



**St Kilda Hebrew
Congregation Inc
Bat Mitzvah Ceremony
2014 – 5775**

**The St Kilda Hebrew Congregation
Annual Bat Mitzvah programme is a
project of the
St Kilda Hebrew
Congregation Library Fund**

Programme

10:15am Sunday 23rd November 2014

12 Charnwood Grove, St Kilda VIC 3182

Order of Service

B'not Mitzvah processional

Choral Welcome

Welcome & Address by Rabbi Yaakov Glasman

Blessing of the daughters

Presentation by Naomi Krampel, Aimee Kay & Georgia Burstin

Musical Interlude by the choir

Presentation by Erin Jankelowitz, Zoe Komisaroff & Alexis Levy

Musical Interlude by the choir

Presentation by Emma Gunn, Chloe Guss & Timnah Poratt

Musical Interlude by the choir

Tribute to our grandparents

Address by Yael Schneier

Presentation by Ladies of the Congregation

Close by President

Adon Olam

B'not Mitzvah Recessional

L'Chayim in the Adele Southwick Centre hall

Our young ladies



Georgia Burstin



Emma Gunn



Chloe Guss



**Erin
Jankelowitz**



Aimee Kay



Zoe Komesaroff



Naomi Krampel



Alexis Levy



Timnah Poratt

Greetings



On behalf of Rebbetzin Sara and myself I extend a very hearty Mazel Tov to each of our graduating Bat Mitzvah girls and to their families. Becoming Bat Mitzvah symbolizes a girl's entrance into womanhood and is a time of both joy and introspection, as our young ladies begin to establish themselves in the Jewish community by emulating their Matriarchs: Sarah, Rivkah, Rochel and Leah.

May G-d bless you all with health and happiness into the future and may each of you continue be a source of Nachas to your entire families and to the Jewish people -
Rabbi Yaakov Glasman



Dear girls,

Mazel tov on the occasion of your Bat Mitzvah.

I simply cannot believe how fast the year has flown. It is unbelievable to think that this time a year ago we had not even met! I feel privileged that I have been able to share your Bat Mitzvah journey with you and coming to learn with you each week has been such a joy and a pleasure. I am a better person for having known you.

Hold onto the lessons you have learned and the memories you have made and they will surely continue to enrich your lives.

May you and your families be showered with only good health and happiness for ever.

I look forward to catching up with you all regularly over the coming years.

With lots of love and very best wishes, Yael Schneier



Bat Mitzvah girls' reflections

Georgia Burtsin

Hi and good morning, I'm Georgia Halina Burstin. Today I'll be presenting my speech at St Kilda shule which I've known my whole life.

My story is one of mixed generations. I am a perfect example of blending the very new with the very old.

On the one hand, I am the first generation to join the shule on my father's side. A new member from grandparents that survived the horrors of World War II journeyed to Australia by ship from Poland and started a new life here in Australia. I am now the third generation on my Dad's side here in Australia but the 1st generation here at St Kilda shule.

On my mum's side, I am the fifth generation at the shule. My great grandparents on either side, my grandparents and my mother and father were all married here. Not only have my family married here but all the ladies and men on my mother's side have been Bar and Bat Mitzvahed here. I feel honoured to know this shule and to be a part of it.

It was about 67 years ago, that my nana stood right here in front of the *Bimah*, with her bat mitzvah class of 10 girls facing Reverend Jacob Danglow, It was the first bat mitzvah group to go through after World war II, so it was a really big deal. Together they recited the 13 principals of faith speaking as one and Reverend Danglow spoke to them, a group of young ladies about the importance of becoming a Jewish woman and creating a Jewish home.

Then 40 years ago, my mother also sat in front of the *bimah* with her group of bat mitzvah girls. The 12 year old spoke in unison and then stepped up to the pulpit one by one, where I am today, looking around the congregation, and recited her learning's, as I am today.

I feel very special to be standing before you, with my speech in my hands and talking to you about my learning's of being a Jewish woman in today's world. I

wonder if in 25 years or so, my daughter will also be standing in the same spot, learning about the journey and spirituality of being a Jewish woman in her world.

I'd like to think that everyone has a perfect life. But when you hit reality there's always going to be bumps and at the end of the day, it's your family that will heal your wounds it's your family that you can have those heart-warming conversations with and it's your family that will always be there for you. I'd like to share a quote with you "We all grow up with the weight of history on us. Our ancestors dwell in the attics of our brains as they do in the spiralling chains of knowledge hidden in every cell of our bodies." ~Shirley Abbott

I want to say a massive thank you to all my family, especially my mum for all their support. I love you all and thank you for helping me get through this special occasion.

I'd also like to thank Yael for teaching me this year. If it wasn't for her I don't think I would know half of the importance of a Jewish women's role in her household and Jewish history.

Thank you all for coming and I hope you enjoy the rest of this *simchah*.



Emma Gunn

Hello everyone. My name is Emma Gunn. Today I will be speaking on my feelings on Shabbat. I will be answering the following questions: What is Shabbat? What do we do on Shabbat? And why I personally love Shabbat?

The world was created over six days and on the seventh day Hashem 'rested' from his work of creating the world. This day of rest is called Shabbat. Hence, we as Jews observe it.

Shabbat lasts for 25 hours. It starts from Friday night at sunset and ends on Saturday night when 3 stars are visible in the sky. Shabbat is welcomed when mothers and daughter light the candles and recite the brachah over them. Shabbat

concludes with the recitation of the Havdalah ceremony. During *havdalah*, prayers are recited over wine with the use of fragrant spices and a braided candle.

There are 613 *mitzvot* in the Torah which every Jew must continuously try to achieve. The observance of Shabbat is one of these. On Shabbat we are not allowed to do any work or *melachah* that we can do on the other six days in the week. There are 39 different *melachot* or categories of work that we cannot do as they break the laws of Shabbat. For example we are not allowed to use money because we are not allowed to do business deals on Shabbat. We are not allowed to step on insects, because we are not allowed to kill a living animal. We cannot cut hair. We therefore cannot comb our hair as there is a risk that hair will come out, which is like cutting our hair.

So, what do we do on Shabbat?

On Friday we cook and prepare the food that we will eat over Shabbat. This includes either baking our own *challot* or buying them from Glick's or another kosher bakery. The table is then set for Shabbat Dinner. Just prior to Shabbat we get dressed in nice clothes which are appropriate for Shabbat. We do not wear our everyday clothes.

When Shabbat is about to come in, the women in each Jewish house, both mothers and daughters light the candles saying the *brachah*. The men of the house go to Shule for the Kabbalat Shabbat and *Ma'ariv* services. Once the men of the house return home, Kiddush is recited by the father of the house. Prior to doing this, we sing songs such as "*Shalom Aleichem*" and "*Eshet Chayil*." *Eshet Chayil* is a song dedicated to the women in each family which praises for the wonderful things they do to maintain their family. The father then recites the Kiddush. Everyone then washes their hands reciting the prayer for washing hands. No one is allowed to speak after washing their hands until *Hamotzi* has been made and everyone has taken a piece of *challah* to eat. After a *Hamotzi* is made over the *challah*, we all eat dinner. After dinner, *Birkat Hamazon* or grace after meals is recited.

After we wake on Shabbat morning, we go to shule and listen to the Shacharit service, in particular the *parshah* of the week. We do not eat before shule. At the completion of the service, a Kiddush is held at Shule. We then go home and have Shabbat lunch and again recite *Birkat Hamazon* at the completion of the meal. Late on Shabbat afternoon, we again go to Shule for *Minchah* and *Seudah Shlishit*. *Seudah Shlishit* is the third meal for Shabbat. On Shabbat we must eat 3 meals over the course of Shabbat. During *Ma'ariv*, the Havdalah ceremony is performed at sundown when 3 stars are in the sky when we welcome in the new week.

On a Thursday night at my house it is a bit of a *balagan* as my Mum finalises her menu for Shabbat and checks to see that she has all the food that she will need, I love Shabbat dinner because I get to catch up with my family. Every Shabbat is spent with my family- my *Savta*, my Grandma when she is visiting Melbourne from Perth, my aunt, uncles and cousins. We all sit down together. We listen to my brother and my male cousins recite the Kiddush and then my dad recites it afterwards. We then eat the delicious food that has been prepared. My favourite Shabbat meal is my Mum's chicken soup, my *Savta's* clops and my aunt, Ros' ribs. We all eat the yummy food and talk about the highlights of our week. Then my siblings, cousins and I go and play different games that we have created. Shabbat helps me to relax as I am not worrying about home-work and get to enjoy quality time with my family.

As I become Bat-Mitzvahed I will continue to ensure that I light the Shabbat candles every Friday evening. I will also give *tzedakah* before I light the candles.

Yael thanks so much for everything this year. I have learned so many new things. Thank you for always making sure that the lessons were so much fun. Thank you for always helping me whenever I needed it.

To my bat-mitzvah group thank you for a lovely and enjoyable year. I am lucky to come out of this program with 8 new friends. You have all made the lessons so special.

Enjoy the rest of the *simchah*.

Chloe Guss

Hi everyone my name is Chloe and today I decided to do my speech on family. I love being part of a big Jewish family because I can tell them anything and they will be there for me no matter what.

My family are all members of this shule. My papa Len Levy has just been honoured a life membership to this shule as was his mother. I just love seeing my family at the shule on Jewish holidays.

Now over to my other side. My Nana, Rosie always makes so much food on Shabbat and its sooo good. She is a typical Jewish nana and I am so grateful that I have her. Now have I mentioned her chicken soup? It is to die for. On Shabbat Nana Kay and I always play cards. I always win. At my nana and papa's house my nana lets me light the candles and we sing the prayers together.

I'm so glad to have a big Jewish family to celebrate all the Jewish holidays with. For Rosh Hashanah this year the whole family came over to our place. The 24 of us sat at one big table laughing, eating and celebrating Rosh Hashanah.

On Pesach and all the other holidays the nanas go out shopping and whether they buy food or a toy it always makes it a special night.

I think I have the best family ever. My dad is the strongest dad in the world and he works so hard for us so we can go on holidays. He also has taught me a lot. I would not have learnt how to ride a bike without him. Thank you for everything dad.

Now, my little sister Charli is one cheeky girl. She's funny, cute, she can be really annoying sometimes but I will love her no matter what. Life would be pretty boring without her.

Last and certainly not least mum! I love you with no words to describe it. You're my flower that never dies. My sun that never sets. I just love you to bits, and I know that you will always be there for me. I love you all so much and I don't know what I would do without you.

Our Bat Mitzvah teacher, Yael is a warm, loving, kind lady. No matter how annoying we are she just laughs it off. I am so glad I got her as my teacher.

I am also so grateful to be a part of this Bat Mitzvah program because I have had a lot of fun and have learnt so much, such as the Ten Commandments, the holidays and much more. We've also done some cooking. We've cooked *hamantashens*, we made a cheesecake and a honey cake we also made challah and matzah, it was so much fun and delicious. Out of everything we have done at Bat Mitzvah I have enjoyed scrap booking the most because I love being creative and in the future when I look through my scrap book I will be able to remember all the great times we have had. Another thing I have enjoyed is meeting other people. Everyone in our class is so nice and cheerful. I hope our friendship lasts forever.

Thank you.



Erin Jankelowitz

When I was choosing a topic to talk about, I spent some time looking back over my Bat Mitzvah year of preparation. I realized that this year I have focused on 2 things: Judaism and what it means to me and my passion for dance. So I decided to talk about Dance in Judaism.

Throughout the history of the Jewish people, Jews have danced to express their feelings. This is most often at celebrations like weddings and Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. At school we also dance to show *ruach* (spirit) and pride in our school. In Hasidic Judaism, dance is a tool for expressing joy and it is believed to purify the soul and unifies the community. In fact, dance is seen as having an effect on the heavenly worlds and is therefore a form of worship. Dancing is most common on Shabbat evenings after the service, and on holidays and festive occasions like weddings, *Simchat Torah* and *Shemini Atzeret*. Dancing in a circle is the most common form of dance in Judaism.

Just like dancing in Judaism is used to express joy, when I dance I experience lots of emotion. I dance when I feel happy, but also to express sadness or anger. When I dance I can be myself and I feel brave and confident. This is also how I feel to be Jewish. Over this year of learning, I have become more aware of what becoming Bat Mitzvah means. I have realized that it is not just about becoming an adult, but is also about taking action and becoming more responsible. I feel much more connected to my Judaism and feel pride in who I am and what it is to be a Jewish woman today.

When I was looking for Jewish ballet dancers on the Internet, I found the names of some who danced during the Soviet era, when they could not publically admit to being Jewish or even dance outside of Russia. One of these dancers, was Maya Plisetskaya who is considered one of the greatest ballerinas of the 20th century and in 1960, became a prima ballerina of the Bolshoi Ballet. Her father was a political activist and was arrested and later executed because of his communist beliefs. Her mother was also arrested and sent to a labour camp for 3 yrs. Maya took refuge in ballet and was 18 when she joined the Bolshoi ballet company during the soviet era. Her early years were marked by political repression because she was Jewish and therefore unable to tour outside of Russia for 16 years. Her ban was lifted in 1959 and she was then described as not only the best ballerina in the Soviet Union, but the best in the world. I feel so privileged to live in Australia, where I am free to celebrate who I am, A Jewish Dancer, and can express myself without fear.

We have had such a special year learning with Yael and through the fun activities like baking honey cakes, making shofars and documenting our journey in our scrapbooks, I have developed a true understanding and pride in Judaism and am able to show commitment to my 2 passions, dance and Judaism.

Zoe Komesaroff

Good Morning. My name is Zoe Komesaroff. Thank you all for coming here today to celebrate this very special day in our lives....our Bat Mitzvah.

Today I am going to talk to you about Israel. Israel isn't just a place on a map, it is our holy homeland.

I have written a word for each letter in the word ISRAEL to describe how I feel about the land of Israel.

I is the 1st letter in the word Israel.

I is for Important.

Two things are important if a nation is to call itself a nation, and they are 1) A state or land and 2) a language. Israel is lucky to have both that can be associated with every Jewish person around the world. It is also very important that we as Jewish people outside of Israel never forget the importance of a happy and safe Jewish state.

S is for Shalom, peace.

Unfortunately peace doesn't come easy to Israel. It's had an unsteady path towards making peace with its neighbours. It has fought many wars to try and make peace but unfortunately there are many out there that just don't like Israel. I just hope that Israel has Shalom very soon.

R is for Religions.

Israel is a place full of different religions and cultures. It is not just a holy land for the Jewish people; there are parts of the country that are holy for other religions such as the Muslims and the Christians. For example, this can be seen in Jerusalem where there is the Jewish quarter, the Christian quarter, the Armenian quarter and the Muslim quarter.

A is for Accomplishments.

Israel's greatest accomplishment is the formation of a Jewish state...a place where Jews can go and feel at home. I am very proud to be a Jew and have Israel as my spiritual homeland.

Israel has many other accomplishments. The people of Israel have built a modern country from a land that was mainly baron and swampy.

Israel has also had many great inventions over the years. Just to name a few, they created the USB key, the laser keyboard, Waze maps, Viber, soda stream, Epilady, Rummy tiles, and the Iron Dome that was recently used for its defence.

Eis for Everyone.

The state of Israel was born in 1948 in the hope that the Jewish people from around the world would come and live in Israel to grow a Jewish homeland, so today Israel is an international country as it has people from all over the world living there and calling Israel home.

Lis for Love.

It is so nice for the Jewish people to have a place where they can visit or live and feel the Jewish connection and bond.

Becoming a Jewish woman has changed my perspective on how I see Israel. I have expanded my appreciation for Israel through my Jewish education and Bat Mitzvah classes. I am now looking forward to visiting Israel with my family next month after all that I have learned and heard about the country. I am very excited to write my very own message to G-d and put it in the Jerusalem Western Wall, the *kotel*. The *kotel* is the holiest place in the Jewish religion. What an experience it will be for me to be standing at the *kotel* in Jerusalem with my family after learning what a very special place it is. I feel my connection to Judaism and my place within our Jewish community will become stronger after I have experienced all that Israel has to offer.

Now that I am Bat Mitzvah age, I am considered a Jewish woman. I have certain obligations to uphold as a Jewish woman. I will continue to enjoy celebrating the festivals, taking part in Shabbat on Friday nights, and I look forward to keeping a Jewish home when I am at that time in my life.

I would like to thank my parents for all their efforts until now, and also my extended family.



Naomi Krampel

Good morning everybody,
As most of you know my name is Naomi Krampel and today I will be talking about becoming a Bat Mitzvah girl.

What I have enjoyed the most about becoming a Bat Mitzvah girl is all the activities we have done.

I enjoyed going to the kosher butcher and learning about how they prepare there meat. We went on a tour and sore all the machines and how they worked. At the beginning we had to wear hair nets and we all looked very silly.

At the end we got to eat sausage rolls now they were very yummy.

We did scrapbooking for a few weeks and in those weeks we were learning about all the Jewish traditions such as sweet New Year. We got to make honey pots ourselves. The best thing about making the honey pot was we got to share them with the family on Jewish New Year.

The best things of becoming a Bat Mitzvah girl are all the friends you meet. Erin, Chloe, Georgia, Lexi, Zoe, Timnah, Emma and Aimee you have made things really funny and I hope we can continue our friendship for many years to come.

I would also like to say thank you to the best family ever mum dad and Alex for doing everything for me I love you all to the moon and back. What would I do without you? You make me really happy every day and when I wake up I'm feeling like it's going to be the best day and trust me it is.

Mum, I will love you forever and forever. You are the most wonderful and beautiful mum ever. You mean everything to me. You do everything for me you. You are the best in the whole wiled world you are there whenever I need you and I wouldn't know what I would do without you.

Dad, what would I do without you? You make me laugh every day. You're really funny. You take me out heaps. I love you so much and I can't live my life without you. I love when we went down to the park and kicked a footy around.

Alex, you are the best brother a sister can have. I love you so much. My life would be lonely and boring without you in it. I love bossing you around and telling you what to do especially when it comes to basketball.

Omi and poppa, here you are listening to my speech. I love you so much and what would I do without you? You do everything for me. I appreciate all the things you have done for me and most of all I love spending time with you.

Yael, thank you for being my Bat Mitzvah teacher have made things really fun and enjoyable. We muck around and do silly things and most times you join in once again thank you so much.

THANKYOU.



Lexi Levy

Good morning everybody,

I am Lexi Levy and first off, I would like to thank you all for coming, especially my family and friends. It is greatly appreciated because this ceremony represents the making, of bright, Jewish, young ladies. I have decided to make my speech on the Holocaust and use the experience of my Great grand Father, Zeida Lolak, a holocaust survivor, as an example. The Holocaust, also known as Ha-Shoah was a horrific war that began in 1939 and ended in 1945. There were little survivors and around 6 million Jews were killed.

Zaida Lolak was one of those few survivors.

Hitler gained his power in 1933 and immediately sent troops into Jewish homes around Poland. Just like that Zaida and his family were forced out of their modest homes with only the clothes on their back. Like many of his generation he ended up in a concentration camp and got an identification number tattooed on his forearm. In an instant, his childhood had been taken away from him. Attending school, playing soccer and just hanging out with his friends was now a part of the past.

Part of his everyday life was dealing with starvation, death and separation from his parents and siblings.

Not only did he lose his identity and dignity, but Zaida Lolak witnessed both his parents perish and just like that, all he had to feed him, care for him and help him, was himself. And to me...that's called survival.

Zaida Lolak was a very smart person, he would constantly strive to live. Even whilst lining up for the Gestapo he had a genius idea to fake his death (and along with a few others), escaped from the Gestapo and hid in a near-by barn. He did everything in his will to survive, He would not give up.

Whilst writing my speech I realised that not much has changed since this war. People are still discriminating against each other's religions, nationalities, beliefs and values. I might be young and naïve but I still find it hard to comprehend why people can't be more accepting and live together in harmony. I don't believe in war and what the Holocaust stood for, but we can draw strength from the sheer will and determination that Zaida, and the Jewish Community at that time showed, as they rose up to re-establish their lives, to give future generations, like us, the opportunities and traditions to experience the Jewish lifestyle to which we have now grown accustomed.

Once the war had ended he took advantage of things we normally wouldn't think much of. Like family gatherings or just walking down the streets freely. He was determined to rebuild his life and start a fresh new chapter with his beautiful, intelligent and witty wife (my great grandmother), Halina. She too was a victim of the war. Together Babi and Zaida gave their daughters, Rina and Dalia, a lifestyle full of love, respect and happiness.

Despite all of this, there is one thing that I want to live by that will not only remind me of Zaida Lolak, but help me in life. And that is what Anne Frank once said "despite everything I believe that people

really are good at heart.” That is what Zaida Lolak lived by and that is to what I would like to live by. And I would really like to think that some of his qualities have carried on to me. I want to live my life to the fullest and make my dreams come true. “to life, *l’chaim*.”

Thank you.

Timnah Poratt

Hello everyone my name is Timnah Poratt and I was a part of this Bat Mitzvah class 2014.

Throughout this program I have learnt many different things like about Jewish festivals, scrapbooking, my responsibilities and I could go on and on. During this program I have made many friends and we all had a great time together as a group. We all got along so great and shared the same ideas. With Yael as a teacher we have learnt so much in a fun way by decorating the Sukkah, making *hamantaschens*, going to the kosher butcher and much, much more.

I have learnt how to grow up into the best Jewish woman I could possibly be. I have learnt to grow up a good Jewish woman. I have learnt to care more for other people, to be more responsible for my things, to never give up and to keep on persevering and to become the best person that you can be. Talking about the Jewish festivals my favourite was obviously Purim we got to cook.

When learning about the Jewish festivals there was a story behind all of them and I thought that that was really cool because the stories were very interesting and I loved every single one of them. There is just something about those Jewish stories that I really like. Scrapbooking, I really liked doing the scrapbooking because this really showed the understanding of what we were learning and I never knew that I could even scrapbook. We did really fun things when we were scrapbooking because there were so many things to do with all of the coloured paper and then there were stickers and letters and so many

different coloured pencils you could create anything. We all together had a great time when we were scrapbooking because we were all talking while doing our work and that was very enjoyable.

When doing the photo competition was fun because I thought that I could take a photo of just about anything but what to pick. I decided to choose *hamsas* because I love the way that they look and they really are beautiful. There are *hamsas* all around us and they are all beautiful in their own little way.

This reminds me of people because every single one of them is different and special in their own way and that’s what makes us all beautiful. A butterfly reminds me of when I grow up because at first you are a caterpillar meaning you are with your family looking after you in your little bubble and feeding you and driving you places but when you have turned into a butterfly you have grown up and can take on new responsibilities and you are let out of that cocoon and just bloomed open to new and different things.

Throughout this program I have learnt many new things and have learnt to grow up and be open to new things and I love that. This program has been so much fun that I would want to do it over and over again. Thank you for listening and I hope you have a great day.



A Tribute to Our Grandparents

In the spirit of “Bnei banim harei hem k’vanim – grandchildren are like own children”,

We, Bnot Mitzvah, give thanks to Hashem for the gift of true Yiddishkeit bestowed on us by our grandparents – those who are with us and those who are not.

Your love is a uniquely special love; and your teaching is a uniquely special teaching that links us back to the very founders of our Jewish people.



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