

An app for the departed

DALIA SABLE

THE devastating loss of her older brother became the inspiration for Gila Rakusin-Frankl to help people remember the *yahrzeits* of family members.

The South African-born Sydneysider this month launched an application called *iYahrzeit*, which calculates, stores and reminds users of the anniversaries of the deaths of friends and relatives.

“Over the last four years we have integrated the loss of [brother] Arie into the tapestry of our lives,” explained Rakusin-Frankl.

“His *yahrzeit* is the saddest and hardest day of the year. It is a time when support is needed most, yet only the closest people know, remember and acknowledge the solemn day.”

Upon purchasing her first iPhone in 2009, she searched for an app to calculate and remind her of her brother’s and other family members’ anniversaries, but to no avail. Realising the potential of such an app, she set about creating it.

“It’s difficult to know or remember when a loved one’s *yahrzeit* occurs, as the dates change every year,” Rakusin-Frankl says. “No app like this existed on the App Store and we felt it should.”



Gila Rakusin-Frankl has created the *iYahrzeit* app, to help remember the anniversaries of family members’ deaths.

Photo: Ingrid Shakenovsky

Available internationally through iTunes, *iYahrzeit* converts the Gregorian calendar to the Hebrew one and sends automatic reminders on approaching *yahrzeits*.

Being linked directly to the address book, it also enables users to contact the deceased’s relatives.

In addition, it features the Mourner’s Kaddish, both in Hebrew and with an English transliteration.

“Remembering and acknowledging *yahrzeits* shows you truly care about the soul of the departed and the loved ones who are mourning.

“It is the most appropriate and sacred time to share memories and stories and to celebrate the life of the deceased loved one,” Rakusin-Frankl said. “The *iYahrzeit* application is very close to my heart and I believe Arie would have been very proud of what I have achieved.

“Even though the reason for the app is sad, I hope that people find it meaningful and useful.”

iYahrzeit is available worldwide for \$2.49. It can be downloaded from the App Store directly to the iPad, iPhone or iPod touch.