

Heritage Week

The Jewish Community in Australia

Date: Saturday 18 April 2026

Time: 11am

Place: Tamworth Library, 466 Peel Street

Gillian will be live-streaming from Canberra

Presentation followed by Q&A

Free community event



There has been a Jewish Australia since 1788. What is it like? What food do we eat (and what on earth does 'kosher' mean)? What do we learn and what books are important to both learning and praying? How do we fit into wider Australian history? And why are Jews in 19th century regional Australia (including Tamworth) so very important and why don't we know much about them?

Dr Gillian POLACK is an Australian speculative fiction writer with too many PhDs. In 2020 she was awarded the A. Bertram Chandler Award (lifetime achievement in science fiction). Her most recent novel is *The Green Children Help Out*. Her next (much-delayed) novel will be released this year.

Her study of culture in speculative fiction, *Story Matrices: Cultural Encoding and Cultural Baggage in the Worlds of Science Fiction and Fantasy* was released in 2022. In 2023, her short story from *Other Covenants* was a finalist for the Sidewise Award, which is wildly appropriate because she is an ethnohistorian with a special interest in how story transmits culture, both Medieval and Modern. She has recently researched how Modern Western Germany sees its Jewish past, and into what speculative fiction novels tell us about world building and is currently investigating the history of Jewish Australia, especially outside the major cities.

Gillian can be found on social media under her own name. She keeps a current list of her books on <https://gillianpolack.com>