran High School	Warrandyte High School
Cathedral College Wangaratta	Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak	Preston High School	Warrnambool College
Catherine McAuley College	Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School	Ranges TEC	Waverley Christian College - Wantirna South
Catholic Ladies' College	Loyola College	Rivercrest Christian College	Weeroona College
Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs	Luther College	Rochester Secondary College	Wellington Secondary College
Catholic Regional College Keilor North	Lyndhurst Secondary College	Rosebud Secondary College	Werribee Secondary College
Caulfield Grammar School	MacKillop Catholic Regional College	Rutherglen High School	Wesley College Elsternwick
Cheltenham Secondary College	Macleod College	Sacre Coeur	Wesley College Glen Waverley
Cire Community School - Lilydale Campus	MacRobertson Girls High School	Sacred Heart College Newtown	Westall Secondary College
Citipointe Christian College	Marian College Myrtleford	Sacred Heart College Yarrowonga	Western Port Secondary College
Clonard College	Maribyrnong Secondary College	Sacred Heart Girls' College	Whitefriars College
Clyde Secondary College	Marist College Bendigo	Sale College - Macalister	William Angliss Institute
Cranbourne East Secondary College	Marsden High School	Salesian College Chadstone	William Ruthven Secondary College
Cranbourne Secondary College	Maryborough Education Centre	Salesian College Sunbury	Williamstown High School
Crusoe 7-10 Secondary College	Mazenod College	Saltwater P-9 College	Woodleigh School
Dandenong High School	McClelland College	Sandringham College - 10-12 Campus	Yarra Valley Grammar School
Diller Teen Fellows	McKinnon Secondary College	Scotch College	Yarram Secondary College
Dimboola Memorial Secondary College	Melbourne Girls' College	Seymour College	Yarrowonga P-12 College
Donvale Christian College	Melbourne Girls Grammar	Shelford Girls' Grammar	Yea High School
Dromana Secondary College	Melbourne Grammar School	Shepparton ACE Secondary College	Yea High School-Chinese Community Centre
Edenbrook Secondary College	Melbourne High School	Shepparton Christian College	
Elisabeth Murdoch College	Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School	Simonds Catholic College	
Elwood Secondary College	Melton Christian College	South Oakleigh Secondary College	
	Melton Secondary College	Springside West Secondary College	

Making History Accessible

2024 saw the MHM achieve two major projects in the collections department: our new library catalogue, GeniePlus, and our new collections management software (CMS), Argus. Both changes have allowed us to streamline our collection management processes, and increase public access to our collections.



Above: Maria Kamm (centre) with friends in Kyoto, Japan, 1941.
MHM Archives, Maria Kamm Collection, Object ID 1727-1.

The seed for this transition was planted in 2014, with the museum's 30th anniversary.

The museum's first 30 years were focused on collecting and preserving; the next 30 years would be about discovery and access – both local and the world over. In order for our Melbourne survivors' experiences to be represented in their complete scope, each aspect of our collections – archives, testimonies and library - needed to be connected and have the means to speak to one another.

For the museum library, this meant breaking away from the auspices of the Lamm Jewish Library of Australia's catalogue, which had been hosting our bibliographic records since 2012. This would afford us the autonomy to display our branding, to personalise online bibliographic displays and exhibitions, and to cross-reference other aspects of the museum's collections.

Beyond having a standard record summary about a survivor's memoir, we could also provide a gateway to their testimony record, artefact collection, related event notification, or create a special online catalogue exhibition tab to showcase the survivor.

Additionally, we could tailor our catalogue to introduce meaningful tabs that complemented our researchers' most popular search trends and customise their search experience.

In 2021, funding was secured for implementation, and planning began. Following a long process of back-end customisation and importing data, our vision was finally realised with the library catalogue launching to the public in early October 2024.

There are many more exciting initiatives in development for our library catalogue to realise its full potential as a robust resource repository to enhance the researcher's experience. This includes the completion and public launch of our specialist research topics and online exhibition tabs. There is also the catalogue's add-on Overdrive platform. Overdrive is a well-established e-suite host elected by many libraries for their online catalogues. It enables the e-lending of digital resources such as audio and e-books. Our specific intent is for hosting eBook versions of Melbourne Holocaust memoirs that the museum holds printing and distribution rights to. Thereby, enabling our memoirs a wider reach.

We hope to expand on our existing link to Google Books' ISBN tool to direct researchers to our catalogue and explore future partnerships with national and international databases such as National Library of Australia's Trove and the global library catalogue WorldCat. In short, we are extending our reach for quicker, easier and more meaningful public discovery of our library collection.

Our collections management software, providing our back-end catalogue, as well as public access to our archives and testimonies, has seen a similar shift.

Since 2014, the museum had been using DBTextworks and its complementary public-facing component, Presto, to catalogue our archives and testimonies and make them publicly available. By 2019, this software was no longer meeting our needs, as it lacked the ability to create connections between records which would allow us to provide broader context and further research pathways to dive into survivor stories.

The collections teams canvassed several products available, before selecting Lucidea's Argus Museums CMS as the most appropriate for our museum. Argus allows researchers to view a survivor's collection as a whole, including historical information about their experiences and links to other resources, as well as providing a platform to build online exhibitions. In the back-end, Argus allows us to link object records with donor records, location records, and accession paperwork, streamlining our work processes and ensuring clear and readily-accessible documentation of the museum collection.

The process of migrating to Argus began in late 2022, with consultation on our needs and the needs of our audience. Our existing data was then exported from DBTextworks, and transformed to suit import into Argus. Finally, the collections team worked with Lucidea to design a public-facing portal. The public collections portal went live in February 2024. Throughout 2024, the portal received almost 5000 visits, including members of the public and internal museum staff utilising the collection for their work. In December 2024, the portal received visits from users in Australia, the USA, Israel, Mexico and Brazil.

We were thrilled to see the new online catalogue in action in October, when we were contacted by the Silent Heroes Memorial Centre in Berlin, Germany. Through our public portal, the centre's staff had located an image of Holocaust survivor Maria Kamm, which they requested to display in their exhibition. Maria was one of almost 2000 European Jews saved thanks to a visa granted by the Japanese vice-consul in Lithuania, Chiune Sugihara. Thanks to the accessibility of our online collection, the Silent Heroes Memorial Centre was able to learn more about Maria's story, which they now share online and in their permanent exhibition, enabling a global audience to learn from the experiences of this Melbourne Holocaust survivor.

We are excited to see what possibilities these new platforms will bring in the future.

Making a DIFFERENCE

Volunteering at MHM

In 2024, our volunteer program reached new heights, achieving remarkable milestones each month.

With the onboarding of our new Volunteer Coordinator, we were able to focus on recruiting new volunteers, tracking data for the first time, and celebrating the continued dedication of our long-term volunteers.

This renewed focus allowed us to strengthen our program, ensuring that every volunteer felt valued, supported and empowered in their roles.

After three years of closure, we entered 2024 with a newly renovated building, and our volunteers were needed more than ever. Their presence was essential in bringing our revitalised space to life, ensuring that visitors, school groups and community members could engage meaningfully with our exhibitions and programs. We were thrilled to host nine information sessions throughout the year for our six key departments, which resulted in 120 new active volunteers joining our museum. By the end of 2024, we had grown our cohort to an incredible team of 180 dedicated volunteers.

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organisation, ensuring that education and memorialisation remain at the forefront of everything we do. Since our founding by survivors and volunteers in 1984, we have remained committed to honouring those origins by offering meaningful opportunities that create lasting impact. Whether they are greeting guests at the front desk, assisting with research and translations, leading educational and public tours, or supporting archival work, our volunteers play a vital role in preserving history and enhancing knowledge. Every new volunteer undergoes comprehensive training, equipping them with the skills to create impactful experiences for all visitors.

One of our highlights in 2024 was the opportunity to recognise our volunteers for their years of dedicated service. In May, during National Volunteer Week, ten of our volunteers were honoured at the Glen Eira Volunteer Recognition Awards, held at Glen Eira Town Hall. The event celebrated their, their long-standing commitment to our





organisation with each nominee receiving a certificate from the City of Glen Eira Mayor. Among those honoured were Holocaust survivors Abram Goldberg OAM and Paul Grinwald acknowledged for over 40 years and 30 years of service respectively. These individuals have contributed so much through their steadfast presence, care, and commitment, and we look forward to continuing to honour our volunteers' dedication and contributions in the years to come.

Our volunteers reflect the diverse fabric of our community—individuals of all ages and backgrounds, united by a shared passion for learning, community building, and professional development. One of our dedicated Visitor Experience volunteers, Jenny Sach, shared her reflections on the personal impact of volunteering at the MHM and the unique connections she has formed. In her role, Jenny guides the *Walk With Me*, VR experience and welcomes visitors to our exhibitions. When asked about her favourite part of volunteering, her answer is simple: the people.

"You get to meet a wide variety of people. And sometimes you learn what brings them here. And you can also learn how they felt after they had been through. Public, volunteers, survivors... and in the quiet moments to just keep learning."


Jenny also spoke fondly of her connection with our 2023/2024 Austrian Abroad Participants - Max, David, and Luise. *"That friendship with young people from another country, and how easily we seemed to gel at different ages—we had a common ground together. That is something I won't forget, I'll always remember them."*

CLOSING OUT 2024 WITH GRATITUDE

To close out an incredible year, we hosted a special morning tea in December, welcoming 160 of our dedicated volunteers to celebrate. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together, reflect on shared achievements and look ahead, sharing our aspirations for 2025.

As we move into the new year, we are incredibly grateful for every volunteer who gives their time and commitment to MHM. Our volunteers are the heart of our work—the hands that lift, the voices that inspire, and the strength that carries us forward. Their efforts transform challenges into opportunities and hope into action, bringing our mission to life in ways that words alone cannot capture.

Thanks to their dedication, we can continue to educate, remember and inspire future generations. We look forward to welcoming new volunteers and growing our community together.



Visitor experiencing
*Virtual Reality:
Walk With Me.*
Photographed by
Simon Shiff.

Visitor experience is at the heart of any museum, shaping how people engage with and interpret the space from the moment they arrive to the moment they leave.

At the Museum, guided by the Visitor Experience Master Plan, our goal is to create a warm and welcoming environment where visitors feel safe and comfortable exploring the difficult topics and themes of the Holocaust.

The Visitor Experience team works to ensure that all visitors feel welcomed and empowered to become custodians of Holocaust memory and catalysts for positive change. From the outset, we recognised the importance of fostering an environment in which visitors can absorb and engage with the exhibitions meaningfully.

Unlike many other museums, our institution does not attract visitors seeking a casual day out. Instead, people actively choose to come here to learn, bear witness to a dark chapter in history, and also find moments of hope and resilience shared by Holocaust survivors. Overcoming the universal challenge faced by Holocaust museums—encouraging people to step through the door—is a key priority. Once visitors make that decision, it is vital that they feel supported throughout their experience. Visitor feedback reflects this commitment:



”

Everyone was incredibly welcoming and made the experience very meaningful for my friend and me.



The MHM VISITOR EXPERIENCE

An essential part of this process are the dedicated volunteers, interns and staff members who interact directly with the public, helping visitors make personal connections to the experiences presented. Recruitment and training have been an ongoing and evolving process, as we continuously adapt to support the needs of both visitors and volunteers. Supporting volunteers is just as vital as supporting visitors, as they play a crucial role in creating an enriching and meaningful experience. Providing the right tools and training ensures they can engage with visitors confidently and sensitively. Over our first full year, we have continuously refined our approach based on visitor feedback, enhancing our ability to serve both our visitors and volunteers effectively.

Throughout 2024, we gained valuable insights into what visitors seek from their museum experience, most of which align with the Visitor Experience Master Plan. Visitors deeply appreciated the personal connections facilitated by the Visitor Experience team across all exhibitions, particularly with *Hidden: Seven Children Saved* and the Virtual Reality experience. The stories of the seven children in *Hidden* resonated strongly, illustrating how choices—both big and small—shaped their survival. Visitors recognised how even

the smallest acts of kindness had lasting impacts on these children and their families. Visitor feedback highlights this:

“Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and for the way you worked so hard to explain the experiences of survivors. That was most helpful.”

A significant change based on visitor feedback was extending our opening hours and adding an extra day. This adjustment allows visitors greater flexibility to visit when it best suits them, rather than being restricted by our schedule. Given the challenge of encouraging people to visit a Holocaust museum, reducing barriers to entry is essential. The change in hours has also led to a new dynamic, as the general public and school students now overlap. This integration has proven valuable, enabling visitors to witness the impact of Holocaust education on younger generations. It ensures that these lessons continue to be taught and remembered, while also showing students that this is a place of learning for all ages, where people from diverse backgrounds seek to understand history’s lessons.

As we continue to grow and refine our visitor experience, we remain committed to fostering a warm and welcoming environment where learning, reflection and remembrance are deeply supported and encouraged.

Corporate Partnerships

Founded by Holocaust survivors in 1984, the Melbourne Holocaust Museum exists to amplify voices of Holocaust survivors.

We can only keep delivering our important work because of our generous community and partners.

Partnerships are key to MHM's strategy to expand support for our growth and sustainability. We have ambitious goals on our path to improve community connections and address growing racism and antisemitism. To achieve these goals requires significant resources to provide safe and professional programs.

MHM IS INVITING PARTNERS TO SUPPORT US IN KEY AREAS INCLUDING:

- 1** Increasing public access to exhibitions, public programs and education
- 2** Receiving key items, technologies and advisory services
- 3** Increasing engagement in events and the museum

MHM is looking for partnerships that meet these needs and are aligned with our values. In return, we can provide generous support including corporate training for staff to excel in their work, and the benefit of being seen to support a better world for all.

Below: Sam Shlansky, Dr Breann Fallon, Anita Lester and Bendigo Bank representatives learning about their partnership.



What does a partnership look like?

In late 2024, **Bendigo Bank Caulfield Park** commenced a partnership with MHM to support Anita Lester's portraits of Holocaust survivors. This is important for many reasons, including increasing engagement in our museum. There is a strong alignment between Bendigo Bank's focus on being a better bank working with community and our community-led approach to all of our work. We have already recognised this partnership through inclusion on the donor board seen by our thousands of visitors. Next, we will run a corporate training program with their team so that they learn more about the community they support – building cultural competence. This is the start of a long and valuable relationship with the

Bendigo Bank Caulfield Park team.

Another valued partnership is with **Lowe Lippmann Associates**. Since 2019 they have generously provided pro-bono auditing services for MHM. Lowe Lippmann Associates are committed to providing professional and quality services, just as we do with our work. We have recognised this partnership on our website and the donor wall, providing exposure to tens of thousands of people.

Next, we will explore ways to further benefit their teams. This is a sustained and valued partnership with Lowe Lippmann Associates.

Reach out to Grants and Partnerships Specialist Sam Shlansky at sam.shlansky@mh.org.au to explore ways to support our integral work.

Partner with us to create a kinder world for generations to come.

DONORS

MELBOURNE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

Our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all our donors and funders — your support continues to allow us to preserve Holocaust memory and teach the important lessons of the Holocaust.

BEQUESTS

The Estate of the late Elizabeth Lazlo
The Estate of the late Kenneth Ray
The Estate of the late Rachel Magda Hornung
May their memory be a blessing.

CORPORATE AND PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

Arnold Bloch Leibler	Kogan
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Fella Hamilton	Project Black
Gary Peer	Ramler International
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ABC Education
Besen Family Foundation
Community Bank Caulfield Park (Bendigo Bank)
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims
Against Germany (Claims Conference)
Department of Industry Science and Resources
Department of Education Victoria
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
Erdi Foundation
Gandel Foundation
Pratt Foundation
Robert Salzer Foundation
Spotlight Foundation
Telematics Trust
William Angliss Charitable Fund
Australia and New Zealand

The Melbourne Holocaust Museum **Foundation**

The aim of the Melbourne Holocaust Museum Foundation is to ensure the future financial security and sustainability of the museum.

It has been chaired and administered since inception by Helen Mahemoff OAM and has a Board of Trustees consisting of Nina Bassat AM, Joey Borensztajn AM, Allen Brostek, Phil Lewis, Jeffrey Mahemoff AO and Helen Mahemoff OAM.

The foundation plays a vital role in financing the ongoing activities of our organisation. While building and growing a substantial endowment fund, the foundation continues

to support the museum's operational costs with a significant annual distribution. We sincerely appreciate the foresight and generosity of people who support the museum by contributing to the endowment fund. We welcome enquiries from major donors and those considering leaving a gift in their will to the foundation.

The Melbourne Holocaust Museum Foundation is a Public Ancillary Fund, ABN 27 013 077 595.

DONORS OF \$1000 AND ABOVE from January to December 2024

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Marjan Erlanger	Jodie Kagan	Adam Messer	Morry & Anna Schwartz	Reuben & Keren Zelwer
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David & Vanessa Fajnkind	Les Kaufman	Shaun Millett	Sidney & Julia Segal	
Sue Fajnkind	Les & Leah Kausman	Mark & Den Montag	Marshall Segan	
Simon & Amy Feiglin	Ashley Kausman & Lisa Mann	Simon & Kelly Morris	Leon & Vivienne Serry	
Dan & Elissa Feldman	Joseph & Yvonne Kay	Lenny & Ilana Moses	Benjamin Shafir	
Leo & Mina Fink Fund	Adam Kaye & Lexi Frydenberg	Richard & Romy Moshinsky	Ian Sharp	
Alan & Elizabeth Finkel		Jon Moss	Douglas Shears	
Paul & Helen Forgasz			Deirdra Shears	

We apologise if your name has been omitted. Please contact Aviva Weinberg donate@mh.org.au for donation or gift in wills enquiries.

2024 Events



Chairman Dani Dayan
in the Memorial Room.
Photographed by
Jarrod Freedman.



Ingrid Stitt MP at the
launch of *Critical Thinking
is Critical*. Photographed
by Jarrod Freedman.

Yom HaShoah panellist,
Adam Butt. Photographed
by Jarrod Freedman.

In 2024, the museum delivered a dynamic calendar of events centered around Holocaust remembrance, education, democratic values and cultural identity.

These programs fostered meaningful dialogue, learning, and community engagement, reflecting a commitment to preserving historical memory and addressing contemporary challenges.

The Fragility of Freedom – IHRD (29 January 2024)

This flagship event focused on the importance of democracy, featuring Nina Bassat AM as a keynote speaker and an esteemed panel: Dr. Daniel Heller, Nyadol Nyuon OAM, and Dr. Kylie Moore-Gilbert, moderated by Dr. Breann Fallon.

Honouring Josh Frydenberg (8 April 2024)

This event acknowledged Josh Frydenberg's significant contributions to Holocaust education, underscoring the importance of political leadership in Holocaust remembrance work.

FutureGen Launch (18 April 2024)

The launch of the FutureGen initiative drew 324 attendees, marking a major step in engaging the next generation with Holocaust education and leadership development.
Key Themes: Empowerment of young voices and sustaining Holocaust memory through innovative programming.

Yom HaShoah – Inheriting Memories and Preserving Truth (6 May 2024)

A panel discussion with Rachelle Unreich, Anita Lester, and Adam Butt, moderated by Dr Breann Fallon, explored the custodianship of Holocaust memory in an era of growing misinformation and denial. This event reinforced the urgency of safeguarding historical truth and inspired attendees to consider their own roles as memory keepers.



Friends of IHRA Launch (9 May 2024)

Held in parliament, this event celebrated the launch of the Parliamentary Friends of IHRA, emphasizing governmental commitment to Holocaust remembrance.

Hope is a Verb – Ben M. Freeman (6 June 2024)

A powerful conversation on Jewish pride and identity, particularly in the context of rising antisemitism post-October 7th. Moderated by Dr. Simon Holloway, the session was targeted at FutureGen audiences. Discussion Points were navigating hostile environments, fostering Jewish pride, and supporting intergenerational transmission of identity.

On Moral Complexities and the Holocaust (15 August 2024)

This inaugural event tackled complex ethical questions arising from Holocaust history. Moderated by Jayne Josem, this was a dialogue between Associate Professors Patrick Stokes and Leslie Cannold.

Launch of “Critical Thinking is Critical” (22 August 2024)

The Melbourne Holocaust Museum has received funding through the Multicultural Affairs portfolio of the Victorian Government for a ground breaking project, *“Critical Thinking is Critical: Educate, Innovate and Advocate against Antisemitism”*. It was launched by Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Ingrid Stitt MP and Hugh de Kretser, President, Australian Human Rights Commission.

In Conversation with Dani Dayan (6 November 2024)

A profound conversation with Dani Dayan, Chairman of Yad Vashem, examining the evolving challenges of Holocaust remembrance in the modern world. This event was for major donors and provided fresh perspectives on remembrance strategies.

Betty & Shmuel Rosenkranz Oration:

Zachor – The Challenges of Holocaust Remembrance Today (7 November 2024)

Dani Dayan delivered the prestigious oration, focusing on current obstacles in Holocaust education and memory preservation.

Exhibition Launch: *Underground – The Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto* (14 November 2024)

This exhibition launch unveiled rare archives from the Warsaw Ghetto, highlighting clandestine documentation efforts by Jewish communities during the Holocaust.



Top left: Audience at the Hope is a verb - Ben M. Freeman event. Photographed by Jarrod Freeman.

Top right: MHM representatives at the Pride March.

Above: Sam Kassow, Sandy Saxon, Michal Trevacz, Sue Hampel, Mike Debinski, Gerry Pearce, Michal Majewski and Dr Steven Cooke at the launch of *Underground: The Hidden Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto*.

REVENUE

Operation revenue	\$4,056,077
Capital campaign revenue	\$460,001
Other revenue	\$642,167
Interest Revenue	\$12,479
Total revenue & other income	\$5,170,724

EXPENSES

Administration expenses	\$317,914
Professional fees	\$459,323
Employee benefits expense	\$3,188,894
Depreciation & amortisation	\$797,076
Loss on disposal of assets	\$1,739
Occupancy expenses	\$661,923
Donation to MHM Foundation	\$158,955
Other expenses	\$561,742
Total expenses	\$5,986,872

Deficit for the year attributable to the members of Melbourne Holocaust Museum Inc	(\$816,148)
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Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the members of Melbourne Holocaust Museum Inc	(\$816,148)
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Deficit/comprehensive income is made up of monies received specifically for the new museum building project and have expended and capitalised in the balance sheet.

FINANCIALS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
DECEMBER 2024

ASSETS

Current assets	\$377,717
Non-current assets	\$28,476,863
Total assets	\$28,854,580

LIABILITIES

Current liabilities	\$691,083
Non-current liabilities	\$38,421
Total liabilities	\$729,504
Net assets	\$28,125,076

EQUITY

Retained Surplus	\$28,125,076
Total equity	\$28,125,076

CONTACT

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”

The history you preserve is so important...Sadly, we know that history can repeat itself, so by maintaining the knowledge about past atrocities, we can hopefully prevent new ones from occurring.

Public Visitor, October 2024

MELB^{URNE}
HOLOCAUST
MUSEUM

Judy & Leon Goldman Learning Centre