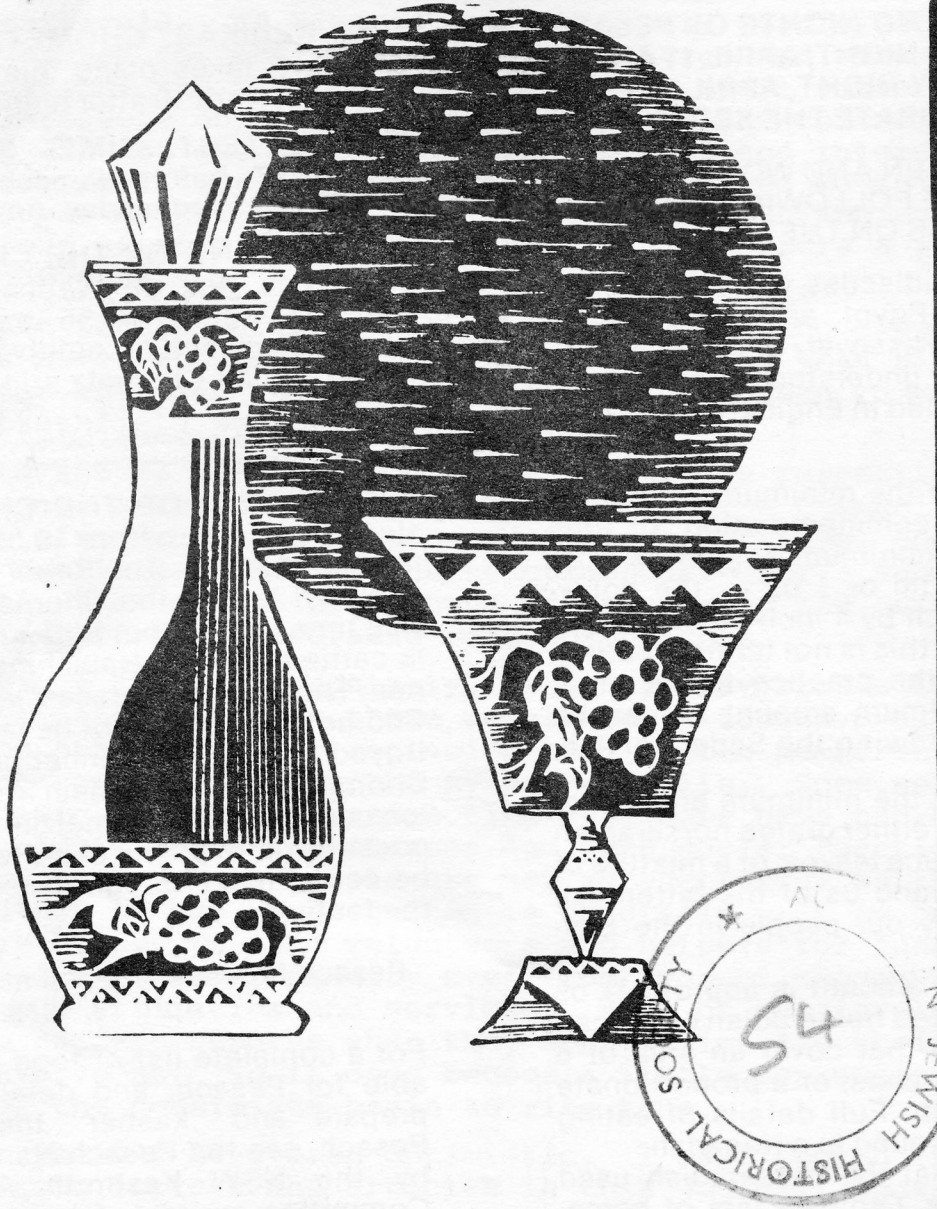


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Strathfield & District Hebrew Congregation

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April 1979
Nissan 5739

PESACH

5739 — 1979

(April 12 to April 19, 1979)

**ON THE FIRST TWO NIGHTS OF PESACH
WEDNESDAY NIGHT, APRIL 11 AND
THURSDAY NIGHT, APRIL 12,
WE CELEBRATE THE SEDER.**

**ALL JEWISH MEN AND WOMEN MUST
FULFIL THE FOLLOWING FOUR
OBLIGATIONS ON THESE NIGHTS:**

1. To recite and discuss the story of our Exodus from Egypt, as set out in the Hagadah for Passover. (If Hebrew cannot be read or understood the Hagadah should be recited in English or any other language).
2. To eat at least the minimum amount of MATZOH in commemoration of this Exodus. This minimum amount is approximately 29gm or 1 oz — the equivalent of a 6 inch by 4 inch piece of Matzah. Less than this is not termed 'eating' Matzoh. It is the practice to eat more than this minimum amount as can be seen when following the Seder service.
3. To eat at least the minimum amount of bitter herbs — either grated horseradish or Roman Lettuce leaves, or a mixture of both — to remind us of the bitterness experienced by our people in the Egyptian slavery.
This minimum amount is approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ oz or 21gm of grated horseradish or Roman Lettuce leaves that cover an area of 8 inches by 10 inches, or a proportionate mixture of both. Full details of eating the Murror are found in a Hagadah.
Please note that the horseradish used should be pure. Ordinary jars of horseradish even if produced for Pesach are mixed with other ingredients and cannot be considered as pure "Murror."
4. To drink four cups of wine to express our rejoicing. These cups must contain approx. $3\frac{1}{3}$ fluid ounces and each time at least half the cup should be drunk. One does not fulfil the obligation simply by sipping a few sips. Kosher grape-juice can be used instead of wine. All amounts mentioned above should be eaten within a 4 minute time span.

THE BEDIKAS CHOMETZ (Search for Chometz) takes place this year on Tuesday night April 10 after nightfall.

THE LATEST TIME FOR EATING CHOMETZ before Pesach this year is 10 a.m.* on Wednesday, April 11.

THE BURNING OF THE CHOMETZ takes place this year on Wednesday morning, April 11 before 10.55 a.m.* The "Kol Chamira" is recited, nullifying and making ownerless all Chometz still in one's possession.

* It is preferable not to wait till the last minute but to cease eating or remove the Chometz a half hour before the times mentioned.

THE SELLING OF THE CHOMETZ must also take place, before 10.55 a.m. on Wednesday, April 11. The Rabbi should be empowered to sell the Chometz well before this time. This is not just a mere ritual but is carried out in a Halachically legal manner. Those who possess large stocks of Chometz which cannot be removed or destroyed can in this manner ensure that the Chometz does not remain in their possession over Pesach. Chometz remaining in the possession of a Jew over Pesach may not be eaten, used, bought or sold even after the festival.

**Pesach finishes after 6 p.m. on Thursday,
April 19, 1979.**

For a complete list of food products suitable for Pesach, and details on how to prepare and "kasher" the kitchen for Pesach, see the Pesach Handbook issued by the NSW Kashruth Administration Committee, available from your Synagogue office, or from the Committee's office — 33-3914.

FOR TIMES OF SERVICES
AT THE
STRATHFIELD SYNAGOGUE
ON PESACH —
SEE INSIDE BACK COVER.



From the Rabbi

I was recently asked by a prominent communal personality what I thought would be the future of the outer suburban Jewish communities such as Strathfield. He himself was extremely pessimistic and vehemently argued for the support of a few large and strong synagogues and organisations and the closing down of the small suburban synagogues which, he felt, were only a financial burden on the community in general and did not seem to receive the support and interest of even the community that they claimed to serve. He asked me to tell him how many people of the Strathfield community attend the synagogue more than four or five times a year and how many hours a week was the synagogue open.

He was just a little surprised by my answers - having expected a lower figure. But never-the-less he adamantly maintained that his arguments held true for at least the majority of outer suburban communities and that Strathfield would also soon follow suit.

His opinions set me thinking. It is true that we currently have relatively good attendances at the synagogue for a community of our size. It is also true that we offer religious services, educational and social facilities that are quite commendable for a suburban congregation. But on the other hand if we examine the situation closely we can find considerable room for concern.

Though services are held regularly, it is usually always the same people who attend, and when these people begin to leave us, though there may be other families replacing them on the membership lists, they are not replaced within the synagogue walls. Some services which are basic to any self-respecting synagogue have had to be suspended. Adult education classes and even social functions - which should attract many more people - are not as successful as they could be. The future of our kindergarten is uncertain. It is becoming increasingly harder to find volunteers and helpers for fund-raising, and other work for the community, even from amongst those who gain a lot from our facilities and services. Many of our involved families move to the Eastern suburbs when they want to improve their commitment and involvement. So it does become a little depressing and the words of the pessimists begin to ring true.

In the past years I have been optimistic. I have spoken from the pulpit, written letters and articles in this journal, spoken to many of you privately, worked, and on occasions even begged, for greater attendance in Shule, greater involvement in Jewish education and tradition, and for an up-lifting of commitment to Jewish affairs in general. I do not know how successful I have been. Such things are difficult to judge. But as the current Pesach festival reaches us we have to now, more than ever, attempt to channel its eternal teachings into a relevant message that will help us positively when we contemplate the future and make major decisions in an attempt to improve our current standing.

One of the great messages of Pesach is that the Children of Israel had sunk to the lowest levels, they faced the most difficult trials and tribulations, yet just at the most dark and difficult moment

the miraculous redemption took place. The Midrash tells us that the Jewish people were redeemed from Egypt in the merit of three things. Though they had sunk to the lowest levels over the hundreds of years of bondage, they "did not change their names, they did not change their language and they did not change their manner of dress".

These appear to be relatively minor things, but in reality they held the key for survival of the Children of Israel in those days. They symbolised the pride and commitment that the people still maintained towards their traditions and heritage as the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

If we are to prove the sceptics wrong today, and to ensure our survival as a strong Jewish community, then we too must cultivate a greater pride and commitment to our heritage and traditions. This can even be through starting with relatively simple things. It may be through introducing a few new Jewish practices into the home, through a greater commitment to Jewish education - for both adults and children, and through attending Shule services a little more often. It should also be reflected in the support of all things Jewish.

I hope, within the next few months, to step up my personal contacts with the members of our community - particularly our newer members. In order to help encourage our community to raise its standards of Jewish involvement. Whether this be through attaching MEZUZOT to the doorposts of Jewish homes, helping to introduce Jewish books into the home library, and in general to encourage use of our community's many facilities.

I trust that we shall all be successful, that the message of Pesach will fortify us with the strength to accept upon ourselves the privileges and responsibilities that we accepted upon ourselves when we left Egypt so many thousands of years ago - not just for the sake of freedom from slavery but for the purpose of "serving Him". May we thus be able to prove all the pessimists and cynics completely wrong and may we continue to go from strength to strength as a strong and ever-flourishing community.

With blessings for a Kosher, Happy and meaningful Pesach,

Mordechai Gutnick

RABBI.

The President's Column

Once again I should like to address a few words to our community through the pages of our journal.

Your Board of Management is working hard at ensuring that the Synagogue and its many facilities continue to function in the best possible manner for the welfare of the community. The Board currently consists of Mr I. Lacey (Vice-president), Dr E. Fitchman (Honorary Treasurer), Mr B. Drisin (Honorary Secretary), Mr R. Speiser (Minutes Secretary),

and Messers E. Dahl, B. Edelstein, A. Kohn, J. Lutman, S. Levett, J. Phillips, A Schneider, and myself as President. If you have any comments or suggestions on the management or progress of the Synagogue please do not hesitate to contact any of the members of the Board. At the same time I must once again stress that all board members are working voluntarily in an effort to keep YOUR community going - so your full support at all times, both moral and financial support, is necessary if we are to function properly.

The Shule has been involved in a number of activities as is reported elsewhere in this Journal. However it is my duty to call once again for greater attendances and interest in all services and activities. We have a lot to offer. Our Rabbi and Rebbetzin attend most ably to the spiritual and educational needs of our community. Our Ladies Auxiliary, under the capable Chairmanship of Mrs Sue Cohen are constantly active, whether it be a cake stall at Westfield, the Monster Fete, which will take place on Sunday, 8th April, or even their expert catering for 170 people at our recent Shabbaton. Our kindergarten and Talmud Torah are functioning well. But we must have the full support of all members, in ALL activities and projects.

I would like to welcome our many new members who have joined our community in recent months and extend to them our invitation to avail themselves of all that we have to offer, and to ask for their support in our endeavours in return.

In conclusion I must wish Mazel Tov to all our many members who have had Simchot recently - to Families Merton, Gibbons and Nebenzahl on the Barmitzvahs of Alan, Warwick and Henry; to the Lemberg family on Mira's BatMitzvah; to the Hyman family on the birth of their new grandchildren, and to all the others who have shared their simchot with us. May I also extend the condolences of the whole community to Mrs J. Nagel and her family on the tragic passing of Mr Johnny Nagel - he will be always lovingly remembered by his many friends in our community.

May I wish all our members a Happy Pesach and ask that we all make special efforts to ensure that Pesach services in the Shule are well attended - particularly the special peace service on the second day of Pesach, Friday, April 13th commencing at 9.00 a.m.

SAM STEIF J.P.
PRESIDENT,
STRATHFIELD HEBREW CONGREGATION.

SPECIAL PEACE SERVICE

2nd DAY PESACH - FRIDAY, APRIL 13th at 9.00 a.m.

COME AND PRAY IN GRATITUDE AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Woman to Woman

THE PAGE FOR WOMEN

Compiled and Edited by
Rebbetzin Sarah Gutnick.

Pesach and Purim

The days which join the festivals of *Purim* and *Pesach* are an appropriate time to reflect on the important historical role which Jewish women played in these festivals and on the lessons we may learn from their contribution.

Because of the time-consuming duties of home-making and bringing up children, the *Torah* frees women from the obligation of performing many of the *mitzvos*. However, she is required to participate in the special *mitzvos* connected with the festivals of *Purim* and *Pesach*, such as hearing the reading of the *Megillah* and reading the *Haggadah*. Our Sages explain that these *mitzvos* are given to women because of their share in bringing about the great deliverances commemorated by *Purim* and *Pesach*.

The *Megillah* tells us of the crucial part that Esther had in the miracle of *Purim*. It was Esther who took the first step towards bringing the redemption by telling Mordechai: "Go and gather all the Jews who are in Shushan and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night and day; I and my maidens will also fast." After the three days of fasting and praying, Esther came before the king in the throne-room to intercede for her people. In coming before the king without being summoned she risked her very life; anyone entering the throne-room uninvited was subject to the penalty of death. It is not surprising, therefore, that Esther's vital role is recognised by having both the Book of Esther and the Fast of Esther named for her.

As for Passover, our Sages emphasise in the *Midrash* that it was the Jewish women who kept alive the courage and spirit of the men in those most trying times of Egyptian bondage. Moreover, they raised the generation worthy to receive the *Torah* at Mount Sinai and who later entered the Promised Land, the everlasting inheritance of our people.

The function of Jewish women on each of these two occasions was somewhat different. In the case of Passover, the woman's influence was concentrated in the home and family, displaying all the true feminine Jewish virtues of modesty, piety and faith. In the case of *Purim*, Esther showed that where Divine Providence places a Jewish woman in a position of social prominence and influence, she should use it wholly for the benefit of her people and be ready if necessary to sacrifice her very life for this.



Page from the Sarajevo Haggadah, showing (at top) the Israelites crossing the Red Sea and Pharaoh's men drowning, and (at bottom) Miriam and the women of Israel dancing during the chanting of the Song of the Sea, Spain, 14th cent.