

MATT NURICK, YEAR 10, 2018

DR HANS KIMMEL MEMORIAL PRIZE FOR JEWISH HISTORY

New South Wales Jewry can be considered as consisting of a number of organisations which deal with the various facets of communal life. Choose a person who has played a significant part in one such organisation and find out and relate his/her experiences. Write briefly what has been the continuing history of the organisation, and its present role in the community.

Introduction

“To be a Jew is to be a blessing to others”, emphasises Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. He explains that over four thousand years ago these were in fact the first words that Hashem stated to Avraham and that these words would form the cornerstone of Jewish practice and history, “Through you”, he said, “all the families on earth will be blessed. To be a Jew is not to ask for a blessing. It is to be a blessing”. There are many individuals past and present in the NSW Jewish community who epitomise being “a blessing to others”. Part of being a blessing to others is how one engages in deeds that are truly selfless. In many ways, the capacity to achieve absolute selflessness is possibly only achieved through one’s legacy that one leaves for future generations. This capacity for greatness is magnified if the giving is done with humility. One such person who has achieved this is Chaimas Baruch Kopilovicius as it has been through his humble actions that he prioritised the welfare of others.

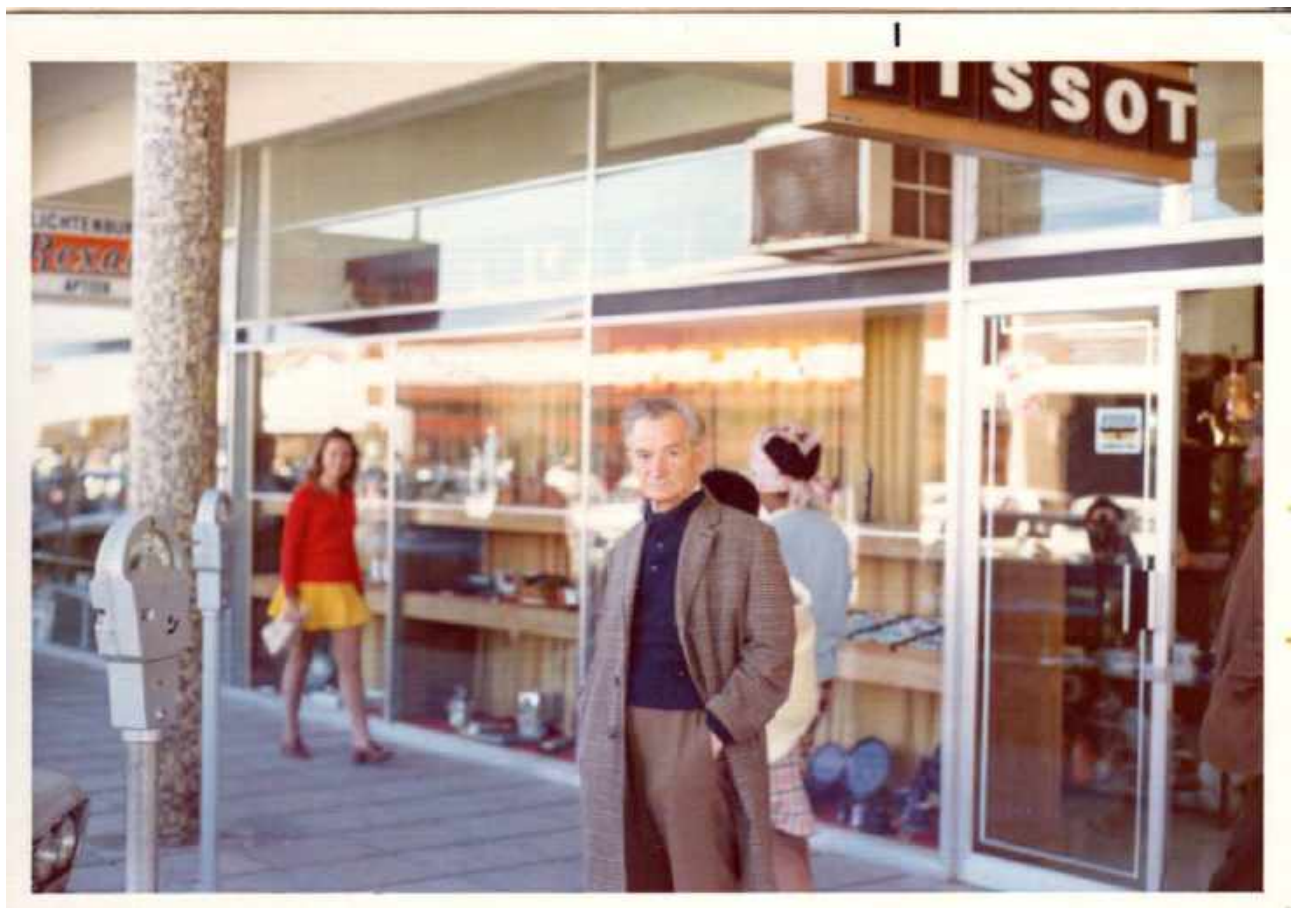
Underpinning being a Jew is the practice of philanthropy as acts of tzedakah have always been one of the most central inherent attributes of Jews with Judaism recognising that tzedakah is a notable and praiseworthy act. The word tzedakah is often translated to mean “giving charity” but actually refers to acts of justice and righteousness. As Jews, it is the greatest mitzvah to fulfil the moral obligation to give to others in need by engaging in acts of chesed otherwise known as benevolence or kindness. As Rabbi Sacks explains, “A single life, says the Mishnah, is like a universe. Change a life [through chesed] and you begin to change the universe.”

According to Ryzhyn, “for centuries Jews have been forced to move from their homes and Jews would need to reconcile their longing to return with their new reality of living as foreign subjects in distant lands”. This in turn meant that Jews would have to find a way to integrate themselves into the communities in which they had chosen to live. Part of integrating themselves would be ensure that were able to give back – “to do good, not just for their own community, but for all citizens of the land – for in their welfare, they would find their duty to contribute”.

There are many New South Wales (NSW) Jewish organisations and individuals including Chaimas Baruch Kopilovicius who have undertaken acts of tzedakah and chesed based on the beliefs that contributing to one’s community by giving back is so fundamental to being a Jew. This includes improving and adding value to the lives of others in one’s community. Chaimas Baruch Kopilovicius looked beyond himself and made a difference to NSW Jewry. He represented positive, meaningful philanthropic action which has resulted in lasting impact on the Sydney Jewish community.

Chaimas Baruch Kopilovicius (also known as Chaim Kopelevich and Chaim Copp) was born either on the 18th May, 1892 or on the 12th of August, 1892 in Rokiškis, Lithuania. He passed away on 15th December 1982 in Sydney, Australia. Chaim was my great, great maternal uncle. From his early life in Rokiškis, Lithuania then to Harbin, China and finally to Sydney, Australia, Chaim lived a very humble life. His significant contributions to NSW Jewry have unfortunately not been well publicised and regrettably too have not been well documented. For this reason, this Hans Kimmel Project will focus on Chaim’s story with particular focus on his legacy through his considerable contribution in the establishment of *Jewish Care’s Beit Chaim Program*. Beit Chaim was founded in

Chaim's memory following Chaim's instructions in his Will where he bequeathed his home to poor and need people of the Jewish faith. The organisation's name Beit Chaim is derived from the Hebrew word 'beit' meaning 'home' or 'house' of Chaim. Furthermore, unbeknown to many in our community, Chaim's legacy of generosity has extended to providing financial support to the education of numerous Sydney Jewish students through the creation of the ***Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarships***. His enormous philanthropic contributions still continue today. It is ironic and deeply disheartening that the story of Chaim or Uncle Chaim (as he was fondly known by all his nieces and nephews, as well as his great nieces and nephews) has never officially been documented. It is hoped that this Han Kimmel Project will ultimately serve to recognise and honour this modest mensch by recognising Chaim's generous acts of tzedakah and chesed in our community.



Chaim Baruch Kopilovicius, taken outside his nephew's (my maternal grandfather's) Jewellery Shop, Lichtenburg, South Africa, 1974

Family of Origin and Life in Rokiškis, 1892-1926

Chaim's parents Zalman Kopelevich (born 1855) and Fruma Ester Kopelevich (born 1865) both originated from Rokiškis and were married in 1886. Chaim was their third oldest son. He had six brothers and one half-brother from his father's first marriage to Khaya Sora Kopelevich who died suddenly in 1885 aged 27 years of an unknown illness. Chaim's oldest brother Yosef Maishe Kopelevich (Kopel) is my maternal grandfather's father. The Kopelevichs only spoke Yiddish.

The Kopelevich family lived in Rokiškis (known as Rakishok in Yiddish), a small provincial capital in North Eastern Lithuania, near the Latvian border. "The town of Rokishok is situated on both sides of the Laukipe River, 22 km from the Latvian border, and 3 km from the railway line connecting Dvinsk, Liepaja, and Riga in Latvia with Ponevez, Shavli, and Kovno in Lithuania", (Schoenburg and Arons).

Rokiškis was a Lithuanian shtetlach. It had both a thriving religious and Zionist Jewish community prior to both World War One and World War Two with a population of approximately 1000 Jewish families before the first World War. Estimates of the Jewish population in 1923 was 2,013 (46.5%).



Map of Lithuania Showing Rokiškis, Courtesy of Nations Online Project

The Jews of Rokiškis were mainly Chabad Chasidim, especially Lubavitch, Bobroisk and Lyady. The town also housed a Yeshiva, with many cheders as well as having two rabbinates present before World War One. Similar to many other Lithuanian shtetls, Rokiškis was traditionally religious with Orthodox Judaism being the most prominent influence on the Rokiškis Jewish community. Chaim's half-brother became a Rabbi at the town's yeshiva and as a young boy Chaim and his brothers attended the cheder. However, throughout his life Chaim was not known to be religious in his practices. In a 2018 email interview correspondence with Chaim's nephew Solly Cope, he shared a story that Chaim had related to him in the 1970's about his brothers. According to Solly, the story was of Solly's father Dovid, who was leaving on an army train for the front. Chaim's brother Yosef Maishe (my great great grandfather) came running to the station to give him his Tefillin and Tallit and Chaim explained that they both could have been shot had an army guard standing nearby witnessed this. This story reflected that Chaim's family valued the importance of the mitzvot of Tefillin and Tallit.

Rokiškis was a major exporter of hides, meat, fruit and berries. Most of the Jews made a living from small businesses and peddling. The Kopelevich family were not particularly wealthy. According, to his nephew Solly Cope, Chaim's father Zalman "rented cows for milk". Aside from the merchants, there were many Jewish craftsmen and artisans who engaged in crafts including shoemaking, tailoring, hat-making. Rokiškis also had a number of tanneries which produced raw cow hides and leather for all purposes, for footwear, and handbags. Chaim was by trade a shoemaker. He was apprenticed as a shoemaker from an early age of about 15 years. Solly noted that Chaim appeared to have had a savings account where he deposited his hard-earned Rubles. His apprenticeship lasted for approximately 5 years.



Republic Street, Rokiškis (1925), (Photo Credit, Jewish Gen, Kehila Links)

After World War One, Russia took control of Lithuania and a war broke out for Lithuania's independence. Solly explained that as a young man Chaim was a Communist under Lenin. After Lenin's death in about 1924 he was then a follower of Trotsky. Chaim's father and a few of his brothers were enlisted in the army and participated in emancipating their country. The new Republican Government were quite tolerant of their Jewish population but unfortunately, this tolerance was very short lived. Taxes for Jews increased dramatically and the new ultra-reactionary leadership had the sole goal of degrading and hindering all Jewish businesses and trades. With Stalin's gain of power, Solly stated that Chaim as a Trotsky supporter was forced to flee for his life. Notably, between 1926 and 1930, mass Jewish emigration from Lithuania occurred with many Jews relocating to South Africa or the United States. However, many Trotskyites fled across the border to Northern China and made their way to Harbin. Chaim had no other option but to do the same. Chaim's brothers and their families all made the journey to Johannesburg, South Africa in 1926. My impression is that this would have been a difficult and traumatic time for Chaim to be separated from his siblings and their families and to be forced to make the journey alone to another country without any family support. But evidently, given his political affiliations, he had no choice. Noteworthy too is that the Jewish population in Rokiškis dwindled by forty percent during this period.



Chaim's brother Yosef Maishe pictured centre as part of the army who were responsible for emancipation of Lithuania, 1920's



Chaim Baruch Kopilovicius, Rokiškis, 1926



Chaim's Brothers Dovid (top right) Louis (bottom left) and Yosef Maishe (bottom right), and unknown cousin (bottom left) , 1926



Chaim's nephews Sidney and Solly Cope outside their family home in Rokiškis, 2011, Photo credit Solly Cope

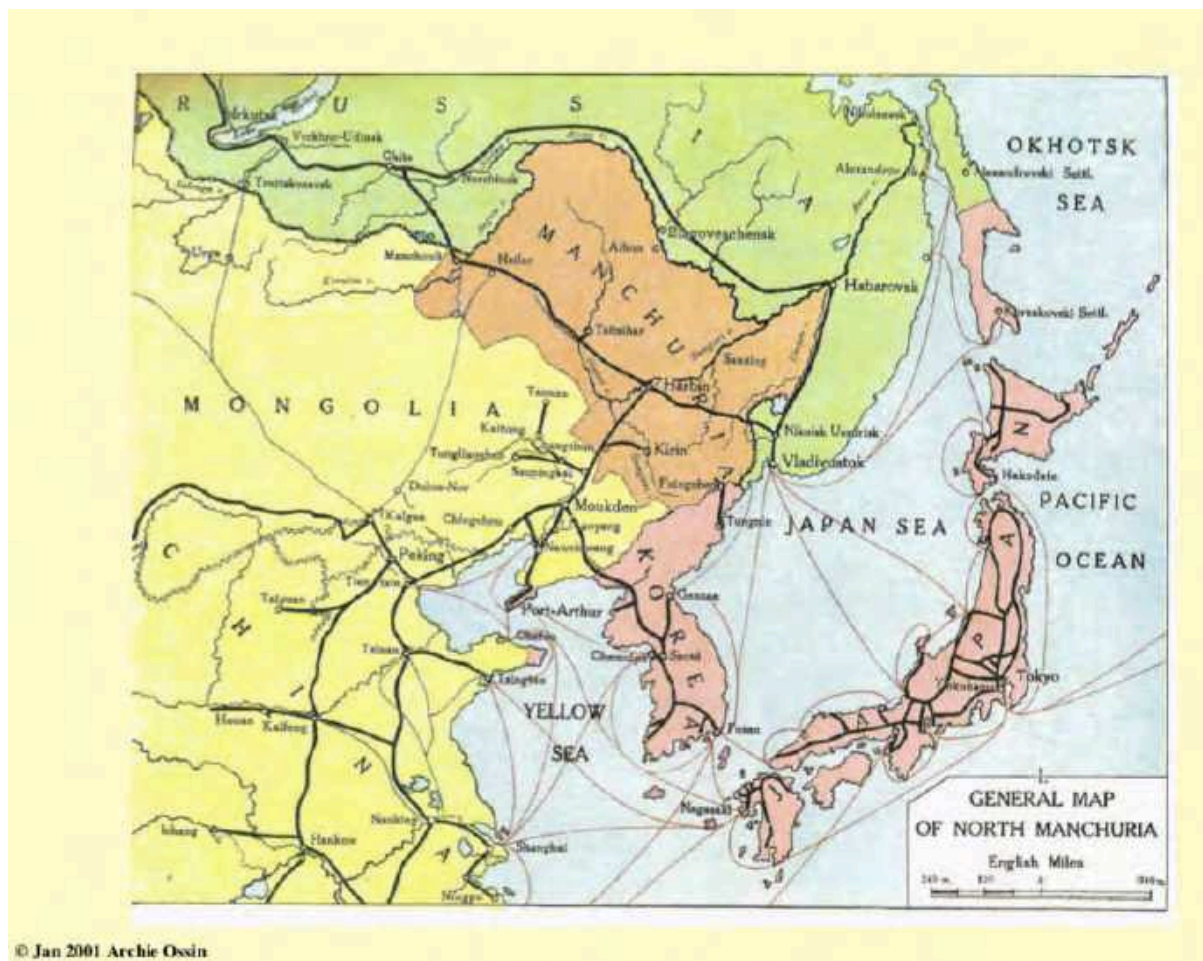


Rokiškis today (Photo Credit Jewish Gen, Kehila Links)

Life in Harbin 1926-1935

At the end of the 19th Century as a result of pogroms and intense institutionalised anti-Semitism during this revolutionary period in Russia, many Russian Jews fled to escape persecution and made their way via Siberia to many North-Eastern China cities including Harbin, Tianjin and Dalian. In 1895 land was leased by Czarist Russia from China and used to construct the Chinese Eastern Railway across Manchuria serving as part of the Trans-Siberian line. Harbin was established in 1898 along the southern banks of the Songhua River (Sungari in Russian) on this same land that Imperial China leased to Russian colonists. This railway gave Russia economic power along the route and the Czar gave Jews permission to live unrestricted if they moved to Manchuria.

Harbin was derived from a Manchu word which means “a place for drying fishing nets”. It is known as the capital of the Heilongjiang (translated as the Black Dragon River) province. The Heilongjiang is one of China’s three major rivers and forms part of China’s north-eastern border with Russia. Today, Harbin is a well-established industrial city that is well known for its beautiful snow and ice sculptures.



Map of North Manchuria showing Harbin (Courtesy and Credit Archie Ossin)

During the late 19th Century many Jews and other minority Russian refugee groups had permission to live freely in Harbin and their economic and political rights were not

restricted in any way. For this reason Harbin was known as “the city of no passports” (Clurman and Ben-Canaan). The north-eastern city, Harbin was recognised as having one of the largest Jewish communities as many sought haven there. Settling in China meant the beginning of a new and prosperous life for many Jews who sought refuge, building their own communities there. The Harbin Jewish population, in the 1920’s has been reported to have been approximately 20, 000 mainly living in the Pristan District. They built their own synagogues such as the old Harbin Synagogue as well as many European buildings which are still present today. The first official synagogue of Harbin was opened in 1909 but in 1931 was completely burnt down by White Russian fascists. Soon after it was rebuilt but closed down again in 1963. Thereafter it was converted into a hospital and hotel and in 2014 after extensive renovations was restored. However, today it is not used as a place of worship but as a communal concert theatre.

By the mid-1920s, Harbin was home to “one of the largest Russian diasporas in the world, with over 120,000 Russians and other nationalities from the former Czarist empire” (Clurman and Ben-Canaan). Many Lithuanian Jews or “Harbiners” were extensively involved in the economic and cultural life in Harbin, owning more than 70 businesses. It has been estimated that “by the 1930s, specifically 1000 Lithuanians were residing in eastern China, including perhaps 350 in Harbin and 150 in Shanghai” (Clurman and Ben-Canaan).

The city of Harbin became well recognised as “a thriving, cosmopolitan centre” (Clurman and Ben-Canaan) also known as “the Paris of the east” given both its cultural and industrial development. Harbin was “home to political refugees, fascists, Bolsheviks, painters and poets” (Clurman and Ben-Canaan) and would also become home to Chaim for a period of nearly 10 years.



The main Synagogue also known as Old Synagogue in Harbin, 1920’S (Photo credit: JIN BO, China Daily staff)

Details of how Chaim travelled to Harbin are not available. It is likely that his relocation to Harbin and the actual journey was not shared in detail with his family as he needed to leave Rokiškis quickly to start a new life.

According to Chaim's nephew Solly Cope, Harbin was an ideal and appealing destination for Chaim to settle as it had a plethora of business opportunities. Chaim had told Solly that this was because Harbin was known for pelts, furs & skins. Being a shoemaker this was a dream come true. Chaim became a manufacturer of leather bags. He established a handbag factory and was apparently very successful in this business, and soon made a substantial amount of money from this business. Solly noted that he had asked Chaim if he could speak any of the Chinese dialects. Chaim had told Solly that he in fact could not. When Solly asked Chaim how he communicated with the Chinese, Chaim explained that they also spoke English. I am unsure when Chaim would have learnt to speak English as he and his family had only spoken Yiddish. Solly also noted that Chaim had stated that "the Chinese needed the foreigners more than the foreigners needed the Chinese". Evidently life in Harbin for Chaim was good, he appears to have been entrepreneurial and overall it seems that he was able to create a life for himself even though he had no family with him. My impression of Chaim is that he was a man who was quite adaptable, and was highly motivated to work hard and be successful, in spite of not being surrounded by his family. Chaim's move to Harbin was seemingly reflective of the start of a new dynamic life filled with prosperity. My understanding is that Chaim remained in contact with his siblings in South Africa at this time. However, I am unsure whether despite the well-established Jewish community in Harbin whether Chaim built any relationships with other Jews living in Harbin.



Chinese Quarter, Harbin, 1930's Photo Credit: Sitsky/Toper Collection, Jewish Gen, Kehila Links)

In 1932, life in Harbin changed dramatically when flood waters breached the banks of Harbin's Sungari River, as well as the occupation by the Japanese. Declining personal security and changes in the economy impacted many living there. "Harbin in the 1930's was described as "a worn-out, decadent, almost desperate, but still, charming beauty, clinging to her reputation as the Paris of the Far East, but step by step being taken over by the new Japanese masters" (Clurman and Ben-Canaan). The Japanese reportedly allowed Russian fascists to instigate anti-Jewish campaigns. Solly explained that in 1935 Chaim had known a representative from the English Consulate and on Chaim's request had attempted to get Chaim emigration papers for South Africa. However, because of Chaim's past Communist affiliations this was not possible and he was refused entry into South Africa. I imagine this would have been extremely difficult for Chaim as I am sure he would have wanted to be reunited with his siblings and their families in South Africa, but seemingly this was not to be. Chaim's only other option was to make his way to Australia and eventually in 1936 Chaim began his voyage as he had been granted his landing permit to arrive in Australia. Following World War II, it has been estimated that only 2000 Jews remained in Harbin.



**Kitaiskaya (which means Chinese in Russian) Street, Harbin during 1932 flood
(Photo Credit: Sitsky/Toper Collection, Jewish Gen, Kehila Links)**

Life in Sydney (NSW), Australia, 1936-1982

Chaim travelled from Harbin to Sydney on the steamship *Kama Moru*, which was often used as a passenger ship between Asian and Australian Ports. Little details are known about his experiences travelling from Harbin to Sydney but it was surely a lengthy journey. We have estimated that Chaim arrived in Sydney in 1936. I am unsure whether or not he was expected to pay the 50 pounds that refugees from Europe were expected to pay as landing money. According to Rutland, "between 1934-1940, the Australian Jewish Welfare Society estimated that over 5000 Jewish migrants arrived in New South Wales", and Chaim would have been one of these. I can only wonder what it was like for him settling into a new and alien environment as the "pre-existing Sydney Jewish community was not particularly welcoming of newcomers. They faced social rejection and experienced disappointment and loneliness," (Rutland). Refugees escaping from persecution in Europe who were arriving in Australia at much the same time as Chaim were expected to "adjust immediately to Australian conditions and discard foreign behaviour, become 100 percent Australian by only speaking English and adopting Australian customs and manners" (Rutland). I wondered if Chaim experienced these same expectations on his arrival in Sydney and whether in fact he also attended English classes that were provided to refugees by various Jewish organisations. There are scant details about his first few years living in Sydney except that he later lived for most of his life in Paddington, NSW where many new migrants tended to settle as well as in surrounding areas like Darlinghurst and Surry Hills. Once again it seems that Chaim was adaptable and set about making a life for himself in a new land despite having no family support.



The Steamship *Kama Moru* (1930's)

Solly Cope explained that he recalled his parents talking about Chaim's early life in Sydney, specifically that they talked about him having a girlfriend & friends. He recalled that growing up he remembered seeing photos that Chaim had sent to his parents. These photos were "of Caucasian couples in a crowd picnicking or boating, or just individuals". Solly stated that "Chaim always had female company. In particular Solly recalled a large photo had appeared of Chaim in a leather lumber jacket, lying on a blanket spread on a lawn. Sitting next to him was a good-looking lady, that Solly estimated now was about in her early 40's. This photo was taken about 1937 in Sydney". Solly explained that he believed that this relationship lasted a few years and that she may have been married to him. However, he stated that after a few years, this lady disappeared out of Chaim's life and no one knew why as Chaim was very reticent to discuss this relationship.

Very little detail is available about Chaim's life in Sydney except that he lived the life of a bachelor, living all alone. I was able to locate a copy of Chaim's official certificate of his Naturalisation in Australia from the Commonwealth of Australia, September 1946 Government Gazette, from the National Library of Australia. This document highlights that on 30 July 1946 Chaim was granted naturalisation and at the time was living in William Street, Sydney. A photo of Circular Quay and Sydney Harbour from 1946 has been included below to provide insight into what Sydney would have been like at that time. According to Rutland, when many refugees first arrived in Sydney, they went to live in the Kings Cross area first, using it as a base to find other accommodation as it was close to the city and also where the Maccabean offices of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS), which was established in 1936, were located. I wondered if this had been the case for Chaim too that he had first lived in Kings Cross as reflected by the William Street address on his naturalisation papers. I also am unsure whether in fact Chaim accessed support from the Australian Jewish Welfare Society in his first few years in Sydney but I imagine that it is likely that he did. My mum recalls her father saying that Chaim had brought to Australia many of his leather handbags from his factory in Harbin. This was confirmed by Solly Cope who noted that Chaim sent handbags to all his sisters in law living in South Africa and that these bags were of good quality. It is unclear whether Chaim continued with his leather handbag business in Sydney, but we have assumed that he would have been engaged in some form of business as he was able to eventually buy his home in Paddington, NSW. It seems that Chaim was a quite a resourceful and astute businessman as he was able to buy his own home and live self-sufficiently for many years. In his Last Will and Testament it states that Chaim was a retired "handbag manufacturer" alluding to the fact that Chaim may have continued his work producing and selling leather handbags.

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Copy of Chaim's Certificate of Naturalisation in Australia (Courtesy of Commonwealth of Australia 1901-1973 Government Gazette, National Library of Australia)



Sydney Harbour Bridge and Circular Quay 1946-1949 (Photo credit State Library NSW)



Chaim in Sydney (St Mary's Cathedral in the city in the background), 1950's



Chaim's House, 34 Ormond Street, Paddington, NSW (1999)

In the late 1970's Chaim's nephew Louis and wife Sarah visited him once. His nephew Sydney Cope also visited him. Sydney's brother Solly stated that on this visit to Chaim's home, Sydney "refused to eat there as the house was filthy". Solly also explained that at this time Sydney reported that Chaim was "getting old and was dementing".

In 1977, Chaim would finally have some relatives living in Sydney. Chaim's uncle Josef Kopelevich and his wife Lija Kopelevich had a daughter Shayna Golde Kopelevich who married Josef Yudeikin. Shayna and Chaim were first cousins. Their son Henry Yudeikin had a son called Len Yudeikin who emigrated to Sydney, Australia in 1977 with his wife Pam. Therefore, Shayna's grandson Len Yudeikin is Chaim's third cousin and is my third cousin once removed.

According to Len, prior to emigrating to Australia, his Bobba Shayna had instructed him to make contact with her cousin Chaim. Len stated that that he would go and pick Chaim up from his home in Paddington and that Chaim would go to Len and Pam's home on the North Shore for Yom Tavim. Len described Chaim as a quiet man, who at the time was living a very lonely and reclusive life. Len also stated that Chaim seemed generally quite suspicious of people until he got to know them. Len also reported that his sense of Chaim was that "he felt very alone in the world and his life had not worked out the way he had hoped or wanted". I have wondered if all the years of being separated from his family, not marrying and having his own family as well as his experiences of being a migrant in both Harbin and Australia had taken a toll on Chaim over the years. It seems that Chaim's life experience was fraught with so much loneliness which is really so heart

wrenching. Australia eventually did become his final home and I do hope that in some way he was able to feel a part of the rest of the Jewish community.

Len stated that in his interactions with Chaim he had alluded to having a close relationship with a woman while living in China and that this relationship had fallen apart and that he had left her in China. The information that Len shared with us about Chaim feeling alone and unhappy deeply saddened me. Len confirmed that Chaim had been in the handbag business in Sydney. He also reported that Chaim's home was in a state of disarray. In his last few years of life, Chaim's eyesight deteriorated rapidly and he was almost completely blind. Len recalled that prior to Chaim's health deteriorating that he had encouraged Chaim to have a Will drawn up and Chaim had reassured him that "this had been taken care of" and did not share any further information with Len as he was generally quite secretive too. When Chaim suffered a stroke that left him semi-paralysed, he was hospitalised at St Vincent's. Prior to Chaim's death, Len recalled visiting him at St Vincent's Hospice, in Darlinghurst as he was no longer able to care for himself.

Another important part of Chaim's story is his relationship with Bernard (Bernie) Rosen, his accountant who had managed his tax affairs for many years and lawyer Roland Gridiger. The following information was provided in a 2018 interview with Roland Gridiger: "Chaim's General Practitioner was Dr Willy Wise in Glenmore Road Paddington. In early 1980 Chaim had told Dr Wise that he wanted to make a will and plan for his estate. Dr Wise referred Chaim to Roland Gridiger who was a lawyer specialising in Estate Planning. In early 1980, Roland Gridiger went to Chaim's home and they had a meeting to discuss what to do about Chaim's home and funds in the event of his death. Chaim had stated that he would want to bequeath some of his funds to the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS), now known as Jewish Care, as they had treated him well. According to Roland, Chaim had been a client of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society and they had been providing him with support in his latter years of life. Chaim had also explained to Roland at their meeting that he wanted to leave funds to the education of poor and needy Jewish children.

Following their meeting, Roland drafted a Will for Chaim and went past his house a few weeks later for Chaim to sign the will and Roland offered to keep the Will safe. However, Chaim decided that he did not want sign the Will as he first wanted to read through the Will. This would be the last time that Roland would meet with Chaim and he would have no further knowledge about what Chaim did with the Will". Unbeknown to Roland, Chaim did in fact sign the Will and it was witnessed as being signed on 29th January 1980 by Dr Wise's secretary.

Chaim's Visits to South Africa, 1962 and 1974

Chaim was able to visit his siblings, their respective families, including all his nieces and nephews living in South Africa in 1962 and 1974. My mother was four years old when Uncle Chaim (as the family called him) visited her family in Lichtenburg, a small town in the Western Transvaal – a three hours drive from Johannesburg. According to my mum, she has fond memories of Chaim and remembers him being a quiet but kind man. Photos below depict Chaim's visit with my mum and her family. During this visit, Chaim was very interested in visiting the old abandoned diamond mines in the area. My mum also recalled that on this visit Chaim presented each of his nephews and nieces with a leather handbag from when he had sold leather goods in the 1950's in Sydney. According to Solly Cope, on Chaim's second visit he thought Chaim was quite frail. As Solly was a General Practitioner he explained that he managed Chaim's blood pressure when he stayed with Solly's family. I believe Chaim's visits to South Africa brought him great joy as he was reunited with many of his family who doted on him on these visits. In the following photos of Chaim, from his visits to South Africa, he appears quite happy and in relatively good health.



Chaim at the Lichtenburg Diamond Mines, South Africa, 1974



Chaim with his arms on my mum, Heidi Kopel (Centre), and her brother Roland (above Chaim) and sister Ilana as well as a one of their neighbours, Lichtenburg, South Africa, 1974



Chaim with his other great nieces and nephews, Lichtenburg, South Africa, 1974



**Chaim with his nephew Chick Kopel (my maternal grandfather) Lichtenburg,
South Africa, 1974**

The Mystery of Chaim's Will, 1983

Chaim died all alone at St Vincent's Hospice in Darlinghurst on 15th December 1982 from a cerebral haemorrhage due to hypertension.

According to Len Yudeikin there were only three people at Chaim's funeral at Rookwood Cemetery, including Len, Chaim's cleaner, and the Rabbi.

Following Chaim's death, Len Yudeikin explained that he went to check Chaim's home to clean things up. At this time, Len could not locate Chaim's Will among Chaim's belongings and papers. Given that Chaim had previously told Len "that the Will was taken care off", Len believed that a Will did exist, hence his search for it. Len made many inquiries to Chaim's bank, pharmacy and other officials with little success. So began the mystery of what happened to Chaim's Will. Of concern was that because no Will could be located, the NSW Public Trustee who had also been unable to find Chaim's Will were beginning to make arrangements to take possession of Chaim's home and estate. The legal notice below was placed in the Sydney morning Herald, on the 15th March 1983, by the Public Trustee with the view of advertising that Chaim's Estate had been placed under administration of the Public Trustee as they had been granted Probate in the NSW Supreme Court on 3 March 1983. The Public Trustee was attempting to gain possession of his estate given that his Will could not be located. I was able to locate this legal notice in the Sydney Morning Herald Archives.



Legal notice in the Sydney Morning Herald, 15th March 1983 (SMH Archives)

The details of this part of Chaim's story have been gleaned from Roland Gridiger, Len Yudeikin and the newspaper article by Peter Morrison on pages 27 and 28. Given Chaim's reclusive lifestyle, his neighbours were unaware that he had passed away and "the police visited his house in Paddington to investigate", (Morrison). While Len was actively searching for Chaim's will, simultaneously the Public Trustee had taken over and had also been unable to locate Chaim's will. According to Morrison's article "the furniture and all other belongings, except Mr Copp's braille watch were dumped ("they couldn't even give them away") and the house was about to be put up for auction".

This was when there was dramatic turn of events. Len who was a General Practitioner by profession made contact with Dr Wise, Chaim's doctor and mentioned the situation of not being able to locate Chaim's Will. Dr Wise evidently said "there must be a Will" (Morrison), as Dr Wise's secretary had been one of the witnesses that had signed the Will. As a result of this discussion, Dr Wise provided Len with Roland Gridiger's contact details and "the AJWS was alerted as Mr Gridiger was able to reveal that the Society was

a major beneficiary", (Morrison). Roland also explained that he had offered to "hold the Will in safekeeping" after he had drafted it but that Chaim had thanked him and declined.

What unfolded next in the story of Chaim's missing Will was that the Public Trustee was contacted by AJWS and "urged to hold everything while a thorough search as conducted for the Will" (Morrison). Evidently, Brian Lenny (AJWS Executive Director) was adamant that the Will would be located and he did not want the AJWS to lose their rights to the estate.

Importantly, the unsigned copy of Chaim's Will that Mr Gridiger held in his office was not legally binding and "it took some persuasion to stop the auction of the property from going ahead," (Morrison).

Given unsuccessful extensive searches for the Will, Peter Kay a private investigator was employed by AJWS with the aim of locating the missing the Will. Mr Kay had also made inquiries to the Public Trustee to assist him in his investigation, but this yielded little information. "The signed Will, together with other bank documents was finally found "in a hidden panel in a secret hiding place in one of the walls of the Paddington house". Chaim's Will was finally found on the 18th May 1983, nearly 5 months after he had passed away. Peter Kay had made this discovery by using "the classic method from private eye movies from bygone days of tapping the wall. When the tapping revealed a hollow sound, Mr Kay knew he was onto something" (Morrison).

At the same time, Bernie Rosen was contacted by police as they had found his name in Chaim's abandoned house. "The following week, Mr Rosen was further involved in the mystery when he attended a consecration at Rookwood cemetery when he noticed the name on the next grave as being Chaim's. Bernie had also been contacted by the Public Trustee office as they were following up on Chaim's final tax return for his estate. The Public Trustee had explained to Bernie that "Chaim was missing" and Bernie was able to clarify this matter and provide information to the Public Trustee of which they were unaware.

According to Morrison's newspaper article, once the Will had been located, a meeting was held at the offices of the of the AJWS where the Will was read in the presence of Roland Gridiger, Bernie Rosen (President of the Hebrew Benevolent Society), Sydney Field (AJWS President), Brian Lenny (AJWS Executive Director), Peter Kay (private investigator) and Len Yudeikin. All of these individuals had been actively involved in the search for the 'elusive Will'.

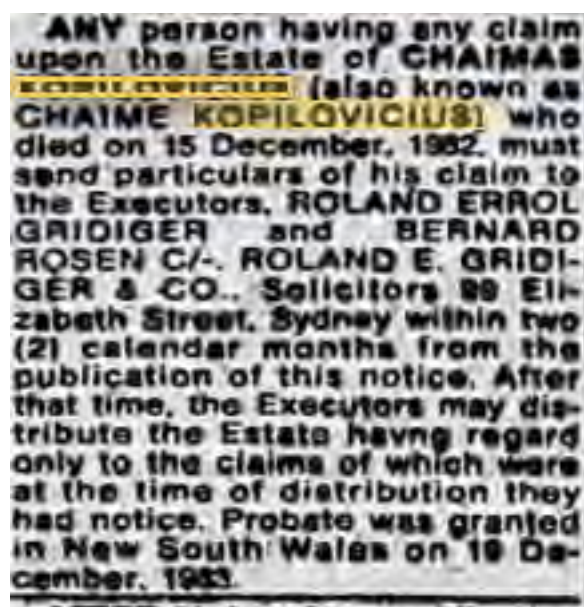
At the reading of Chaim's Will, Peter Kay provided more details of Chaim's life. What is quite uncanny is that according to the newspaper article, Chaim's last Australian passport had been issued in the 18th May 1973 and if in fact he was born on the 18th May, 1893, then the 18th of May is a very coincidental and important date for Chaim as this was also the date his Will was located (18th May 1983). Mr Kay had also found a shed at the back of Chaim's house and inside were materials that Chaim would have used in his handbag manufacturing business. Additionally, Peter Kay found a photo at the house "with a soldier standing in a garden, written on the back in Yiddish was "Best Wishes, Shlomo Klein" and an Israeli address. I am able to confirm that this would have

been a photo of Chaim's great nephew Shlomo Klein, who still resides in Israel today. Shlomo's mother was my maternal grandfather's oldest sister and I met Shlomo when he attended my Barmitzvah in Israel in 2015. Of surprise is that when Peter Kay had made enquiries about Chaim in Israel and South Africa it had been fruitless.

Chaim had certainly not made it easy for his Will to be located. However, as Morrison's article highlights "determination, skills, team work and a little bit of luck saved a major legacy for the community –more specifically for the *poor and needy of the Jewish faith*".

Chaim's Will and Probate Document 1983-1984

Following the reading of Chaim's will in the AJWS offices, Roland Gridiger proceeded to obtain a revocation of the Probate that the Public Trustee had been granted on 3rd of March 1983 in the Supreme Court of New South Wales. On the 9th of December 1983, the Public Trustee Probate of Chaim's Will was revoked and on the 19th of December 1983, Probate of Chaim's last Will and Testament was granted to Roland Gridiger and Bernard Rosen identifying them as the executors of Chaim's Will (see copy of Probate document on next page 27) Following this, Roland and Bernard could begin the task of administering the Will and releasing the assets. Below is a copy of the legal notice placed by Roland Gridiger and Bernie Rosen as the Executors of the Estate in the Legal Notices section in the Sydney Morning Herald, 8th of June 1984 that I was able to locate in the SMH Archives.



ANY person having any claim upon the Estate of CHAIMAS KOPILOVICUS (also known as CHAIME KOPILOVICUS) who died on 15 December, 1982, must send particulars of his claim to the Executors, ROLAND ERROL GRIDIGER and BERNARD ROSEN C/- ROLAND E. GRIDIGER & CO., Solicitors 89 Elizabeth Street, Sydney within two (2) calendar months from the publication of this notice. After that time, the Executors may distribute the Estate having regard only to the claims of which were at the time of distribution they had notice. Probate was granted in New South Wales on 19 December, 1983.

Sydney Morning Herald Legal Notices on 8th June 1984, SMH Archives

A copy of Chaim's official Will provides an inventory of his property. Besides his real estate (home in Ormond Street Paddington), Chaim had money in a current account as well as money distributed in seven different Term Deposit Accounts. His other Personal property of note included: "one Omega pocket watch, one Lanco wristlet watch and one Fab wristlet watch with Braille face.' The total Net Value of Chaim's estate was estimated as "\$156,258.11" which appears to be a considerable amount of money for

that time. With regards to the one Omega pocket watch, and the one Lanco wristlet watch, my mum was able to confirm that my maternal grandfather who was a Jeweller and watchmaker had given both of these watches to Chaim as gifts when he had visited her family in South Africa in 1974. Sadly, I am unsure what became of these possessions.

On Page 1 of Chaim's Will, it clearly states that this is his last Will and testament. It also indicates that he appointed Roland Gridiger and Bernard Rosen as the Executors and Trustees of his Will. Following this it details that Chaim bequeathed some funds to four different family members: 1) Ade (Sydney) Cope, one of his nephews, a sum of \$2000 2) Chick Kopel, another one of his nephews and my maternal grandfather, a sum of \$5000, 3) Jolda (Golde) Yudeikin, his cousin and Len Yudeikin's grandmother, the sum of \$2000 and 4) Chaim Klein, another nephew who lived in Israel and the father of Shlomo Klein, the soldier in the photo, a sum of \$500.

When I saw this information, I reflected on those individuals Chaim had chosen to bequeath funds too. It seems he had chosen those family members who he may have favoured and felt closest to in his lifetime because it is likely that they showed him kindness. My maternal grandfather received the largest sum of money, and this did not surprise me. My grandfather was also an incredibly generous man who epitomised warmth and a deep love of his family. I have no doubt that Chaim would have experienced some of my grandfather's warmth and generosity. My mother recalled that she remembers when her father received word that Chaim had passed away in Australia. She was fourteen years old at the time and remembered how upset my father was that his Uncle Chaim in Australia had passed away. My mother also explained how shocked my grandfather was when he heard that Chaim had left some money in his Will to her father. In those days \$5000 would have been a massive amount to someone living in South Africa. This was quite bittersweet for my family as it was wonderful to receive the funds but also sad that Chaim had passed away. It also makes it even more fitting then that I am the family member who is now all these years later documenting Chaim's life and his invaluable contributions to NSW Jewry. It is ironic also that 15 years after Chaim's death that my mother made the choice to emigrate to Sydney, Australia. She too like Chaim, moved to Sydney, without any family and with the hopes and dreams of building a better life and future for herself. What a pity that Chaim was not alive to witness this.

1983

Determination nets a major legacy for communal needs

Where there's a will there's a way!

Determination, skill, team work and a little bit of luck have saved a major legacy for the community — more specifically for "the poor and needy of the Jewish faith".



• Chaim Copp

Because of the persistent efforts of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS), which went to extraordinary efforts, including the use of a "private eye", a will was discovered in a secret hiding place, ensuring that the Society would have the use of a five-bedroom house in Paddington for the next 20 years.

The will also specified that the residue of the estate be applied to scholarships in Jewish education, for needy students.

Syd Field, AJWS president said this week that a meeting had just been held at the Society's Darlinghurst office, when the elusive will was read to those who had played a major role in the search.

The will was found in a hidden panel in one of the walls of the Paddington house, where Chaim Copp (born Koplovic), in Lithuania lived alone for many years, in almost complete blindness, helped by the AJWS.

Attending the reading of the will were Mr Field, Brian Lenny (AJWS executive director), Roland Gridiger (solicitor), Bernie Rosen (president of the Hebrew Benevolent Society), Dr Leonard Yedeiken (a distant relative) and Peter Kay (private investigator).

Mr Gridiger (who drafted the will) and Mr Rosen are executors of the Chaim Copp estate.

RECLUSE

Mr Copp came to Australia via China in 1936.

A bachelor, he was in latter years very much a recluse, lonely and distrustful.

An AJWS officer, Stephanie Pojer, was introduced to him in 1976.

Mrs Pojer "got to



• Solicitor Roland Gridiger (left) reads the last will of Chaim Copp to (l-r) Bernie Rosen, Syd Field, Brian Lenny and Dr Leonard Yedeiken.

By
PETER MORRISON

been told: "Don't worry. It is taken care of."

The secretive Mr Copp would give no further information.

After Mr Copp's death, the doctor checked the house and cleaned up.

There was no will among the few papers he found.

He acquired with a bank manager, solicitors and others, without success.

Meantime, the Public Trustee had taken over.

They, too, had been unable to find a will.

The furniture and all other belongings except Mr Copp's ornate watch were dumped ("they couldn't even give them away") and the house was about to be put up for auction.

Now a dramatic turn. Dr Yedeiken, in the course of his professional work, happened to be talking to Mr Copp's doctor, and the situation was mentioned.

Mr Copp's doctor said there must be a will.

In fact his secretary had witnessed it.

He put Dr Yedeiken in touch with Roland Gridiger and the AJWS was alerted, since Mr Gridiger was able to reveal that the Society was a major beneficiary.

His brief was literally to leave no stone unturned in the search.

The will, together with bank documents, was finally located in the secret hiding place in a wall of the Paddington house — discovered by the classic method, so familiar from "private eye" movies of bygone days, of tapping the wall.

When the tapping revealed a hollow sound, Mr Kay knew he was onto something.

MISSING

In another parallel drama, Mr Rosen had received a call from the police, informing him that Mr Copp was "missing".

They had found Mr Rosen's name in the empty house.

By an extraordinary coincidence, Mr Rosen was later standing by a graveside at a consecration and noticed the name on the next grave.

It was Chaim Copp's. The following week,

Mr Rosen was further involved in the mystery through a call from the Public Trustee, regarding a final tax return for Mr Copp's estate.

Mr Rosen had handled Mr Copp's tax matters for many years, and he was able to give the Trustee a great deal of information of which he was completely

secretive life of Chaim Copp.

He was born on May 18, 1892, and that date now assumes strange significance.

His last Australian passport was issued on May 18, 1973 and Mr Kay found the will on (would you believe?) May 18, 1983.

At one time Mr Copp had been a handbag manufacturer and some materials were still lying in a shed at the back of the house.

Inquiring at the Public Trustee's office for anything that would help him in his investigation, Mr Kay found very few clues.

There was, however, a photograph of a soldier in a garden.

WISHES

On the back was written in Yiddish, "Best wishes, Shlomo Klein", and an Israeli address.

But all inquiries in Israel and in South Africa (where Dr Yedeiken came from) proved dead ends.

Chaim Koplovic died "a poor old rich man", as Mrs Pojer put it.

But he had a good Jewish heart and though he did not make it easy for his executors, "the poor and needy of the Jewish faith" will finally benefit from his labors.

The Australian Jewish

RENTS

young, unemployed people
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DR JOACHIM
SCHNEEWEISS

PAST-PRESIDENT EXECUTIVE
JEWEL OF AUSTRALIAN JEWRY

WOOLLAHRA

it 8pm

charge.

executive director), Roland Gridiger (son-in-law), Bernie Rosen (president of the Hebrew Benevolent Society), Dr Leonard Yedeiken (a distant relative) and Peter Kay (private investigator).

Mr Gridiger (who drafted the will) and Mr Rosen are executors of the Chaim Copp estate.

RECLUSE

Mr Copp came to Australia via China in 1938.

A bachelor, he was in latter years very much a recluse, lonely and distrustful.

An AJWS officer, Stephanie Pojer, was introduced to him in 1976.

Mrs Pojer "got to know him" over a period and he seemed to trust her.

She visited him often, did shopping for him and took him for walks.

It was a question of looking after his "human needs" — "he didn't seem to be short of money", Mrs Pojer said, "but he was sick, 80 per cent blind and very much alone".

Following a stroke, which semi-paralysed him, Mr Copp was hospitalised.

He died on December 15, 1982.

Dr Yedeiken and Mr Copp's cleaner, who came once a fortnight, were the only mourners at the funeral.

Mr Copp had been such a recluse that many weeks later police visited the Paddington house to investigate.

Apparently the neighbors were unaware that Mr Copp had died.

Dr Yedeiken, who had kept in touch with Mr Copp and visited him in hospital, had earlier spoken to him about making a will, and had

unable to find a will.

The furniture and all other belongings except Mr Copp's braille watch were dumped ("they couldn't even give them away") and the house was about to be put up for auction.

Now a dramatic turn.

Dr Yedeiken, in the course of his professional work, happened to be talking to Mr Copp's

doctor, and the situation was mentioned.

Mr Copp's doctor said there must be a will.

In fact his secretary had witnessed it.

He put Dr Yedeiken in touch with Roland Gridiger and the AJWS was alerted, since Mr Gridiger was able to reveal that the Society was a major beneficiary.

He said that after drafting the will, he had offered to hold it in safe-keeping for Mr Copp, who thanked him.

DOCUMENT

But, Mr Gridiger heard no more about the matter and had no idea what Mr Copp may have done with the document.

The AJWS now contacted the Public Trustee and urged it to "hold everything" while a thorough search was conducted for the will.

Brian Lenny was determined that the estate was not going to slip through the AJWS's fingers and was convinced the will would be found.

It was explained that the unsigned copy of the will in Mr Gridiger's office was not a legal basis for any enjoyment of the estate and it took some persuasion to stop the auction of the property going ahead.

After all other inquiries proved fruitless it was decided to engage private investigator, Peter Kay, to find the missing will.

police, informing him that Mr Copp was "missing".

They had found Mr Rosen's name in the empty house.

By an extraordinary coincidence, Mr Rosen was later standing by a graveside at a consecration and noticed the name on the next grave.

It was Chaim Copp's.

The following week

Mr Rosen was further involved in the mystery through a call from the Public Trustee, regarding a final tax return for Mr Copp's estate.

Mr Rosen had handled Mr Copp's tax matters for many years, and he was able to give the Trustee a great deal of information of which he was completely unaware.

At the reading of the will in the Welfare Society's offices, investigator Peter Kay shed more light on the

Mr Kay found very few clues.

There was, however, a photograph of a soldier in a garden.

WISHES

On the back was written in Yiddish, "Best wishes, Shlomo Klein", and an Israeli address.

But all inquiries in Israel and in South Africa (where Dr Yedeiken came from) proved dead ends.

Chaim Kopilovicus died "a poor old rich man", as Mrs Pojer put it.

But he had a good Jewish heart and though he did not make it easy for his executors, "the poor and needy of the Jewish faith" will finally benefit from his labors.

The Australian Jewish Welfare Society together with the executors, is now looking into ways of fulfilling the wish expressed in Mr Copp's "last testament".

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The dry powder that cleans, deodorises and pestproofs. Not just for spots and spills but a revolutionary way to keep your carpets looking as good as new. Forget messy shampoos and steam cleaning. Karpet is so much more hygienic and easier to use. It repels all insects, leaving your carpet with a fresh fragrance. No wonder it's recommended and approved by all leading carpet manufacturers.

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From the Carpet Maintenance Company an all Australian Company, the only to specialise in dry cleaning.

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF
NEW SOUTH WALES,
PROBATE DIVISION.

No. 968447 See
953792

BE IT KNOWN that on 3 March, 1983
at Sydney in the State of New South Wales. ADMINISTRATION
of the estate of CHAIMAS KOPILOVICIUS (also known as Chaime
Kopilovicus) late of Paddington in the said State
Retired Handbag Manufacturer deceased intestate was granted
to the PUBLIC TRUSTEE

AND BE IT FURTHER KNOWN that on 9 December, 1983 the said
grant was revoked by Order of this Honourable Court

AND BE IT ALSO FURTHER KNOWN that on 19 December, 1983
PROBATE of the last Will and Testament of the estate of
CHAIMAS KOPILOVICIUS (also known as Chaime Kopilovicus)
(a true copy of which Will is hereunto annexed) was and is
hereby granted to ROLAND ERROL GRIDIGER of 47 Dover Road, Rose
Bay and BERNARD ROSEN of 26/52 Darling Point Road, Darling
Point the executors named in the said Will.


The inventory attached hereto lists property disclosed to the
Court in accordance with section 81A of the Wills, Probate and
Administration Act, 1998, and is issued by the Court under
section 91(2) of that Act.

Deceased died: 15 December, 1982

I certify this page and the following
8 pages to be a true copy of
Probate No. 968447 for the Estate
of the late Chaimas Kopilovicus
(also known as Chaime
Kopilovicus)


Russell Norwood, Solicitor, Level
4, 67 Castlereagh Street, Sydney
2000 Telephone 02 9413 2182

Registrar.

rl Extracted by:
ROLAND E. GRIDIGER & CO.,
Solicitors, 99 Elizabeth Street, SYDNEY. D.X. 887


Copy of Last Will and Testament of Chaim Kopilovicus signed on the 29th January
1980 and Probate, 1983. (Copy taken from Archives and provided by Roland
Gridiger, November 2018)

966447

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of CHAIMAS
KOPILOVICIUS of 34 Oxnord Street, Paddington in the State
of New South Wales.

1. I HEREBY REVOKE all former Wills and Testamentary
dispositions made by me AND DECLARE this to be my last
Will and Testament.

2. I APPOINT SOLAND ERROL GRIDIGER of 99 Elizabeth
Street, Sydney, Solicitor and BERNARD ROSEN of 26/52
Darling Point Road, Darling Point to be the Executors and
Trustees of this my Will.

3. I BEQUEATH the following pecuniary legacies:-

- (a) To ADE COPE C/- P.O. Box 2562, Denver
T.V.L. Republic of South Africa in the sum
of Two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00).
- (b) CHICK KOPEL of 15 Charl Road, Retief Park,
Lichtenberg, Republic of South Africa in
the sum of Five thousand dollars
(\$5,000.00).
- (c) JOLDA YUDZIKIN of 63 Guild Hall 6th, Cnr
Eselen Street and Cavell Street,
Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa in
the sum of Two thousand dollars
(\$2,000.00).
- (d) CHAIM KLEIN of Kfar Monash, D-M Leb
Hasharon 42-875 Israel in the sum of Five
hundred dollars (\$500.00).

In the event of any one of the said ADE COPE,
CHICK KOPEL, CHAIM KLEIN predeceasing me then the
legacy of the deceased legatee is to be divided
equally among the children of the deceased
legatee living at the date of my death and in the

*James Koplovich L. H. Koplovich
Chaim Koplovich The Lewis*

Hewson

Paul E. G. G. G.

Koplovich

968447

-2-

event of there being no children of the deceased legatee living at the date of my death then the specific legacy is to form part of my residuary estate.

In the event of the said JOLDA YUDRINEN predeceasing me then that legacy that he would have received from this my Will is to form part of my residuary estate.

4. I DEVISE my house at 34 Ormond Street, Paddington in the State of New South Wales, to my Trustees UPON TRUST for twenty (20) years for the use, free of charge, of poor and needy people of the Jewish Faith and I EMPOWER my Trustees and the Jewish Welfare Society to select those poor and needy people who will reside in the said premises. I DIRECT my Trustees to meet all costs for the maintenance of the said premises for the declared purpose out of the income from my residuary estate. After the period of twenty (20) years I DIRECT my Trustees to sell the said premises and divide the proceeds of the sale equally between MORIAH WAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE, MASADA COLLEGE, HILLEL COLLEGE KINDERGARTEN. If in the opinion of my Trustees and the Board of Management of the Jewish Welfare Society the said premises are not suitable for the use as a residence for the said class of persons then I DIRECT my Trustees to sell the said premises, the proceeds of sale forming part of my residuary estate.

5. I DEVISE AND BEQUEATH all my real and personal estate whatsoever and wheresoever not herein bequeathed or devised or which forms part of my residuary estate by the operation of this my Will to my Trustees UPON TRUST to

charities of my choice
as may appear

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convert into money that part of my estate as shall not consist of money with power during such time as my Trustees shall consider expedient to postpone such sale of any part or parts thereof and during the postponement to manage the same and out of the moneys to arise from the sale of my estate and any moneys of which I may die possessed:-

- (a) TO PAY my debts, funeral and testamentary expenses and the expenses incidental to the execution of the trusts and powers herein contained and all probate estate and other duties payable in respect of my estate or in consequence of my death.
- (b) Insofar as is consistent with the authority granted herein to invest and apply the income of my residuary estate for the granting of annual scholarships to needy students attending or wishing to attend MORIAE WAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE, MASADA COLLEGE or HILLEL COLLEGE KINDERGARTEN. The said scholarships are to be known as the "CHAIMAS KOPILOVICIUS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS" and the selection of those students who are to be the recipients of the said scholarships is to be made at the absolute discretion of my Trustees and DR W. L. WISE of 15 Kippara Road, Rose Bay and in the event of the unavailability of the said DR W. L. WISE then at the absolute discretion of my Trustees and the Principals of the abovementioned schools.

James Kippara
Charles Kippara

B. H. Salvants
Geo. L. L. L.

Edward

7. ANY one or more of the Executors and Trustees of my Will being a Solicitor or engaged in any profession or in business may act in a professional or business capacity in the administration of my estate and/or in connection with the trusts of my Will and shall be entitled to charge and be paid all professional and other charges for acts so done or services so rendered by him or them or any firm with which he is or they are associated (including acts done and services rendered by an Executor or Trustee personally and not requiring the services of a Solicitor or person engaged in a profession or a business for the doing or rendering thereof) in the same manner in all respects as if he were not an Executor or Trustee.

respects as if he were not an individual of
 Anna's physician Edw. Edwards
 Charles Brooks Jr.

H. K. H. H.

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068417

8. IT is my wish that ROLAND ERROL GRIDIGER shall be employed as Solicitor in proving my Will and in transacting any legal business in the administration of the trusts hereof.

9. I EMPOWER my Trustees to exercise all powers conferred upon a Trustee by Section 26 of the Trustee Act, 1925, as amended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand to this my Will on the 28th day of January, 1900.

SIGNED by the Testator as and for his last Will and Testament in the presence of us both being present at the same time who at his request and in the sight and presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses:

James Hepburn
James Hepburn

Elaine M. Edwards
Secretary
38 Grosvenor St
Bonnie Junction

Margaret Percil
242 Mac Donald St
Port of Spain
General Assistant

James

INVENTORY OF PROPERTY

968417 *APB*

of the estate of CHAIMAS (also known as Chaine) KOPILOVICIUS
 of PADDINGTON
 (occupation) RETIRED HANDBAG MANUFACTURER deceased

Schedule No.	Property	Estimate or known value
1	<u>Real Estate</u>	
	House and Land Lot 5 Section 4 DP 419 Parish of Alexandria County of Cumberland situate and known as 34 Ormond Street, Paddington and being the whole of the land described in Certificate of Title Volume 5591 Folio 233 in the name of the deceased Valued at	\$90,000.00
2	<u>Money in Current Account</u>	
	Westpac Banking Corporation Paddington Account No. 530.133	\$407.25
	ANZ Banking Group Paddington, Cheque Account No. 535663363	\$3,932.86
3	<u>Money in Bank on Deposit</u>	
	Westpac Banking Corporation Paddington Account No. 900032 P \$30,026.53 I \$2,210.81	\$32,237.34
	Commonwealth Savings Bank Paddington Savings Account No. 72265 P \$416.21 I \$51.14	\$467.35
	Commonwealth Savings Bank Paddington Term Deposit, Safe Custody Receipt No. 845868 P \$10,000.00 I \$22.19	\$10,022.19
	Commonwealth Savings Bank Paddington Term Deposit, Safe Custody Receipt No. 56014 P \$900.00 I \$31.66	\$931.66
	Commonwealth Savings Bank Paddington Term Deposit, Safe Custody Receipt No. 572528 P \$11,337.00 I \$218.04	\$11,555.04
	Commonwealth Savings Bank Paddington Term Deposit, Safe Custody Receipt No. 9915 P \$2,500.00 I \$46.23	\$2,546.23
	NSW Permanent Building Society Account No. 284311	\$1,864.16
4	<u>Taxation Credit</u>	
	Australian Taxation Office - provisional tax held	\$1,195.00

Reilly
B. Brown

Khwan

068447 *B/E*

Schedule No.	Property	Estimate or known value
5	<u>Other Personal Property</u>	
	Telecom - net credit refunded \$7.91	\$955.03
	Sacred Heart Hospital - Trust Account \$947.12	
	One Omega pocket watch	
	One Lanco wristlet watch	\$150.00
	One Fab wristlet watch with Braille estimated value face	
		<u>\$156,258.11</u>

Luan Luan

Robt W. G. Brown

R. Luan



IN THE SUPREME COURT OF
NEW SOUTH WALES
PROBATE DIVISION

CHAIMAS KOPILOVICIUS (also known as
Chaime Kopilovicius)

Paddington

in the State of New South Wales,

deceased.

PROBATE

ROLAND E. GRIDIGER & CO.,
Solicitors,
99 Elizabeth Street,
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000

190441-2.85 D. West, Government Printer

Heaven

Jewish Care's Beit Chaim Program 1984-Present

According to Clause 4 on page 2 of Chaim's Last Will and Testament, the following was stipulated: "I devise my house at 34 Ormond Street, Paddington in the State of New South Wales, to my trustees UPON TRUST for twenty years (20) for the use, free of charge of poor and needy people of the Jewish Faith and I EMPOWER my Trustees and the Jewish Welfare Society to select those poor and needy people who will reside in the said premises. After this period of twenty (20) years I DIRECT my Trustees to sell the said premises and divide the proceeds of the sale equally between MORIAH WAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE, MASADA COLLEGE, HILLEL COLLEGE KINDERGARTEN. If in the opinion of my Trustees and the Board of Management of the Jewish Welfare Society the said premises are not suitable for the use as a residence for the said class of persons then I DIRECT my Trustees to sell the said premises, the proceeds of sale forming part of my residuary estate". An estimated value of the property in the Will was given as \$90,000.00 which in the 1980's would have been a substantial amount of money.

In 1936 the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (AJWS) was established with the primary purpose of being a Jewish supportive agency to both pre and post war migrants. Years later it would transform and become a Jewish Welfare Organisation with the primary goal of being the providing a range of services to the Jewish community in aged care, family services, and mental health. The AJWS was renamed Jewish Care in 2001 when it merged with Montefiore Homes.

The newspaper article by Morrison also provides important details about why Chaim chose the AJWS as a beneficiary of his estate. Specifically, Ms Stephanie Pojer from AJWS, was introduced to Chaim in 1976. She would visit him regularly and developed a trusting relationship with him. She would assist him with his shopping and take him for walks. According to the article, Mrs Pojer had stated after Chaim's death that her care had involved "looking after his human needs as he did not seem to be short of money but he was very sick, eighty percent blind and very much alone" (Morrison). "Chaim lived alone in almost complete blindness" (Morrison) and was seemingly helped extensively by AJWS.

It was evident that the AJWS had played a substantial role in Chaim's later life, and that he felt indebted to them for the care that they provided, given his instructions in his Will whereby he bequeathed his home to the AJWS. Chaim's remarkable acts of chesed and tzedakah is so poignant as he clearly wanted to repay his debt to the AJWS for the care they had provided him in his time of need. Here was a man with no family of his own, and he made the decision to give back to others "especially the poor and needy".

Roland Gridiger explained that the philosophy of the AJWS was hugely impacted by Chaim's actions of choosing to bequeath his home to the AJWS. In the past, the AJWS had relied solely on grants from the government to support those in the Jewish community who were in need of support. The house provided AJWS with options and financial security in its endeavours to support those in the Jewish community. This was a very positive change for the AJWS. Roland Gridiger explained that under the guidance and discretion of the Trustees, AJWS bought out the interest of the other organisations (Moriah College, Masada College and Hillel Kindergarten), and accordingly Roland Gridiger explained that another document was drafted stating that these organisations

surrendered the property for a cash amount. Hence, this meant that after the twenty years (as stipulated in the original Will) that the house would be the sole possession of AJWS.

AJWS took ownership of the house and it became known as **Beit Chaim** (translated as House of Chaim). The **Beit Chaim** house was originally renovated in the 1990's and enabled a group of six intellectually disabled, Jewish adults to move out of home for the first time. They were supported by care workers from Jewish Care while living in the house. In 1999 my mother attended an official opening at the **Beit Chaim** house. She also recalls meeting some of the residents living there. However, there are no official photos or documentation available of this day. My mum recalls feeling very emotional at the opening, and described that she had mixed feelings of sadness and joy. She explained that she felt sad that Chaim never had the chance to witness the extent and impact of his generosity and that he had clearly lived such a lonely life. She felt so pleased knowing that in spite of his own difficult life that he was now bringing so much hope and happiness to those in need.

It is unclear exactly when the house was no longer used as a home for these disabled adults and exactly when Jewish Care made the decision to sell the house. This information has been very difficult to obtain from Jewish Care and it became a futile endeavour to investigate further as it seems that this matter is shrouded in secrecy. Given the stipulations in Chaim's will "after the period of 20 years, I direct the trustees to sell the said premises", the house was sold in 2003 house by Jewish Care. It is also unclear exactly how Jewish Care has made use of the funds from the sale of Chaim's house but given that **Beit Chaim** has continued as a Jewish Care Program, it is likely that the funds have been appropriately used to fund and continue the **Beit Chaim Program**. Roland Gridiger did state that the house was bought by Catherine Hewgill, the principal cellist of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In a 2015 conversation with my mum and Suzi Parker, Manager of Disability Services, Jewish Care, she explained that **Beit Chaim** supports 22 people living with a disability and who are living independently, or are in a transition to independent living. At the time, there were two coordinators managing a team of support workers who work one on one with the people they are supporting in order to meet their goals of independent living. One example shared by Suzi was of a young man who had recently moved out of home into his own apartment. He was being supported to learn to shop, cook and use his washing machine. The support worker would go to his apartment every week, they plan what they will cook for lunch and go shopping together and come home and cook. As his skills are built up, the support worker will continue to help him develop further independent living skills to help enhance the quality of his life. Suzi also explained, "4 of the original 6 people who had lived at the **Beit Chaim** house have continued to live a meaningful and independent life, thanks to the foresight and generosity of one man, Chaim".

Currently the **Beit Chaim Community Living Program** purports to "provide flexible support for Jewish adults with a disability who need support to live independently in the community". It aims to "promote autonomy and independence and to enable the person with the disability to access and utilise a full range of community resources and facilities". Support includes dropping in to client's homes at various times as well as

assisting clients with building independent living skills like shopping, banking and building social skills. Below are extracts about **Beit Chaim** from Jewish Care's Disability Brochure (2016):

My Home

JewishCare knows that your home, and how you live, is one of the most important things in your life. The right home helps to encourage stability, independence and social connections. We provide support options for people with various disabilities allowing independent living in a supportive environment, with improved daily living skills and autonomy.

JewishCare has been helping **Roxana Beder** for over 30 years. She now lives in her own flat in Maroubra and works for Wingap in Eastgardens. *"My JewishCare support workers help me so much. They helped me to get my current flat that I really like and they help me to keep it tidy. They also help me with the shopping, getting to doctors appointments, with sewing and getting to bowling. We are also now working on improving my computer skills. I can't imagine my life without JewishCare".*



Living independently

JewishCare provides flexible, drop in support for people with disabilities who require assistance to live independently in the community. If you made the choice to live independently, our **Beit Chaim Community Living program** can help you develop living skills, so you can enjoy a greater degree of independence. It also enables you to access and utilise a full range of community resources and facilities. Our support is based on building ability to manage daily living skills such as budgeting, banking, attending medical appointments, shopping, cooking etc. We also focus on building social skills and social inclusion.

5

Lifestyle Coordination

Qualified caseworkers work closely with you and your family to provide support with crisis management, referral as well as liaising with schools and government agencies. Our **Beit Chaim Community Living program** can assist you to pursue independence and participate fully in community life. We will work with you to identify your needs and to develop your own vision for the future so you can achieve your goals. We can also assist in providing opportunities for you to fully participate in the mainstream community to gain access to work, volunteering and education.

Extracts about **Beit Chaim** from Jewish Care's Disability Brochure (2016)

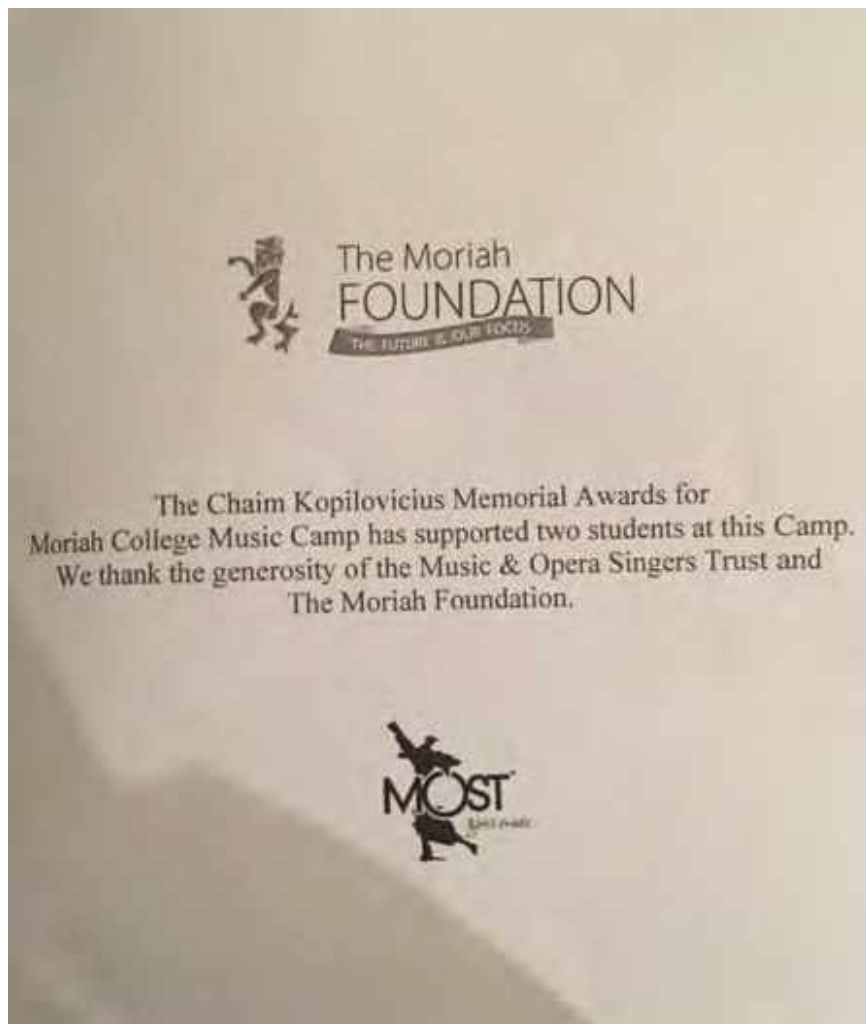
Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund 1985-Present

In 1985 under the guidance of Roland Gridiger and Bernie Rosen, the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund** was established. This was in accordance of Clause 5 (b) of Chaim's Last Will and Testament which stated: "In so far as is consistent with the authority granted herein to invest and apply the income of my residuary estate for the granting of annual scholarships to needy students attending or wishing to attend MORIAH WAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE, MASADA COLLEGE or HILLEL COLLEGE KINDERGARTEN. The said scholarships are to be known as the "CHAIMAS KOPILOVICIUS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS" and the selection of those students who are to be the recipients of the SAID scholarships is to be made at the absolute discretion of my Trustees and DR W.L. WISE OF 15 Kippara Road, Rose Bay and in the event of the unavailability of the said DR W.L. WISE then the absolute discretion of my Trustees and the Principals of the abovementioned schools".

Roland Gridiger explained that following the granting of the Probate in 1983, the money from AJWS purchase of the property was distributed amongst the three Jewish Schools, the remainder of the funds from Chaim's residuary estate were placed in an interest bearing investment deposit account that rolls over every year. As Hillel College Kindergarten closed, the funds that were accumulated from this investment account and were only distributed to Moriah College and Masada College. According to Roland, he and Bernie Rosen would meet annually to nominate which students would benefit from the support and receive funding from the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund**. In more recent years, Roland stated that he is no longer involved in these nominations and that the individual schools make the decisions of which students are recipients of support from the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund**. Roland Gridiger estimated that to date over 350 students have benefitted from Chaim's generosity and tzedakah as a result of the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund**. Most of these recipients do not know Chaim or his story. According to Maimonides, this act of tzedakah would be at the second highest level given that both Chaim would not have known the recipients and the recipients would not have known Chaim, in other words they were both unknown to each other. It is highly ironic that both I have been a student at Moriah College since 2005, and my sister since 2010 and this is one of the schools that our great great uncle chose to have students as beneficiaries of the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund**. I feel an enormous sense of pride that Chaim's generosity, chesed and tzedakah has extended to supporting the education of Jewish students in both Moriah College and Masada College. He obviously valued the importance of education, particularly a Jewish education and wanted to make a difference by supporting the educational needs of underprivileged students. His philanthropy deserves recognition as most people in our community would be completely unaware of these contributions that he has made to the continuity of Jewish education.

In 2015, with the assistance again of Roland Gridiger, Chaim's generosity was extended to the Moriah College Foundation with the establishment of the **Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards for Moriah College Music Camp** which is a camp held annually. At the time two students benefitted and their attendance at Music camp was supported by

this award. Since then a further 6 students have benefitted from the ***Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards for Moriah College Music Camp***, with a total of 8 students to date who have been beneficiaries of this award. In 2015, when I was attending Music Camp in Year 7, you can imagine my family's surprise when we saw on the back of the final concert program the acknowledgement of the ***Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards for Moriah College Music Camp***. We had not been aware that this award had been established and were overjoyed and so proud that this award had been indeed been established. How ironic that Chaim's benevolence has extended to supporting students at Moriah Music Camp, as personally both mine and my sister Chelsea's involvement in the Moriah College Music Program has been such a significant part of our lives as students of Moriah College. We feel very proud that our great great uncle's generous acts of Tzedakah have extended also to music education which our family is very passionate about. As a result of seeing this acknowledgement, my mum then was in contact with the Moriah Foundation and shared more details about Chaim's life story with the hope that this too would encourage and inspire others in our community to provide donations to the Moriah Foundation. My mum was very involved in providing the necessary information about Chaim and his life for the article in the 2015 Annual Moriah Foundation Review.



Copy of the back of the 2015 Music Camp Program acknowledging the Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards *for Moriah College Music Camp*.

A *legacy* THAT EXTENDS FOR OVER 30 YEARS

For students who have demonstrated commitment to the music program yet find the cost of Music Camp beyond the financial capacity of their family, ***The Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards for Moriah College Music Camp*** provides direct funding support.

Chaim Kopilovicius (1892-1982) emigrated from Lithuania to Australia via Shanghai in 1936 having established a handbag and leather factory. He lived a very reclusive life having never married nor having his own family.

In his last few years he was very unwell, with poor eyesight. At the time of his death his signed Will could not be located and the Public Trustee attempted to take ownership of his Estate. Eventually his last Will was discovered by tapping on the walls of his house, hidden in a secret panel.



Chaim Kopilovicius, in Lichtenburg SA, 1974

Thankfully, Chaim's benevolence has extended to many in our community.

His home at 34 Ormond Street, Paddington later became known as *Beit Chaim*. It was converted into a home for young Jewish adults with intellectual disabilities to live independently under the supervision of JewishCare, and has continued as a program that provides flexible support for Jewish adults with a disability.

The Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship was established in 1986 to financially assist students attending Moriah College and Masada College and, to date, more than 350 Jewish children have benefited.

In 2015, Chaim's generosity extended to supporting two students attendance at Moriah College Music Camp under the guidance of the Music and Opera Singers Trust and The Moriah Foundation.

Today, Chaim's great-great-nephew and great-great-neice, Matt and Chelsea Nurick, participate in the Moriah College Music Program.

It is a remarkable testament to his generosity that thirty years after his passing, there are students in our community that continue to benefit from his 30-year legacy.

The Moriah Foundation invites members of the community to follow Chaim's footsteps and include a gift to Moriah in their Will, or to contribute directly to support either *The Chaim Kopilovicius Memorial Awards for Moriah College Music Camp* or *The Nelly Apt Scholarship for Excellence in Music*.

Please contact Joseph Herschel, the Foundation Director, on (02) 9375 1774 for a confidential discussion.

1999-Present

In March of 1999 when my maternal grandfather visited my mum in Sydney, they visited Chaim's grave at Rookwood. My mum explained that both she and my grandfather were horrified and very distressed to find that no tombstone had ever been erected for Chaim. My grandfather contacted Steven Denenberg who was Jewish Care's CEO at that time, and requested that given Chaim's generosity to Jewish Care that it was only fitting that they too honour Chaim and ensure that a tombstone be erected for Chaim. Without delay Steven Denenberg agreed and organised Chaim's tombstone much to the enormous relief of my grandfather and mum.

Mr Denenberg also arranged for my mum and grandfather to visit Beit Chaim, Chaim's home in Paddington. This was a very meaningful visit for both my mum and grandfather as she said that it was very moving and poignant for my grandfather to be sitting in the home of his uncle in Sydney, Australia. It had been 25 years since my grandfather had last seen his Uncle Chaim. My grandfather felt extremely proud and emotional knowing that through his uncle's thoughtfulness and tzedakah that his uncle had made a unique and special contribution to helping others in the Jewish community.



My maternal grandfather and Steve Denenberg, CEO of Jewish Care in Chaim's house, 34 Ormond Street, Paddington, NSW (Beit Chaim), 1999.



**My mum and maternal grandfather outside Chaim's House (Beit Chaim),
34 Ormond Street, Paddington, NSW, 1999**

Following my mum and grandfather's visit to Chaim's home in Paddington, they also contacted Roland Gridiger and met with him at his offices in Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Roland shared details with my mum and grandfather about the contents of Chaim's Will as well as information about how Chaim's generosity to others in the Sydney Jewish community had been made possible by the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund**. Roland invited my mum to attend the annual scholarship meetings with him and Bernie Rosen. At the time, my mum was thrilled to be involved in this

process and attended one or two meetings where they discussed how the funding would be allocated. She recalls meeting Bernie Rosen, Chaim's accountant who spoke fondly of Chaim. During my mum's pregnancy with me, she took a leave of absence from attending the **Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund** meetings and somehow lost contact with Roland Gridiger. My mum stated that she does regret not continuing to be more involved in this process and should have been more proactive in re-involving herself.

In 2015, following my Barmitzvah in April, I made the decision to honour Chaim and his contribution to the Sydney Jewish Community. As part of Moriah College's Matanah Program for Bnei Mitzvah students the charity that I chose that was profoundly important to me was Jewish Care's Beit Chaim Program. I therefore bequeathed a portion of my Barmitzvah gifts by making a \$1000 donation to the Beit Chaim Program as a way of continuing the generations of giving that Chaim had established when he had his last Will and Testament drafted all those years ago. In June 2015, my mum, sister and I visited Jewish Care and met with Suzi Parker, Head of Disability Services and Richard Spence, the Acting CEO Of Jewish Care. They presented me with a certificate to acknowledge the donation that I had made to Jewish Care and we spent time chatting about Chaim and the amazing legacy that he has left for my family and the Sydney Jewish Community. This was an especially proud moment as I was able to continue, in some small way in Chaim's footsteps and also to share Chaim's story with others. They also recommended to my mum that she submit an article to the Sydney Jewish Report to raise the visibility of Chaim's story.

Generations Of Giving

**HEIDI KOPEL
JEWISH CARE**

When Year 7 Moriah College student, Matt Nurick recently celebrated his Barmitzvah in April, he wanted to choose a charity as part of the school's Matanah Program for Bnei Mitzvah students that was especially significant to him. He immediately knew that he wanted to bequeath a portion of his gifts to Jewish Care's Beit Chaim Program. Beit Chaim is a program that was started many years ago in Honour of Matt's Great, Great Uncle Chaim Kopilovicius.

Chaim Kopilovicius emigrated from Lithuania to Australia via Shanghai in the late 1930's. For many years his home was at 34 Ormond Street, Paddington. In 1984, when Chaim wanted to make a will, never having married nor having his own children, he instructed lawyer Roland Gridiger to act as his Co-executor and establish the "Chaim Kopilovicius Scholarship" for poor and needy Jewish students. Today, this Scholarship Fund still continues to provide benefits to many Jewish students in our community. But at the time of Chaim's death in 1985, his will could not be found. Following much searching the will was found by his friend and accountant, the late Bernie Rosen hidden behind the wallpaper in the living room wall of Chaim's home.

His generosity also extended to the house at 34 Ormond Street which was converted into a home for young adults with intellectual disabilities under the supervision of Jewish

Care. For many years young Jewish adults with intellectual disabilities were given the opportunity to move out of home and have the experience of living independently at the Beit Chaim house. In February 1998 when Beit Chaim was officially opened, Matt's Mum, Heidi, who had immigrated to Australia in 1997 attended the opening hosted by Jewish Care. Heidi had only ever met Chaim once in 1975 when he visited her family in South Africa.

The house was sold some years ago and Beit Chaim has continued as a Jewish Care program that provides flexible support for 22 Jewish adults with a disability who need support to live independently in the community. Many of these adults either live with their

parents or in Department of Housing homes. The aim of the Beit Chaim program is to promote autonomy and independence and to enable the person with the disability to access and utilise a full range of community resources and facilities. This support includes drop-in support at their residence at certain times, helping with shopping, banking, attending medical appointments as well as skill building and social support.

Matt recently met with Jewish Care's CEO, Richard Spence and Manager of the Disability Services Team, Suzi Parker. He presented them with a cheque for Beit Chaim to help continue the legacy started so many years ago by his great great uncle Chaim.



Richard Spence, Matt Nurick and Suzi Parker



Chaim Kopilovicius, 1975



Ormond Street, Paddington

Article in Sydney Jewish Report, June, 2015

Len Yudeikin, saw this article in the Sydney Jewish report and contacted Suzi Parker to find out if he could have my mum's contact details. As a result of this story being published in the Sydney Jewish report, Len Yudeikin and my mum were able to meet and share stories about Chaim and how they were related to each other. This was quite a remarkable outcome as both my mum and Len did not know each other. Len was able to provide my family with the Morrison newspaper article about Chaim from 1983, as there were many details about Chaim we were not aware of. It was only through this connection to Chaim that my mum and Len were able to meet which is truly extraordinary.



Family Tree from Geni.com explaining how Len Yudeikin and I are related

Jewish Care

This certificate is presented to

MATT NURICK

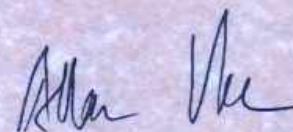
**On the occasion of
your Barmitzvah**

The President, Board and Staff of JewishCare
thank you most sincerely for your
donation to our organisation

We wish you and your family a hearty
mazaltov on your Barmitzvah

May 2015

Allan Vidor



President

Certificate presented to Matt Nurick by Jewish Care, 2015

Summary and Conclusion

It is undeniable that Chaim's greatest achievement was that he "was a blessing to others", that he made a difference to NSW Jewry but will never know the influence and impact of his actions.

One can only wonder what would have happened if Chaim's Will had not been located, the Public Trustee would have taken ownership of his estate, including his home and funds and the AJWS would not have been benefitted and neither would have the many Jewish student's and beneficiaries of Chaim's philanthropy through both ***Jewish Care's Beit Chaim Program and Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarships***. Chaim's exceptional story is certainly one that reflects triumph given that "his major legacy for the community – more specifically for the poor and needy of the Jewish faith" (Morrison) was indeed saved. It has resulted in having a major impact on the Sydney Jewish community for over thirty years that still continues today.

It would appear that even though Chaim admitted that he was not a particularly religious man, he still maintained a deep connection to his Jewish identity and values. This is most evidenced by his ultimate acts of tzedakah and chesed where the beneficiaries were stipulated in his Will to be those of 'the Jewish faith'. Chaim seemingly continued to maintain a sense of responsibility to his Jewish values and traditions, and he seemed resilient despite the many difficulties that he faced in his life. Despite being limited by his own life circumstances he wanted to transform the world by helping and giving back to others. No doubt his many life experiences impacted him but also reinforced his beliefs in giving back to his community and enriching the lives of others. He came to Australia with the hopes and dreams of starting a new life, and at the end of his life wanted in some way to repay the kindness that he was shown by the AJWS. His actions have supported others who could not, otherwise afford a Jewish education demonstrating his outstanding commitment to the continuity of Jewish students receiving a Jewish education. By giving back to his community through the establishment of ***Jewish Care's Beit Chaim*** and the ***Chaimas Kopilovicius Memorial Scholarship Fund***, it is evident that he felt a strong obligation and appreciation of giving back, to contributing, and to helping others less fortunate to assist them in building fulfilling lives. By providing funds for those in need really reflects that Chaim truly gave from his heart, an ultimate act of altruism.

As a final tribute to Chaim, I recently went to Rookwood Cemetery to pay my respects to him by visiting his grave. Standing by his grave, reading the words on his tombstone "His generosity made a difference to the lives of many people", I felt a wave of emotion as I again realised that there has been little documentation or acknowledgement of the enormous legacy that Chaim has left in terms of the significant contribution he has made to the Sydney Jewish Community. I thought about the words of AJWS support worker Ms Pojer's that Chaim had died "a poor old rich man" (Morrison). She was not wrong. Chaim did pass away a wealthy man, but was 'poor' as my sense is that his life did not seem to have provided him with the fulfilment that he had wished for. Poignantly, it seems that rather this has occurred more so in his death through his legacy, that he has made such a huge impact through his substantial contributions. It is difficult to estimate the extent of the benefit that has been experienced in the support

and assistance Chaim has provided to “poor and needy children’s education” as well as “poor and needy people of the Jewish faith”.

Although Chaim may not have been able to witness the blessings of his chesed, he now serves as a role model to my family and I. His dedication to his Jewish values and acts of tzedakah and chesed reflect the honourable man he was. His generosity and impact on the Sydney Jewish community is a great source of pride and joy for my entire family. Chaim’s story has also inspired my sense of responsibility to be philanthropic by also inspiring others to be generous and make an impact on our community and world just as Chaim has done. I hope that I am able to emulate his achievements in my lifetime too. His legacy certainly has continued and he is deserving of being honoured and recognised. Through this Hans Kimmel Project, as his great great nephew I have endeavoured to honour him as he really deserves recognition although I am sure he would be very humble in this tribute to his vast contributions to our community. His benevolent deeds and actions have certainly benefitted others and what a positive impact he has had on future generations of our community. My sense of pride of being able to share Chaim’s story and be his voice and witness through this Hans Kimmel Project has been a privilege.



Matt Nurick at Chaim Kopilovicius’ grave, Rookwood Cemetery, 2018

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Copy of Article about Chaim from 2015 Annual Review Moriah Foundation, provided by Heidi Kopel

Article from Sydney Jewish Report, June, 2015, provided by Heidi Kopel

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Interviews:

1. Roland Gridiger, Chaim's solicitor, Sydney, NSW
2. Len Yudeikin, Chaim's third cousin, Sydney, NSW
3. Solly Cope, Chaim's nephew, via email correspondence, Johannesburg, South Africa

4. Heidi Kopel, Chaim's great niece, Sydney, NSW
5. Suzi Parker, Head of Disability Services, Jewish Care, Sydney, NSW