



*Bat Mitzvah Ceremony*  
2015 – 5776

*80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* since the first  
“Bat Mitzvah consecration service”  
held at St Kilda Shule  
on 1<sup>st</sup> Day Shavuot 1935



**A project of the St Kilda Hebrew  
Congregation Library Fund**

# Programme

1. Afternoon Minchah service
2. B'not Mitzvah processional
3. Choral Welcome
4. Welcome & Address by Yael Schneier
5. Presentation by Samantha Reichenberg and Jessica Patishman
6. Musical Interlude by Chazzan Brett Kaye accompanied by the St Kilda Shule choir
7. Presentation by Tal Dahan, Hayley Eben and Andie Montag
8. Musical Interlude by Chazzan Brett Kaye accompanied by the St Kilda Shule choir
9. Address by Rabbi Yaakov Glasman
10. Blessing of the daughters
11. Presentation by ladies of the Congregation
12. Close by President
13. B'not Mitzvah Recessional
14. Carlebach-style *Kabbalat Shabbat/Ma'ariv*



**Tal Dahan**



**Hayley Eben**

∞ ∞  
*Our young  
ladies*

∞ ∞



**Andie Montag**



**Jessica  
Patishman**



**Samantha  
Reichenberg**

# 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' speeches

## Samantha Reichenberg

Hi my name is Sami and tonight I will be talking to you about Shabbat.

So why do we celebrate Shabbat? Why do we do all the things we do like lighting candles, saying *Kiddush* and having two *challot*. Why do we have Friday night dinners with our family? What is the feeling of keeping Shabbat? But the biggest question of all is what is Shabbat?

Shabbat is the centrepiece of Jewish life. We celebrate Shabbat because G-d created the world in six days and on the seventh day G-d rested. So Shabbat is a day of rest and celebration that begins on Friday at sunset and ends on Saturday at nightfall.

Shabbat is a day we are to honour and delight in a day of peace and harmony. We honour Shabbat with clean clothes, showing what a special day it is and delight in it with good food and drink. Eating a delicious meal in the dark wouldn't be too much fun, or people tripping over obstacles or falling over each other would not lead to peace and harmony. As we cannot create a fire on Shabbat we light Shabbat candles just before the start of Shabbat to give us the light we need to make Shabbat a delightful peaceful day. The female of the house lights the Shabbat candles.

The *Kiddush* is said by the male of the house, this sets the tone for the meal and defines what makes Shabbat so special. The words in the *Kiddush* tell us what a celebration Shabbat is and it is not an ordinary day.

The word *challah* is Hebrew for loaf of bread. On Friday night we have two *challot*, this is because every day the people of Israel, whilst wondering through the desert, would go and collect *manna*. On Shabbat they could not collect - instead collecting double on Friday. We braid the *Challah* with three strands each, together the two *challot* have six strands, and this signifies the six days of the week before Shabbat.

On Shabbat we forget about the week's distractions and frustrations and focus on

higher goals such as family and Hashem. We delight in Shabbat by having three meals when families can bond. The first two meals - Friday night and Shabbat lunch - are full of delicious food and special dishes. The third meal is eaten towards the end of Shabbat is much smaller and lighter. The most important thing about Shabbat is that it must be DIFFERENT from the other days of the week. On the other days of the week we work but on Shabbat we rest, pray, eat drink and have a lovely time. Shabbat is the day that gives us the strength to start again.

To my family and me, Shabbat is a time to reflect on the previous week without the use of technology and talk about what the week ahead brings. On Shabbat we relax and forget about school and work for the day until reality hits us once again. Shabbat in my household is filled of happiness, peace and harmony. We try to not fight with each other but that never lasts too long.

This year in Bat Mitzvah class I have learned so much and enjoyed every second of it together with Yael, Hayley, Andie, Jess and Tal. We have cooked and baked Hamantashens, cheese cake and honey cake. We have made a scrap book of our experience that I am sure to be keeping. We made honey pots for Rosh Hashanah which took centre place at our table. After a delicious breakfast we decorated the *Sukkah* together with the Bar Mitzvah boys. We have been to the Jewish Museum, Challah Bake, CCare and are hopefully going to the *Mikvah*. If I could do this wonderful experience again I would do so in a heartbeat.

Thank you Yael for helping me with this speech and making this whole year enjoyable (just like Shabbat needs to be).

Thank you mum and dad for all your support.

Finally thank you to all for coming and good Shabbos.

## Jessica Patishman

My name is Jessica. Over the last couple of weeks I've been thinking about what Bat Mitzvah means to me and honestly so many things came to mind. I thought about what being Bat Mitzvah is - of becoming an adult and of being part of something bigger, not knowing but having faith. In my opinion believing in something is the only way to get through life.

I don't just mean a religion (but that is important too). I mean believing in lots of little things. For example, that you can finish the homework that's due tomorrow or that you can clean your room in 2 minutes. While some of it might be wishful thinking, that's the stuff that is what gets you through.

Now you ask what does this have to do with Bat Mitzvah? To me Bat Mitzvah means believing, in anything and everything.

This year has truly helped me with all of the above, opening my mind to new ways of thinking and learning more about my heritage and the ones that came before me. Coming from a non-religious family, I was very interested in Judaism - the traditions of different families and where they came from. For example, on Pesach some families use celery but some have potato. The variety of traditions are one of my favourite aspects of the Jewish religion. - the way that we all believe in the same god and yet we all believe differently, if that makes sense.

Making new friends has always been daunting to me, I've been at the same school since the age of 2, but this year I have met so many new people in the Jewish community who are so welcoming and are ready to help and share their knowledge. I think, because of this, there will forever be a "Jewish community" because for every new generation there'll be new knowledge to share.

I definitely think that, in doing this class, my morals and principles have strengthened, especially the ones based around the importance of family and staying connected, coming and participating in various events including the Ccare cookathon, the tour of the Jewish museum, the pizza and parchment event and the sukkot dinner at Yael house. It has

shown me how strong the bond between Jewish people is.

Expanding on the charity events I mentioned earlier, a couple of weeks ago my Batmi group and I helped to make over 300 meals for less fortunate members of our community. During that two hours I thought about how lucky I am to be born here in Australia, to be born into a stable and unconditionally loving family whom have always taken care of me.

Typically tonight is my birthday. I started thinking why birthdays are such a big event. Is it to bring family together? To celebrate coming of age or to, I guess, force kids to become adults? I personally believe it's a combination of all three. Because without one the other two cannot come to fruition.

Finally I would like to thank everyone for making this night, but also this year of classes, possible.

...to Yael for listening to all of my Sunday night rambles, but also for being so patient, understanding and welcoming. You truly have inspired me to become a better person.

To all the girls in my group, for always making me laugh I couldn't have done it without you.

Lastly to everyone here tonight thank you for coming and celebrating this very special occasion with me.



## Tal Dahan

Hello and Shabbat Shalom. My name is Tal and tonight I am going to talk to you about some significant memories from our Bat Mitzvah lessons this year. We have done and learned so many things this year from our teacher and mentor, Yael. She has guided us to view Judaism from a whole new perspective.

My first memory from our Bat Mitzvah lessons is coming to my first lesson not knowing anyone in the group and magically by the end being friends with all the girls. Andie, Jess, Hayley and Sammi are all great friends that have made this year so much more fun and memorable.

The second main memory from this year is our trip to the Jewish Museum of Australia earlier this year. We went to the museum to

investigate our Jewish history and to discuss what becoming a Bat Mitzvah girl really means. It was a great experience to really find out the true meaning of a Bat Mitzvah girl and how it will affect us. It was also really interesting to look at all the old photos and videos from various aspects of Melbourne's colourful Jewish history.

We had a brief but worthwhile introduction to photography at one of our classes. This helped us to then embark on our own photography project of what being Jewish means to each of us.

Another class which made us more aware of a dark chapter in recent Jewish history was the one where we participated in the Remember Me Project. We learned that 1 million Jewish children lost their lives in the Holocaust. One million separate souls who were individuals just like us with their own hopes and dreams for the future. To make it even more real we each received a bracelet with the name, age, place and date of death of a child. I remember a child called Chaya Greenberg who was only 3 years old when she perished in Auschwitz in 1944.

Another memorable event Yael offered us to participate in was The Great Challah Bake this year organized by the Shabbat project. This year's Challah Bake was a huge success with 2500 Jewish women in one enormous space each making their own Challah under the professional guidance of Alice Zaslavsky. It was an amazing experience and everyone, young and old from all walks of Judaism, bonded together and had a great time there. That was definitely an amazing experience that I don't think I'll forget.

This year we also volunteered at CCare preparing meals for less fortunate Jewish people. Not only was this a great organization to help we all had so much fun making over 500 tuna patties and preparing fruit salad for over 300 people.

One of my favourite things we've done this year is definitely making delicious cakes for various Jewish festivals. Yael always found fun and interesting ways to teach us about Judaism and what better way to learn about the things we eat on a Jewish holiday than to make it yourself?

A really fun memory from this year was learning about the story and customs

relating to Sukkot. After learning the facts Yael hosted us at her family Sukkah for a delicious dinner under the stars.

Yael has done an amazing job this year teaching us so much about Judaism and becoming Bat Mitzvah girls. I have loved all things we've done in class. I'm sure none of us will forget our Bat Mitzvah year but if we ever need reminding, we have our scrap books which record for us all that we have done this year.

Thank you Yael for such a great year and being the best Bat Mitzvah teacher ever!!



## Hayley Eben

Hello my name is Hayley and tonight I am here to tell you about how I have grown as a participant in the Bat Mitzvah program.

I remember in late February I started the program.

In the very first lesson of the program I had no idea what a Bat Mitzvah really meant or what it was. I just thought that it was about having a big party and celebrating with everyone. I remember what we did in the very first lesson. We had a puzzle of a face and on the back there were questions such as what is your Hebrew name and what is your favourite food etc., I remember hardly filling mine out and everyone had filled theirs in. slowly throughout the first few lessons I had a bit more confidence and more of an understanding on what a Bat Mitzvah really means.

In the middle of this year I delivered my *Dvar Torah* and I learnt more about Bat Mitzvah and about becoming a Jewish adult and maturing. While preparing my speech I learnt about the *parashah* and also more about how important it is to uphold and carry on the Jewish traditions and lessons that have been handed down to us from generation to generation.

I also realised that I used to lie sometimes because I was scared to tell the truth and I thought I would get into trouble. But then I realised that trust is like an eraser - every mistake it gets smaller and smaller. Since I started Bat Mitzvah class I have grown to realise that there is a bad book and a good

book and Hashem writes your name in one of those books on Rosh Hashanah. If you keep lying you will be put in the bad book and I personally do not want to be in that book so I have realised that telling the truth will get you into less trouble than telling a lie.

Then eventually near the end where I am now I have got a much better understanding on what Bat Mitzvah means. Now in these last few lessons I know that Bat Mitzvah means connecting with Hashem and becoming a Jewish adult, which means being more responsible. It is also about being kind. A couple of weeks ago for one of the Bat Mitzvah classes we went to CCare, which is a place that uses volunteers to help people in need. When we were there we cooked 300 meals for people who couldn't afford to buy nutritious foods. The group that I was in made tuna patties and in total we made 522 tuna patties that were then packed and given to the less fortunate. Afterwards my family and I decided that we would go back to CCare and help once a month to make or deliver the meals, by doing that it makes me feel good inside.

So now that the Bat Mitzvah program is nearly finished, I understand that being Bat Mitzvah is not just about having the biggest party it is about realising who you are as a Jewish woman and being the best you can be. I will hope to continue to incorporate different aspects of what I have learned.

Before I finish I would like to say I wouldn't have been here today without my family. Also thanks to my fellow Bat Mitzvah students who have helped me along the way who are Andie, Jess, Tal and my cousin Sami, and finally I wouldn't be here saying this speech to you if it weren't for my amazing Bat Mitzvah teacher Yael, thank you.



 **ndie Montag**

Hello My name is Andie. Since today's theme is Shabbat I thought that's what I would talk about. So we all know the basics of Shabbat. It is about eating yummy food and

being with family. But I wanted to know more, what you can and can't do or where it all began.

About 2 years ago I travelled to Israel for the Maccabiah games. In Jerusalem we visited my very religious cousins and had an amazing Shabbat dinner and I learnt a couple of things and rules of Shabbat such as no driving or taking photographs or using the phone. Jewish people do not work or create work for others on this day of rest. These were not always convenient as we discovered on a very hot Jerusalem summer day with a long walk.

And over the last few weeks with the help of my parents, the Internet and my amazing Bat Mitzvah teacher, Yael, I have learnt so much more.

So Shabbat is the day of rest that starts at sunset at the end of the sixth day of the week. It was Adam and Eve who had the first ever Shabbat in the Garden of Eden.

I also wanted to learn about the history behind some Shabbat traditions. For example the reason we light a candle on a Saturday night when Shabbat finishes is because Adam and Eve first experienced fire on a Saturday night. And the reason we eat delicious *challah* is because it commemorates *Manna*, when the Jewish people were walking around the Egyptian desert for 40 years. God would send food from the heavens and it fell to the ground and *challah* was one of these foods.

The reason why we bless everything is to make it even more holy. We bless the wine at the start of Shabbat to symbolize the special occasion. And the reason why we each light a candle is to bring light to the world.

Most of all Shabbat is a festive day when Jewish people can enjoy a day away from the chores of school and work. It offers an opportunity to spend time with family.

I have loved spending this last year doing Batmi classes with these wonderful people, learning new things and discovering new experiences.

I would like to thank Yael and everyone else in the shul for making this year so much fun and making me feel welcomed.

Thank you for listening.



## Consecration Service at St. Kilda

All who witnessed the special consecration service for girls, which took place in the St. Kilda Synagogue on Friday last, the First day of Shevuos, pronounced the service a most impressive and delightful ceremony.

The Synagogue was beautifully decorated with plants and flowers by Mr. Charles Shmith, as in former years, in memory of his late lamented wife, who was a highly esteemed member of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation.

The following seventeen girls took part in the ceremony:— Shirley Abraham, Vivienne Abraham, Ethel Bernstein, Henrietta Hannah Ellinson, Eva Farr, Erica Goldring, Pamela Goldring, Shirley Isaacson, Betty Isaacs, Wilma Joseph, Cara Joseph, Mary Michaelis, Esther Marks, Valda May Rapke, Valda Southwick and Anna Saunders.

These were all dressed in white, and wore tulle veils. Prior to their entry into the Synagogue, each girl was presented by acting president, Mr. Archie Michaelis, M.L.A, with a Singer's Prayer Book as a gift from the board of management.

As the girls entered the Synagogue in procession, preceded by Rabbi Danglow and Rev. E. Kowadlo, the choir sang "Boruch Habbo."

The girls occupied special seats in front of the Ark, and, at the conclusions of the Bible reading, rose and recited by heart in unison the following prayer, which rabbi Danglow had composed for the occasion:—

ALMIGHTY FATHER:

On this glad anniversary of the Giving of Thy law, we appear before Thee in the midst of Thy Congregation with praises on our lips and gratitude in our hearts, thanking Thee for the manifold boons Thou hast graciously bestowed upon us, for the blessing of loving and devoted parents, for the priceless possession of good health, for the privileges of British freedom and, above all, for the gift of Thy Divine Revelation.

As Thou hast been with us till now, so we beseech Thee to guide and protect us during our future lives.

Do Thou help us to grow up in the love and reverence of Thee, to mould our character and conduct according to Thy teachings and loyally to discharge our duties as Jewesses at home, in Synagogue, and towards the Community.

Kindle an enduring flame of earnestness within our hearts so that Thy Word may ever remain a lamp to our feet and a light upon our path.

To Thee and to the service of our fellow-creatures we would fain dedicate our lives as true daughters of Israel, declaring, as did our forefathers at Sinai, "All that the Lord hath said we will do and hear."

Help us, we beseech Thee, in this aspiration, and give us strength to translate it into deed in the coming years.

—AMEN.

After Musaph had been read, Rabbi Danglow delivered to the girls the following address:—

For the first time in the history of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation, there is being conducted a consecration service for girls on this glad Feast of Pentecost amidst a beautiful environment of graceful plants and flowers reminiscent of the harvest time of the original feast, and symbolical of the sweetness and fragrance of God's Revealed Word, which plants and flowers also intended in this instance as a tribute to the cherished memory of the late Mrs. Charles Shmith, who was a True Mother in Israel, and a highly esteemed and greatly beloved member of this congregation.

Hitherto, in this congregation, only the Jewish boy, on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah, has been singled out for special honor on the attainment of his religious majority; but all who are in touch with modern thought and conditions will readily agree that our girls too should be reminded of their responsibilities, obligations and privileges as members of the House of Israel. It is in the hope that this consecration ceremony will have this salutary result that it is now taking place.

From time immemorial, the women of Israel have exerted a beneficent spiritual influence upon our people, and it is to their pride of faith and race, their modesty and purity, their high sense of duty, and their love of God that we owe the happiness, sobriety and unity of Jewish family life through out these many centuries.

Dear girls, you are never likely to forget this solemn and yet joyful day on which you are participating in this consecration service, just as, I am sure, this congregation will never forget the inspiring spectacle of your procession into this Synagogue this morning with the sacred object of dedicating your future lives to the service of God and of your fellows, and the impressive manner in which you invoked the Almighty's blessing upon your undertaking in the prayer which you have just recited in unison.

With one voice and with one heart you have declared this morning, just as did our forefathers before Sinai, "All that the Lord hath spoken we shall do and hear." May God grant you strength to live up to that resolution.

By your upright character and conduct, by your love of truth and goodness, by the grace and dignity of your demeanour, by your unselfishness in all things, and by your devoted attachment to the tenets and traditions of your religion, you can win much happiness for yourselves, illumine the lives of others, and do much towards maintaining the honor of the Jewish name.

The Giving of the law at Sinai, which we Jews perennially celebrate at this season, imparted to Israel a spiritual energy and vigour which has lasted throughout these many centuries. The Law has indeed proved itself to be "a tree of life to those who grasp it." Many once-powerful nations have perished, but Israel still lives on, contrary to dark presagings of the prophets of despair. The secret of its survival is to be found in the Torah, which has been "a lamp to its feet and a light to its path." Wherever your future paths may lie, you can always play your part as true daughters of Israel, remembering that the Jewish religion teaches, above all things, the unity of God and the love of one's fellows.

The keen attention you have evinced in the lessons it has been my pleasure to impart at the class held on Sabbath mornings during the past few weeks has been most gratifying to myself, but what has pleased me most has been your expressed desire to continue to attend the sessions of that class. This shows that you regard this consecration service not as the end, but, rather, as the beginning of your serious study of the teachings of Judaism.

I pray that there will be realised in you the fondest hopes of your devoted parents, that they will be long spared to you and you to them, and that there will be vouchsafed to each of you the blessing God has commanded His servants the Priests to pronounce:—

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace." —AMEN.

The choir then rendered an English anthem, and the service concluded as usual.

The girls who had participated in the consecration service were afterwards warmly congratulated by the members of the congregation.