

ISRAEL AT WAR

Website: australianjewishnews.com
Advertising enquiries: sales@jewishnews.net.au
Email: ajn@jewishnews.net.au

Publisher: Robert Magid
Director: Anna Pasternak
Chief Operations Manager: Marina Yuksel
Strategic Marketing Manager: Belle Kwan
Editor in Chief: Gareth Narunsky
Digital Editor: Liz Rudenko
Religious Affairs Editor: Yossi Aron
Arts & Lifestyle Editor: Jessica Abelsohn (on leave) Sharyn Kolieb (acting)
Travel Editor: Danny Gocs
Sports Editor: Shane Desiatnik
Senior Journalists: Peter Kohn, Carly Adno, Bruce Hill
Journalist: Carol Saffer
Photographer: Peter Haskin
Subeditors: Rebecca Alford, Michelle Perl
Advertising: (National) Deborah Maybloom, Yakov Moses
National Art Director: Stephen Fretwell
Assistant Art Director: Adriana Alvarez
Production Manager: Glenda Steckoll
Production: Vivienne Napolitano, Tiffany Morris-North, Samantha Oakley
Finance Manager: Olivia Smith
Subscriptions: Rhonda Cashmore

The Australian Jewish News does not guarantee the kashrut of any restaurant, caterer or product advertised.

The Australian Jewish News is printed by Newsprinters, Wodonga, VIC and Spotpress, NSW.

Printpost: No 100007670
ABN: 54618993967

The Australian Jewish News is published by Polaris Media Pty Ltd.

To advertise call: (03) 8531 8900

To subscribe call: 1800 010 171
or email: subscriptions@jewishnews.net.au
Social notices: notices@jewishnews.net.au

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK:
facebook.com/australianjewishnews

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM:
[@jewishnews_au](https://instagram.com/@jewishnews_au)

IN EVERY GENERATION ENEMIES RISE UP TO DESTROY US

Stand with our brothers and sisters in Israel



ZEDDY LAWRENCE

“I’m staying in Egypt this year.”
This year? In fact, it was every year. The same answer. I’d call my father erev Pesach and ask him where he’d be for Seder and that would be his stock response. “I’m staying in Egypt this year.”

Of course, he wasn’t really in Egypt. It was actually Bournemouth, a seaside town in the south of England. And how often he’d really be staying there for Seder I’m not sure. For instance, sometimes he’d be with his brother in Leeds and sometimes he’d be with my brother in London.

But nonetheless, that was his answer every year. For more than 30 years since my parents divorced.

It was a Pesach tradition. As much as eating matzah, asking the Four Questions or putting a slice of carrot on top of the gefilte fish. Erev Pesach: “Where are you for Seder?”

“I’m staying in Egypt this year.”
But 2023 marked the end of an era.

Ten days after the terrible events of October 7, my father alav ha’shalom passed away.

Living on the other side of the world, it had been several years since we’d actually spent a Seder night together. So, I was more than used to not seeing him at the table.

But this year I’ve felt his absence through not hearing him utter that answer over the phone. Pesach has not been complete without it.

Needless to say, I’m not alone in suffering that sense of loss. In Israel, well over 2000 families sat down for Seder with empty chairs at their table – their loved ones struck down on October 7, killed in action since then or held hostage in one of the terror tunnels in Gaza.

It’s not just me and those 2000 plus families though. True to the spirit of Pesach in which we are supposed to feel that we ourselves were slaves, so too we as a people have all



Chairs for the missing Bibas family at a symbolic Seder table at the communal dining hall at Kibbutz Nir Oz on April 11. Photo: Maya Alleruzzo/AP

shared that sense of loss this year – that sense summed up so aptly in the lament Vehi Sheamda that in every generation enemies rise up to destroy us.

And it’s not only on Israel’s borders that the assaults have been launched. Over the past couple of weeks, we’ve witnessed scenes at universities across the United States where police have had to be brought in to deal with anti-Israel activists causing havoc on campus.

Jewish students say they feel unsafe, a refrain we’ve heard on these shores as well. Likewise, city centres the world over are being labelled no-go zones for Jews as militant protestors chant hate-filled slogans.

Time and again, we hear the same story – that rather than stand up to the mob, the authorities tell Jews to keep their distance or indeed drag them away for fear their presence might provoke further unrest.

Similarly, venues are bullied into cancelling Jewish events, under threat of demonstrations on their doorsteps.

But every time they give in, the bullies see that their tactics work.

And so they step up their campaign of harassment and intimidation.

And another Jewish student decides it’s safer to stay at home rather than go to lectures. And another Jewish event has to find a new venue. And another Jewish employee feels uncomfortable in the workplace and that they have to find a new job.

Were there any Seder tables this year at which this wasn’t the main topic of conversation?

The only way to stop this descent into mob rule is to say we will not be cowed, we will not slink into the shadows. And to insist that those entrusted with upholding our rights as citizens do just that.

In just under two weeks, the Jewish world will mark Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha’atzmaut.

Given what has transpired over the past seven months and what we as a people are experiencing now, never have these days been more significant or their observance more important.

As a community, it is imperative that we come together to stand with each other and stand with Israel. And stand proud.

These aren’t just symbolic gestures.

There are those in our community who lost loved ones on and since October 7. We stand with them and we comfort them. There are those in our community who’ve lost work, who’ve lost friends, who’ve been abused, whose businesses have been targeted, who feel unsafe where they study or where they live. We stand with them and we support them.

And there are those outside our community who want us to cower and want Israel eradicated. But we won’t stand for that.

So, join the Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha’atzmaut events in your state as we stand with each other, we stand with our brothers and sisters in the Jewish State, and we stand tall.

Now more than ever, it’s never been more critical for us to take a stand.

Zeddy Lawrence is the executive director of Zionism Victoria. Yom Hazikaron is on Monday May 13. Register: trybooking.com/CQYOR Yom Ha’atzmaut is on Tuesday May 14. Register: trybooking.com/CRCUJ

YOM HA'ATZMAUT 76 יום העצמאות

ZIONISM MORE THAN EVER

TUESDAY 14 MAY From 4pm - 10pm
REGISTER AT: YOMS.COM.AU
LOCATION ON REGISTRATION

- Shira B'Tsibur Concert •
- Activities • Food • DJ's •

<p>MAJOR PHILANTHROPIC PARTNER</p>	<p>MAJOR COMMUNAL PARTNER</p>	<p>The Jakob Frenkiel Charitable Trust</p>	<p>PARTNERS</p>	<p>PATRONS</p>	<p>CORPORATE SPONSORS</p>	<p>EVENT SPONSORS</p>	<p>PRODUCED BY</p>
------------------------------------	-------------------------------	--	-----------------	----------------	---------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------