

# Save One Child, Save the World

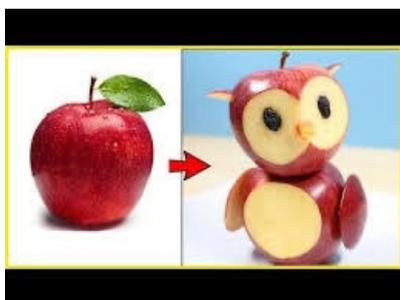


## the elul project

Children and babies are the inspiration behind my professional work, my support for Jewish non for profit charities and Jewish community organisations and my view on how to celebrate the Yomim Noraim during Covid.

As Chairman of the Australian chapter of the Kindertransport Association, I bring the plight of refugee children and babies to the forefront, giving speeches at a wide variety of forums, including a talk on the ABC program Our World program hosted by Beverley O'Connor. I have three members of my family who survived WW2 because they went on a Kindertransport. My mother, Regina Morgenstern was on the first train out of Vienna on December 11th, 1938 and eventually was able to give something back to the country which saved her life, and to make a significant difference to the War effort. At the age of 18, she was enlisted by the secret agency, MI6 to serve on the Enigma project based at Bletchley Park. Her cousin married Max Unger, a Kind from Frankfurt who eventually migrated to the USA with his parents, served in the US Airforce. Suddenly at age 36, Captain Unger died of scarlet fever and is buried at Washington's Arlington Cemetery. The third member of the family, Franzi Rapin got off the Kindertransport train in Holland and was soon after smuggled into Paris. Her life was one of sadness, alcoholism and seclusion, a common trait among many Kinder, their minds darkened without parents. Hidden in a parcel, child survivor Henry Buch was born in the Warsaw ghetto, was smuggled out, and is one the War's youngest child survivors. In all its chapters the Kindertransport Association fights for the rights of refugee children and babies regardless of race, creed or religion. Every day we must ensure that no child should ever be caught up in the horrors of War.

Let's be happy during the Yomim Noraim for the sake of our children. Covid restricts our homes to 10 people and in some states, no one at all. Being without all our friends and families during Rosh Hashanah can be upsetting for children. Let's all make our children happy by doing fun things like decorating the table with soft toy bees and carved apples. We read in the parsha on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, that Abraham aged 100 and Sarah aged 90 had a son which they called Yitzchak, meaning "will laugh." Isaac was their surprise and joy, so let's draw inspiration from them and laugh. I wonder if we all stood on our balconies on Rosh Hashanah evening and laughed, whether we could hear our Jewish neighbours laughing too!



apple sculpture



**JANET MERKUR**

Janet Merkur is a descendant of survivors of the Holocaust who arrived in Sydney in 1951. She works as an educator of teenagers with disabilities in regional schools, and is author of over twenty history textbooks and biographies, including a family biography, 'Sunflowers', which is held in many libraries across the world. She is the Chairman of the Australian chapter of the Kindertransport Association, and a trustee Governor of the JCA. She is Co-President of the NCJWA NSW Section and is a Board member of the NCJWA.

### ABOUT THE ELUL PROJECT

An initiative aiming to share stories and teachings from Jewish women leaders in our community. Whilst many of us are stuck at home, or isolated from family over Elul and the High Holy Days, we hope this project will serve to inspire, nurture, and uplift during this difficult time.