

Around *the community*

GIVING HOLOCAUST EDUCATION A VOICE

Speaker training course for survivors' grandchildren

SHANE DESIATNIK

MICHELLE Levitt established 3G Sydney almost three years ago to empower grandchildren of Holocaust survivors to share their families' Holocaust experiences with others and help combat hate and antisemitism in the process for the next generation.

Already, the volunteer-run initiative has provided speaker training to 22 grandchildren of survivors, who've gone on to talk to more than 1000 students, mainly through the Sydney Jewish Museum's (SJM) education programs.

The next 3G speaker training course will in October, spanning four Sunday morning online classes and one in-person debrief, provided via an ongoing partnership with American not-for-profit LivingLinks.

Levitt said she was driven to set up 3G Sydney as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, Paul Drexler.

"My dad has been sharing his story with students at the SJM for over 20 years and when he stepped off the museum's board in 2022, I stepped on to continue his legacy," Levitt said.

"3G Sydney is now really gaining momentum and unfortunately as we lose more of our remaining Holocaust survivors, Holocaust education becomes even more important for society.

"We're lucky at 3G Sydney to have speakers that can contribute to that, by telling the unique and compelling true stories of their grandparents' survival and what it was like growing up as a survivor's grandchild."

As a young child, Drexler and his family went into hiding in a farmhouse in the Slovak coun-



3G Sydney founder Michelle Levitt with her father Paul Drexler.

tryside when Jews were being rounded up.

But after a few months, their

names were aired on radio with a threat that anyone discovered to be hiding them would be ex-

cuted and so they were forced to go back home, were arrested by the Gestapo within 24 hours and taken to the town of Sered in December 1944, when Drexler saw his father for the last time.

Levitt said, while non-Jewish students can read about the Holocaust, or watch a documentary, having a grandchild of a survivor speak directly to them about what happened to their family "is much more impactful and real and what they can learn from that can really stick".

"The fact that our volunteer speakers are closer in age to the students they speak to, also means that they can relate to them more and that what they say will resonate."

For more information about the next 3G Sydney speaker training course intake, visit www.3gsydney.com or email 3gsydney@gmail.com

IN THE COMMUNITY

AJN STAFF



Photo: Nadine Saacks

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE Join the walk this Sunday

JOIN the Friendship Circle Sydney as they walk together for disability awareness, inclusion and acceptance, while raising funds for programs for young people living with disability in our community.

Starting from 9am on August 31 at an eastern suburbs location, the Friendship Walk's theme this

year is 'Comm-you-nity' and apart from the fun walk, there will also be kids' activities like a giant obstacle course and mini golf, a DJ pumping out dance music and food and drink stalls.

To register, visit www.sydneyfc.org.au/walk

JNF NSW Enter student Hebrew comp

SUBMISSIONS are open until September 12 for JNF NSW's sixth annual Hebrew Writing and Recording Project – an initiative for year 8 to 11 students at Sydney's Jewish schools, Reddam House and BJE-affiliated schools across the state to nurture and celebrate Hebrew language learning.

Run in collaboration with JNF Australia, the University of Sydney and the Suzanne Rutland Foundation, the project encourages students to creatively and accurately express themselves in Hebrew, through both

written and recorded formats.

"This initiative is more than language," JNF NSW education coordinator Hilli Lam said.

"It's about giving students the tools and confidence to express their ideas, values and identity in Hebrew – the language of our people and culture."

This year, there's a choice of three topics.

Outstanding submissions will be recognised with certificates and prizes donated by JNF and the foundation, presented at a ceremony.

Submission criteria and further information is available at jnf.org.au/nsw-hebrewproject-2025

JEWISH HOUSE Matchmaking

JEWISH House recently launched JLinkd – a matchmaking service for Jewish singles, focused on building healthy and meaningful relationships.

Since J Junction, later known as Jconnect, ceased operating three years ago, Jewish House program

coordinator Michelle McEwing said, "We've continued to receive regular enquiries from people looking for help finding a partner, so we've taken up the call!"

"JLinkd is a response to that growing need, offering a personal, values-based approach to matchmaking."

For more information, visit www.jlinkd.org.au

ZDVO Shule choirs hit right note

ZDVO recently held its awareness-raising week in Sydney, featuring a moving and powerful Chazzanim and Shule Choir concert – Songs for Heroes – at North Shore Synagogue (pictured).

It drew an audience of more than 600 people, who were deeply moved by the melodic sounds of the chazzans, choirs and the Chutney Band, featuring Ben Adler on violin and Paul Khodor on piano.



Choirs from the Great Synagogue, Central Synagogue, Kehillat Masada, North Shore Synagogue, Kadimah and the Borowsky Chazanut Singers, performed.

The concert was in honour of the late Theo Whitmont.

Special guests Eytan and Israel shared their miraculous October 7 survival stories.

They also spoke at the "Help Them Heal" event in the eastern suburbs, attended by 350, as did Jonathan Conricus, the former spokesperson of the IDF and senior fellow at the Foundation for Defence of Democracies, via a live cross.

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