

VALE SAM STEIF

'An exceptional man who dedicated his life to the community'

By **GARETH NARUNSKY**, December 23, 2020



Sam Steif being honoured by UIA in 2013.

THE community is mourning the loss of Sam Steif, a stalwart who gave his all to his people.

Romanian-born Steif, a Holocaust survivor, became involved in the NSW Jewish community after arriving in Australia in the late 1950s. He spent more than four decades devoting his time to JCA, JNF, Montefiore and Strathfield Synagogue.

After retiring in 1989, he walked into the offices of the United Israel Appeal (UIA) and asked to be given something to do. He went on to serve as its director of planned giving from 2000-2018, raising over \$40 million for Israel.

He told *The AJN* in 2015, "Whatever I do, I do because I feel it's necessary and if I can help in any way I can, I don't expect anything as a reward."

He was honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in June 2019.

UIA NSW CEO Yair Miller described Steif as "an exceptional man who dedicated his life to the Jewish community and the people of Israel".

"He raised tens of millions of dollars for Israel and gave his heart and soul for many years to the Jewish Community in Strathfield," Miller said.

"His story of surviving the Shoah and the rebuilding of his life to a point where he gave so much to so many was an inspiration. May his memory be a blessing to his family."

Longtime Strathfield Synagogue board members Josie and Ian Lacey said, "He was an absolutely perfect gentleman always and everyone loved him.

"Strathfield flourished while he was there. He was always respected, everyone cared about him. He was dedicated to the synagogue and to Israel."

Son Charles Steif told *The AJN*, "He was a warm, loving, caring family man to his wife and children.

“He devoted much of his life to his community of Strathfield. During his working life he was deeply involved in JCA and JNF.

“After retirement he took on work at UIA and he truly believed in everything Israel stood for and backed it up through all the work he did.”

He leaves behind children Charles and Sharon, grandchildren Adena and Aidan and family in Israel and the US.