

MINA FINK – AN AMAZING JEWISH FEMINIST LEADER

I would dearly love to spend an evening entertaining and learning from Mina Fink. After attending the NCJWA (Vic) Mina Fink lecture and hearing stories of Mina's life as told by her grandson (the much-admired Mark Regev) I took some time to read more about Mina. I am sure that if Mina were to visit, she would have countless stories to share – of meeting dignitaries, of founding important organisations, advocating for change, nurturing a family and impacting many many individuals with acts of kindness.

I was amazed to read Mina's story – a Polish Jew who moved to Australia pre war and visited Poland as the atrocities of the holocaust were unfolding. I admired how her good fortune at having moved inspired her to do good for others and how she worked hard to help her fellow Jews to

settle in Australia – offering them a smile and kindness on arrival and setting up the infrastructure they would need to settle successfully. I had known of Mina as an amazing Jewish feminist leader – hearing of her time at NCJWA and the ICJW but reading more about her I learned of her as a role model of kindness, compassion and action.

If Mina were to visit my succah I would seek to learn from her more about her activism. I would like to know how she balanced the higher-level advocacy and leadership activity in her various organisations with the practical 'on the ground' activity such as meeting ships and arranging outings for newly arrived Jewish refugees. When I read about the memories of some of those she helped in a practical way and the impact she had on them it caused me to wonder which of these two types of

activism she felt had the best impact or the best legacy – the formal or the informal – and which she would prioritise if she had her time again. I have thought about Mina's work in recent times when I have needed to prioritise my own time between helping an individual in a practical way or working behind the scenes on a more 'strategic' effort. I am fascinated by these trade offs and Mina's experience would be so valuable to consider.

Mina was also known to seek out proteges and to mentor them into leadership positions.

I would love to talk with Mina about how she identified and nurtured this talent – and how she inspired those who came after her to lead. I believe this is a greatest role of a leader in any organisation and something we need to focus on in our communal organisations – to grow and nurture the future generations of leaders



[IMAGE SOURCE: WWW.JHC.ORG.AU/ABOUT-US/FOUNDERS-OF-THE-JEWISH-HOLOCAUST-CENTRE/MINA-FINK/](http://WWW.JHC.ORG.AU/ABOUT-US/FOUNDERS-OF-THE-JEWISH-HOLOCAUST-CENTRE/MINA-FINK/)

from diverse backgrounds and to mentor them and lift them to succeed – learning from and with them so our community can grow and thrive in the generations to come.

Rebecca Burrows - NCJWA Board Member

Rebecca has long history of involvement in the Jewish Community from a youth spent in Hineni (including being the Melbourne and Federal Rosh Hineni), Vice President of the ACT Jewish Community (in 2006-7) and as a member of the College Council of Bialik for the last 8 years. She also has extensive Board experience having held Board positions at Bialik, The ACT Jewish Community, Little Doers (Charity Fun Run) and 3 corporate Boards – DFE Holdings/Mail Plus and Clik Collective.

Rebecca has many ideas for how she can further the work of the NCJWA – in particular to engage her generation more broadly and to raise the profile of Jewish women in our community and beyond.