

Year in Review 2020

Marie-Luise Skibbe, *Sukkah*, 2020



Our Message



↑
Jessica Bram
Director & CEO



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Gideon Kline
President

It feels an understatement to describe 2020 as a year of exception, unprecedented as it was in global distress and disruption across personal, communal and professional lives.

For the Jewish Museum of Australia: Gandel Centre of Judaica, this impact was keenly felt.

Melbourne's COVID-19 context, and the many months of lockdown and restrictions that ensued, saw our onsite spaces dimmed for a long eleven months and the Museum's doors closed extendedly for the first time since inception.

With our team relocated to work-from-home set ups and building access limited to the oversight and safeguarding of our collection and permanent galleries, the Jewish Museum (like all those similarly affected) faced an unquestionably onerous challenge: to reimagine our already planned annual activities and redefine our engagement strategies through an exclusively digital realm.

It's my privilege, alongside President Gideon Kline, to enunciate the Jewish Museum's exceptional performance in this respect. Within days of finding ourselves in remote 'kitchen table' environments, the Museum adjusted not only its working behaviours, but ways of connecting with and inspiring our audiences as well, across our mission of illuminating Jewish life.

Holding to our values of being authentic, inclusive, innovative and open—and infusing all we do with chesed (kindness and compassion) and tikkun olam (a desire to improve the world)—we created and designed virtual experiences for the young and young-at-heart, pivoted our programs for school and adult learners, creatively and sensitively found ways to mark and celebrate the Jewish festivals and high holy days, and used our social media channels more than ever to continue sharing Jewish excellence and everydayness.

We curated and partnered in programs at home and abroad that showcased our collection and unique Australian Jewish experience, giving voice to the richness of our community's diversity, and we launched our online shop and 360 degree-tour of our four permanent galleries—making the Jewish Museum of Australia truly accessible at any time and from anywhere.

We shared some big news too, announcements that caught attention around the globe and pointed to the change we're thrilled to be bringing reimagining our Museum into a new era and cementing our place and relevance in the world: our milestone MIRKA project, plans for our proposed relocation to the Jewish Arts Quarter in Elsternwick, and our beautiful new brand and reinvigorated organisational identity and tone.

And even through the most difficult of months as our team felt the COVID-weight of physical distance and disconnection, we recognised our privilege to provide illumination for those at home, curating digital moments and missives at the intersection of art and Jewish culture to inspire, nourish, engage and delight.

There's a beautiful saying in the Talmud that states 'one man's candle is light for many'. We recognise and thank deeply our staff, Board, volunteers, supporters, financial and in-kind partners, creative collaborators and audiences for enabling and allowing us the place of being one such candle during 2020.

Our Team

Our Governors

John Gandel AO
Chair

Jeanne Pratt AC
Zelda Rosenbaum OAM

Our Board

Gideon Kline
President

Barry Fradkin OAM
Adam Krongold
Jodi Lee (The Observership Program Participant)
Ben Margow
Oliver Moore
Marcia Pinskier
Carmella Prideaux
Zelda Rosenbaum OAM
Frank Tisher OAM

Our Team (cont.)

Annette Bagle
Development Assistant

Nadia Bailey
Digital Marketing Coordinator

Jenny Better
Senior Education Coordinator

Katherine Bruce
Visitor Services & Volunteer Coordinator

Natalie Even-Bar
Program & Events Coordinator

Alice Freeman
Education & Programs Officer

Enza Farfalla
Accounts Assistant

Leah Justin
Community Education Coordinator

Loran McNamara
Collection & Curatorial Officer

Alexandra Rubin
Education Project Officer

Susan Slode
Development Coordinator (outgoing)



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Noah's Ark, 19th century
America

Our Team

Jessica Bram
Director & CEO

Jenny Thompson
Deputy Director/Finance & Operations Manager

Emma Eldridge
Marketing & Communications Manager (outgoing)

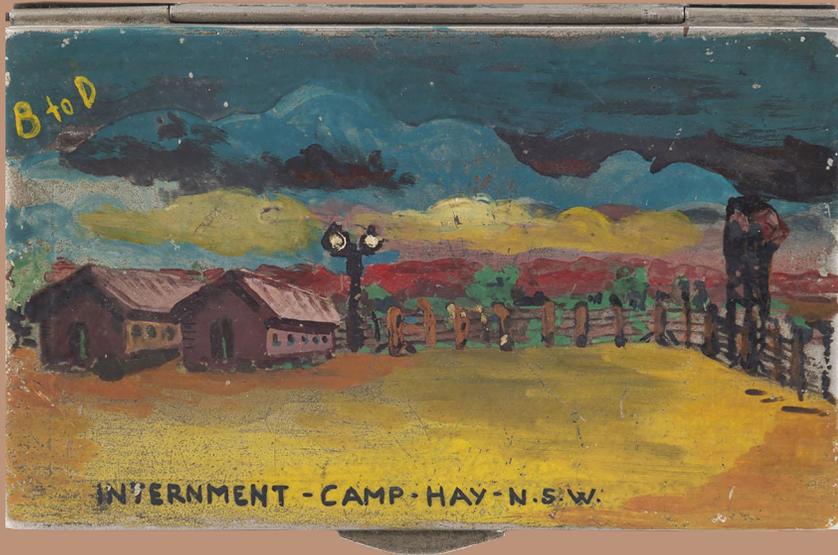
Noè Harsel
Marketing & Communications Manager

Eleni Papavasileiou
Senior Curator & Collection Manager

Naomi Raymond
Development Director (outgoing)

Tamar Simons
Education & Programs Manager

Our Exhibitions & Collections



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Metal cigarette box, 'Internment - Camp - Hay - N.S.W./'B to D', c. 1942
Hay, metal, wood, paint, 150×95×40mm, Jewish Museum of Australia Collection

In 2020, the team:

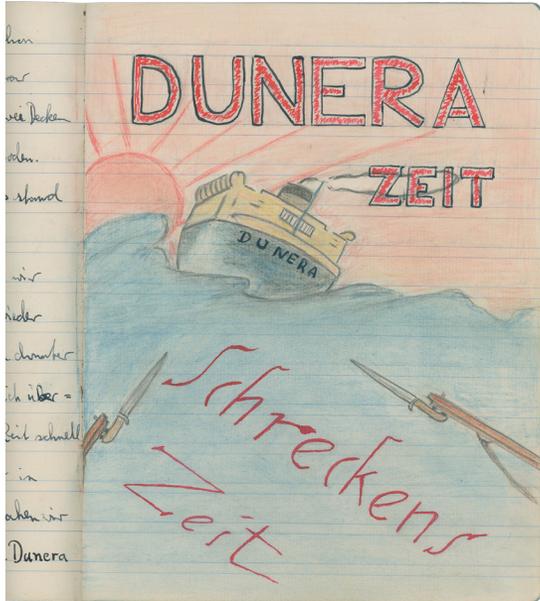
- Pivoted the Museum's permanent galleries on-line to enable a 360 degree virtual tour available anywhere at anytime
- Welcomed 1,260 unique digital visitors to the Museum Collections pages during lockdown
- Saw 149 new visitors in July alone, visit the virtual Museum Tour page
- Added over 70 new objects to the collection
- Oversaw over 250 internal and external image requests
- Improved over 1,500 collection records

Even though the Curatorial team were not able to digitise new material from the collection during 2020, we rationalised and made available over 600 existing images, transcriptions and translations to our online database.

Highlights included:

- Launching a new iteration of our Evolving Identities display, which features artistic projects by Leibler Yavneh Year 9 (2019) Roots students. 15 works were selected for showcase in the Museum by our Senior Curator & Collection Manager and Senior Education Coordinator, with the remaining entries shown on a slideshow in the Gallery.
- Caring for and protecting our collection throughout the closure period by conducting rigorous checks across the storage and exhibition areas and ensuring that all preventative conservation measures were in place, even during periods of hard lockdown.

Our Exhibitions & Collections (cont.)



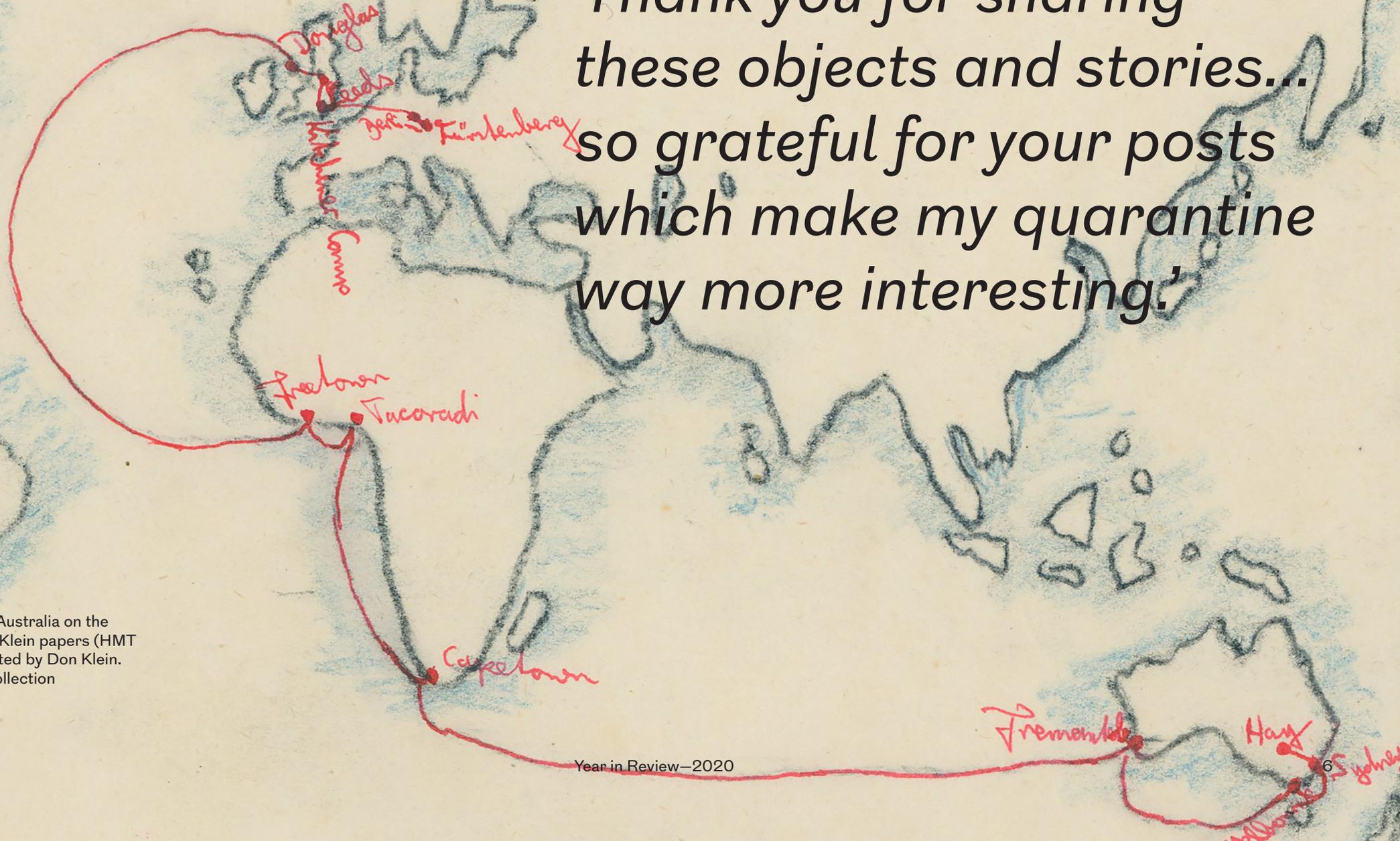
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Page from Manfred Klein's diary, hand drawn image of the HMT Dunera at sea. Part of Manfred Klein papers (HMT Dunera and Internment). Donated by Don Klein. Jewish Museum of Australia Collection

- Keeping our team of staff and volunteers motivated, engaged and continuing to work remotely and behind the scenes to make more of our collection accessible for all.
- Capturing and developing our Permanent Exhibitions Virtual Tour to assure and extend engagement with our audiences and support the Museum's events and educational activities.

Enormous thanks to our collection volunteers Kay Ronec, Debbie Max, Shauntel Keenan, Elizabeth Offer and Jessie Brown for supporting our team in caring for our collection throughout 2020. Specifically, in:

- Transcribing over 170 items of correspondence, historic documents and oral history accounts.
- Rationalising digital assets and collection object images.
- Researching towards our permanent collection and for MIRKA.

'Thank you for sharing these objects and stories... so grateful for your posts which make my quarantine way more interesting.'

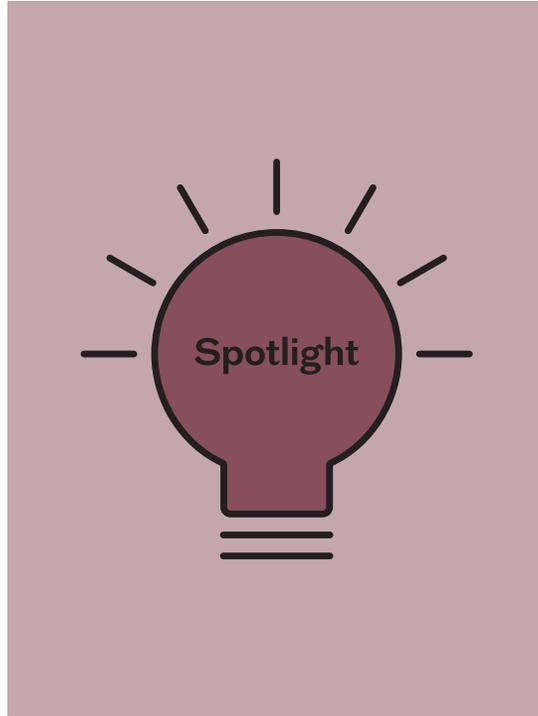


Hand drawn map of voyage to Australia on the HMT Dunera. Part of Manfred Klein papers (HMT Dunera and Internment). Donated by Don Klein. Jewish Museum of Australia Collection

Our Events & Education Programs



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Erev Rosh Hashanah, Spotlight: Neshama



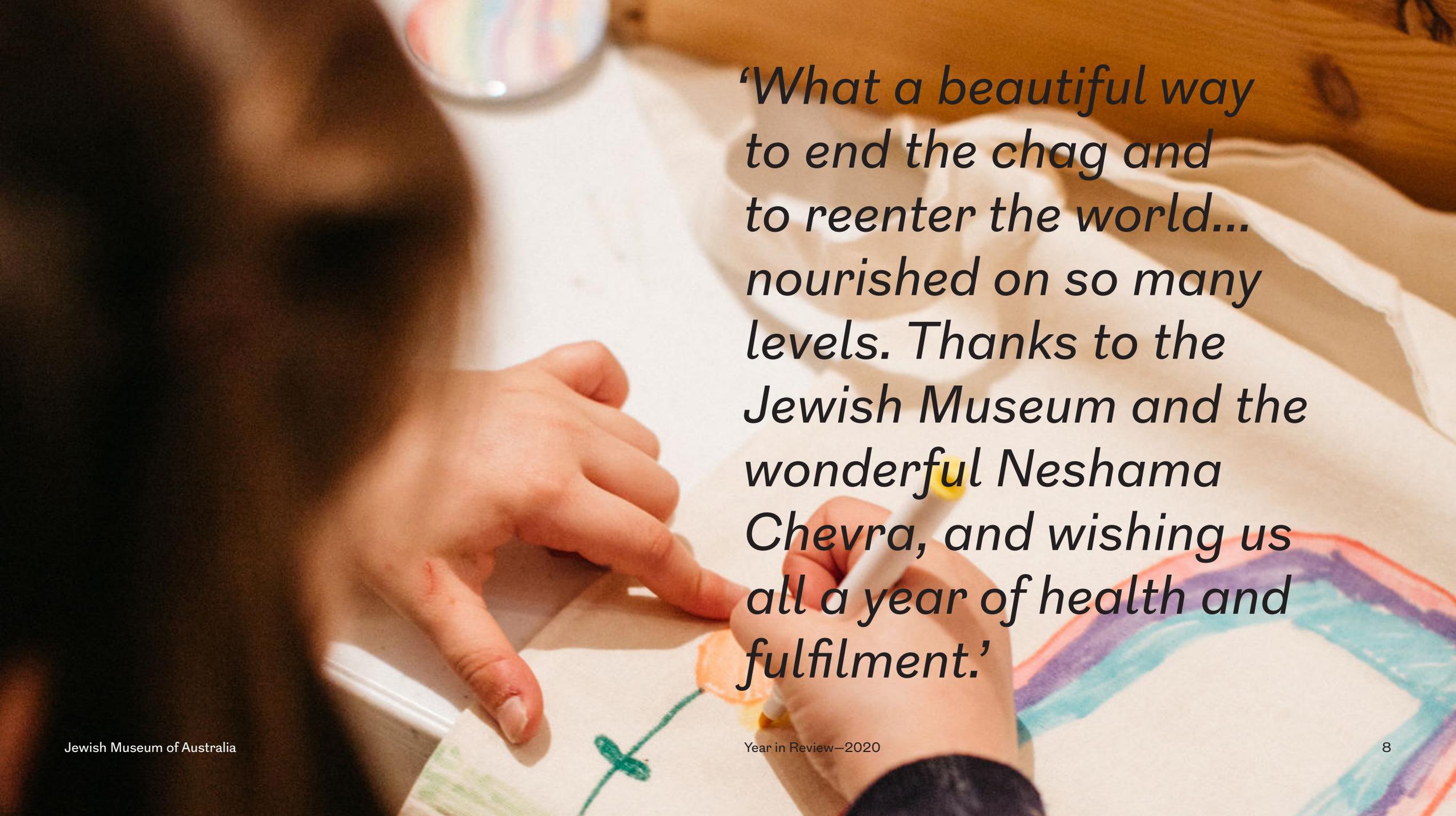
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Spotlight: Neshama

In 2020, we were able to host:

- 1,085 students for on-line programs
- 801 students for in-person programs
- 21 schools for on-site visits
- 10 schools for on-line visits
- 41 programs through in situ delivery
- 19 programs through digital delivery
- 152 parents for evening events

Highlights included:

- Quickly and proficiently manoeuvring into an effective COVID-19 response model.
- Offering online delivery of our learning program to enable robust and dynamic sessions for primary and secondary students.
- Attracting over 250 highly engaged participants to an online book launch for Dunera Profiles, in partnership with Monash University and highlighting our extensive and exceptional Dunera collection.
- Engaging and connecting hundreds of community members with an online offering for the High Holy Days through our Neshama programming.
- Partnering with three international Jewish museums to deliver Museums Across the Seas that transported attendees to virtually visit our museum counterparts in London, Cape Town and Maryland.
- Launching our Breakfast with Museum series, profiling inspired leadership at a time when all sectors and industries needed hope.
- Reaching over 3,500 participants through our online programs and events.
- Hosting 11 in person events while changing 27 rapidly online.
- Running 9 multi-session courses online, while 3 courses were in-person (2 of which pivoted online).



‘What a beautiful way to end the chag and to reenter the world... nourished on so many levels. Thanks to the Jewish Museum and the wonderful Neshama Chevra, and wishing us all a year of health and fulfilment.’

Our Volunteers



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Volunteering in the permanent galleries, Jewish Museum of Australia

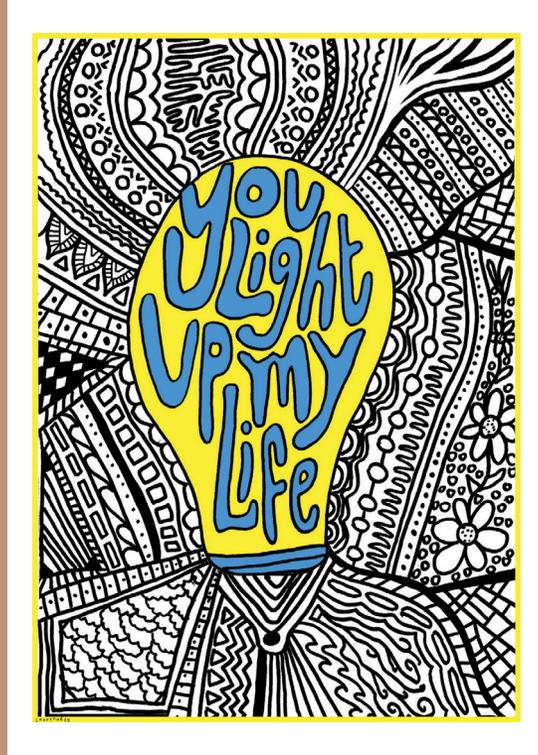
In 2020 as a result of COVID, we weren't able to have as many in person events.

However we still had over over 100 volunteers who looked after over 580 visitors to the permanent exhibition spaces, events and education offerings and during this time, and over lockdown, we answered approximately 3,000 enquiries by phone and email.

We were committed to keeping our incredible volunteering cohort engaged with the Jewish Museum through:

- Regular emails
- Monthly phone calls
- In-person visits during National Volunteer Week, which fell at the end of the first lockdown.

Love Letters

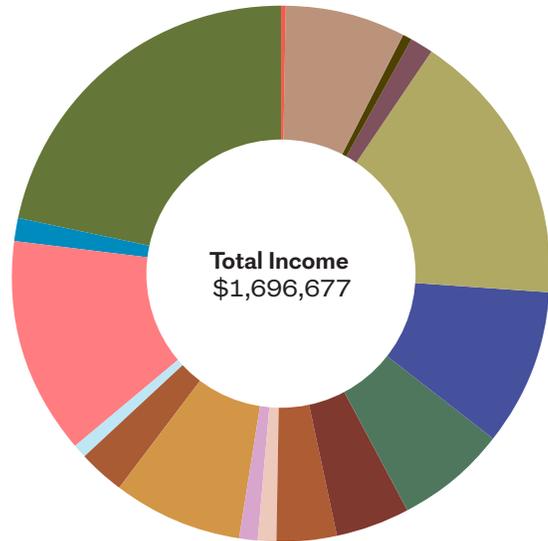


While our Museum was closed through 2020, we emailed weekly Love Letters to inspire hope and resilience. Buoyed by the embrace of these, we launched our Love Letters Project to empower everyone to send their own.

With our mission to illuminate Jewish life, we invited artists—student, emerging, mid-career and retired—to share an artwork responding to the idea of illumination. A selection of works were submitted to create a post-card series, with the works collected serving as a remarkable capsule of this time, to be housed in our collection.

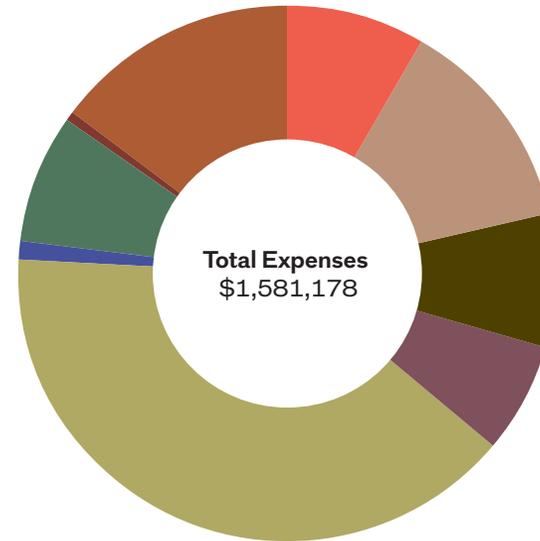
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Love Letters Project

Our Performance: Income & Expenditure



INCOME

- Admissions \$5,631
- Fees \$123,668
- Sale of Goods \$11,423
- Memberships \$21,374
- Donations \$283,126
- Sponsorship \$0
- Grants (Philanthropic & Government) \$158,264
- Foundation Distribution & Interest \$115,891
- CV Grant \$73,080
- CV Strategic Investment Package \$65,058
- CV Support \$15,000
- Augmented Reality App \$21,236
- MIRKA \$130,790
- Museums Together \$50,000
- Other Income \$10,000
- Auspiced grant: Multicultural Museums Victoria \$224,836
- Business Victoria Support \$20,000
- ATO Subsidies \$367,300



EXPENSES

- Curatorial \$133,615
- Education & Programs \$205,094
- Marketing & Communications \$131,231
- Development \$103,662
- Finance & Operations \$629,022
- Augmented Reality App \$18,090
- MIRKA \$123,212
- Museums Together \$7,992
- Auspiced grant: Multicultural Museums Victoria \$229,260

Net Income \$115,499

Our Supporters

We are grateful to the individual donors, philanthropic trusts and foundations, corporate and government partners who share our passion for illuminating Jewish life, and whose financial support assists and enables our pillars of research and interpretation, learning and engagement and experiences and events.



↑
Nikki Green, *Preichah: Blossoming WA*, 2013,
paper, ink, 190 × 140 × 40mm

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2020 Exhibition Supporters

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Creative Victoria

Thank You

Miri Hirschfeld, *Missing You*, Love Letters Project, 2020

