



EMANUEL SCHOOL

Grandparents & Friends

NEWS

June 2020

Tammuz 5780

Vol 12 Issue 1



From the Development Office

I hope this latest newsletter finds you and your family well and safe.

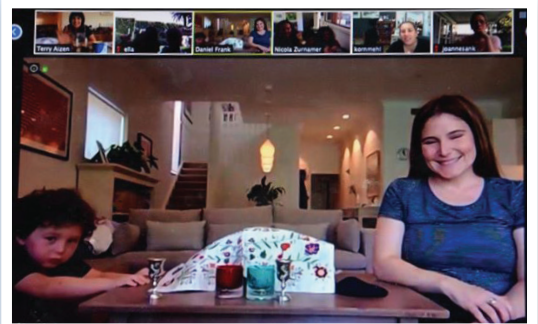
The world has changed so much since the last edition of this newsletter in December. No one in their wildest dreams could have imagined these changes over the past few months, as we have learnt to "live with" coronavirus. By the time you read this newsletter, things will have changed again in terms of what we can and what we cannot do, as restrictions are being lifted week by week.

Here in Australia we have been very "lucky" compared to many other countries as we all try, in our own different ways, to deal with the impact of coronavirus on us and our families. We know many of our grandparents live interstate or overseas. These turbulent months of social isolation have seen planned trips back to Sydney to see your children and grandchildren cancelled, or maybe put on hold. We hope that times ahead are getting better and until such time when you can visit here again, we hope you remain safe too.

Despite all these changes, this newsletter is filled with details about school-related news we thought you might like to know about, even though we have not been able to share events with you face-to-face. The world does not stop – yes, it is different and with all that is going on, we have to learn to do things differently. Thank goodness for digital technology like Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp and the other internet communications, which allow us to stay connected to loved ones who do not live with us.

As you all know, school-life also changed these past months. Our online learning program was launched on 24 March. We also had a handful of students at school, who are children of essential workers – and word filtered back that we were tracking well for a first day. It was a great start.

Here are a few photos, showing what online learning looked like.



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EMANUEL SCHOOL

20 Stanley Street Randwick NSW 2031
www.emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au

EMANUEL SCHOOL Where the Individual Excels

From the Development Office (continued)

Here are quotes from a couple of parents at the start of online learning:

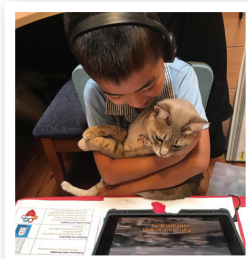
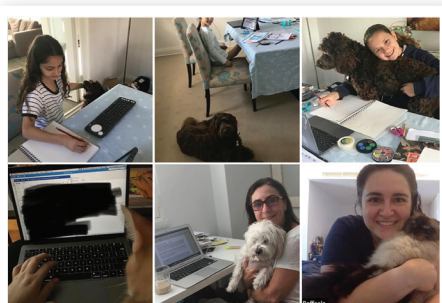
"I think today's schooling has been amazing so far. All my three kids are fully engaged! The teachers are doing such a great job of making it work – and really, so are the kids".

"My job is just to 'ring the bell' after each lesson and provide some technical support!"

Another parent:

"The online learning platform is amazing. You are the teaching staff should be so proud. Thank you."

Our amazing teachers along with our students, embraced e-learning and home-based school, whilst most members of the Administration team were also working from home. We posted on the School Community Facebook page in early May, an album Pets @ Emanuel with many fabulous photos of students and staff studying/teaching/working with or alongside their pets. Here are a few sample photos:



can-watch-on-stage-from-home

Dunera Project: www.dunera.org.au

Recently launched, this is an online hub where members of our community and beyond can access live events and participate in a range of cultural and communal activities from any device, at any time. An initiative of Emanuel Synagogue created and curated by a group of dedicated volunteers, Dunera features a mix of community learning, cultural enrichment and good old-fashioned entertainment. These volunteers include a number of members of our own Emanuel community including current parents Daniel Grynberg and Sam Zwarenstein

as well as past parent, Geoff Sirmai. We encourage you to join up and enjoy some of the many live events and activities on offer, and to pass on details to anyone else you know who might be interested.

An Emanuel School history lesson

Our amazing School opened its doors in February 1983, with just 53 students and by the time the first official school photo was taken later that year, we had 74 students and nine staff members



including Linda Zurnamer, now the grandmother of Year K student Stevie Zurnamer and her brother Finn in Kornmehl Pre-school.

We have to thank the late Rabbi Brian Fox AM and the late Ted Waxman OAM for their vision and passion as the Founders of Emanuel School, as we stand so proud of all our achievements over the past 37 years. A number of students who were part of our first intake in 1983 have had their children as students at the School

for some years already, and joining them this year we welcomed Jonah Symonds, great grandson of Ted Waxman. Jonah's mother Ilana Symonds (Waxman) and father Adam Symonds are both Emanuel alumni, Class of 2004 and 1999 respectively. Ilana's parents Tracey and Leon Waxman have been part of this School for what they describe as a lifetime. Their son Asher finished Year 12 in 2009 whilst their youngest child, Aliza finished Year 12 in 2012. Having such love and commitment to the School beyond this time, Leon has continued on as part of our amazing Parent Safety Group (PSG) and we hope he will continue to do so for many more years



- 12 museums with virtual tours from your couch
www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours
- 15 Broadway plays and musicals you can watch at home online
www.playbill.com/article/15-broadway-plays-and-musicals-you

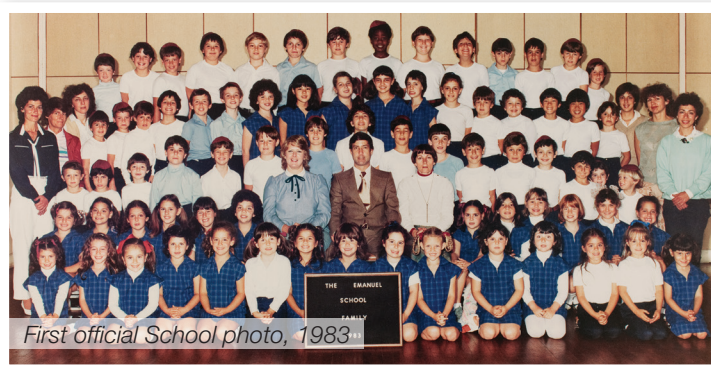
From the Development Office (continued)

to come. Ilana said: "I feel like I've come home! When I used to walk through the School gates as a child, I always felt very safe, happy and so nurtured. It is a wonderful feeling to know Jonah will feel the same in his school experience. It's so beautiful to look around the grounds and everywhere I see my own memories of my childhood come to life! So incredibly special to relive those happy times through Jonah's experiences now."

Tracey Waxman said: "it is such a privilege to be back at Emanuel School as grandparents. We certainly feel we have come home again!" You can read more from Tracey and Leon in our "Schmooze" on page 8 of this newsletter.

Another family who has a long association with the School and has returned this year is the Drexler family. Paul Drexler, whose two daughters Julie and Michelle are Emanuel alumni, is a Holocaust survivor and has donated prizes for High School Speech Night for many years for the Eugen Drexler Memorial Essays. The Eugen Drexler Memorial Prize was first awarded more than 25 years ago to a Year 10 student for proficiency in History. In 1998 it became the Eugen Drexler Memorial Prize for Excellence in Holocaust Studies. Some years ago the essays were expanded to include two further subjects to give the Year 10 students a wider choice – not only could they interview a Holocaust survivor, they could instead, interview someone who has immigrated to Australia under adverse circumstances or someone who has made a significant contribution to Jewish Community Life.

Paul Drexler and his wife Diane have now returned to the School as grandparents and he commented: "It is wonderful to see our granddaughter Maya following in our daughter's footsteps." Paul's



daughter Michelle Levitt (Class of 2000) agreed: "It is really great being back at Emanuel and seeing our daughter Maya absolutely love starting Year K. I think it is very unique how the feel of the School hasn't changed since I graduated despite the School going through so much growth and development."

Coronavirus has not and will not stop us wanting to share our news and yours. Don't forget to keep us updated if you have moved and/or changed your email, or if you have news to share. Please send your updates to: snewell@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au

If you did not receive the December 2019 newsletter, you can see it and all past Grandparents & Friends newsletters at: www.emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au/Gesher

I encourage you to also have a look at our alumni newsletters using this same link where you will read about some of the amazing achievements of our graduates.

We look forward to sharing special times with our students together with their grandparents and special friends back on campus once everything settles down.

If you have news to share, please send to:
snewell@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au

Sonia Newell,
Development Officer – Alumni & Community Relations

Emanuel on Social Media



School Community
Facebook Page

We encourage you to join this page and see some of the exciting things going on at School, including student activities: www.facebook.com/groups/Emanuelcommunity/

Emanuel Shuk

This is the place to swap, sell, buy and advertise pre-loved and new items, holiday homes and cars...in fact anything that is of value (actual or perceived) can be advertised here. If you have a business, you are welcome to tell us what you do, but please make it interesting and a special offer for the Emanuel community is always a bonus! There are rules to posting – please check out the pinned post for these. Here is the link to join: www.facebook.com/groups/Emanuelshuk/



EMANUEL SCHOOL FOUNDATION

The Emanuel School Foundation provides financial support to assist with the sustainability and continued growth of Emanuel School. By securing funding for all aspects of the School, including bursaries and scholarships, programs, special projects and infrastructure, The Emanuel School Foundation affirms the School's vision "where the individual excels".

More information online at
www.emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au/community/foundation/
All donations to the Emanuel School Foundation are tax deductible.



From the Principal's Desk

Staff reflections: Lessons learned during COVID-19

Whilst we are still in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, the experience of remote online learning has been profound. I have shared a selection

of staff reflections below, which will provide an insight into the experience from an educator's perspective:

I have learnt how it feels being in a big messy sea storm but sitting in a very strong ship. The Emanuel School ship has sailed with calmness and strong leadership in what has felt like treacherous seas and this has had a very stabilising feeling at a very messy time! On a personal note, I have discovered, as a keen sea swimmer, a whole new swimming area near me. Just after 6.00 am, I have seen more schools of fish than a David Attenborough documentary, and that has made my heart sing with joy!

Claire Pech, Careers Adviser

I think that, as humans, it is interesting that it takes something as small and seemingly insignificant as a virus to teach us what it truly means to be tolerant of all people, regardless of race, age, skin colour, beliefs, gender or eating habits: the virus treats us all as equals and, may perhaps, encourage us all to think of ourselves as simply one race, perhaps for the first time ever. Who knows if, at the other side of the corona experience, we end up more peaceful,

more kind, more gracious and, as a species, significantly humbler than before. **Joseph Peacock, High School Teacher**

I think if I have learned anything – actually not learnt but reinforced to me at this unprecedented time – is how proud I am to be part of the Emanuel Family. The way everyone has come together to support each other and put the wellbeing of our students and families first and foremost is incredible. You never realise what you are capable of and how strong you can be until you are thrust into a situation like we have been. It is truly amazing what we have achieved. **Nicole Esra, Primary School Teacher**

Thank you to the JCA

Emanuel School is one of 23 members of the JCA family of organisations. We are grateful to the JCA for the generous funding assistance they provide to the School and essential role that the organisation plays in so many aspects of the Jewish communal life. The JCA leadership, in partnership with Jewish Care, acted quickly and decisively at the start of the coronavirus pandemic. The launch of the Jewish Emergency Relief Fund meant that members of the community who found themselves in financial crisis, as a direct result of the Coronavirus pandemic, were able to access financial assistance quickly and directly. I thank the JCA for their strong leadership and foresight during this difficult and confronting time.

Andrew Watt, Principal



Connecting the Emanuel School Community



I hope you are safe and well. It is at times like these, that community and connection are even more important. At Geshher, community and connection are at the core of what we do, keeping our community of alumni, past and current parents, grandparents, carers, and those connected to Emanuel School, in touch with one another.

Celebrating the important festival of Shavu'ot most recently, makes Pesach seem like a dream, but it is worthy to note that as we went into quarantine due to COVID-19, we all experienced a Pesach unlike any before. Although it wasn't the usual big affair and we missed being together, many of us made up for it by doing something so different that it may become part of our celebrations going forward. Zoom Seders with family and friends from not just Sydney or even Australia, but from all over the world to our dining room table were indeed very special. Although

seeing one another in person is the preference, there was something very special to be able to see and speak with so many loved ones from near and far at the same time. Many of them had not met before so new connections were made. This taught me an important thing – although we may feel we can't do what we normally do, it is showing us that there are other ways for us still to connect and do things – some creativity and imagination is what is needed. This may very well become our 3rd night Seder to connect in with everyone from all over the world.

Thankfully technology enables us to stay connected so watch this space for how we will be staying connected. Necessity is the mother of all invention. There seems to be much invention and creativity coming through from how our students were doing their lessons from home to how we are all staying connected via technology. Those on email will have received a survey recently, asking you to share how you would like to stay connected with the School and the Emanuel community. I will be sure to let you know the plans for the coming months so you can join in on the events that are of interest to you and your family.

In the meantime, as always, we are still a community and here for one another, even if not in person – we are only a phone call/ text message/ Zoom, Skype or Facetime away from one another.

Stay safe,

Natalie Ranki-Goldman, Chair Geshher Committee



Message from Kornmehl Centre Emanuel Pre-school

Last term, we welcomed all our new children and families into the Pre-school. During the term, we celebrated Purim with a beautiful parade and magician show, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Luckily, we were still able to have families join us to celebrate. It was lovely to see many Mums and Dads getting into the spirit of Purim and dressing up too.

After Purim, we began learning about Pesach. Such a rich and beautiful festival, filled with stories, characters – both good and bad and lots of opportunity for discussion, beautiful creative artwork, singing and fun. Sadly, our Pesach preparations with the children were cut short, due to our early closure for coronavirus. We were not able to have our usual Kornmehl Pesach Seder, but we do know the children did go home with lots of knowledge and were able to participate meaningfully in their Seders at home.

We have all been feeling like we are on a roller coaster ride at the moment. What a wave of feelings we are all experiencing. We are hoping that you have all been keeping safe and well these past few weeks and months. I acknowledge that this isolation is tricky for everyone and I hope you have all been managing to keep yourselves busy and have been getting time to do lots of things you love, such as listening to music, watching TV, reading books, knitting or sewing, painting and walking.

We were feeling very nervous and tentative about returning to Pre-school for the start of Term 2. The Kornmehl educators have all been amazing – brave, courageous and willing to embrace the new norm. We returned to Pre-school on 28 April, with reduced numbers but still offering a full Pre-school program. Our joy was to see the children again and to see how happy they were to be back at Pre-school and being able to see their friends. For young children, the COVID-19 time has been very scary and over-whelming and has brought a lot of uncertainties and anxiety into the children's lives but being with them has been refreshing for us all and it has brightened all our days. Their enthusiasm, thirst for knowledge and boundless energy have not been dampened, despite the many waves of emotions and feelings they are experiencing at the moment.

On our return we celebrated Yom Ha'Atzmaut – Israel's 72nd birthday. We all dressed up in blue and white, waved our flags, made beautiful crowns and sang and danced. We baked delicious cupcakes and we all got to enjoy them together.

We hope that this newsletter will cheer you all up while you are at home and bring a smile to your face. We hope you are all keeping safe and we are looking forward to you being able to pop in and out of the Pre-school again soon. Remember we are all adaptable, resilient and strong and together we will get through this.

Sending you all our love.

Terry Aizen,
Kornmehl Centre Emanuel Pre-school Director



From the Jewish Studies Department

Purim was the last Jewish festival where family and friends could share such celebrations together before lockdown. Children dressed up in fancy dress and many of them came to school for lots of dancing and fun activities at the P&F Purim Disco.

Pesach on the other hand, was a very different experience this year. Every year as we sit round the Seder table, we ask the question: "Why is this night different to every other night?" This year all around the world, Pesach certainly was a very different night for everyone. Unfortunately, we could not hold the usual student-led sederim at school to share with you in person because of COVID-19, but the children continued with lessons online, being very resourceful and innovative. They enjoyed acting in, directing and producing Pesach plays online, and they held their own Pesach celebrations via Zoom, as did many of our School families on Seder night, allowing us to connect with friends and family across the world in a very different way to usual. There were many online resources shared to help us create the best Seder night we could for Pesach 5780. Next year we all hope Seder Night and life in general will be well and truly back to normal.

Lag B'Omer, traditionally celebrated with bonfires, parades, dancing and other joyous events, was celebrated at home this year. Our younger Primary students celebrated with home-made (non-flammable) bonfires.

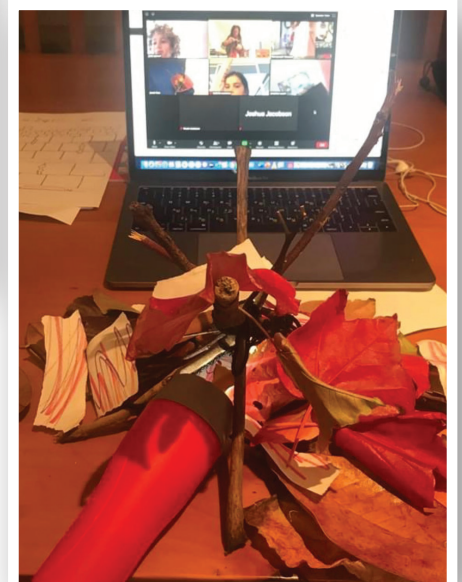
Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Israel's

Independence Day was celebrated and shared in isolation with the children making, baking and decorating using the colours of the Israeli flag at home. Israel's 72nd birthday was very special in its own unique way online this year.

Most recently, with isolation rulings being lifted, we hope you were able to celebrate the festival of Shavu'ot with family members, to share the delights of yummy cheesecake or cheese blintzes with loved ones – maybe you even had both!

Rabbi Daniel Siegel, Head of Jewish Life

Adam Carpenter, Head of Jewish Life Primary



No matter where in the world you, our Emanuel Grandparents live, we hope you enjoy reading about some of the events that go on here at School. If you know of other grandparents who do not receive this newsletter and/or the weekly School newsletter Ma Nishma, please contact me and I will update our database accordingly. Please email updated contact details to: snewell@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au

P&F Report



Hello! Time really flies. We are writing to you in our fourth year as the Co-Presidents of the Emanuel P&F, and what a surreal year it is shaping up to be. While we now understand what is required to create successful friend-raisers for the Emanuel Community, this year brings with it unexpected challenges.

Our children are now in Years 4, 5, 7 and 9. We feel so lucky to be part of this

incredible and supportive community: now more than ever.

The year started off normally with our annual Staff Welcome Lunch, which was a great way to both welcome back and thank our staff members. The School Canteen catered for this lunch and the food was delicious.

Cookies and Kisses, where we got to meet some of the parents of the new Year K students, had a great turnout and the children (and their parents) all seemed to be settling in easily.

Our Purim Disco was amazing! We are so thankful for our wonderful parent and High School volunteers, who helped to run the event and bring such enthusiasm to the function. The children's costumes were fantastic, and it was an afternoon of dancing, eating, face painting, sports and crafts as well as a stall where kids could 'adopt' stuffed animals! A huge thank you goes out to all our volunteers, spectacular Emanuel parents/families and a special thank you to Tami Martin (and her brother) from Kool Kidzz, who entertained the kids with amazing arts and crafts. We also want to thank The Art Shop at Rose Bay, and the Michel Family, for donating the amazing prizes!

In March we had the first Camping Trip of the year, organised by the fabulous Shelley Millingen, and despite some rain it was a wonderful weekend of fun and bonding for a large number of Emanuel families.

Our fundraiser from last year, *The Family Meal Cookbook*, was a huge success and we had to order a second print to meet the demand.

We don't know what the rest of the year will look like for us. We were not able to celebrate Mother's Day as we usually do with the MPH filled with children, their mothers and grandmothers and other special friends, but a wonderful online School collaboration saw a very special video starring our wonderful school families: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hj5M6frfhEA&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0rzKjnd-Hwo9hh30H530HTMFFiQJEjc0ghuq99HMC5KJUc1DFoKnlsyVc

Stay safe and healthy and we look forward to touching base with you all in the near future. Until then, thank you so much for your support of the P&F.

Jen Opit and Ruby Berkovic,
Co-Presidents of the P&F



Parent Safety Group (PSG)

An increasing number of Emanuel grandparents have become members of our PSG, and we would love to see even more sign up.

Please contact: esadmin@sydpsg.com for more information on what is involved and how to be part of this very important team which helps keep our campus and students safe.

Schmooze with Tracey and Leon Waxman

"It is such a privilege to be back at Emanuel School as grandparents. We certainly feel we have come home again!

We have only been gone seven and a half years since our youngest daughter Aliza finished Year 12 in 2012 and now, we are back as our oldest daughter Ilana and her husband Adam Symonds who is also an Emanuel alum, have their son Jonah in Year K.

We enjoyed 21 consecutive years as parents of our three children Ilana, Asher and Aliza attending K-12 and we believe that their achievements, values and contributions to life since they left school were greatly shaped by their wonderful well-rounded education at Emanuel.

We are now back as grandparents to observe this wonderful environment, as it provides the same opportunities to our next generation, and have enjoyed seeing so many familiar teachers to us, which is the best testimony of what a wonderful environment Emanuel is to teach in.

We feel no older but marvel how far the School has come since its humble beginnings that we witnessed and how it continues to evolve into the state-of-the-art school we are so proud of today.

In looking back to those first years, Leon and I can recall the Friday night that Leon's father Ted, as the Founding President of the School, proudly announced that the current site had been purchased, after tremendous work on the part of Rabbi Brian Fox, Ted and all the members of the Founding Board to amass enough funds to buy the site.

What foresight they had and how proud they and their families must be today of this beautiful campus that has evolved with the contributions of so many.

In that first year in 1983 Leon and I were newlyweds and did not even have children to attend the School but we were present at the many 'working bee Sundays' when the parents came to sweep out rooms, clean windows, floors and garden at Temple Emanuel (now known as Emanuel Synagogue) to prepare the site for the first intake of their children.



What commitment and faith those early families had! During the next 37 years Leon and I have enjoyed a tremendous connection to the School and its spirit that we have loved to be part of.

I so enjoyed my years on the P & F, firstly for two years under the Presidency of Ruth Guth and later as President myself for two further years with a great team working together. Perhaps many of the families from those years are or will be grandparents here too.

There are so many wonderful memories from the events of those years of welcomes to new parents, Mother's Days, Father's Days, Grandparent's Days, Market Days, fundraisers and functions, tuck shop and Uniform shop rosters.

Leon also volunteered to join the founding Parent Safety Group (PSG) and after more than 20 years is still doing it. He is so committed, he never once thought of stopping his regular morning PSG sessions when Aliza left in 2012, and now is one of the many grandparents who help patrol the School campus as our small but vital contribution to keeping the students safe – you can see him on the corner of Avoca and Stanley Streets.

My mother Loris Barrington, now 95 years old, volunteered in the school library for many years. She loved that her grandchildren would come to visit her in their lunchtimes. They were such very special times.

As parents, Leon and I derived so much pleasure from being involved in so many school events, I lost track of the number, and now as grandparents we look forward to many more years as active members of the Emanuel School family."

Stay in touch with the Emanuel School Grandparents & Friends Club

Do you want to add or update your details on our Grandparents and Friends mailing list?
Please send an email to Sonia Newell at snewell@emanuelschool.nsw.edu.au

We thank our Grandparents and Friends for their time and support in helping make Emanuel School such a special place and we look forward to your continuing assistance.

Thank you to our staff and other members of our Emanuel School community for your invaluable contributions to this newsletter.

We believe the information included is correct at the time of printing. Any errors are regretted.



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