



**Executive Council of
Australian Jewry**

**Annual Report
2008 / 5768**

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Executive Council of Australian Jewry Inc.

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COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT AND COUNCILLORS – 2008

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| PRESIDENT | Robert M Goot AM SC |
| IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT | Grahame Leonard AM |
| DEPUTY PRESIDENT | Jill Segal AM |
| HON. TREASURER | Peter Wise |
| HON. SECRETARY | Peter Wertheim AM |
| NSW JBD PRESIDENT | Robin Margo S.C. |
| JCCV PRESIDENT | Anton Black |
| JCCWA PRESIDENT | Dr Keith Shilkin AM |
| JCCSA PRESIDENT | Norman Schueler |
| QJBD PRESIDENT | David Paratz |
| HHC PRESIDENT | Daniel Albert |
| ACTJC PRESIDENT | Dr Anita Shroot |

AFFILIATES

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| UPJ PRESIDENT | Phyllis Dorey |
| AUJS PRESIDENT | Jessica Roth |
| JEWISH CARE AUSTRALIA PRESIDENT | Eva Engel OAM |
| MACCABI INC. PRESIDENT | Harry Procel |
| NCJWA PRESIDENT | Rysia Rosen OAM |
| WIZO PRESIDENT | Jo Gostin |

OBSERVERS

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| ZFA PRESIDENT | Phillip Chester |
| B'NAI B'RITH PRESIDENT | Adrienne Perch |
| NEW ZEALAND CO-PRESIDENT | Stephen Graham / Geoff Levy |
| COUNCIL OF PROGRESSIVE RABBIS CHAIRPERSON | Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins |
| FAJEX PRESIDENT | Wesley Browne OAM |
| JNF AUSTRALIA INC. | Ron Ferster |

ADVISORS

Susi Brieger
Peta Pelach Jones
Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins
Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence
Roman Mirkus
Nechama Bendet
Dr Ron Weiser
David Rothman
Dr Geulah Solomon
Yosi Tal
Peter Wise

PUBLIC OFFICER

Bill Arnold

HONORARY AUDITOR

Barry Mendel

ECAJ HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Nina Bassat AM
Earle Hoffman OAM
Jeremy Jones AM
Josie Lacey OAM
Isi Leibler AO CBE
Rabbi John Levi AM DD
Gerry Levy AM
Laurie Rosenblaum OAM
Dr Joachim Schneeweiss AM
Diane Shteinman AM

MEMBERS

Daniel Aghion
Ron Finkel
Dr George Foster
Alan Gold
Sharene Hambur
Ian Lacey AM

MEMBERS CONTINUED

Dr Danny Lamm

Yair Miller

Judith Perlstein

Ian Samuel

Robyne Schwarz

John Searle

Geoffrey Zieger

Ian Lacey AM

Judith Perlstein

Ian Samuel

Robyne Schwarz

John Searle

ECAJ PRESIDENTS 1945 – 2008

| | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| A. MASEL | 1945 – 1946 |
| S. SYMONDS | 1946 – 1948 |
| M. ASHJKANASY CMG QC | 1948 – 1950 |
| | 1954 – 1956 |
| | 1958 – 1960 |
| | 1962 – 1964 |
| | 1966 – 1968 |
| H.B. NEWMAN | 1949 - 1950 |
| B. GREEN | 1950 – 1952 |
| THE HON. SD EINFELD AO | 1952 – 1954 |
| | 1956 – 1958 |
| | 1960 – 1962 |
| | 1964 – 1966 |
| G.Y. FALK OBE JP | 1968 – 1970 |
| N. JACOBSON OBE | 1970 – 1972 |
| | 1974 – 1976 |
| L. KLEIN CBE | 1972 – 1974 |
| J. SCHNEEWEISS AM | 1976 – 1978 |
| | 1980 – 1982 |
| L. CAPLAN AM | 1985 – 1987 |
| | 1989 – 1992 |
| I.J. LIEBLER AO CBE | 1978 – 1980 |
| | 1982 – 1985 |
| | 1987 – 1989 |
| | 1987 – 1989 |
| | 1992 – 1995 |
| D. SHTEINMAN AM | 1996 – 1998 |
| N. BASSAT AM | 1998 – 2001 |
| J.S. JONES AM | 2001 – 2004 |
| G.J. LEONARD | 2004 – 2007 |
| ROBERT M. GOOT AM SC | 2008 - |

ECAJ ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2008

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Introduction

1. Under its constitution the ECAJ, inter alia:
 - represents and speaks officially for Australian Jewry;
 - acts as it deems necessary on behalf of Australian Jewry on matters that concern it; and
 - supports and strengthens the connection of Australian Jewry with Israel.
2. The ECAJ's representative status derives from its make-up. The voting members of the ECAJ, including its office bearers and Committee of Management, are councillors who have been:
 - elected by the plenary organs of the roof bodies of the Jewish community in each State and the Australian Capital Territory ("Constituent Bodies"); or
 - elected or appointed by other national Jewish bodies ("Affiliate Bodies").
3. In addition, the ECAJ appoints individuals as non voting "advisers" to the Committee of Management, to broaden the areas of expertise available to the ECAJ.
4. The Constituent Bodies of the ECAJ are the:
 - New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies;
 - Jewish Community Council of Victoria;
 - Jewish Community Council of Western Australian;
 - Jewish Community Council of South Australia;
 - Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies;
 - Hobart Hebrew Congregation; and
 - ACT Jewish Community.

5. The Affiliate Bodies of the ECAJ, each of which has active State affiliates, are the:
 - Australasian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS);
 - Australian and New Zealand Union for Progressive Judaism (AUPJ);
 - Australian Federation of WIZO (WIZO);
 - Federation of Australian Jewish Welfare Societies (AJWS);
 - JNF Australia (JNF);
 - Maccabi Australia Inc
 - National Council of Jewish Women of Australia (NCJW)
6. B'nai B'rith, the Council of Progressive Rabbis, FAJEX, JNF, the New Zealand Jewish Council and the Zionist Federation of Australia, all which have active State affiliates, have attendance rights at meetings of the ECAJ as "Observer Bodies".
7. Because the Constituent Bodies, Affiliate Bodies and Observer Bodies operate at State level and sit at the ECAJ table, the ECAJ is uniquely placed to speak on behalf of Australian Jewry and discharge its responsibilities on behalf of its constituency to whom it is formally accountable.
8. No other organisation draws its members from, and is accountable to, the whole Australian Jewish community.
9. Notwithstanding the restrictions on its meagre financial resources (referred to later in this report), the ECAJ has, since its establishment in 1945, been well served with dedicated honorary officers and committee members, who have enabled it to "punch above its weight" in all of the many areas in which it operates.

Meetings

10. The Committee of Management met by National telephone conference on 13 February, 10 April, 19 June, 20 August and 29 October 2008. Attendance at its meetings was high as was the quality of the discussion.

Overview

11. I commend the reports of the Constituent Bodies of the ECAJ and the other reports contained in this publication. They provide clear and compelling evidence that in the main the Australian Jewish community is vibrant, confident, well governed and meeting the challenges that it faces.
12. Whilst such a state of affairs is a great source of pride and satisfaction to the ECAJ, we cannot be and are not, complacent. Much remains to be done to maintain our position and protect the manifold interests of the community.
13. In this respect the Report on Antisemitism once again comprehensively compiled by Jeremy Jones, remains troubling especially in respect of the marked increase in hate material generated by email. Whilst it is early days, the extent of antisemitic comment associated with the global financial crisis is worrying.
14. Further, there is a growing trend among Israel's enemies to frame their polemical attacks in terms that appeal openly or subliminally to classic forms of Jew-hatred, which was once a marginal phenomenon in western democratic societies. This trend has reached alarming proportions in parts of academia and the media in Australia, and presents new challenges that must be met. Many of the mythologies about Jewish and Israeli history have been repeated so widely and so often, without sufficient contradiction, that they have become established orthodoxies even among some educated people.
15. A small but growing number of Australian Jews working in the media and academic institutions have succumbed to intense peer group pressure and become mouthpieces for anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment (eg Independent Australian Jewish Voices). Although so-called Jewish dissidents speak for only a tiny fraction of the Jewish community, they are increasingly being given an entirely disproportionate amount of media coverage in comparison with spokespeople for the mainstream of Jewish attitudes.
16. Particularly in Europe, Canada and New Zealand, the ascendancy of anti-Israel views in large parts of the quality media and in academia has already made

the transition into mainstream politics, compromising Israel's relationships with once-friendly democratic governments. Although that transition has not yet occurred in Australia, it may well do so. There is a continuing need for united action by the Jewish community, together with sympathetic parts of the wider community, to ensure that Australian governments will remain as forcefully committed as in the past to Israel's right to exist in peace and security.

17. In that context it is reassuring to note not only that the change in the Australian Government in November 2007, insofar as mainstream Jewish issues are concerned, was seamless, but significantly there was a marked absence of extremist policies and candidates in that election.
18. The strong PR work done by Jewish organisations in the past will not be enough in view of the challenges ahead. Heightened challenges require a heightened and more professional public relations effort by those who unarguably speak for the community. The times demand a strong representative voice which does not seek to quell other voices but which seeks to coordinate and leverage them. These are challenges which the ECAJ must be equipped to meet.

Federal Parliament

19. We are indeed fortunate in Australia to have governments at the national and state level which are committed to policies and programs that are consistent with and supportive of, the attitudes and aspirations of the Jewish community
20. During the year under review the ECAJ has had many occasions (summarised below) to interact with members of the Australian Parliament both in the Government and the Opposition. On all such occasions we have been listened to sympathetically and with an understanding and appreciation of the issues raised.

Israel's 60th Anniversary

21. Although, the ECAJ played no active role in its passage, the resolution of congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, moved by the Prime Minister and supported by the Leader of the Opposition on 12 March 2008 (**Appendix 1- pages 33-37**), was a unique event in the legislatures of the world. The resolution exemplifies the bipartisan political support in Australia not just for Israel but for Australian Jewry. Those who were fortunate to attend the parliamentary sitting and later the cocktail party in Parliament House hosted by Yuval Rotem the Ambassador of Israel, could not fail to be moved by the significance of those historic events. The Statement issued by the ECAJ on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel is attached (**Appendix 2 – pages 38, 39**).

Official Commemorative Book and Memorial Park in Beersheba

22. It is gratifying to note that Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel with a special Australian government publication entitled *'Australia and Israel: A Pictorial History'*, by Dr Leanne Piggott of the University of Sydney.
23. The photographs and accompanying narrative in this book celebrate both the historical and contemporary facets of the bilateral relationship between Australia and Israel. Some of the photographs have never before been published and tell a truly remarkable story of intimate military, political and trade relations between the two countries and a wide range of people-to-people contacts.
24. Situated on opposite sides of the world, Australia and Israel have nonetheless developed a unique bond that pre-dates the rebirth of the Jewish commonwealth in 1948. The story of Australia's extraordinary military contribution to the ending of Ottoman rule in Palestine in World War I is an epic rivalling Gallipoli in feats of courage and endurance, but is given far less

prominence in Australian literature. It deserves a much higher profile than it currently enjoys in Australian historiography and the book makes a notable contribution towards achieving that objective.

25. The military story is intimately connected to the publication by Britain of the Balfour Declaration 91 years ago, in November 1917 supporting the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. This was the first official step in the long road to the attainment of Jewish statehood in May 1948. It is arguable that no other military exploits by Australians have had such far-reaching and enduring consequences in world affairs.
26. The book highlights Australia's diplomatic support in 1947 for the UN plan to partition Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. This was the genesis of strong political relations between the two countries which were formalised when Australia extended official recognition to the State of Israel in January 1949.
27. Important sections on the people-to-people contacts between Australians and Israelis, trade relations between the two states and the sharing of the fruits of scientific and medical research and technological innovations demonstrate the depth and richness of the overall relationship. The book is a testament to the shared values of the two peoples and the warmth of Australia-Israel relations. Copies of the book can be obtained from the DFAT in Canberra. It has already proven to be an invaluable educational and *hasbara* tool.
28. A copy of the book was presented personally to Israel's President, Shimon Peres, by Australia's Governor General, Sir Michael Jeffrey, following the official opening of the Park of the Australian Soldier in Beersheba on 28 April 2008. The park which was made possible through the generosity of Richard Pratt and the Pratt Foundation commemorates the exploits of Australia's Light Horse regiments in the Middle East in World War I and features a life-sized bronze sculpture of horse and rider by Australian artist, Peter Corlett. The park includes a playground that is specially designed to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

29. The official opening of the park was marked by an impressive military display by units of the Australian Defence Forces and moving speeches by President Peres and Governor General Jeffrey.

2020 Summit

30. As part of an initiative to obtain input into the challenges confronting Australia's future up to 2020, the Prime Minister announced that he was convening an *"Australian 2020 Summit"* and inviting some of the *"best and brightest brains"* from across the country to participate in the Summit in Canberra on 19 and 20 April 2008. However, the date chosen inadvertently clashed with Pesach and, following representations from the ECAJ (**Appendix 3 – page 40**) supported by the National Council of Churches and the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews, on 12 March 2008, the Prime Minister wrote to the ECAJ (**Appendix 4 – pages 41-43**) inviting it to attend a symposium on Monday 14 April 2008 in Sydney prior to the Australia 2020 Summit (Symposium), so that those unable to attend on 19 -20 April, would nevertheless have the opportunity to meet with Government ministers and the 2020 Summit Steering Committee and allow the Steering Committee to engage with them on the nation's priorities.

31. Although the ECAJ was not ultimately responsible for the invitations extended to members of the Jewish community to participate in the Symposium, it played a major role in providing names of potential participants to the Summit Steering Committee who chose 54 participants for 7 of the 10 challenge issues viz: The Productivity Agenda - Education Skills Science and Innovation; The Future of the Australian Economy; A Long Term National Health Strategy; Strengthening Communities - Supporting Families and Social Inclusion; Options for the Future of Indigenous Australia; Towards a Creative Australia - The Future of the Arts, Film and Design; and The Future of Australian Governance - renewed democracy, a more open government including the role of the media, the structure of the Federation and the rights and responsibilities of

citizens. A list of the participants at the Symposium is attached (**Appendix 5 – pages 44-47**).

32. The Symposium was an unqualified success with the Hon Kevin Rudd MP, Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, the Hon Chris Bowen MP, Assistant Treasurer, the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Aging, the Hon Tania Plibersek MP, Minister for Women, the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, the Hon Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for the Environment Heritage and the Arts and the Maxine McKew MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Childcare in attendance. In addition Professor Glyn Davis the Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University and the Co-Chair of the Australia 2020 Summit was in attendance together with the members of the Summit Steering Committee responsible for the 7 challenge agendas the subject of the Symposium.
33. The introductory and closing remarks made by the President of the ECAJ at the Symposium are attached (**Appendix 6 and 7- pages 48-51**).
34. Following the Symposium a meeting of all the Jewish participants took place with a view to endeavouring to keep the group together and informed in the future and an invitation has been extended to each of the participants to attend the Annual Conference of the ECAJ.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

35. Representatives of the ECAJ met formally with the Hon Stephen Smith MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs on a number of occasions.
36. Following correspondence with the Minister on 21 January 2008 (**Appendix 8 – pages 52,53**), representatives of the ECAJ and the ZFA met with the Minister on 11 February 2008 where matters raised included: Australia's voting at the UN; the Legal Committee of the UN; Development of a Universal Definition of Terrorism; the EUMC working definition of Anti-Semitism; the possibility of proceedings against President Ahmadinejad in the International Criminal Court or the International Court of Justice; opposition

to state funding of Para-military and other forces in other states; appointment of a Parliamentary head of delegation to Durban 11 and ECAJ representation on that delegation; Australia becoming a signatory to the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (Holocaust Task Force); and a visit by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to Israel during its 60th Anniversary year.

37. The discussions with the Minister were entirely satisfactory and included a commitment that if Australia attends the Durban Review Conference, then the Minister would give positive consideration to once again including a representative of the ECAJ on Australia's delegation (**Appendix 9 – pages 54,55**).
38. Subsequent correspondence with the Minister on the question of broadening the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, to include grave crimes of international terrorism is attached (**Appendix 10 – pages 56-61**).
39. On 15 October 2008 the Minister made a ministerial statement in the House of Representatives on Iran (**Appendix 11 – pages 62-64**), in which he announced a broadening of sanctions against Iran significantly beyond those imposed by the UN Security Council and more in line with those imposed by the European Union. At the same time the Minister announced that the Attorney General had decided not to pursue international legal action against Iran having regard to the complexity of the issues involved and the high legal threshold required to bring forward such a case in circumstances which would give further profile to the "*obscene remarks*" of Ahmadinejad.
40. Representatives of the ECAJ met with the Minister the following day 16 October 2008 principally to discuss developments in relation to Durban 11 in light of the Preparatory Committee held in Geneva commencing 9 October 2008 and to further discuss Australia's involvement with the Holocaust Task Force. However having regard to the Ministerial Statement made the previous day, we applauded the broadening of the sanctions regime and expressed understanding in relation to the international legal action issues (**Appendix 12 – pages 65-71**). In light of the researches carried out on behalf of the

ECAJ by Peter Wertheim and Ian Lacy, we regarded the Government's decision on that latter matter, to be unexceptional.

UN Fourth Committee Resolutions

41. On 7 November 2009 Australia voted on 9 resolutions tabled in the Fourth Committee of the United Nations relating to the middle east. Australia's vote on 7 of the resolutions was unchanged including votes against 2 resolutions relating to Israeli practices affecting human rights of the Palestinian people. However Australia voted in favour of 2 resolutions: applying the Geneva Convention to the occupied territories and calling for a freeze on settlements. In that respect Australia departed from the stance taken by the Australian Government since 2003, when it first abstained and then voted against such resolutions on the basis that they sought to bind Israel to the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) contentious advisory opinion on the security barrier.
42. The basis for the change in the 2 votes is set out in the attached Government's Background Brief (**Appendix 13 – pages 72-80**)
43. Apart from maintaining its vote on 7 of the resolutions it is significant that the Government made clear that resolutions referring to the ICJ advisory opinion should reflect its non-binding character and should give due regard to Israel's legitimate security concerns. Australia also noted that it continued to support Israel's right to take measures in self-defence which are discriminating and proportionate and consistent with applicable international law.
44. In its 10 November Media Release (**Appendix 14 – pages 81**), the ECAJ whilst welcoming the principled stand taken by the Government in continuing to oppose one sided resolutions which failed to take into account Israel's legitimate security concerns and did not reflect adequately the responsibility of Palestinians to end attacks targeted at Israeli civilians, expressed disappointment and concern at the votes in favour of the 2 resolutions, in part because they were also one sided.

45. At the same time the ECAJ applauded the Government's stated position in relation to the ICJ decision and other aspects of the Government's stated position.
46. On 13 November 2008, the President and Peter Wertheim (ECAJ), Frank Levy AM and Michael Lipshutz (ZFA) and Dr Colin Rubenstein AM (AIJAC) met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs to discuss with him the community's disappointment and concern in relation to the Government's changed votes on the 2 Fourth Committee resolutions as well as our expectation that in respect of the 11 resolutions yet to be voted on, the Government would not change any of the votes it recorded in 2007, other than by converting abstentions to opposition. The meeting was frank but the assurance we sought was not provided. A letter the terms of which were jointly supported by ECAJ, ZFA and AIJAC, was sent to and received by, the Minister on 14 November 2008 (**Appendix 15 pages 82-84**). The letter was sent on the same day this report was sent to the printer and accordingly, the matter will be reported on further at or before the Annual Conference of the ECAJ.

Durban 11

46. Central to all discussions that have taken place between the ECAJ and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, has been the issue of the 2009 UN Durban Review Conference to be held in Geneva in April 2009 (Durban 11). The ECAJ's attitude has in part been informed by the attitude of the Australian Government to multilateral discussions and the role of the UN. Correspondence between the ECAJ and the Minister on the issue is referred to above (**Appendix 8, pages 52, 53, 9 pages 54, 55 & 12 pages 65-71**). In short following the Preparatory Conference for Durban 11 which took place from 9-17 October 2008 and notwithstanding that the address by the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights to the conference was encouraging, a number of paragraphs in the "Draft Outcomes Document" are of considerable concern. The ECAJ has expressed that concern in writing to the Minister following our

meeting with him (**Appendix 12 – pages 65-71**) and the Shadow Minister Senator Helen Coonan with whom the ECAJ also met.

47. The Australian Government's position at the time of writing this report was to maintain a wait and see approach such that if circumstances warranted it, Australia might entertain not attending Durban 11.
48. The ECAJ's approach has been assisted by Dr Geulah Solomon (who attended on behalf of the ECAJ, a meeting of UN Watch in Geneva mid year) and the other members of the Durban 11 sub-committee Jeremy Jones Peter, Wertheim and Alan Gold. The sub-committee was reconfigured by the Committee of Management in November to include myself as President.
49. Durban 11 will be the subject of discussion at the Annual Conference of the ECAJ.

Holocaust Task Force

50. The Committee of Management resolved that the Holocaust Task Force and National Curriculum proposals should be progressed with the Government with priority and that state constituents of the ECAJ should raise the issues contained in the curriculum proposal, with their State Education Ministers.
51. The ECAJ has accordingly agitated for Australia to become a signatory to the Holocaust Task Force with the Minister for Foreign Affairs both in correspondence (**Appendix 16 – pages 85, 90**) and in person. The ECAJ has also raised the issue with Hon Julia Gillard MP, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education (**Appendix 17 – pages 91, 95**) especially in the context of changes to the National Education Curriculum in History.
52. Following correspondence from the Minister on 29 July 2008 (**Appendix 18 – pages 96, 97**), Susi Brieger the ECAJ's Education Adviser met with representatives of the curriculum branch of the Department of Education on 2 September 2008 (**Appendix 19- pages 98, 99**) and, consistent with those discussions, representations have been made to Professor Barry McGaw AO the Chair of the National Curriculum Board (**Attachment 20 – pages 100, 101**), which were supported by the New South Wales Coordinating Committee

of Jewish Day Schools and which will now be the subject of focus group discussions for the development of the Curriculum.

Security Funding

53. During the course of the 2007 Federal election campaign the Government proposed to provide tax deductibility status to a fund to be established for the purpose of protecting Jewish individuals and property. The *"Council for Jewish Community Security"* which came into existence by legislation passed in June 2008 is responsible for the fund which is operated and administered by the ECAJ at a national level and by the Constituent Bodies at a state/territory level. NSW is currently conducting an appeal for funds for security expenditure on communal buildings. In that context, David Knoll met the Assistant Treasurer to discuss DGR status for security donations and Sam Salcman the former Hon Treasurer of the ECAJ undertook important work in ensuring that the DGR status of the Fund was finalised.

School Funding

54. Also during the election campaign the then Opposition proposed to allocate \$20m payable over 4 years to schools demonstrably at risk from a security point of view. The then Shadow Minister for Education (Stephen Smith MP) made the announcement at Moriah College in November 2007 and it was widely accepted that the announcement was in response to representations that had been made over a number of years by the Jewish community as to the crippling burden of extra security measures introduced by Jewish Day Schools.

55. In respect of those funds, the ECAJ together with the Australian Association of Jewish Day Schools (now the Australian Council for Jewish Schools), met in Canberra separately with the Hon Bob Debus MP, Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Robert McClelland MP, Attorney General and the Hon Julia Gillard MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education. As a result of those representations, a mechanism for inviting *"at risk"* schools to make application and for the risk assessment of those schools was determined.

56. The process has been centralised through the office of the Minister for Home Affairs. Guidelines were developed for a questionnaire that was issued to all schools which was the result of input from various sources, including ASIO, the AFP and the Departments of the Attorney General and Workplace Relations.
57. Each of the Jewish Day Schools in Australia assisted by the Communal Security Group, have made application to the Federal Government for security funding and at the time of publishing this report we are awaiting the results of those applications. The ECAJ has every reason to believe that significant funding will be made available to Jewish Day Schools which are unquestionably at risk.
58. In February 2008, the President of the ECAJ accompanied representatives of the Australian Council for Jewish Schools, led by Ian Rockman in a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, to raise the question of anomalous funding of certain Jewish Day Schools as a result of the operation of the National SES Funding Model. The Minister was entirely understanding and sympathetic of the anomalous problems that had arisen and has subsequently dealt with them to the satisfaction of the schools concerned.
59. Shortly after that visit to the Minister, Ian Rockman took leave of absence from his long standing position as Co-Chair of the Australian Council for Jewish schools, prior to resigning from that position. Tragically Ian passed away in September 2008 and his outstanding contribution to Jewish education is discussed further below.

Minister for Communications

60. Following the resumption of broadcasts of the Hezbollah controlled media outlet *al-Manar*, on this occasion from Indonesia, the ECAJ wrote to Senator Stephen Conroy the Minister for Communications (**Appendix 21 – pages 102,103**) and met with him in Canberra on 2 September 2008. A further meeting to review progress in relation to the matter has been scheduled for 11 November 2008.

61. In this context the ECAJ and ZFA issued a joint media release (**Appendix 22 – pages 104-105**) and wrote to Roland Jabbour the Chairman of the Australian Arabic Council calling on him to retract anti-Semitic and anti Israel statements attributed to by him (**Appendix 23 – pages 106,107**). In subsequent correspondence Jabbour claimed to have been misrepresented by the media and stated that he *“did not hold the views”* attributed to him.

Visits to Canberra

62. On each occasion that representatives of the ECAJ have met in Canberra with Ministers, they have also met with other Members of Parliament and those visits were facilitated by Michael Danby and Mark Drefus, Members of Parliament from 2 electorates in Melbourne. The ECAJ is very grateful to Michael and Mark for their active involvement and interest in the work of the ECAJ.

Opposition

63. The ECAJ met with the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson MP, the then Leader of the Opposition earlier in 2008, Senator Helen Coonan the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and has arranged for the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP the Leader of the Opposition who is well known to the Jewish community, to address the ECAJ Annual Conference on Sunday 30 November 2008.

Other Matters

64. The ECAJ: was represented at the National Civil Society Dialogue in Canberra in September 2008; the Humanitarian Conference in February 2008 organised by the Honourable Chris Evans MP Minister for Immigration; provided information on Judaism (by Josie Lacey) for inclusion in a booklet published by Centrelink; and made representations to various government departments and others on matters of interest to the Australian Jewish community.

Submissions

65. The ECAJ has made the following submissions to the Australian Government during the period under review:

1. to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship on the Citizenship Test (**Appendix 24 – pages 108-111**);
2. to the Attorney General's Department on the optional protocol to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment - National Interest Analysis (**Appendix 25 – pages 112,113**);
3. to the Senate Inquiry into Academic Freedom (**Appendix 26 – pages 114,149**); and
4. to the Department of Agriculture in relation to ritual slaughter.

Prof Saikal

66. In the context of the Senate Inquiry into academic freedom referred to above the ECAJ highlighted a particular problem associated with the Centre for Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Australian National University which Centre is headed by Professor Amin Saikal and statements that he made in the ABC PM radio program, which neither he nor the ANU have retracted. Hopefully the Senate Inquiry will deal with that matter. Having regard both to the submissions and the oral testimony given to the Senate Inquiry by AIJAC, the ECAJ regarded it as unnecessary to appear before the Senate Inquiry.

Embassy of Israel

67. In February, the President, Peter Wertheim, David Knoll, Geulah Solomon, Robin Margo, Anita Shroot and Earle Hoffman OAM attended a cordial two hour discussion at the Embassy with the Ambassador, Yuval Rotem, Eli Yerushalmi, Dor Shapira and Greg Scott. There were no disagreements on the range of matters covered but it was readily recognised that Australian Jewry

might have different views or positions from time to time from those of the Government of Israel. Subsequent interactions with the Ambassador and his staff have proved most useful and there is an assuring level of co-operation between us. We will have the pleasure of hearing from the Ambassador at the Annual Conference as our luncheon speaker on 30th November.

International

68. The ECAJ continues to be a respected contributor in the international organisations of which it is a member.

WJC

69. Since the ECAJ rejoined the World Jewish Congress following the withdrawal by the WJC of the defamation litigation instituted against Isi Leibler, the ECAJ has been involved in discussions with the WJC regarding the potential role of the ECAJ in Asia Pacific and our desire to take a leading role in that region provided that funds were made available by the WJC. This matter was discussed by the President and representatives of the WJC in New York in July 2008 and again at the Governing Board meeting of the WJC in Israel in September 2008. The proposal is currently being considered by the Steering Committee of the WJC with a view to the matter being further discussed at the Plenary Assembly of the WJC in Jerusalem on 26-27 January 2009.

70. The ECAJ is uniquely positioned to provide headquarters in Sydney for a WJC regional office for the Asia Pacific area and is anxious to fulfil its role in this increasingly important region.

Memorial Foundation

71. Yair Miller and the President represented the ECAJ at a meeting of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture held in Israel in July where, inter alia, a report was provided by Yair Miller on the Nachum Goldman Fellowship programme. Australia has once again nominated a number of suitable potential young leaders to undertake the Nachum Goldman Fellowship programme in Israel in January 2009.

Claims Conference

72. Nina Bassat AM and the President represented the ECAJ at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) in New York in July 2008. At that meeting a special committee was established to examine certain aspects of the Claims Conference (**Appendix 27 – pages 150,151**) and the President was appointed to that Special Committee. The Special Committee will meet in New York in November 2008 and in anticipation Nina Bassat has met with survivors in Melbourne and the President has met with the Australian Association of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and Descendants in Sydney to ascertain the need for greater explanations to be provided as to the work of the Claims Conference in general and recent adverse publicity in particular.

73. It is apparent that notwithstanding its remarkable transparency and accountability, the work of the Claims Conference and the complexity of its operations are not well understood. To assist in that understanding, the website addresses containing important information on all aspects of the work of the Claims Conference and in particular its financial arrangements are set out below.

- General Information: www.claimscon.org
- Financial Statements: www.claimscon.org/audit

- Summary of 2007 Financial Statements:
www.claimscon.org/audit-summary
- Summary of assets: www.claimscon.org/assets-explanation
- 5-7 year Allocation Plan: www.claimscon.org/allocations-increase09

74. The Claims Conference has suggested that the ECAJ and the Claims Conference host a meeting of representatives of the principal organizations in Australia relevant to looted art and cultural property issues to consider what activities and actions it could and should be, undertaken in Australia. It seems that the situation in Australia is somewhat similar to that in Canada, where very successful meetings have been hosted by the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Claims Conference/WJRO that have involved representatives of the Canadian Art Museum Directors' Organization, the Canadian Museums Association, Canadian Heritage (Government of Canada), and the National Gallery of Canada. Building on previous discussions and efforts in Canada, that meeting led to agreement for a survey of the extent to which Canadian museums have done provenance research on their collections, establishment of a training program in how to do provenance research, and a commitment to include Holocaust-era provenance information in the Canadian Heritage Information Network. This matter was discussed at the October meeting of the Committee of management and steps will now be taken to progress the matter.

Global Forum On Antisemitism

75. Jeremy Jones represented the ECAJ at the forum in Jerusalem and was appointed to the nine person Steering Committee between conferences.

Interfaith Dialogue

76. As the reports of Jeremy Jones and Josie Lacey elsewhere in this publication make clear, the ECAJ continues to be involved in the all important area of interfaith dialogue at various levels with the major faiths in Australia.

77. An important series of meetings took place during 2008 commencing with an informal meeting on 5 March 2008 with representatives of the Heads of Churches and National Council of Churches of Australia (NCCA) following the return to Australia of a delegation of the National Council of Churches of Australia (NCCA) from a visit to the "Holy Land" in December 2007 (**Appendix 28 & 29 – pages 152-155**). That frank discussion resulted in a greater understanding of the sensibilities of the parties to certain issues and the way in which those issues were expressed.
78. Following the publication on 11 March 2008 by the Heads of Churches of a series of resolutions on the situation in the "Holy Land" (**Appendix 30 – pages 156,157**) which were regarded by the ECAJ as far from ideal and the publication on 4 June 2008 of *"The Heads of Churches Statement on Palestine and Israel"* (**Appendix 31 – pages 158,159**), it was decided that the ECAJ should respond to the statement (**Appendix 32 – pages 160-161**) and continue with the dialogue. A meeting took place at the Great Synagogue on 27 June 2008 where the ECAJ was represented by Rabbis Lawrence and Kamins, Peter Wertheim, Robin Margo and the President. The church leaders present were Archbishop Phillip Aspinall the Anglican Primate, Reverend John Henderson General Secretary of the NCCA, Reverend Gregor Henderson Head of the Uniting Church and Reverend Rod Benson of the Baptist Church. Archbishop Philip Wilson the Head of the Catholic Church was unable to attend.
79. The meeting was friendly and positive and the ECAJ tabled a draft joint statement for consideration by the group (**Appendix 33 – pages 162,168**), which the church representatives undertook to consider before meeting again on 19 September 2008.
80. At the September meeting further progress was made in relation to the draft joint statement and it was agreed that an approach would be made to representatives of the Muslim community through established channels to consider, subject to the 3 faiths agreeing upon and publishing a joint

statement beforehand, a 3 faiths delegation to the middle east late in 2009 or early in 2010, possibly with the assistance of DFAT.

81. Since its inception a few years ago, the ECAJ had been actively involved in the Asia Pacific Regional Interfaith Dialogue (APRID). In April 2008 the fourth dialogue in the series took place in Cambodia; however no person associated with the ECAJ or any of its formal dialogues was invited by DFAT which represented a departure from earlier dialogues. A letter has been sent to the Minister for Foreign Affairs drawing these matters to his attention and it is anticipated that the issue will be raised during the ECAJ's next meeting with the Minister, hopefully in November 2008.
82. The milestone 25th National Dialogue with the Uniting Church also took place during the year.
83. We are indebted to Rabbis Lawrence Levi and Kamins, Jeremy Jones, Josie Lacey, Graham Lawrence, Peter Wertheim, Robin Margo and Peta Pellach in particular for the progress in this important area of ECAJ activity.

Papal Visit

84. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, visited Sydney for World Youth Day in July 2008 and the ECAJ was represented by Rabbis Lawrence and Kamins, David Knoll, Josie Lacey and the President at an interfaith gathering with His Holiness on 18 July 2008. On that occasion Rabbi Lawrence delivered an address of welcome to His Holiness (**Appendix 34 – pages 169-171**).
85. Part of the World Youth Day ceremonies included a re-enactment of the "Stations of the Cross". The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies was actively involved with representatives of the Catholic Church in revising the script and certain aspects of the staging of the pageant, so as to minimise offence that might be caused to members of the Jewish community. That process was successful and, as a result, the ECAJ will make the script and DVD of the pageant available to the World Jewish Congress in order that in the

future, Jewish communities in cities where World Youth Day events will take place can use the script as a template in discussions with representatives of the Catholic Church.

Parliament of World Religions

86. The Parliament of World Religions will convene in Melbourne in December 2009, when the organisers expect 6,000 delegates from Australia and overseas to be in attendance. Nina Bassat AM is a member of the Board of the PWR and discussions have taken place between representatives of the ECAJ and Rev Dirk Ficca the Executive Director of PWR, on matters of concern to the Jewish community. In particular, it is anticipated that issues relating to the Middle East will feature, possibly prominently, at the Melbourne meeting. The ECAJ is working to establish appropriate mechanisms for such discussion to take place so as to prevent the Middle East issue receiving disproportionate prominence on the Agenda and to minimise the possibility of any adverse outcome for example along the lines of Durban 1. The ECAJ wrote to Dirk Fecca of the PWR on 7 November 2008 setting out our concerns (**Appendix 35 –pages 172-173**) The PWR has requested funding for the Conference from the Jewish Community, but in light of the local demands for funding and the economic crisis neither the ECAJ nor the community will be able to assist in any material way in that regard.

Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*

87. A most important address by eminent Catholic theologian Dr Paul O'Shea. was given to the Sydney commemoration gathering in the Great Synagogue in Sydney on 9 November 2008. His address (a copy of which is available from the ECAJ office), was especially noteworthy because of Dr O'Shea's careful analysis of the acts and omissions of Pope Pius XII. His concluding remarks are important and bear repeating -

"Pius XI died on 9 February 1939 and was succeeded by his Secretary of State, Eugenio Pacelli, a man of similar mind and heart but a man of vastly different temperament. The new pope was a man who believed that rational diplomacy combined with patience, faith and careful strategy would save the Catholic Church and Europe's Christian heritage from the short-term scourge of Nazism and the far greater danger of communism. Pacelli's decision meant that nothing and no one would come between his role as Vicar of Christ on earth and his unshakeable belief that God had called him to lead the Catholic Church in its hour of greatest danger. He could not see the horror that was to be unleashed against European Jewry. He could not, and he knew it, stir the Catholics of Germany to rise in defence of the defenceless Jews. What then did he have? He had a voice that was listened to across the world. And he used it throughout the course of the war years on behalf of every victim group and nation by name – with the glaring exception of the one victim group for whom a plain word was so desperately needed. The Jews of Europe would always be second to the perceived needs of, and threats to, the Catholic Church. The true horror of the October 1943 round-up of the Jews of Rome was the expectation on all sides, including, and especially the Germans, that Pius would speak. He did not.

"It is my considered opinion based on my research work over the last ten years that Pope Pius XII was a good and holy man who made some terrible decision and errors of judgement. His failure to speak clearly in defence of the Catholics of Poland during 1939-1940; and his ambiguous responses to the murderous and officially pro-Catholic regime of the Ustasha in Croatia who were engaged in slaughter of Orthodox Serbian Christians as well as Jews between 1941 and 1944 raises serious problems as to his ability to move beyond his natural inclination to be a diplomat to that of the much needed role of leader. Of course for the Poles and Serbs there were avenues of hope however slim. For the Jews of Europe there was no hope,

and the one man who had shown resilience in fighting the Nazis throughout the 1930s was now so prolix and turgid as to be all but mute.

“But a final word of caution is necessary. If Pope Pius XII is to be held accountable for what he did and did not do during the years of the Holocaust then so must the whole Church – Pius cannot, and should not, bear the blame for all the sins of Catholicism during those dark years; that is a burden for which the whole Church then, as well as the Church today, must bear responsibility. Endless citing of isolated newspaper articles, symposia with prepared conclusions and good-intentioned, but ignorant believers – Jews and Catholics- do not help. This is not the place for apologetics and sloppy history. The skills of the trained professional Jewish and Christian historian must work together with the skills of the trained and professional Jewish and Christian theologians. They must work together.

“And here we must wait for the archives to reveal the full story, and more importantly, for the Catholic Church to summon the courage to seek forgiveness from the Jews for all her sins of commission as well as those of omission. We have come a long way through the witness and work of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II, both of blessed memory. We have come a long way through the growth of positive and genuinely held friendships forged between Jews and Christians that will not allow the difficult and hard words that need to be said go unsaid”

Racial Hatred Litigation

88. In 2008, the principal activity of the ECAJ in this area was the institution of proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia against Dr Toben for contempt of the Court by breaching Orders made by the Court (Justice Branson), in civil proceedings brought pursuant to the *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act*, when he was ordered to remove and not to republish certain Holocaust denial material on his Adelaide Institute website.

89. The contempt proceedings were heard by Justice Lander in the Federal Court in Adelaide in August 2008, when the ECAJ relied on some 144 alleged breaches of the Court Orders in maintaining that Dr Toben was in contempt of the Court. Dr Toben chose not to give any evidence in the proceedings and judgment was reserved. At the time of writing this report judgment is still reserved on the issue of whether Dr Toben is guilty of contempt of court. If found guilty a further hearing as to punishment for contempt will take place.

90. The ECAJ is indebted to the lawyers who represented it in this litigation: Robin Margo SC; Shane Prince and Professor Regina Graycar of Counsel and Steven Lewis, for their dedication and hard work provided pro bono.

Welfare

91. Following a presentation at the Annual Conference of the ECAJ in November 2007, a working party was established to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Federation of Jewish Aged and Community Service Organisations (Federation). The working party (the President (ex officio), Eva Fischl, Robin Schwarz, David Brous and Phil Samuel), reported to the Committee of Management and the Federation's Draft Business Case was adopted by the Committee of Management in April 2008. The objectives of the Federation include:

- leadership and support to the Australian Jewish community on all policy matters relating to the provision of effective and efficient health, aged and community services;
- enhancing the capacity of the Australian Jewish community to influence and support the provision of those services to the broader Australian population;
- through sharing best practice to support the provision through existing service providers of the services to all Jews in Australia encompassing

the full spectrum of religious observance, secularity, lifestyle and geographic location;

- to ensure that the views and interests of all members and affiliates are given due regard with specific emphasis on the utilisation of communication and consultative processes that support effective participation of smaller communities outside Sydney and Melbourne, in deliberative processes; and
- to work in conjunction with the ECAJ acting as a resource in consideration of health, aged and community care policy to ensure consistency in approaches to decision makers at all levels and to establish a common approach and understanding of the health, aged and community services issues of relevance to the Australian Jewish community.

92. Membership of the Federation comprises: Montefiore Homes; Jewish Care NSW; Wolper Hospital; Chai Foundation; Centre on Ageing; Jewish Care Victoria; Emmy Monash Homes; and the Morris Zeffert Homes.

93. This is a welcome initiative of the ECAJ and will facilitate both the planning and delivery of services within the community in an environment where there will be an increasing demand for such services as the community ages.

ADC

94. Early in 2008 the ECAJ and the Anti Defamation Commission of B'nai B'rith (based in Victoria) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to assist in the co-ordination of the organisations' respective roles in anti defamation work and approaches to Government. Since then the MOU has been honoured and co-operation between the two organisations is at a high level.

ORA

95. Following the address by the President to the Annual General Meeting of the Organisation of Rabbis of Australasia, and in an endeavour to better facilitate the interaction between the 2 national bodies, the Executive of ORA will meet with the ECAJ at the ECAJ Annual Conference on 1 December 2008. It should be noted that the Council of Progressive Rabbis is an Observer Body to the ECAJ.

OTHER MATTERS

Arab Israeli Conflict Booklet

96. The booklet published by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies will be distributed to affiliates of the ECAJ through the generosity of a member of the Committee of Management.

Israeli-Palestinian Afl Team

97. The Peres Peace Centre was responsible for organising an AFL football team comprising young Israeli and Palestinian players to participate in an international competition in Australia. The tour was an outstanding *hasbara* success.

Council for Jewish Education In Schools

98. The ECAJ is responsible for the administration of this tax deductible fund. The operation of the fund in NSW and VIC has been delegated in accordance with the Constitution to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and the Victorian Jewish Board of Education respectively. It remains a priority of the ECAJ that a national scheme of operation for the CJES be urgently implemented along the lines of the NSW scheme of operation.

PASSINGS and HONOURS

99. During the year we were saddened to learn of the passing of Doron Ur AM a Honorary Life member of the ECAJ a former President of the JCCWA and a person who contributed extensively to the community in Western Australia, Victoria and nationally. His wise counsel and emails will be missed.

100. We were also saddened by the untimely passing of Ian Rockman the former Co-Chairman of the Australian Council for Jewish Schools. The leadership that Ian provided to Jewish day schools throughout Australia on a range of issues particularly concerning recurrent and one off funding from Federal Governments, enabled those schools to flourish and grow and become the envy of the Jewish world. His commitment with others was instrumental in obtaining from the then Federal opposition one off security funding for Jewish day schools in 2007, and the resolution of the anomalous funding of certain schools earlier this year. These are but the most recent examples of that which Ian helped achieve for the Jewish day school movement.

101. The ECAJ also congratulated one of its Life Members, Jeremy Jones AM on the significant achievement of the award to him of HREOC's Human Rights medal.

102. The ECAJ also congratulated members of the community who had been named as recipients of the Order of Australia awards. It is most pleasing to note that many of the recipients have a close association with the ECAJ.

103. The recipients of Australia Day honours were: Grahame LEONARD AM, Ilona LEE AM, Dr Paul GARDNER AM, Dr Keith SHILKIN AM, Louise ADLER AM, James ALTMAN OAM, Beverley BOS OAM, Lesley ERDI OAM, Cantor Shimon FARKAS OAM, Susan FELLER OAM, Dr Samuel FRIEDMAN OAM, David LANDA OAM, Ruth LILIAN OAM and Joel NATHAN OAM.

104. The recipients of Queens Birthday honours were: Associate Professor Suzanne Rutland OAM The Hon Emeritus Prof Peter BAUME AC, Dr David BENNETT AC QC, Professor Dennis ALTMAN AM, Mr Albert DADON AM, Mr David Maxwell FREEMAN AM,

Ms Tania de JONG AM, Emeritus Professor Richard FOX AM, Associate Professor Jack HANSKY AM, Mrs Penelope SEIDLER AM, Mr Stanley ROTH AM, Mrs Helen BRUSTMAN OAM, Mr Phillip Paul WOLANSKI AM, Mrs Susi BRIEGER OAM, Mr Andrew LANG OAM, Mr Phillip Falk MAISEL OAM, Mr Steven Peter NEMES OAM, Mrs Anne-Louise OYSTRAGH OAM, Mr Richard Isaac PILPEL OAM and Mr Stuart SILBERT OAM.

The Challenges Ahead

105. As can be seen from the summary of its work set out above and in other reports in this publication, the ECAJ's range of activities include:

- formulating policies and positions on a wide variety of issues;
- providing public comment to the media and non-Jewish audiences on behalf of Australian Jewry about issues of concern to it;
- making representations to government, politicians and bureaucrats;
- preparing and submitting position papers;
- meeting with editors, journalists and other opinion-makers in the national media and coordinating responses at a State level;
- conducting interfaith dialogue with leaders of other faiths to promote a better understanding of Judaism;
- monitoring and coordinating the response to antisemitic events throughout Australia;
- conducting litigation against holocaust deniers and vilifiers of the Jewish people;
- liaising with intelligence and security agencies and coordinating the communal security services within the Jewish community;
- representing the Australian Jewish Community on world Jewish forums including the WJC and the Claims Conference;
- administering and coordinating the Council for Jewish Education in Schools, the tax deductible fund for education of Jewish children in schools and the Council for Jewish Community Security; and
- making representations to the Australian government, international organisations, NGO's and foreign governments in support of oppressed and

distressed Jewish communities overseas and on other fundamental human rights issues.

106. The ECAJ receives its funding almost exclusively from its constituent bodies. The revenue received during 2008 was \$82,775.00 (ex GST) which includes contributions from each State (with the majority from each of NSW and VIC) as well as small contributions from each affiliate. The ECAJ is very grateful to the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and through it the Jewish Communal Appeal for additional funding and assistance it has provided to the ECAJ in NSW. But even with this additional funding the ECAJ cannot possibly discharge its important obligations at the appropriate level.
107. The ECAJ must be properly resourced with: personnel; finances; research capabilities and knowledge resources.
108. Specifically the ECAJ will need:
 - funding to pay for professional personnel, office facilities and services that will make it possible for its office-bearers and other councillors to carry out the ECAJ's functions; and
 - timely access to the best information and analysis available to the community on all matters that concern Australian Jewry, to optimize the quality and effectiveness of the ECAJ's work.
109. The necessary reaffirmation and strengthening of the role of the ECAJ should not be seen as a move to exclude other organisations from their legitimate roles in the community, rather as a necessary refocusing of effort in a cooperative endeavour to maximise the effectiveness of representation on behalf of the community.
110. These problems have only been made possible by the severe under-resourcing of the ECAJ relative to other Jewish organisations.
111. Even if all fees were paid on time, the funds yielded would be insufficient to pay for the support personnel, office facilities and services, and access to high quality information and analysis that would make it possible for the ECAJ to carry out its functions properly and effectively. The ECAJ's present shoe-string

budget only allows the ECAJ to have one part time employee. This severely restricts the ECAJ in its operations and future planning.

112. It is therefore past time to re-position the ECAJ as the pre-eminent national representative organ of the Jewish community and coordinator of community representation by putting it on a professional footing to enable the community's voice to be listened to with respect, knowing that it is representative, measured and reasonable in its advocacy as well as focused on leveraging and coordinating views.
113. This is the fundamental challenge for the ECAJ in 2009.

Acknowledgments

114. The year has been busy with progress on a number of fronts. Such achievements as have occurred were only as a result of concerted co-operative efforts by many. It is matter of disappointment that our plans to professionalise the operations of the ECAJ, have not yet been realised but it is hoped those arrangements can be finalised early in 2009.
115. The Committee of Management has operated harmoniously and with great commitment. There has been no suggestion of the old interstate rivalry that has unfortunately marred the work of the ECAJ at times in the past. I am particularly grateful to the Executive in particular Peter Wertheim, Jillian Segal, David Knoll, Robin Margo Graham Leonard and Anton Block for their contributions input and counsel.
116. Although not a member of the Committee of Management, Sam Salcman as always has been a tower of strength as a de facto Hon Treasurer, pending the appointment of Peter Wise to that position in October.

117. The staff of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies in particular Sarita Gold, Alla Pillman, Vic Ahladeff and Etty Ayalon have been obliging and dedicated to the Board's "poor relation".
118. Without all of the assistance willingly given by colleagues and staff including my personal assistant Wendy Herbert, we would simply not have achieved that which is reflected in this and the other reports. I am most grateful to all of them.

Robert M Goot AM SC

President

November 2008

ACT JEWISH COMMUNITY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 30 October 2008

The first year of my presidency has been a challenging one, with some achievements and some disappointments.

The ACT Jewish Community is a microcosm of governing bodies in the larger states and as such we are trying to be everything for everybody in a community that is pluralistic with a full spectrum of observance, interest and needs. We have to prioritise.

The biggest change for the Community this year has been the departure of former Executive Secretary, Christine Sullivan, in March. We thank Christine for her 11 years of dedicated service to the Community. She will be sorely missed by all. Her smiling face and easy going unflappable manner aided the smooth administration of the Community.

We are fortunate to have found a very capable new Executive Secretary Miri Barhen. Miri took over the helm at an extremely busy period and has coped admirably with the vast variety of difficult challenges given to her. Having a native Hebrew speaker in the office has helped strengthen our ties with the growing Canberra Israeli population encouraging them to join our Community. Miri's helpful manner has endeared her to our Community members and we look forward to a long and fruitful working relationship.

Firstly I will speak about services provided to Community members then about infrastructure.

BRITH MILAH

Dr Robert Lewin continues to travel from Sydney several times a year for Britot Mila in Canberra.

PLAYGROUP

The greatest priority in the Community is education. Starting with our youngest group there are 40 Jewish children in Canberra under the age of 5 identified. An active informal playgroup is organised by Veronica Leydman. Numbers vary from half a dozen to 20 children at playgroup meetings. They meet at different venues. Only 15% of the families of children in this age group are financial members of the Community. This outreach is important and hopefully in time they will become more involved. A community's involvement with such a Playgroup is vital because that is often young families' initial contact with other Jewish people, resulting in the formation of social networks.

JEWISH PRIMARY LEVEL JEWISH STUDIES AND HEBREW EDUCATION

I thank Veronica Leydman who was our Board member earlier in the year with this portfolio. Sarah Zelig was coopted in April and has continued to work enthusiastically to improve the education for our youngsters. Finding suitable Jewish studies teachers in Canberra has always been problematic and I thank Dane Mair who ran the Cheder single handed in the latter part of 2007 with occasional help from Amelia Watson. and Yum Dror took over the helm in 2008. She was ably assisted by Lily Dixon and occasionally Sam Raiz. Yum returned to Israel in August. At present Lily is being helped by a roster of parents in educating our primary school aged children.

Once again, we have a need for a Jewish studies educator to provide the essential Jewish education at this level. The Board has suggested a scholarship be offered to either an undergraduate or postgraduate student to commit to this role. The ongoing problem of providing a suitable Jewish Studies educator has to be solved.

A new successful initiative has been a Hebrew language class with the appointment of Ruti Yahalon as a midweek Hebrew teacher for primary aged students. This class

will hopefully continue in the New Year. Ruti is a qualified teacher previously from Moriah College. Sunday classes will be concentrating on Jewish studies.

A three week vocational care program was held at the Centre during last summer where Ruti Yahalon and Miriam Rosalky were the main teachers with other helpers. Thank you to Allan Doobov and Sarah Weisman who helped facilitate this program. Unfortunately it will not be running this coming summer because of a lack of qualified teachers and a low number of attendees. We thank NCJWA who continue the tradition of providing annual prizes for the children.

Individual Bar/Batmitzvah lessons are given at present but a class will be formed when the numbers dictate.

YOUTH GROUP

Both Hineni and Netzer have supported our youth group this year, sending madrichim from Sydney and Melbourne to engage with our upper primary and high school children. A disappointing number of our youth attended summer and winter camps interstate. I thank Gidi Butow along with Tessa Forshaw for facilitating Youth Group. Gidi has been awarded an ACT Jewish Community scholarship towards his shnat year in Israel with Hineni in 2009 and we hope he will return to Australia with renewed enthusiasm to support our youth group.

Hineni held their annual winter leaders' gathering at our Centre in July 2008, with leaders from Sydney and Melbourne. This included activities for our local children.

AUSTRALIAN UNION OF JEWISH STUDENTS

AUJS has been moderately active this year at the ANU campus with a stall at Orientation Week and various gatherings through the year. The Annual National Political seminar was held at our Centre in August. I thank Professor Kim Rubenstein for taking over the Jewish Chaplaincy at the ANU. The lack of AUJS representation at the University of Canberra campus has become problematic with the loss of our Canberra University chaplain Liz Brumer. I also thank AUJS for their help at the Food Fair. Dane Mair Who was recipient of our Hollander–Selinger Youth Award (Hanukah 2007) has been awarded an ACT Jewish Community

scholarships to attend the Leadership Development Program in Europe & Israel over the summer. Tessa Forshaw who represented Australia at the World Youth Parliament in July has been chosen to be a facilitator at the UN Youth Assembly in New York in January 2009. Having effective youth leadership will aid our youth programs and AUJS .next year.

YOUNG ADULTS

After Alan and I attended a Jewish Communal Appeal continuity meeting in Sydney in January Sharon Benporath was approached to try to establish a young adults' Jewish Network in Canberra. It has been a concern of mine for many years that young Jewish adults arriving in Canberra for either postgraduate study or work were losing contact with their Jewish roots.

...

Coordinators of JNetwork in Sydney visited Canberra to assist with the formation of this group. The first meeting of JNetwork in Canberra was organised by Sharon in April and together with others they now have a data base of 50 people They meet weekly at various venues around town. Members of this group attended a JNF information session at the Centre and helped erect the Succah. I thank Sharon and her helpers. We are hoping to obtain extra funding from JCA to support the Canberra JNetwork.

We also thank Ben & Veronica Selinger for encouraging our younger members with the annual presentation of the Hollander-Selinger prize.

ADULT EDUCATION

Melton began enthusiastically at the beginning of the year with 20 members attending but unfortunately the numbers declined as the year progressed despite the high standard of teaching. This resulted in the classes being cancelled for the rest of 2008 due to lack of financial viability. However we hope to complete the course during an intensive study weekend with the Melton Visiting Scholar at the beginning of 2009. I would like to thank all the visiting Melton teachers and a

special thank you to Peta Pellach of the Shalom Institute in Sydney who facilitated the course in Canberra.

A return of the Sunday Brunch Study Group may be more appropriate for our Community, providing suitable study leaders come forward from our midst.

A lack of interest in first semester resulted in adult Hebrew Classes recommencing in the middle of the year. I thank Nurit Aharoni for running these classes.

A regular Talmud Shiur is held on Wednesday evenings at the Centre and I thank Donald Chambers for organising this activity. Occasional visiting Rabbis and learned out of town visitors enriched the experience.

I thank Jerry Jacobson for running the Jewish Meditation Group

Visiting Rabbis during the year included Rabbi Ralph Genende of the Caulfield Hebrew Congregation in Melbourne who visits quarterly as senior Rabbi to the Australian Defence Forces. The Rabbi has engaged our Community in a variety of topics with his interactive approach to Jewish learning. Rabbi Genende has also addressed the Canberra Christian-Jewish Dialogue Group. Rabbi and Rebbetzin Peres from Maroubra led a spiritually uplifting Shabbat with the Community and stayed on to teach the children on Sunday morning, giving us advice on growing a young Jewish community. Rabbi Jeffrey Cohen, one of the Melton teachers from Sydney, also addressed us during the Siyyum Torah in August.. Rabbi Benzion Scheinfeld from Camp Kanfei Nesharim as well as giving drashot and leading a Tish B'Av service invited the Community to join the camp of American teenagers for all Shabbat meals. Rabbi John Levi from Melbourne will be joining us in November for a Shabbaton. I would also like to thank Rabbi Meir Rabi from Melbourne who is happy to give Alan and myself rabbinical advice on Community issues.

THE LOST GENERATION

The Lost Generation Group catering primarily for families with teenagers was started by Annette Cohen and met a few times during 2007. This social network group for families with parents in the 40-50 age group has met informally through 2008.

SENIOR GROUPS

The monthly Lunch 'n Lecture held usually on the last Friday of each month with a variety of interesting speakers was organised by Christine Sullivan as part of her communal worker role. The lack of a communal worker at present has prevented regular Lunch 'n Lectures but a few have been held with help from some of the Jewish Care Committee. Thank you to Sasha Weisman for the lunches and to all the speakers we need a coordinator responsible for this activity which overlaps with Jewish Care, as it may be the only regular outing for some of our elderly members.

The Ladies Who Lunch, also known as Yiddisher Mamas, meets for lunch on a regular monthly basis, and attracts both members of the Community and Jewish women on the periphery. I thank Pam Fein for organising this activity.

Grumps 'r Us for retired men has been so successful this year that they are now meeting weekly at the Centre instead of fortnightly. The coffee must be good I would like to be a fly on the wall at these gatherings! Thanks to founder Ben Selinger for continuing to coordinate the group. Miri and I also wish to thank the group for helping in the office on numerous occasions with various tasks.

JEWISHCARE

The contribution of Christine Sullivan is greatly missed and continued support is needed for our elderly members and those with health and social issues. We require the paid services of a social worker. I thank Miriam Gellibrand in her role as pastoral care visitor to the hospitals; Bill Arnold and Sidney Pohorille as visitors to prisons in Southern NSW and all other Jewish Care committee members and

volunteers. The Crisis Line is manned 24/7 and I thank those dedicated professionals who give their time free of charge. This month sees the start of a "Befriend a Grandparent" initiative to introduce our teenagers to community work and brighten the day for our housebound members.

I would just like to thank everybody who has given their time to Jewish Care in the past year.

The Canberra Chevra Kadisha is also run by volunteers and I thank all those involved.

ORTHODOX AND PROGRESSIVE CONGREGATIONS

The attendances at Friday night services in the Orthodox minyan have been disappointing this year. On the other hand, Shabbat morning minyanin have been well attended and the after service schmoozes at Kiddush a focal point. Large numbers attended Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Donation of a new bimah carpet by Donald Chambers and refurbishment of the shul area is greatly appreciated. The Orthodox Group have the use of a new Sefer Torah from the Shroot Family.

The Progressive group had reasonable attendances on Friday nights but relatively lower attendances on their monthly Shabbat morning gatherings. A priority this year is the refurbishment of the upstairs hall to provide a permanent spot for the Ark and other matters such as heating need to be addressed.

Our services are definitely more popular when food follows. This year we have celebrated various simchot with a Kiddush/Shabbat lunch. Thank you to Edith and Tom Blumenthal, Josh Klein, Yossi White, Donald Chambers, Jonathan Weinberger and Sam & Pam Fein for feeding the Community. Sponsor a Kiddush has become popular. I thank Adele Rosalky for organising the Kiddush roster and her army of helpers. Thank you to Rivka Roussel, new Guild convenor, and her catering team.

Without a Rabbi in this Community, I especially like to thank all those that contribute to the running of services.

CHAGIM

A large Chanukah party was very well attended last December with entertainment by the Cheder children.

Purim: Cheder children entertained us with a spiel, There was face-painting and jumping castle and carnival-like atmosphere.

Communal Seder: approx 70 people attended. Special thanks to Veronica Leydman, the Rosenberg family and all the other helpers for assisting with the cooking and preparation for the seder. Also, I thank Tom Frommer for facilitating the Pesach food sales.

Yom HaShoah: I thank Tom Blumenthal for organising a well attended and meaningful Yom Hashoah commemoration.

Yom Ha'atzmaut: supported by the Israeli Embassy (including Ambassador Yuval Rotem) the Community celebrated 60th anniversary of the State of Israel with a film and celebration afterwards. I myself was privileged to witness the motion in the House of Representatives congratulating Israel on its 60th year.

Lag B'Omer was celebrated with Hineni, Netzer and a bonfire.

Shavuot was celebrated by an ice-cream party enjoyed by children of all ages.

Sukkot: a small gathering of young members celebrated Friday night in the Sukka.

Simchat Torah: party being mid-week was very poorly attended.

GRANTS

Thank you to Allan Doobov who has worked on grant applications.

FUNDRAISING

Our main fundraising was the Food Fair which was very successful both financially and demonstrating a community spirit I especially thank David Gould who coordinated the event and Tom Frommer for his contribution and coordination of the white elephant stall. The whole staff of the Israeli Embassy supported our Community by organising and manning the felafel stall.

Donations have been received throughout the year for aliyot at our Shabbat morning services. The cupboards in the refurbished classrooms were totally paid for by donation! Hopefully further refurbishment in the building will attract similar generosity. There were various donations of siddurim, books, artwork and kitchen items for community use. I thank all who have contributed.

A Bequest has been left to the ACTJC from the estate of the late Jon Prance.

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

THE AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Earle Hoffman, this group's original president, stepped down this year with Sylvia Deutsch taking the Chair. The highlight of the year for both the Society and the Community was the launch of the ACT Jewish Community's oral history. This important research was presented in both hardcopy and electronic form. I thank the editor, Adele Rosalky, without whom this project would not have become a reality, Sylvia Deutsch, her assistant, and all those who contributed.

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

This week our Centre hosted the inaugural Australasian Jewish Genealogical Society Conference. It has been an outstanding success. Thank you to Vernon Kronenberg, our Canberra Coordinator, and all who assisted.

NCJWA

National Council has held regular social and informative events Janet Frommer, an energetic president, has now stepped down. I thank NCJWA for continually supporting the Food Fair, the Cheder and helping to integrate new members to our Community.

INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES

Christian-Jewish Dialogue Group

Pam and George Rothman continue to run the Christian-Jewish Dialogue with Margaret Piper. Meetings have been held regularly in both the Wesley Uniting Church and our Centre with both Christian and Jewish speakers. Pam also represents our Community on multi-cultural matters. Bill Arnold and myself have attended numerous other inter-faith gatherings and I have attended spasmodically the inter-faith forum of the ACT who are developing an inter-faith garden adjacent to Clare Holland House (Hospice). Alma Armstrong, leader of this group, attended with myself Abrahamic faith women's conference in Victoria in February.

Sylvia Deutsch represented the Community recently at an Eid celebration run by the Department of Multicultural Affairs.

Local clergy attended the Siyyum Torah.

2009 will see the World Parliament of Religion come to Melbourne. We hope to have a representative from our Community at this event.

CONFERENCES and NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

I have represented the Community at the ECAJ. I attended the annual conference in Melbourne last year and will be attending the conference in Sydney at the end of November. I also represented the ECAJ at a number of Canberra events.

Bill Arnold has been our representative at the JCA Board of Governors. JCA provides a substantial amount of funding to our Community each year. We will not be involved in their capital appeal next year for security.

Four of our members took part in the 2020 Summit. They are Professor Ben Selinger A.M., Professor Kim Rubenstein, Sharon Ben Porath and associate member Ian Bull.

I thank George Rothman for organising the UIA Appeal in Canberra. The speaker was Assefa- Dawit, Executive Director of UIA, for NSW who came to Israel from Ethiopia as a child.

I also thank Pam Rothman and Bill Arnold for representing the Community at meetings of the local Multicultural Association.

JNF – the Community took part in the “Walk the Land” to celebrate Israel’s 60th birthday. A JNF delegation visited Canberra in September and took part in a Shabbaton with the Community giving drasha in both Orthodox and Progressive services. On the Sunday we were entertained by Len Mahemof, an ardent JNF worker. Also on that weekend, JNF held seminar information for young adults and there was a re-dedication of the JNF stone in Lennox Park.

I hope to increase our Community’s awareness of JNF’s work in the coming year. Publicising all these activities is imperative and I thank our Executive Secretary for keeping us up to date with the regular Grapevine email and of course the hard working editors who produce our monthly magazine Hamerkaz. Thanks to Dane Mair, Bec Burrows, Janet Frommer, Raffi Lehrer and Vernon Kronenberg and all who contribute articles and photos. Sylvia Deutsch continues to report ACTJC happenings for the Australian Jewish News and archive community records.

Our shop selling Jewish essentials does need volunteers to help Miri. Monthly orders of kosher meat, bread and groceries come from Melbourne. Although there

are kosher goods scattered around town we would prefer if Coles would run a kosher counter from one of their stores.

INFRASTRUCTURE

This year saw the formation of the Advisory Committee on Design and Maintenance. Their first project was completed before Rosh Hashana with the refurbishing of the downstairs classroom and shul. I thank Adele Rosalky who project managed the refurbishment and her committee and all others who contributed. (See Report)

Discussions took place throughout the year on various options to improve accessibility to the upstairs areas. This has to be addressed immediately as the Community is ageing. The lack of facility for the Progressive group was discussed at length. This problem will also have to be addressed this year with an interim solution of refurbishing the upstairs hall with a dedicated area for the progressive Ark.

The toilets need modernised. The roof needs attention. A safe playground for the children with secure boundary is needed. I thank Raffi Lehrer and Tom Frommer for their help with maintenance of the building and Marcel Kievet in keeping the grounds in order, Ilya Leydman for his expertise for maintaining our hardware and sound systems and Lionel Smith who not only keeps the building clean but does numerous odd jobs as well. Thanks to Asher Westropp Evans and Sam Raiz for setting up our multipurpose rooms for services each week.

Ongoing research is being carried out on the feasibility of building aged-care units on our grounds. The block across the road in National Circuit has been acquired by DOMA and it is proposed that new office blocks will be constructed on the site.

SECURITY

My Board and I thank Jerzey Jagiello for organising the computerised roster and all volunteers who have provided security throughout the year and Raoul Salpeter for the Cheder parent's roster. Unfortunately, we have lost some of our regular people and many more volunteers are needed to ensure the door is manned at each and every event. I thank Phil Creagh for being our security Board member. Thank you also to Avi Solomon who has been continual support with security. This coming year, all vehicles parked in our Centre will have to have identification for security reasons.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

This year has seen the arrival of membership cards for all financial members. These cards can also be used for identification as a security measure for both a person and their vehicle. Thanks to Olga Kievet for designing and providing these cards.

Goals for next year include continuous repairs and refurbishing of our building, solving our educational needs, especially for the children, continuing our outreach to increase our membership and making essential changes to our Constitution to be compliant with updated Governace requirements.

A committee working on a strategic plan for the Community will be set up to prioritise our needs and set a realistic plan of action for the short and medium term. We have already done the groundwork with the Study collated by Fiona Sweet Formatti complimented with action lists from Janet Frommer .

Last but not least I would like to thank my hardworking Executive Board: Bill Arnold, Vice President, Garry Sturgess, Honorary Secretary, George Rothman, Honorary Treasurer, Olga Kievet, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer, Tom Frommer, Building & Facilities, Sarah Zelig and Veronica Leydman, Education, Phil Craegh,

Security and Dane Mair, Youth. We also thank Zeke Ezra for auditing our accounts.
I also thank my husband, Alan, for assistance during the year.

Anita Shroot
President ACTJC
30/10/2008

MILESTONES

BIRTHS

To Barak & Vivien Zelig a son (Oren)
To Karen & Andrew Elix a daughter (Katarina)

Many members became grandparents this year. The details have been included in Hamerkaz.

BAR/BATMITZVAHS

Zedekiah Hartstein, Matan Shani, Oriel Rosenberg

MARRIAGES

Rebecca White & Gidon Pinczower (Melbourne)
Emma & Gedalia Afterman (Israel)
Michael Danby & Amanda Mendes da Costa (Canberra)
Paul Jeffery & Krystal Arnsby (South Australia)
Athol and Sara Morris (Canberra)

GOLDEN WEDDING

Helga & Donald Leslie
Ellen & Bob Miller

DEATHS

Jon Prance

Yael Hartstein

ANITA SHROOT

(President, ACT Jewish Community)

EDUCATION

I have looked after the Education portfolio since April 2008, taking over from Veronica Leydman. I would like to start off by thanking the teachers and students who are all dedicated to attending the various education programs the community has to offer. Also, thank you to fellow board members for their support.

Cheder

This year 13 children enrolled for the cheder, including two bar mitzvah students. They were taught by assistant teacher, Lily Dixon and head teacher, Yum.

Following Yum's departure at the end of August, a new teacher has not been found and the community is currently relying on the parents who both have sufficient knowledge and teaching ability, to help out on a rostered system.

An additional mid-week Hebrew class was established for the kids. They have been taught by Ruti Yahalom.

Hebrew Classes

Following a lack of interest earlier in 2008, a second meeting was held after winter to gauge interest in Hebrew classes. As a result, Nurit Aharoni teaches an adult group once a week.

Melton

The Melton course got off to a fair start, however Jewish participants gradually departed, leaving the group too small to be viable. The course was recently cancelled.

Talmud

The Talmud shiur is held on Wednesday evenings for adults. Donald Chambers has kept the lessons running all year and the group has an established feel to it.

Sarah Zelig

YOUTH AND CONTINUITY

This has been a busy year of change and development in regards to youth affairs. We have seen more formal arrangements made with the Hineni youth movement for more frequent visits of madrichim to Canberra, and greater coordination with NSW state and national events and activities, such as camps. The Netzer youth movement is now also on board to provide madrichim and programming, on a rotating basis and also in conjunction with Hineni, to ensure more long term and consistent youth support for our chanichim, as well as providing ideological balance. One example of this was Lag Ba'omer, which marked our first ever festival supported by both Hineni and Netzer over the weekend.

However it is clear that distance support, though very welcome, is not sufficient to produce the momentum necessary to maintain locally-driven youth group, a key target of this portfolio. To that end, the Youth team have been in contact with a number of relevant bodies over the year, such as the Australian Zionist Youth Council (AZYC), Hillel NSW, Shalom College and the Forest Foundation to develop a unified and coherent youth structure for the 13 to 18 year old age group. This group remains our biggest concern, with no more than 3 or 4 chanichim involved with activities run through the NJMC. Ideally a new body should be established specifically to cater to teenagers. Neither the Hebrew School, AUJS or Network is

designed to or capable of dealing in depth in this area. The key to successful implementation is the proper training of a group of local leaders dedicated enough to develop an ongoing and self-perpetuating movement that does not rely on external parties to maintain itself.

Youth leadership training has therefore been a major emphasis this year. We have sent several of our leadership team to a number of leadership programs – such as the Winter Retreat (AUJS), Footsteps (Hillel) and the Leadership Development Program (LDP), the flagship Australian Jewish student leadership program. We are in discussions with Hillel and Shalom College to increase Canberran participation in the other programs being run in the NSW communities, and to explore options for these bodies running seminars and training sessions here in the ACT. Initial feedback has been encouraging.

Participation rates are still the major problem plaguing all youth activities. In spite of increased advertising and direct contact with chanichim and parents, attendance at post-cheder youth meetings and activity days is no greater than 10 people, and often around 5-6. This is the core group of regulars, and our thanks to those parents and who enthusiastically support their children's ongoing participation. Unfortunately, we were not able to send any more than 1 or 2 chanichim to the Zionist youth camps this year due to lack of interest.

Both Hineni and Netzer were keen for Canberrans to attend their major annual youth events, the summer and winter camps. In addition, Habonim Dror also hosted a camp in the ACT, at Camp Cottermouth in July; again, little interest was shown in encouraging local youth to attend. Increasing the number of participants in these events needs to be a high priority in the coming months/years, as these are almost the only occasions where our youth have the opportunity to meet and mingle with Jewish peers from around the region. It is very important that they not develop 'communal myopia', or feel isolated from the broader Jewish community. This often leads to either resentment or disinterest in Judaism general, and strengthens the prevailing drift into assimilation. Lack of participation

in communal activities is not unique to Canberra though; most youth organisations in Sydney and Melbourne have also reported increasing difficulty in retaining active members. Deeper coordination with our chanichim, the AZYC, BJE and other relevant bodies is necessary to strengthen the youth structures already in place and to encourage greater enthusiasm and involvement in ACT communal life.

Dane Mair

NETWORK CANBERRA

NETWORK Canberra connects Jewish young adults (singles, young couples & young parents) through a range of social, cultural, charity and educational events. This social group caters for all Jewish young adults, whether religious or non-religious, orthodox or progressive, by providing varied social activities and events designed to spark the different interests of its diverse membership.

NETWORK Canberra effectively creates opportunities for young adults to meet, network, become friends, find relationships and become active members of the Jewish community. Through NETWORK Canberra, numerous young adults who previously were 'lost' to Judaism or to the ACT Jewish Community – such as those young adults who spent Jewish holidays alone and without celebration, or returned home to Sydney each weekend - have now found a family of Jewish friends in Canberra with whom they actively engage.

MEMBERSHIP

NETWORK Canberra started in April 2008 with a membership of 3 people but it now has ten times that number (over 30) 'active' members with around another 10 on its contact list. Unlike other social groups, NETWORK Canberra is run by its members, with different members organising and taking responsibility for different events, and it is overseen by a small, dedicated and highly energetic Committee.

Within the past seven months, we have run more than 20 informal activities specifically for NETWORK Canberra members, ranging from Israeli movies, Pesach,

Rosh ha-Shana and Shabbat dinners, Israeli dancing, informal catch-ups and cocktails evenings to Succah building and an educational presentation by the Jewish National Fund. Activity attendance numbers are generally between 8 to 15 people. The numbers speak for themselves - the rapid formation of this group within only seven months is quite astonishing.

THE FUTURE: CONTINUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

NETWORK Canberra is based on the popular Sydney 'Network' group which very kindly enables us to use its logos, website and provides us with valuable guidance – thank you. Nonetheless, NETWORK Canberra is independent from it, running, publicising and funding its own events and activities. Unlike the Sydney group, we do not have paid Network staff or even a budget.

Throughout 2008, NETWORK Canberra has relied strongly on the generosity and word-of-mouth publicity of the ACT Jewish Community. All but three of the Network-specific events (as opposed to general Community events) have been fully self-funded by NETWORK members.

With the end of 2008 looming, many of our members will move from Canberra and it will be time, once again, to locate new members, particularly those who come to work or study here but will not otherwise make contact with the ACT Jewish community or with each other.

We foresee NETWORK Canberra running long into the future, recruiting new members in their 20s and 30s through publicity, projects and marketing targeted towards new University students, new Graduates and members of the workforce moving to the ACT, and in locating the many anonymous Jewish young adults who are still lost yet reachable. We look forward to the upcoming official launch of NETWORK Canberra and to participating in the ACT Multicultural Festival, in further activities with the Jewish National Fund, in events in Sydney for Jewish young adults, for instance with Network, Young UIA, Hagshama and the like, and in other campaigns generating wider awareness.

Yet we are still only laying the foundations, and sadly, without funding the group will not be able to participate in such campaigns and it will not be sustainable over the long-term. I urge the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the Jewish Communal Appeal (JCA) and the Board to continue to support NETWORK Canberra and to promote its long-term sustainability.

SUPPORT

THANK YOU to all of the ACT Jewish Community - and in particular Anita and Alan Shroot, Board members and Miri - for their immensely strong support and encouragement. We are also very grateful to Sylvia Deutsch for widely promoting NETWORK Canberra including in the Jewish News and the JCA newsletter.

THANK YOU to Tammy Shmerling and Dane Mair for working with me to create, run and recruit members for NETWORK Canberra since its very conception, and to our Committee Members for their hard work in establishing NETWORK Canberra and in organising its launch.

We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of our NETWORK Canberra members – particularly our solid base membership who regularly organise, run and attend events – and we acknowledge the enormous assistance provided to us by our non-Jewish support group who has helped us to run stalls at the Jewish Food Fair, schlep equipment, locate new members and have participated in the outreach activities we have held with non-Jewish young adults who are interested in learning about Judaism and Israel.

Sharon Benporath

GRUMPS 'R US

The Grumps have had a very successful year. Attendance has been excellent. Grumpology was taken to new heights [What unruly child scribbled in our

attendance book?]. There have been a few orthodox Grumps sniffing around but have not yet been tempted to stay.

The difficulty of members coping with concepts such as "alternate", "first and third", "not next week" and the like, means that we are now considering weekly meetings with 'come as you wish' attendance.

We will also be trialling summer 'activities' like boules, shuttlecock and possibly board games.

We have become skilled Hamerkaz envelope labellers and fillers and will demand redundancy pay if Hamerkaz ever (shock/horror) is accessed mostly online.

There is a deep philosophical issue as to whether we should accept Grumpettes, (naturally only with a suitably young and attractive appearance).

Ben Selinger

JEWISH CARE

We lost the services of Christine Sullivan during the year. In addition to her duties as Community executive-secretary, Christine was employed to work for Jewish Care. Her contribution is greatly missed and the Jewish Care committee believes it is imperative to have a social worker employed for several hours per week. We have a number of volunteers who contribute and we are grateful for their efforts.

Miriam Gellibrand continues in her role as pastoral care visitor to the hospitals. Bill Arnold and Sidney Pohorille have visited the prisons, the crisis line remains available 24/7 through the assistance of dedicated volunteers, visits take place to the sick and elderly within the Community and the monthly lunch n' lecture is a popular activity .

Those on the committee not already mentioned are Bob & Ellen Miller, Fiona Sweet-Formiatti, Eric McDonald, Peter Wise and myself.

Alan Shroot

ORTHODOX CONGREGATION REPORT 2007-8

The Orthodox group have continued to run services for Friday night and Shabbat mornings, all festivals, Shacharit on Rosh Chodesh (some months) and, if requested, minyanim for Yartzeits or Shiva. Attendances have increased on Shabbat mornings. We now have 30-35 congregants attending regularly. Friday evenings have been a problem on occasions. There has been a general rise in the level of Yiddishkeit within the Community. Thanks are also due to the members of the Chevra Kadisha.

Those who have assisted with services and Torah Reading during the year are Sam Dixon (who conducts Friday evening services), David Rosalky, Hilton Stone, Yossi White, Richard Webb, Gilon Smith, Marc Marshall, Barak Zelig, Meir Rosenberg, Lior Rosenberg, Eli Yerushalmi, Josh Klein and myself.

Donations for the new carpet, cupboards, machzorim and siddurim are all greatly appreciated. The renovations give a more pleasant atmosphere during the services.

Alan Shroot

PROGRESSIVE CONGREGATION

This has been a hectic one for the Progressives. Discussions regarding a mikvah on our property seemed to cause a great deal discomfort. The current situation and developments in Belconnen are still a matter of concern. Hopefully there will be mutual cooperation and understanding..

As the year has progressed, it is evident that our congregation has had on most occasions fewer participants. As our older members are finding the effort to get to Services more and more difficult, and the need for us (and for all upstairs functions) for a lift to access the Hall becomes a matter of urgency. The hall is hard to keep warm or cool. We understand the priorities for the coming year identify these as the priorities, as is the need for a dedicated "home" for our Congregation.

We are looking forward to the visit on November the 15th and 16th by Rabbi John Levi eagerly.

Bill Arnold attended a UPJ President's Conference in Sydney in May, and will be attending a UPJ Conference in Melbourne in early November. We have been pleased to welcome a number of new faces at our services as visitors come to remember their Jewish roots.

The visit by Netzer several months ago was appreciated and their involvement for next year is already being discussed.

Raffi continues to be a pillar of learning and knowledge to us. He has made sure that our group kept going, and continues to take groups from local schools through the centre. He and Bill have also addressed several Christian groups.

Bill Arnold

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

This year has seen the arrival of membership cards for all financial members of the ACT Jewish Community. Some 120 cards were posted to members, with a request to let us know if our data on which the cards were based had been incorrect. As some of the data had not been tested, adjustments were needed. If payments have been made since the final cards were posted out, please let Miri know so that this can be remedied. It is intended that these cards will become a means of identifying financial members and the introduction of differential pricing in some areas.

SECURITY

There are two aspects to the security for the Community Centre: the electronic security system, and the security roster.

The electronic system is beginning to become dated but still provides effective alarm on entry. With the change from Christine to Miri, some retraining/investigation was needed to ascertain certain features, but now Miri is able to work safely in the building. The original safety mechanisms are all working as intended. One component of the system is with Domestic Security and will be given an interim overhaul, but the age of the computers means that it will not be long before a complete overhaul is needed for the electronic security system. Before undertaking such an upgrade to newer components (that hopefully have a long working life), quotes will need to be obtained, including a review of ongoing maintenance of the security system (ie quicker response times by the contractor would be a step in the right direction). It is estimated that the cost of an upgrade could be in the order of \$ 5 - 8,000. The quotes will be reviewed by the Board before selection.

The security roster is also problematic. We cannot get enough volunteers, but those that are in the roster are doing a sterling job. The current arrangement is that we need someone to open the door for each and every person to get into the building. A rethink of what we consider to be appropriate security guard arrangements is required. In truth, the only persons that the security guard stops are bonafide visitors to the building (no report of any person seeking entry that was refused entry) so there is little justification for requiring someone on the door at all times when there is an event on. Conversely, in the event of a serious attack on the building, it is unlikely that a guard would halt or hinder such attack. I propose to the AGM that for the majority of 'normal' events in the centre that the door is left closed but unlocked for everyone to let themselves in. For major events such as the Hagim or Food Fair, that we have security guards arranged to filter visitors to the centre. (It might be appropriate to erect signs near the doorway to show the way to the orthodox and progressive services so that visitors don't become lost in the centre.)

Phil Creagh

AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It was a momentous year for the Australian Jewish Historical Society ACT, with founding President Earle Hoffman OAM stepping down in March 2008 after 24 unbroken years at the helm. It is a marvellous record, unlikely ever to be broken. Earle was honoured with a certificate of achievement by the Sydney-based Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS) on 21 October 2007 during its annual conference at University House at the ANU, in recognition of his unbroken years as president and his work exploring the history of Jews in this area.

At the AJHS ACT annual general meeting on 27 March 2008 Earle Hoffman was succeeded as president by former vice-president Sylvia Deutsch. Other positions: Ben Selinger (vice-president), Vernon Kronenberg (treasurer), Greg Marks (secretary), Margaret Beadman, Victor Isaacs and Adele Rosalky (committee). Ruth Landau continues to serve as auditor. The guest speaker at the AGM was former Dunera boy Michael Brent of Canberra, on "The Dunera experience". Earlier, on 28 February 2008, Dr. Rodney Gouttman (B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission, Melbourne) spoke to the Society on "Hush! Don't mention anti-Semitism". The next AJHS ACT function will be a talk by Dr. Ann Moyal AM on the life and work of her late husband Professor Joe Moyal on Thursday 20 November 2008.

On 12 June 2008 the curator of oral history at the NSW State Library Rosemary Block launched the publication edited by Adele Rosalky, *The Jewish Community of Canberra: Recollections in Oral History* (book and CD, ACT Jewish Community publication, 2008). The taped recollections of nine early members of the community (Bev Chalker, Sue Doobov OAM and Dr. Mervyn Doobov OAM, Bernard Freedman OAM, Earle Hoffman OAM; Nina Horton, Dr. Ron Mendelsohn OBE, Dr. Harry Rosenberg and Sir David Smith KCVO, AO) was part-funded by an ACT Government Seniors Grant. This is a unique achievement, and all credit is due to Adele for her hard work on this project.

Vice-president Ben Selinger has commenced publication in Hamerkaz of continuing retrospectives from early editions of Hamerkaz and its newsletter precursor. His initiative is one of several projects agreed on by the new AJHS ACT committee. As

part of a larger project to digitise the community's records, Victor Isaacs with his wife Dr. Agnes Boskovits has commenced digitising early editions of Hamerkaz and making additional copies of editions already held in digital format. Other projects in the pipeline including recording the Centre's artworks, updating the photographic records and additional oral history recording. Earle's practice of four meetings per year will continue, as hopefully will the Canberra Day excursions.

Sylvia Dautch

NCJWA

- Janet Frommer and Anita Shroot accompanied NCJWA National President Rysia Rozen OAM and past National President Dr. Geulah Solomon OAM on a visit to Parliament House. They met with then Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer, shadow Foreign Affairs spokesman Robert McClelland and Israeli ambassador Yuval Rotem.
- Janet Frommer, Ruth Landau and Pamela Rothman attended the National Council of Women, ACT lunch meeting representing NCJWA, Canberra Section.
- Adele Rosalky hosted a Show and Tell in her home. Items of special significance to those present were shown to the gathering.
- Movie night at the Centre, 'Go for Zucker' with supper.
- Theatre party and supper with Miriam Margolyes who performed 'Dickens' Women' at the Canberra Playhouse.
- Israel Day Celebration dinner at A Bite to Eat, Chifley.
- Prizes for the Cheder/Olive Tree Sunday School end of year and Chanukah party.

- Council Shabbat with the Progressive community followed by combined Kiddush.
- Memberships function at Frommer home with Yonotan Weinberg as guest speaker.
- NJCWA members provided cakes and were on duty on the cake stall at the community's biennial Food Fair.
- Janet Frommer represented NJCWA Canberra at Harmony Day Australian Women's Coalition at Regatta Point afternoon tea.
- National Council of Women Presidents' lunch attended by Sylvia Deutsch and Pamela Rothman.
- Visit to Canberra of Professor Haya Itzhaky, NCJWA scholar in residence.
- Movie night at the Centre with supper, 'Something Sweet'.
- At the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 27 July 2008 at Sarit Cohen's home, Janet Frommer stepped down serving as president after a busy two years. Tom Frommer provided an interesting talk on his collection, including kris handles and snuff bottles. A steering committee was formed and the following members were appointed:
Sylvia Deutsch; Sarit Cohen; Barbara Butow; Karen Tatz and Janet Frommer
- Avi Solomon again served as quizmaster at the annual quiz night, the big fundraiser for NCJWA Canberra.

Janet Frommer

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

The Advisory Committee on Design and Maintenance was ratified by the Board in March 2008 to advise on a coordinated style concept for the whole building, as well as maintenance of the heritage aspects of the building. The Committee had initially included: Adele Rosalky (Chairperson), Sylvia Deutsch, Pam Fein and Sarit Cohen. Pam and Sylvia later withdrew for personal reasons. I would like to thank them both for their valuable contributions in the early stages of the formation of the Committee and planning stage of the recently completed refurbishment. My sincere thanks to Sarit Cohen for bringing her skills and ongoing support to the Committee. Leonie Webb will be joining the Committee in 2009, bringing practical common sense and good judgement. I would also like to thank Anita Shroot for her ongoing encouragement and support for the Advisory Committee at Board level.

The building, which opened in 1971, had received little refurbishment since its erection, and no provision had been made to accommodate this in the past with a maintenance budget or sinking fund. It became clear at the General Community meeting held on 25 June 2008 that most community members were in favour of spending community resources to refurbish the building and to improve the amenity for both those who use it on a regular basis, and visitors to the building.

The Advisory Committee presented options and quotes to the Board over the next few months, and each of these was examined and put under scrutiny. The initial project undertaken was to improve the orthodox synagogue and classroom wing of the building. This involved the recommendation (a) to replace the old joinery, which had been modified with the installation of the large folding doors, (b) to replace heaters, and (c) to paint the whole area, including the passageway.

Work commenced on 25 August 2008 and took four weeks to complete. Very little disruption occurred to religious services, meetings and gatherings during that period.

To cover the cost of the joinery, a call for donations was made to Community members. The cost of the joinery was completely covered by the generous response, indicating the enthusiasm of members to see this project to its completion. My thanks to those who donated.

The results of the refurbishment speak for themselves, and I would like to thank everyone who assisted me. These include David Rosalky, Richard & Leonie Webb, Avi Solomon, Janet & Tom Frommer, Marcel Kievit, Sarit Cohen & Tamara Shadbolt, Miri Bahren and Lionel, our Community's handyman.

The refurbishment has been successful not only in improving the appearance of the orthodox synagogue, classrooms and hallway, but also in engaging with Community members who have expressed their appreciation of the work to date, and offered generous financial support.

Community members have also expressed their support for future improvements and I am hopeful that all the members of the incoming Board will continue to embrace change and provide the necessary support and resources for the Advisory Committee to continue with the next stage of improvements to refurbish and maintain the Centre.

I wish to highlight for the AGM and to seek approval for the Advisory Committee to look at options for a further stage which will involve input from all members of the Community. The Committee's focus for the next stage includes improvements to the upstairs hall, commencing with an upgrade of the heaters and installation of ceiling fans. These improvements would benefit all members of our Community and ensure that we can feel proud of our Centre and utilize it well. **Adele**

Rosalky

HOBART HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
ANNUAL REPORT
ECAJ 2008

The Hobart Hebrew Congregation has completed another successful year. Because we are small in number, we feel that we are essentially getting along with little assistance from national secular organisations. We are a congregation as well as the Tasmanian organisation representing Tasmania on the ECAJ. We are also the only operating Tasmanian constituted Jewish organisation. As such the board of management and I, as President, carry on the dual functions of running a congregation and the work of an umbrella body representing Jews in the State.

Being a congregation and not an actual "umbrella" organisation is becoming problematic with regards to representation at the nation level when dealing with the ECAJ. The ECAJ appears to be moving increasingly to the use of separate organisations for dealing with particular issues, with membership that excludes congregations even if they are acting as umbrella organisations. This effectively means that Tasmania is being excluded. The organisation that deals with education has long existed and with limited Jewish Education run in Tasmania, due to our small numbers, not being a member does not matter to us, but now there is a security organisation of which we cannot be a member. An aged and community services organisation is also being formed, and again there is some question over whether Tasmania can be a member. While those involved in the actual formation of the organisation would like Tasmanian membership, the draft constitution distributed by the ECAJ would appear to exclude membership. Security and health/welfare are areas of interest to us.

The ECAJ should be ensuring that Jews in regional Australia are provided with the support they need, especially as these communities tend to be small and are without access to a lot of the infrastructure found in the big cities. By regional Australia I included not only Tasmania, but all Australia outside of the mainland

greater capital city areas and the highly populated south east corner of Queensland, excluding Darwin. The focus of the ECAJ appears to be increasingly on the big city areas, thereby neglecting regional Australia. I believe this direction the ECAJ is taking is poor policy for two reasons. Firstly, there are significant numbers of Jews in regional Australia and by neglecting regional Australia the ECAJ is neglecting those Jews. More importantly for the Jews in the capital cities, regional Australia has 25% of the Australian population and a higher percentage of the national politicians. Many extreme ideas and organisations are born and incubated in regional Australia. By neglecting regional Australia the never ending battle for Jews to secure a place in Australian society could be lost for those in the big cities.

Daniel Albert

President,

Hobart Hebrew Congregation Inc

5 October 2008.



JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL
OF VICTORIA INC.

מועצת הקהילה היהודית בויקטוריה
"ירשער קהילה-ראט פון וויקטאריע"

ARN A00394459M
306 HAWTHORN ROAD
CAULFIELD SOUTH
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EMAIL community@jccv.org.au
WEB www.jccv.org.au

AFFILIATE ORGANISATIONS OF THE
JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF
VICTORIA INC.

ACCESS INC
ASSOCIATION OF JEWS FROM CIS
"SHALOM"
ASSOCIATION OF KATZELERS, FARBAND PARTISANS
AUSTRALIAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY VIC
AUSTRALIAN JEWISH PSYCHOLOGISTS INC
AUSTRALASIAN UNION OF JEWISH STUDENTS
(MELBOURNE BRANCH)
AUSTRALIAN JEWISH DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY INC
BALLARAT HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
BIALIK COLLEGE
BLAKE STREET HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
B'NAI B'RITH VICTORIA
BRIGHTON HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
CAULFIELD HEBREW CONGREGATION
COUNCIL OF ORTHODOX SYNAGOGUES
OF VICTORIA
EAST MELBOURNE HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
ELWOOD TALMUD TORAH CONGREGATION
EMMY MONASH HOME FOR THE AGED
HILLEL FOUNDATION OF VICTORIA INC
JEWISH CARE (VICTORIA) INC
JEWISH CULTURAL CENTRE AND NATIONAL
LIBRARY "KADIMAH"
JEWISH HOLOCAUST CENTRE
JEWISH LABOR "BUND"
JEWISH MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA
KEHILAT NITZAN CONSERVATIVE (MASORTI)
KEW HEBREW CONGREGATION
KING DAVID SCHOOL
KOSHER MEALS ON WHEELS ASSOCIATION OF
VICTORIA INC
LEIBLER YAVNEH COLLEGE
MACCABI VICTORIA
MAGEN DAVID ADOM
MIRACHI ORGANISATION
MOORABBIN HEBREW CONGREGATION
MOUNT SCOPUS MEMORIAL COLLEGE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN
(VICTORIA) INC
NORTH EASTERN JEWISH WAR MEMORIAL
CENTRE INC
ST KILDA HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
THE SEPHARDI ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC
SHOLEM ALEICHEM COLLEGE
SOUTH CAULFIELD HEBREW CONGREGATION INC
STATE ZIONIST COUNCIL OF VICTORIA
THEODORE HERTZL SOCIAL CLUB INC
UNITED JEWISH EDUCATION BOARD
VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH
EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN (VAJEX)
VICTORIAN UNION OF PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM
WINGS OF CARE (KANFEI CHESED) INC
WIZO (WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ZIONIST
ORGANISATION)
WORLD FEDERATION OF POLISH JEWS
(AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL)
ZIONIST YOUTH COUNCIL

2008 REPORT OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.

The Jewish Community Council of Victoria ("JCCV") is the roof body of the Victorian Jewish community. It represents the Victorian Jewish community on issues that are of importance and interest to the community as a whole. In that way, a single coordinated response is brought to matters such as security, advocacy, inter-faith dialogue and public celebrations and commemorations.

At the outset of my presidency in 2006, I stated that the **Key Objectives** for the JCCV for 2006, 2007 and 2008 were to:

- (a) Improve the JCCV's financial standing;
- (b) Further professionalise the office of the organisation by appointing an Executive Director;
- (c) Create a Board of Governors;
- (d) Investigate and lay the foundations for the implementation of a community appeal;
- (e) Develop and operate a leadership program for communal lay-leaders; and
- (f) Encourage and foster volunteerism in the community.

I am proud to be able to state as I approach my retirement from the JCCV presidency at our triennial conference in 24 November 2008, which we have now achieved each of these objectives.

The JCCV's finances have continued to improve and it is now able to work from a secure financial base. We have remained debt-free and have built a corpus of funds to allow us to achieve our many objectives. We have also continued to keep creditors at less than 30 days and the debtors is at a manageable level, although there remains some room for improvement. We have also made significant inroads to obtaining deductible gift recipient status for the JCCV. I am hopeful that approval will be received by the end of the year.

2008 has been a turning point for the JCCV as it saw the appointment of Geoffrey Zygier as its Executive Director. Geoffrey's appointment has seen the JCCV engage in many new initiatives and projects which previously the JCCV did not have the resources to attempt.

Of most significance is the establishment of the Board of Governors. The Board consists of 12 people who have each made a commitment of \$15,000 per annum for 4 years guaranteeing an annual income boost of \$180,000.

The Board is chaired by Jack Gringlas and comprises (in addition to Jack Gringlas) Barry Carp, Debbie Dadon, David Goldberger, Alan Finkel, Zac Fried, George Kline, Justin Liberman, Ricci Swart, Frank Tisher, Lorriane Topol and Simon de Winter.

As already stated we have appointed Geoffrey Zygier as the JCCV's Executive Director. We have also appointed Julie Batty to assist Geoffrey and Hilary McMahon, the JCCV Business Manager, with their work. We anticipate that further staff appointments will be required as the JCCV's workload continues to increase.

Significant work has now been completed on the establishment of the Victorian Jewish Community Appeal. A steering committee has developed a structure for the

Community Appeal and it is in the process of consulting with community organisations who it is hoped will participate in the appeal as well as the major donors.

A presentation of the structure was presented to the community in September to a warm reception. Further work is still required to be done, but there is general acceptance of the need for the Victorian Jewish Community to move to a centralised fundraising structure for non-Israel related organisations. The current aim is to launch the inaugural appeal in the first half of 2010.

The steering committee comprises Anton Block, Braham Goldberg, Justin Kabani, Lindsey Joffe, Grahame Leonard, Bruce Rosengarten, Ian Samuel and Geoffrey Zygier.

On the issue of a leadership program, the JCCV has successfully negotiated a joint project with the Centre for Jewish Civilisation at Monash University to develop and operate the program. It is anticipated that this course will be rolled out in 2009.

Finally, in respect of the objective of encouraging volunteerism, the JCCV's Community Recognition Awards which was initiated in 2006 has become a regular feature of the community calendar.

In addition to working on our key objectives, the JCCV has been busy with its regular activities to continue to meet its mission statement.

I highlight some of our activities that the JCCV has and is currently engaged in.

1. Representation

A key function of the JCCV is to represent the views of the Victorian Jewish community to Government and to special interest groups. The Council is the only body authorised to speak on behalf of the entire Jewish community in

Victoria and is recognised by Governments and other states authorities as such.

Examples of this work over the last 12 months included:

- Hosting, together with the State Zionist Council, politicians' lunches, in which members of both sides of politics are invited to a lunch with communal leaders, to hear directly the concerns of the Jewish community in respect of issues arising both in Victoria and in Israel.
- We have published media releases regarding matters such as establishment of a Hate Crimes Unit by Victoria Police; attacks on Jews; the use of Holocaust rhetoric in public discourse; Refugee Week; the apology to Indigenous Australians; resolution of the Vorchheimer matter; and Anti-Poverty Week, to name but a few.
- We have participated on the executive of the Ethnic Community Council of Victoria via Simon Tisher who is a member of the both the JCCV Executive (in the area of multicultural & interfaith liaison) and the ECCV executive;
- Geoffrey Zygier represents the JCCV on both the Premier's and Victoria Police's Multi-faith Councils;
- Consulting with the Victorian Law Reform Commission on their review of the State's Abortion Laws;
- Submitting a paper to the Victorian Multicultural Commission on the proposed amendments to the Victorian Multicultural Legislation;
- Participating in consultations on the Citizenship Test;

- Participating in consultations on SBS's future directions;
- co-hosting the second Victoria Police Jewish community dinner

2. Multi-cultural and interfaith liaison

The JCCV promotes racial and religious tolerance by building bridges with Christian, Islamic and other communities and by actively participating as a member of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) and the Latrobe University Centre for Dialogue. Our Executive member Simon Tisher, has continued to participate as an active member of the Executive of the ECCV

In addition, the JCCV has actively pursued relationships with the Islamic, Catholic and Anglican communities. The JCCV maintains open communication with members of the Islamic Council of Victoria ("ICV") executive and is an active participant in the annual Abrahamic Conference.

Since my last report the JCCV once again hosted a joint communal dinner with the Catholic community to which members of both the Jewish and Catholic community were invited, a dinner between Executive members of the JCCV and the ICV was also hosted by the JCCV and members of the JCCV executive attended Iftar dinners hosted by Victoria Police, the Governor and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

A joint communal dinner with the Anglican community is also being arranged and should be taking place in November 2008.

3. Anti-Defamation

In partnership with the Anti-Defamation Commission, the JCCV monitors anti-Semitic incidents. Where appropriate, measured responses are undertaken either by direct liaison or contact with relevant authorities and the media. Details of some of those are given above.

4. Security

2008 has been another very busy year for security in our community. There has been a near record of incidents of vilification, vandalism, abuse, graffiti and assault being approximately 190 incidents for Melbourne for the period of September 2007 to September 2008.

While we still have a long way to go to improve our physical security, the community and its organisations are largely taking the threat seriously. Our political leaders appear to share this view as is evidenced by the Government passing Tax deductibility for donations to the Council for Jewish Community Security.

There has been only a minor increase in the budget of the CSG this year, although due to a shortfall in funds last year some items were again held over to this year. The CSG advisory board has performed a sterling job in raising the funds necessary to enable the CSG to continue to perform its task.

While the CSG used 2006 as a year of consolidation resulting in a small decrease in overall volunteer numbers, and compounded by a fall in recruit numbers in 2007 for the first time in many years, recruitment was a priority for 2008 in order to increase protective coverage at the earliest opportunity. This along with the expansion of our parent volunteers has been very successful.

The CSG protected 20 separate shule congregations during their services over Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The CSG liaises with the police to provide protection for the Chagim and major functions. Indeed, the CSG enjoys an extremely close relationship with Victoria Police, from station level through District level to Command level and works very closely with various

specialized units involved in Counter-Terrorism. Unfortunately, the CSG response team has been activated on several occasions during 2008.

The CSG will have protected approximately 70 functions this year covering over 30,000 people at these events. Our volunteers have continued to improve on their professionalism in planning to secure major community events.

The CSG has to date provided training to nearly 2000 parents of children at Jewish Day Schools and congregants of synagogues. This is in addition to training staff at our facilities and organizations as well as training of paid security guards.

Gavin Queit, David Michelson, Andrew Sward, Hillan Klein, and Shelley Freedman have excelled themselves this year. The Victorian Jewish community is lucky to have the benefit of their services.

5. Holocaust Remembrance

The Council educates the Jewish and wider community about the Holocaust.

In April this year, the JCCV arranged and staged the community's annual commemoration ceremony at the Robert Blackwood Hall, attended by some 1300 people. The JCCV again won praise for the professionalism and quality of the event.

The JCCV also administered and contributed to the annual Partisan's Commemoration, held at the Holocaust Memorial at the Old Melbourne Cemetery in Carlton. Some 300 people attended this ceremony this year.

Further, although not strictly, connected with Holocaust Remembrance, the JCCV facilitated the restoration and rededication of the gates to the entrance to the Jewish section of the Melbourne General Cemetery. Within those

gates in addition to the graves of many members of our community, stands the Holocaust Memorial and the Memorial to the Jewish Soldiers who fought for Australia and lost their lives.

6. Communal Appeals

The JCCV has continued to supervise and regulate the official calendar for authorised appeals conducted within the Victorian Jewish Community so as to minimise the overlap of fundraising activities between organisations. The participants in the appeal calendar are:

Anti-Defamation Commission, Community Security Group (which joined for the first time) Emmy Monash Home for the Aged, Jewish Care, JNF, JCCV, UIA, MDA, Makor Library, Mount Scopus College, UJEB and Maccabi Victoria.

There has been a lot more consultation and co-operation between the participants of the appeal calendar. This has largely resulted from the regular meetings facilitated by the JCCV which are held between representatives of organisations participating in the appeal calendar. However, there is still much work to be done as breaches of the appeal calendar do continue to occur from time to time.

Once the Victorian Jewish Community Appeal is up and running, it is anticipated that the appeal calendar will continue to operate in respect of the Community Appeal and the non-participating organisations in the Community Appeal.

7. Social justice issues

In 2008 the social justice committee refined its objectives as follows:

1. To lead and advise the JCCV Executive regarding those social justice issues which are of major concern to the Jewish and/or wider communities.

2. To liaise and otherwise work with Jewish and general community organisations on the JCCV's behalf to implement its social justice policies.
3. To raise community consciousness about contemporary social justice issues and facilitates engagement in addressing them.
4. To advocate on behalf of disadvantaged groups both within the Jewish and/or wider communities either independently or in cooperation with other Jewish or general community organisations.

In fulfilling these objectives, the current focuses of the social justice committee include: indigenous matters, domestic violence, mental health, physical health including drug abuse, child abuse, the environment, refugees, gender equality, prostitution, prisoners, poverty, immigration, employment and inequality of access to education.

The main task of the social justice committee is to act as a management and reference group that meets 3-4 times per annum to approve and oversee projects. To that end, the membership of the committee has been widened to increase its expertise.

8. Honouring and recognising volunteerism

On 12 November 2007 the JCCV held the second Community Awards Night. Affiliates of the JCCV were invited to nominate a person within their organisation to receive an acknowledgement certificate. The awards were presented by the Premier of Victoria, John Brumby and the Minister Assisting the Premier on Multiculturalism, James Merlino.

A showcase of talent was presented to a receptive audience. Twenty-five individuals were honoured. Further, the General Sir John Monash Award for Outstanding Service to the Jewish Community was presented to Anne Zablud AOM.

This event will be held again this year on 10 November 2008 when the awards will be presented by Lord Mayor of Melbourne, the Right Honourable John So.

9. Developing communal leadership

The JCCV has been seeking to develop a community leadership program and in 2007 received some initial funding to support this initiative.

As a first step in the development of the 'pilot' leadership program the JCCV executive participated in two workshops facilitated by the Australian Institute of Management that identified the skills, competencies and behaviours to be covered in the program.

Subsequent to the development of the competency framework we engaged in discussions with two potential service providers, the Australian Institute of Management ("AIM") and Monash University ("Monash") regarding their ability to assist in developing, implementing and facilitating a community leadership program that meets our requirements.

The JCCV has received proposals from both service providers that outline their approach, costings and features of the potential leadership program.

Both AIM and Monash have structured their proposed leadership programs to address the JCCV's broad requirements. Each service provider has also developed a program that is capable of provision across increasing levels of sophistication.

Whilst it is likely that the JCCV will only support (and co-fund) an entry level program students and/or their organisations will be able to choose to expand on this program and continue to further levels if required.

The JCCV executive has reviewed the proposals and Monash University has been identified as the preferred service provider, a high level implementation plan has been developed to commence its development, the key steps of which are:

- Finalise commercial agreement and costings with Monash
- Determine overall program budget and potential funding / co-funding models to discuss with affiliate organisations
- Commence discussions with JCCV affiliates re potential course structure, preferred timings, funding models, potential target market, desired learning outcomes and possible marketing approach
- Commence working with Monash and affiliate / community representatives to develop agreed implementation timetable, course content and marketing plan for the entry program
- Develop marketing materials and media release
- Establish initial target list and commence marketing; and
- Commence first stage roll-out of pilot program

At this stage we envisage the program commencing in the first quarter of 2009.

10. Communal Events

The JCCV hosts a number of communal events each year. These are described in the table below:

| Event | Description |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Chanukah in the City Celebration | This event is staged over the Chanukah period each year. It takes place in Melbourne's new iconic gathering place, Federation Square in the Central Business District. The gala event took place on the 8 th night of Chanukah |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| | <p>being 11 December 2007. Entertainment was provided by Dorothy the Dinosaur, Access Inc Drumming Circle, Troy Sussman and the Chanukah all stars and Yidcore. The Chunukiah was lit by Melbourne Lord Mayor John So together with a special need child and the JCCV President.</p> <p>This event forms part of the City of Melbourne annual calendar of events, and has the strong backing of the City of Melbourne. Last year in excess of 4,000 people attended the event on Bonanza Night. This year the gala night will take place on 22 December 2008.</p> |
| Community Awards Night | Details are given in section 9 above. |
| Holocaust Commemoration | Details are given in section 5 above. |
| Plenum Meetings | <p>Each month, the JCCV Plenum meets. In attendance at this meeting are the leaders of the various organisations that comprise the Victorian Jewish Community. The purpose of the meeting is for policy development and the discussion of issues confronting the community.</p> <p>Often a key note speaker is invited to address the community.</p> <p>This year the speakers were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Dreyfus MP, Member for Isaacs • Robert Goot AM SC, President, ECAJ • Reverend Dr Paul Thonson, Jewish Muslim Christian |

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| | <p>Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr Steven Tang, Mayor, City of Glen Eira • Tony Lupton MP, Member for Prahran • Professor Andrew Markus |
| Yom Ha'atzmaut Cocktail Party | <p>This year's cocktail reception was co-hosted with the State Zionist Council of Victoria. It was held at the Sofitel Hotel in the presence of the Israeli Ambassador, the Premier and the Opposition Leader.</p> |

This year also saw the establishment of the Council for Jewish Community Security. Although this is an ECAJ-auspiced Council, pursuant to its constitution, each State roof body is required to operate the Council for that State. As such much work has been done by the JCCV to establish the Council in Victoria and to develop a Scheme of Operation for the Council in Victoria. I am pleased to say that the Council is now up and running in Victoria.

This year, one new organisation joined the JCCV, being The Jewish Taskforce against Family Violence.

The JCCV now counts as its members close to sixty separate organisations within the Victorian Jewish community, including virtually all organisations of a significant size. It is pleasing to see continued interest in representation of the community as a whole.

At the time of writing this report, the members of the Council's Executive are:

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Anton Block | President |
| Dvir Abramovich | Vice President |
| Laurence Slomoi | Treasurer (co-opted) |
| Daniel Aghion | Public Relations |

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Peter Eben | Leadership (co-opted) |
| Mervyn Cass | Community Liaison |
| Alon Cassuto | Youth |
| John Searle | Anti- Defamation |
| Braham Goldberg | Security |
| Danny Lamm | Ex Officio |
| Lindsey Joffe | Special Projects |
| Rimma Sverdlin | Social Justice |
| Simon Tisher | Interfaith Liaison |

The office staff are:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Geoffrey Zygier – | Executive Director |
| Hilary McMahon – | Business Manager |
| Julie Batty – | Administration Assistant. |

I thank each of the staff for their commitment to the JCCV and the Victorian Jewish Community.

The JCCV has come along way in the last three years. I step down as president with much pride in what has been achieved in the full knowledge that our community is better served today than it was three years ago. This outcome could not have been achieved without the hard work of each member of the JCCV Executive and Office staff. I thank you all for your efforts.

I look forward to witnessing even greater achievements from the JCCV in the coming years,

Anton Block

President



NOVEMBER 2008

For the period December 2007 – November 2008

Executive: The August 2008 elections resulted in the following:

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| President | Keith Shilkin (second of 2 year term) |
| Vice President | Phil Samuel |
| Vice President | Tony Tate |
| Hon Secretary | Joan Hillman |
| Hon Treasurer | Farrell Mosbach |
| Public Relations | Steve Lieblich |
| Youth Interests | Daniel Kitay |
| Community Security | Robin Cohen |

Council: This consists of the Executive and delegates of the 25 constituent organizations of JCCWA. Attendances of delegates at Council meetings and at several other functions arranged by Executive were less than optimal, and this was remarked on by a former JCCWA President at the August AGM.

Loss of Hon. Secretary: During the year we were all saddened at the loss of Judy Shorrock, our long-term Honorary Secretary. She left a huge gap in JCCWA activities that was only made up in a makeshift way, right up to the time of the JCCWA AGM.

New Jewish Cemetery Land: The WA Government has, after a long and tortuous process, now allotted land at a new cemetery site (in Guildford just to the north of the main Jewish residential zone). This has been a major achievement for

JCCWA and our community, and should provide sufficient space for up to 100 or so years.

WA Parliamentary Delegations to Israel: Steve Lieblich, our JCCWA public relations director, arranged a WA Parliamentary Study Tour to Israel that took place in December, 2007. It comprised Hon Nick Griffiths, President of the Legislative Council, Hon George Cash, Deputy President of the Legislative Council and Chairman of Committees, Hon Ray Halligan, Member for North Metropolitan, and Hon Bob Kucera, Member for Yokine, the last two being the Co-convenors of the State Parliamentary Friends of Israel, promoted and formed with the help of the JCCWA. Steve also helped AIJAC arrange a more recent Israel visit by WA Senator Hon David Johnson and Mr Michael Keenan (Member for Stirling) of the Federal Parliament.

JCCWA Major Events:

- ANZAC Day Dawn Service – This was again under JCCWA aegis with some help from WAJEX/General Sir John Monash RSL Sub-branch (newly formed), and was successful, attended as previously by the Governor, many invited dignitaries and the usual huge crowd.
- Yom Hashoah – After juggling with the date due to the State Zionist Council taking our first reservation, this went reasonably well with around 300 in attendance, including dignitaries.

Visit of Mr Eli Yerushalmi, Deputy Chief of Mission Embassy of Israel –

February 2008: This was a 5 day visit organized by JCCWA. Mr Yerushalmi met with JCCWA Executive, Council and affiliate Presidents, visited and spoke at Carmel School, met our youth leaders, addressed a communal public meeting, was interviewed on radio, met with the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, met with politicians at lunch in Parliament House, and Church leaders etc. He presented his report to the Ambassador subsequent to the visit which was considered a considerable success.

Community Security: Robin Cohen and his CSG group have again done a wonderful job. There is a good liaison with WA Police, the State Security Investigation Group and other agencies. This all helped in the aftermath of an attack on young Jewish people in Yokine which has been previously well canvassed. The system worked just as it is supposed to which is a further credit to Robin and his team. JCCWA also liaised in arrangements for funding of payments to Jewish Schools as part of a separate Commonwealth security funding program.

Regarding the arrangements for Community Security tax deductibility in WA, both the NSW and Victorian models have been provided to our Honorary Solicitor (a former, recent member of JCCWA Executive), Steven Pynt, who is preparing a report for Executive to enable us to effect the best system for WA.

National Jewish Demographic Survey: WA, through JCCWA, is part of this survey after some organizational issues were overcome somewhat late in the piece. The Maurice Zeffert Home is assisting with infrastructure support.

Interfaith Activities: We continue to have good relationships with Bridges for Peace, with the Council for Christians and Jews and The Abrahamic Alliance. These are small groups in WA and attendances are low. The nature of the interaction is generally low level.

Talks and Visitors: JCCWA helped sponsor a number of visits, media contacts, small group briefings, community talks, etc.

- Eli Yerushalmi (2/08) – see above.
- Natan Sharansky (3/08) – parliamentary briefing lunch.
- Amos Asa-el (3/08) – media, meeting with youth, community talk.
- Ehud Yaari (5/08) – media, parliament, community talk.
- David Olesker (9/08) – advocacy training seminar, community talk.

JCCWA Representations, talks etc:

Phil Samuell – on Jewish Care Federation Working Party.

Keith Shilkin – to Islamic Council of WA Harmony Day lunch – talks on: -

- Jewish-Islamic relations in WA.
- Carmel School – ANZAC Day address
- Northbridge History Study Day in May 2008 on “Jewish Northbridge”.



NSW JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES REPORT

Introduction

The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies is the roof body of the NSW Jewish community and its spokesperson, representing the community both internally and to government and media. We are regularly told, when we approach government, the media or other major organisations, that no other ethnic or religious community in New South Wales is as well organised.

Our mission, in a sentence, is to strengthen and preserve the political and physical security of the New South Wales Jewish community. And we endeavour as an organisation to be continuously learning and improving in delivering significant strategic value to the New South Wales Jewish community.

A culture of intelligent empowerment

It is by listening and empowering that ideas become goals and goals are turned into realities. We have taken the view and continue to take the view that intra-communal conflict is by and large a needless distraction from the evolution of a successful communal roof body. Here in New South Wales, and this is the result of sound The Board has always played a leading role in achieving and maintaining cooperation within the community, in the belief that intra-communal conflict is for the most part a misdirection of energy and a distraction from more important challenges.

We have a culture of service and innovation at the Board. We are very proud of it, and our achievements flow from that fundamental and innovative culture. No one

deserves more credit for implementing each of the challenges that we set than our outstanding CEO, Vic Alhadeff, most ably supported by a great team.

Achievements in the year ended 30 June 2008

Given the space limitations in the ECAJ Annual Report this document focuses on a few of our successes.

Israel at 60

Under the joint aegis of the Board and the State Zionist Council, this year's public Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration was an outstanding success. On 15 May 2008, at a function at State Parliament House, then Premier, Morris Iemma, gave a speech to more than 700 politicians, journalists, ethnic, faith and community representatives, in the presence of Ambassador Rotem, that included a strong denunciation of antisemitism and commendation of the Israeli Government's commitment to taking measured risks to achieve peace.

We can no longer assume, however, that Israel's existence as a Jewish state is accepted as non-negotiable. As became increasingly evident during the course of 2008, those arguing for a one-state solution are becoming more organised, more articulate and better financed. That argument is thinly veiled code for the end of Israel as a Jewish state. Most recently, some Australian church leaders, perhaps unwittingly, issued a statement that included subtle but clear anti-Israel propaganda. We met them as part of an ECAJ delegation and had to explain to them Israel's right to be a Jewish state and what is meant by that. As we all know, comparisons of Israel to Nazi Germany and Apartheid South Africa have also travelled from the fringes of political discourse into common parlance. The language shifts. Sometimes it is Israel and sometimes it is Jews who are portrayed as the enemy of human rights just as Jews were previously portrayed as the enemies of civilised Europe. And, just as the Nazi and Apartheid regimes had to be destroyed as the human rights evils of the 20th century, so Israel has to be destroyed as the human rights evil of the 21st century.

In addition to those threats, we face a series of major international crises - climate change, a nuclear Iran, fraying social cohesion and economic meltdown. This political overlay will take to new lows the level of anti-Jewish prejudice, antisemitism and media ignorance/bias that already scars the political landscape, making even more vital the work of the ECAJ and the Boards of Deputies and Jewish Community Councils.

Public Affairs

We spend a great deal of time cultivating relationships with media identities, from the managing director of the ABC and the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald to the newest journalist on the Wentworth Courier.

Such relationships provide a framework within which we are better able to convey concerns at problematic editorial content, and to help achieve balance in the various news outlets. The relationship building includes arranging background briefings for editors, producers and journalists. In addition, the Board has conducted over 150 radio and television interviews to present the Jewish/Israeli perspective on a host of issues.

The Sydney Morning Herald's coverage of Israel has shown significant improvement and greater balance. One example this past year was a superb editorial on the occasion of Israel's independence; the headline was "Israel at 60: A stunning success". Another was a recent editorial defending Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state. Fairfax has also terminated Ed O'Loughlin as its Middle East correspondent and replaced him with Jason Koutsoukis. Much of O'Loughlin's 5 years of coverage was severely lacking in balance.

The following is one example of how we were able over time to change a relationship between the Jewish community and an influential radio identity from an adversarial one to one of closer understanding.

Two years ago, Waverley and Woollahra Councils agreed to program traffic lights in Bondi to change more quickly on Saturdays so that Orthodox Jews would not need to press the button. Our CEO, Vic Alhadeff, was approached by a prominent radio journalist on Radio 2UE to explain the issue on air. He did so, after which the

journalist opened the lines to the public. Two hours of anti-Jewish vitriol ensued, with the journalist actively encouraging the comments.

Forty-eight hours later, Vic Alhadeff requested a meeting with the journalist, and explained the hurt and damage caused by the anti-Jewish comments. During the conversation he informed the journalist about Youth Encounters, the Board's interfaith program which brings together Jewish, Muslim and Christian teenagers, and suggested that he consider interviewing representatives of each faith group. The journalist agreed and a month later did a 15-minute interview with the three students on 2UE.

A year later, the journalist interviewed three students from the next cohort of Youth Encounters participants.

A month later, we co-hosted a dinner with the Sydney office of the Peres Peace Centre, promoting work that Israel is doing to assist Palestinians. We invited Muslims, Greens, hard-line left-wingers – and the 2UE journalist. The participants were impressed by the humanitarian work being done on the ground by Israel to aid Palestinians.

Last December, we invited the 2UE journalist to participate in our annual Journalists Mission to Israel, a fact-finding visit in which senior editors and journalists spend an intensive week in Israel. He agreed, he participated, and he has spoken glowingly about Israel on air numerous times since his return. (The other 2007 Journalists Mission participants were the Deputy Foreign Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald; a 2GB presenter, and the Opinion Editor of The Daily Telegraph.)

The 2UE journalist has also conducted the longest interview he has ever done on air – a 35-minute interview with a Holocaust survivor – as a direct result of his participation in the Journalists Mission. He bought his daughter a book on the Holocaust for Christmas. And he said recently that he still believes the traffic lights issue was “bloody stupid – but at least I now understand why you blokes do it!”

Perhaps most importantly, he has been an advocate for Israel and Jewish community in the back calls of Radio 2UE, now Fairfax radio.

The Board of Deputies Luncheon Club also provides an invaluable forum in which political and senior media identities engage with leaders of the Jewish community in a Chatham House Rules environment. It creates opportunities for vital relationship-building, including with junior politicians who are on the way up.

Those who addressed the Luncheon Club during the past 12 months include: Chris Bowen MP, who addressed the Luncheon Club as a newly-elected Member, and was recently promoted to Assistant Federal Treasurer in the Rudd government, NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell, Attorney-General Robert McClelland, Shadow Minister Joe Hockey, Labor MP Mark Dreyfus, Deputy Premier John Watkins, MPs Barbara Perry, Geoff Corrigan and Julie Owens, Janet Albrechtsen and Dennis Shanahan of The Australian, Glenn Wheeler of 2UE, Peter Fitzsimons, Paul Sheehan and Tom Allard of the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC Middle East correspondent David Hardaker, SBS Radio Head Paula Masselos, Tim Blair - at that time the opinion editor of The Daily Telegraph, leading ALP political strategist Bruce Hawker and Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Ephraim Sneh.

In addition, we meet with NSW Government ministers, Shadow Ministers, MPs and ministerial chiefs of staff to deliver background briefings on issues of concern to the Jewish community.

The Advocacy Project

A little over two years ago, we embarked on an innovative advocacy project. We have had successes and we have made mistakes. We are learning from the mistakes and repeating the successes. It is essential that many well-trained members of our community actively advocate on behalf of the community, the Jewish experience in Israel. And the Board must proactively coordinate management of the advocates.

The support of the JCA and in particular its endowment program must be acknowledged.

The contribution of the Zionist movement, as noted above, has been immense. At the very beginning of the project, under its previous name: "Hamabir", one of our former employees Josh Levin came up with a range of innovative ideas.

Frank Luntz, who "Time Magazine" named one of "50 of America's most promising leaders aged 40 and under" and one of the most successful pollsters and United States visited Australia as a guest of the Board. He led two outstanding advocacy workshops for the young professional and university tiers of The Advocacy Project, spoke at a packed out Luncheon Club for Jewish communal leaders, addressed over 40 chiefs of staff and media advisers in the New South Wales Government, met with the Leader of the Opposition in New South Wales, Barry O'Farrell and his staff, provided a private briefing for the Federal leader of the Federal Opposition, Kevin Rudd, met with Bruce Hawker of Hawker Britton and Mark Arbib, secretary of the New South Wales alp and likely to be a New South Wales senator following the next Federal election, provided a private briefing to Lynton Crosby of Crosby Textor and a number of other corporate briefings, including to Frank Lowy.

Luntz is of course is the author of the "Israel Project" report which underpins the Board's advocacy project and numerous similar advocacy projects in North America.

All in all, a very successful initiative, and our CEO is to be commended for securing perhaps the most outstanding communications expert available to any Jewish community in the world.

The schools tier of the project is a particular success story, and Lynda Ben Menashe's commitment, intelligence and passion have attracted equivalent commitment, intelligence and passion from our day schools, Academy BJE and BPJE.

Speaker Service and Regional Outreach

The Board of Deputies conducts an annual speaking tour to Regional NSW, the choice of area being determined by the rise in antisemitic or other racist incidents in the area. Last November we spent five days in Parkes, Forbes, Dubbo and Mudgee, speaking at or with eight schools, six media outlets, three churches, two Rotary clubs and one MP – a total of 900 people directly, plus thousands more reached through newspaper and radio interviews.

The 2008 speaking tour will be conducted to the Shoalhaven region, in light of the recent flurry of antisemitic activity sparked by the Mayor of Shoalhaven's comments

at a public meeting – comments which were subsequently endorsed and defended by fellow-councillors.

Communal Security

The CSG provides security to the Jewish Community by way of regular consultation, advice, training and allocation of manpower to Synagogues, Jewish Day Schools and Institutions. The CSG also works closely with local and federal law enforcement agencies.

The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies has incorporated the Council for Jewish Community Security (NSW) Pty Ltd. It expects to become a JCA Constituent in its own right in the coming month and has become a scheduled deductible gift recipient. It will oversee the raising of funds for communal security needs, including the capital appeal, and will work to ensure that security expenditures are properly and sensibly prioritised for the whole NSW Jewish community. CSG will come under the Council's aegis.

After 5 years at the helm, in March 2008, Kevin Rothschild resigned as CEO and Head of Security for the CSG and NSW Jewish Community. He continues to work for the community as a physical security consultant for the 2008 (Physical Security) Capital Appeal. David Rothman was appointed in March 2008 as the new Head of Security for the Community, after serving as a volunteer for 8 years and working in the CSG team of full time staff for over 3 years in various roles. At the end of May 2008, Kevin Jankelowitz (a long-serving senior volunteer and instructor) was employed to take over David's former role of Security Operations Manager.

This community owes Kevin an enormous debt for his vision, commitment and dedication.

By the time this report is read, the Jewish Security Capital Appeal will be over.

It is the first of its kind, to benefit the entire NSW Jewish community - every synagogue, every school, the Jewish Museum and community centres. It is to fund essential protection measures that will save lives. Bollards and barriers will need to be erected. Glass must be protected from the effects of an explosion. Walls will have to be strengthened. This October the entire Jewish community will come

together to support this appeal. We will be the first Jewish community anywhere in the world that will act to protect itself before an attack. NSW Police have advised that we need to attend to such work with some urgency.

The NSW Government has pledged \$2.5m, and major donors have been remarkably generous despite the trying financial conditions.

The Commonwealth Government has committed funds to support the ongoing operating costs of "at risk" schools, and this is understood to include the Jewish Day Schools. Those funds will help reduce the annual burden on parents, and some portion may be allocated to the physical security upgrades for Jewish Day Schools. The funds will *not* go to the highly vulnerable communal buildings such as the Jewish War Memorial – Sydney Jewish Museum complex or the Synagogues.

The Jewish Emergency Management Plan

The Jewish Emergency Management Plan (JEMP) is a Board initiative led by Yair Miller, with Alan Deutsch and Ivan Chait, and funded by the JCA over the last four years. We have recently signed a vital Memorandum of Understanding with the New South Wales Government through the Department of Community Services. This will ensure that the most vulnerable in our community are serviced by an appropriate and cost sensitive combination of government and Jewish community services.

We are also actively working to ensure that the widest possible range of communal bodies are as prepared as they can be for emergency situations. As part of that, we joined with the JCA in adopting a funded disaster recovery plan.

JEMP (NSW) won the volunteer category in The Safer Communities Awards 2008 awarded by the NSW Government, a magnificent achievement. As a State winner, JEMP advanced to the National level of this award scheme and we remain hopeful that it will receive further recognition.

Cemetery Space

The Board successfully secured additional Jewish community burial space in a new section at The Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park (Botany Cemetery). There will be an increment of approximately 500 additional burial spaces.

The Jewish community was granted space at Rookwood together with other denominations approximately 150 years ago. Together with our other smaller cemetery allocations, on our present projections, we will run out of cemetery space in 12 - 15 years.

The Board is working closely with the Sydney Beth Din, the Rabbinic Council of New South Wales and the Council of Progressive and Conservative Rabbis, the Sydney Chevra Kadisha and the Jewish Cemetery Trust to ensure that the Jewish community's long-term and burial needs are met by the New South Wales Government.

Understanding Judaism

The Board published 22,000 copies of Understanding Judaism – distributing it to every MP in Australia (federal, state and territory), churches, schools, and other appropriate bodies. It has supplied several hundred copies to the Sydney Jewish Museum to distribute to schools which visit the museum; it has supplied copies to organisations across the Jewish community for distribution to their non-Jewish staff; and it supplied 6500 copies to the JCA, which mailed them to its entire database. The publication was funded by a grant from the Community Relations Commission – which has also funded a reprint of 7500 copies. Ian Lacey AM led the writing team. Everywhere that it is distributed, it has been an unqualified success.

Antisemitism, Education and Interfaith Respect

In the course of 2007 we saw a number of antisemitic incidents affecting Jewish school students in NSW. Most recently the front page of the Australian Jewish News focused on physical violence against a Moriah student by a student from Windsor High. Emanuel students have been spat on by students at Waverley College, and a Jewish boy has been withdrawn from that school after an incident involving a challenge of tossing a coin in front of the Jewish boy to see if he would pick it up. When he did the antisemitic insults followed. Masada High school students travelling to and from school have experienced antisemitic insults from students in neighbouring schools.

In the South Western suburbs of Sydney, a teacher who purportedly “looked” Jewish has suffered a range of taunts and threats of physical violence that no one should ever have to put up with.

A new initiative was developed in response. It is called **Respect, Understanding and Acceptance, and it** brings together 250 students from Jewish, Muslim, Catholic and Armenian schools at the Sydney Jewish Museum and Masada College for 3 meetings over the year. We have worked closely with the museum and Masada, in putting it together.

But, we had prescience long before.

Over five years ago, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies foresaw that the education sector was going to be the most strategically important sector in which our efforts to combat antisemitism needed to focus. It is a sector in which the Jewish community's education participants, day schools, Academy BJE, the Board of Progressive Jewish Education and the Museum (and hopefully Courage to Care in the future) need to work together and cooperate to ensure that there is a common policy approach to the way in which we interact with the rest of the education sector.

The brainchild of Susi Brieger OAM, the Education Secretariat is now addressing these issues and is building a fruitful partnership with the Department of Education, the Board of Studies and other independent education bodies.

We have been interacting with the Board of Studies on the development of curriculum to ensure that texts which present Jews in a poor light are wherever possible replaced with more appropriate texts. And, text book publishers are now sending us their material in proof form for comment, and we have been able to be able to persuade a number of publishers to remove anti-Israel and anti-Jewish material from the text books.

The Education Secretariat also provides state-of-the-art resource materials to assist teachers and students in the following syllabus topics: Creation of Israel; Arab Israel Conflict; National Study of Germany; Conflict in Europe 1935-1945; Golda Meir; Zionism; Nuremberg Trials; Judaism as a religious tradition; Australia and World War II – “The internment of enemy aliens”. Our education website, the

brainchild of Ian Lacey AM, Josie Lacey OAM, Susi Brieger OAM, and Lynda ben Menashe, www.ijs.org.au, is now a recognised resource for teachers and students. We contribute regularly to subject association newsletters. The website is being expanded in response to need, and additional content is being developed.

And of course, in the interfaith area Youth Encounters grows from strength to strength and the "Together for Humanity Foundation" led by Rabbi Zalman Kastel is on the verge of major growth with support from governments across Australia.

Total eradication of racism and antisemitism from human society is probably impossible. Nevertheless, thoughtful and comprehensible education about the experiences of those targeted can lead to important attitudinal change.

When governments make racism and antisemitism socially unacceptable, history has demonstrated that the message can stick. It is to be hoped that when the appropriate governmental sponsored programs are put in place, there will be a reduction in the unacceptably high level of antisemitic incidents.

We refer to racism **and** antisemitism for the following reason. Jewish history and indeed well regarded academic studies have demonstrated that programs which combat only racism without identifying antisemitism as an unacceptable form of racism often lead to reduction in racist incidents affecting a whole range of minority groups, but have a much less pronounced impact on antisemitic incidents. There have been programs implemented around the world in which antiracism education is stepped up, and racist incidents against various groups fall, but at the same time antisemitic incidents against Jewish minorities do not fall.

On 11 July 2008, the editorial in "The Australian" had this to say: "As fascinating a film as it is, school students need more than Rabbit-Proof Fence to inform them as to whether the treatment of Australia's stolen generations constituted genocide. An understanding of the Holocaust is vital, as well as an overview of the Armenian genocide. That is in addition, of course, to a broad, factual understanding of the removal of the children from their families. This is just one good reason, among many, why NSW Education Department head Michael Coutts-Trotter is right to be concerned about the omission of the Holocaust from the compulsory NSW History course".

Not long before, Michael Coutts-Trotter had given a speech to high school principals and he committed to reinserting teaching of racism, genocide and the Holocaust into the history curriculum for years 7-10 in NSW. That commitment is welcome, and we are working closely with the Department of Education on the mechanism to give it effect. The new Minister, Verity Firth has publicly committed to this change project.

The Department is also working to specifically target antisemitism as a form of racism in its anti-racism policies and education programs. Research which the Board provided to the Department has demonstrated that anti-racism policies which do not specifically target antisemitism can result in a reduction in racist behaviours among young people without there being a corresponding reduction in antisemitic behaviours. The Department welcomed the research and has incorporated it in to its already outstanding anti-racism programs.

Education Seder

This year, just before Passover about 150 NSW educators came together last week at an unprecedented Passover dinner in the presence of NSW Education Minister John Della Bosca. The event was held at Sydney Girls High School and afforded attendees the opportunity of learning about the educational focus of Pesach. The main themes of slavery and freedom, local and global responsibility, leadership, pedagogy and tikkun olam (healing the world) as they relate to the Pesach story and seder were discussed throughout the evening.

The function was made possible by the JCA LotBen Fund in loving memory of Lotka and Bernard Ferster.

Securing Our Diversity

Securing Our Diversity is an innovative Board of Deputies-Sydney Jewish Museum education program, which enables police officers to address the complex issues of policing in a diverse community. The program, facilitated by the Board of Deputies and delivered by the Sydney Jewish Museum, engages with the role that police play in communities whose members have been subject to racial hatred and even state-sponsored terror.

Whilst it will take a number of years for this program to have the intended impact, as more and more senior police officers participate, the sensitivity and support that our community secures from the New South Wales police will be measurable and enormously valuable. Moreover, the terrorism risk is not abating and the Board's political work dovetails with and informs the physical security work of the CSG.

The Zionist movement

The Board has built an extraordinary and positive cooperative relationship with the State Zionist Council and the Zionist Federation of Australia (through the ECAJ). A big part of that has been the partnership in the Advocacy Project. We publicly acknowledge the support of the Zionist movement and in particular Dr Ron Weiser, Frank Levy AM and his predecessor Brian Levitan, education shaliach, Sima Gutman, and the SZC previous and current executive directors, Evie Smith and Aviva Kogus.

The strength of that relationship must continue. There should no longer be any doubt that fighting antisemitism and standing up for Israel are two sides of the same coin.

The symbolism of World Youth Day

During the recent visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Sydney for World Youth Day, it was significant that a church that focuses so much on symbolism not only held an interfaith gathering, but gave the Jews the first right to speak, seated the Jews in the front row, and introduced to the Pope lay and religious Jewish leaders before any other faith.

At the public interfaith gathering, the Papal Nuncio to Egypt, Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald stressed to the Catholic pilgrims present that in articulating their pride in their own faith they should take care never to denigrate the faiths of others. He expressed a belief that Catholics must engage in face-to-face conversation with those of other faiths, and the conversation must focus on building trust and respect. And, on that evening, I as the Jewish representative, was given the first right of comment and response. Important symbolism again.

And it is important that we place on the public record our acknowledgement that the commitment of the organisers of World Youth Day to avoiding the risk of anti-Semitism arising from Stations of the Cross was very much honoured. We have written to them in the following terms:

"We commend the organisers and television commentators of the Stations of the Cross for their sensitive treatment of the story of Jesus' passion.

We were especially moved by the reference in the commentary to the Church's rejection of anti-Jewish teachings and by the recollection of the Good Friday prayer of the 1970 Roman Missal in the mention of by our Jewish brothers and sisters -- the first to hear the word of God".

We join our Catholic brothers and sisters, and all the Children of Abraham, in praying that torture, abuse, racism and apathy be replaced by the values of love, compassion, respect and tikkun olam - healing the world. "

Social Cohesion: A Jewish agenda

The Rudd Government has embarked upon implementing its policy commitments to social cohesion of Australia. This social cohesion agenda is an agenda to which the Jewish community can make a significant contribution.

We as Jews understand that social exclusion may emanate from a number of factors including: lack of educational or vocational opportunities; low levels of income; mental or physical disability; mental illness; or immigration without social support, and that such exclusion most often results in individuals being prevented through no fault of their own, from building a better future for themselves and their families. Know one has more exemplified a commitment to social Justice and the two chairs of the social Justice committee during my presidency, David Bitel and Ilona Lee AM. Social cohesion and social Justice will become increasingly important aspects of leading this wonderful Jewish community.

In our own community, when the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies focussed a Plenum on the issue of poverty in our community we learned of the many Jews who could not afford event the most basic participation in our community, and we heard that many felt uncomfortable admitting to the disadvantage they suffer.

JewishCare, COA and other organisations in our community reach out to help those in need. We never know whether enough is being done.

Social cohesion will also involve eradicating the scourge of racism. Across Australia today racist speech has again become acceptable speech, and education against racism has diminished in both volume and frequency. For that and other reasons the Jewish community in 2007 experienced the highest number of antisemitic incidents ever recorded in this country. Yet, we do not react by adopting a purely defensive agenda. We understand that human rights are best preserved in nations where the rule of law is sacrosanct. And in an age of terrorism one of the most basic of human rights is the right to live without fear, especially the fear of terrorism.

Increased Jewish commitment to social cohesion in the Australian context will not be at the expense of standing up for Israel, opposing terrorism and insisting that antisemitism is socially unacceptable. Arguably social cohesion is just as much a Jewish issue as these more defensive objectives. We need both agendas. They began with Abraham, and they must continue today.

The Sydney Alliance

Last year the Executive, and in turn the Plenum, approved the Board participating in the founding stage of the Sydney Alliance.

The Sydney Alliance proposal originated with Unions NSW. The invitation to us to participate from the beginning was in part a response to their perception of the Board as an organisation actively seeking relationships with a wider community. The Trade Union Seder three years ago left a lasting positive impression of the Board with the union movement.

The Board very much seeks to encourage inclusiveness in Australia's society. It is in an inclusive society that the community's well being is best served.

The key focus of the Sydney Alliance is inclusiveness. It was framed around the issues of the role and rights of us as citizens, as the best means ensuring a socially cohesive nation. There is a remarkable parallel with Jonathan Sacks' book 'The Politics of Hope' – without the organisers knowing it, of course.

The opportunities include:

- for the Board to be part of a dynamic form of engagement with very diverse community interests;
- for our Constituent Members to engage directly with Alliance members through the Board; and
- a forum in which Deputies and community members, seeking a more active role outside our Committee structure, can participate in the Board's work and within the Board framework represent and forward the Board's objects and interests.

The risk is that the project is still in its infancy and may ultimately not succeed. It is an attempt at developing a different paradigm for building long term relationships in the interests of a socially cohesive society. Not all new things work. But if the overall project fails, relationships developed in the attempt should remain an available resource in the work of the Board.

The Board is viewed very favourably among the current founding partners and is seen as a body able to provide valuable insights.

Project Sydney

This joint project with the JCA and other JCA constituents is moving forward smoothly. We are awaiting approval from the NSW Government to allow Investor Retiree visas to be granted to Jewish families immigrating to NSW. At present NSW is the only state that does not allow new business investment by retirees. This will assist inject new investment in NSW, and will facilitate a new Jewish community program to attract young professionals and business persons with families to the Sydney Jewish community.

The Human Rights Medal

Our community was honoured by the award of the Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission Human Rights Metal to Jeremy Jones AM last year, and we can trust this symbolic gesture is a harbinger of better things to come.

The ECAJ

There should be no doubt that Robert Goot AM SC has been an active and energetic President of the ECAJ since taking over at the end of last year. The transition from his predecessor, Grahame Leonard AM, was entirely cooperative.

Whilst there are many achievements one could remark upon, the Jewish leadership symposium preceding the Rudd Government's 20/20 Summit was quite extraordinary. Not just was the calibre and contribution of the Jewish leaders unerringly high, the recognition of that contribution by ministers and senior bureaucrats has continued to this day.

Exceptional people

As I have indicated the achievements of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies are not the achievements of one person. Thanks are due to our hard-working staff, every member of the Executive and of our committees, and the many volunteers without whom we could not have moved forward at over the last few years as rapidly and effectively as we have.

This last year the two vice presidents have made enormous contributions. Yair Miller has been vice president for four years. He has wisdom far beyond his years, and has championed among many things JEMP and our celebrations of Yom Haatzmaut. The newly elected President, Robin Margo SC, has served as both Honorary Secretary and Vice President. He has chaired our public affairs committee. In each of those roles his commitment and his passion for the welfare and security of our community have been very much in evidence. Uri Windt is a simply amazing honorary secretary. Everything runs smoothly under Uri's watchful eye. He has a capacity to ask just the right question at the right time, and has ensured that the Board's processes are thoughtfully and successfully implemented. Sam Zweig serves as our Honorary Treasurer. Our accounting system has been refined, cash flow management substantially enhanced and our capacity to predict our financial needs much strengthened under Uri's watchful eye.

Each of our committee chairpersons, Susi Brieger OAM, Alan Gold, Ilona Lee AM, Josie Lacey OAM, Robin Margo SC, and Roma Shell have been active and remarkable leaders in their own right. Executive members: Dr George Foster,

Jeremy Jones AM, Yosi Tal and Irving Wallach have each made significant contributions to the work of the Board. We thank also our consultants, Rabbis Jeremy Lawrence and Jeffrey Kamins, and Joy Balkind whose wisdom has always been available and valuable.

We have a fantastic staff. They take responsibility, and they deliver all that we ask. They are proud of their work, and justly so. Prof Graham de Vahl Davis AM who remarked to me some four years ago that Vic Alhadeff would prove to be an exciting CEO. What an understatement! Vic has led our professional and administrative staff with true distinction. We acknowledge them each by name: Ety Ayalon, Lynda Ben-Menashe, Sarita Gold, Cynthia Herman, Ydele Nathan and Alla Pilman. This wonderful team is now supplemented by our new public affairs officer Natalee Pozniak and our new advocacy coordinator Bonita Levy.

So much of the work of a President depends upon the support of his or her predecessors who are an integral part of the Honorary Officers team. Justice Stephen Rothman AM has been without fail generous with his time, and unequivocally supportive in the course of the transition over to my leadership. Thanks are due to each of the past presidents whose active support and constant wisdom educate and strengthen the role of each new president. Graham De Vahl Davis AM, Gerry Levy AM, Robert Goot AM SC, Peter Wertheim AM and Michael Marx AM have been available to me often at incredibly short notice, and their advice and wisdom are always appreciated

Keep the passion alive!

There is great wisdom in the Board's Constitution limiting a presidency to four years. Like all presidents before me, I have enjoyed the support of the past presidents, and will commit to the success of future presidents.

General Matters: Organizations in WA are holding their own, but for some only with difficulty.

The youth leaders are concerned with a certain general lack of youth interest and commitment as well as a drift of some to the bigger centres.

Finding effective leaders remains an issue. The community has a considerable infrastructure to maintain.

Articulate advocacy at the local level for Jewish issues including Israel is a difficult area for the size of our community and needs to be nurtured.

David D. Knoll

Immediate Past President



Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies (Inc)

ECAJ ANNUAL REPORT 2008

1. Introduction

The past year has been one of quiet consolidation and continued activity.

2. Board Structure

The Board formally adopted its new Constitution, and is now an incorporated Association. Each of the separate organisations is now a constituent of the Board.

Regular meetings of the Management Committee are held. This consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary, as well as two representatives from Brisbane and two from the Gold Coast.

These formal changes required a deal of work, and we would like to thank Alf Gans for his personal energy in carrying these through.

3. Alf Gans

Our long-standing Treasurer, Alf Gans and his wife Lili, relocated to Melbourne in late 2008 in order to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Alf served the Board and the Jewish community of Queensland as our Treasurer with distinction for an unbroken period of 28 years, an astonishing contribution.

He was meticulous in the conduct of our finances, and his careful attention to detail, scrupulous record-keeping and reliable advice will be greatly missed.

I would like to publicly thank and acknowledge Alf, and wish him and Lili all the best in their new home.

4. Board Positions

Two casual vacancies arose on the Board recently.

Scott Leonard has been appointed as Treasurer to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Alf Gans, and I thank him for taking on this role.

Sam Miskowski resigned as a Gold Coast representative in late 2008, and that vacancy has yet to be filled.

Elections for the Board are due in November 2008 when all positions will be due for re-election.

5. Brisbane

Communal activity in Brisbane has continued as usual.

Sinai College, the Day School has maintained its operations, and its enrolment increased with the transfer of about a dozen students from the Gold Coast school.

Orthodox services have been held regularly at both Margaret Street Synagogue in the CBD and the Synagogue at South Brisbane. Chabad House has continued its work, and has an Adult Education Director.

Progressive services have been held regularly both at Beit Knesset Shalom at Camp Hill, and at various premises by The Brisbane Progressive Jewish Congregation.

The women's groups of NCJW and WIZO have both been very active.

Both UIA and JNF are very active. UIA publishes a regular email newsletter, and JNF publishes "Shalom", it's written magazine.

Betar and Maccabi have been active with camps and functions for our youth.

6. Gold Coast

The Gold Coast community is active, but is in a period of looser communal adhesion, as many former leaders have wound back their involvement due to age and personal reasons, and a new leadership group is being slow to emerge.

It was with regret that the Gold Coast day school, King Solomon College, was forced to take the decision to cease its operations due to low enrolments and financial pressures. A small group of dedicated supporters and philanthropists had supported the school for many years, but decided that continued operation was not viable.

Regular orthodox services are conducted at The Gold Coast Hebrew Congregation. The Surfers Central Synagogue ceased operations at its former leased premises when they were sold for development, and that congregation appears to have disbanded. Chabad House is active in its operations. Progressive services are regularly conducted at Temple Shalom who have appointed a new female Rabbi.

Mike Simons has worked hard as always, as our Gold Coast representative, to provide positive and constructive input, and has put huge effort into our Aged Care project.

7. Sunshine Coast

No formal communal structures have yet been established on the Sunshine Coast, but occasional festival services are held.

8. Future Leaders

A sub-committee of the Board, under the leadership of our Vice-President, Jason Steinberg, has reported on steps needed to increase engagement by the 25 to 35 years old age group, and these are being implemented.

9. Australian Jewish Population Study

We are very pleased to be involved in the Australian Jewish Population Study being conducted under Professor Andrew Markus. We see this as a very valuable and needed resource to enable us to plan for the future needs of our community.

10. Unger Bequest

Our efforts to implement the aims of the Unger bequest, in providing accommodation for aged Jewish persons are continuing.

This has proved to be a difficult and lengthy process. On several occasions we though we were within sight of an acceptable proposal, but one has not yet become concrete.

We are currently negotiating with a private provider to establish a Jewish wing in an established multi-level centre at Stafford in Brisbane, and are proposing to establish a small group of respected relevant health professionals to administer our involvement.

The moneys are invested in a balanced fund, and these have of course been affected by financial markets in the past year, and their value would now be of the order of \$2.5 million. Our advice has been to maintain these investments in anticipation of a recovery of their value.

11. Finances

Our Board continues to be in a healthy financial position. This is largely thanks to management fees received, and investment of carry-over funds.

Our fee subscriptions from organisations have been very low in the past year. This is due to a combination of sentiment that the Board does not currently need further funding, and a low degree of financial liquidity in many of our constituents.

12. Security

We have a good and active group of young people in our CSG, who provide valuable service at our major events and institutions.

Thankfully we have again had a relatively quiet year in relation to Security with few issues of major concern.

13. Multi Faith

We continue to be very active in multi-faith activities.

The Queensland Forum of Christians Jews and Muslims has continued to meet on a regular basis.

14. ECAJ and Interstate

We have been kept up to date with ECAJ activities by regular emails.

However, with the centralisation of ECAJ activities in Sydney, we have noted that whilst we are informed of most matters, this is often after the event, and the extent of consultation with us has decreased.

We are desirous of maintaining a close involvement in ECAJ activities, and this is very important for the smaller communities who do not have ready access to the constant inflow of speakers and entertainers, and community vibrancy, which Sydney and Melbourne enjoy.

15. Thanks

Our thanks go as always to our long-serving Secretary, Caroline Goldsmith, for her continuing efforts.

16. Summary

The past year has been relatively quiet, and we are entering a period of generational change.

We continue to remain fortunate in enjoying a peaceful Jewish life in the Queensland sunshine.

David Paratz

President



REPORT OF THE AUSTRALASIAN UNION OF JEWISH STUDENTS TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN JEWRY

Introduction

The Australasian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS) is the federal body for Jewish student societies at universities, colleges and TAFEs across Australia and New Zealand. Our mission is to unite Jewish students throughout Australasia, promote Jewish identity, support the needs and interests of all Jewish students, and foster a positive relationship with Israel.

AUJS provides a wide variety of activities for Jewish students including cultural, social, educational, political and religious forums, national conferences and Israel Programs. AUJS was founded in 1948 at the University of Sydney and is now established across eight regions and almost 30 campuses throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The Executive of AUJS is elected at the AUJS Annual General Meeting which is held in September or October each year. The 2008 AUJS Executive was:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| President | Jessica Roth |
| Vice-President | Jesse Sharp |
| Treasurer | James Lesh (resigned) |
| Education Officer | Stefan Oberman |
| NSW President | Neil Sher |
| VIC President | Anat Bogaty |
| WA President | Daniel Kitay |
| NZ President | Gilaad Amir |
| SA President | Jarrold Dean |
| ACT President | Jack Pinczewski |

Activities in 2008

Tragically, the year began with the shock death of former National Vice-President (2007) and former New South Wales President (2006), Dave Burnett, while holidaying in Petra, Jordan. He had just led a Taglit-Birthright Israel AUJS Academy program. Dave's loss was felt deeply by all who knew him and he is greatly missed.

AUJS has worked together with the Burnett family and the Jewish Communal Appeal in NSW to create the 'Dave Burnett Fund', an endowment fund that is intended to see Dave's visionary plans come to fruition. Its purpose is the advancement of Jewish students, particularly in the areas of leadership development, politics, education and training and Jewish identity.

Israel Programs

Thanks to the ZFA, together with the support and initiative of the UIA, and the generosity of Taglit-Birthright Israel, AUJS was able to send four Taglit-Birthright Israel AUJS Academy buses and three Taglit-Birthright Israel AUJS Achshav buses in 2007/2008. All the programs were very successful.

AUJS Aviv, our 5½ month MASA-approved program, was also very successful with 25 participants. Our Leadership Development Program (LDP), led by Dean Rabinowitz, visited Washington, New York, Turkey and Israel in 2007/2008. AUJS LDP aims to equip a select group of approximately 15 student leaders with the skills and knowledge they will require to become community leaders in the coming years.

In 2008, AUJS created an Israel Programs follow up committee and devised a follow up plan. Although not as successful as we would have hoped, organised reunions were held simultaneously in both Sydney and Melbourne. The 'MyIsrael' video competition was offered to Israel Program returnees and they all voted for their favourite video at the reunion. The winner, Joshua Belifante, won a ticket to the annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee in Washington D.C.

In 2008/2009, AUJS Israel Programs have changed significantly. Taglit-Birthright Israel is a 10-day free gift. We are then offering bonus packages to Taglit-Birthright Israel participants to extend their stay in Israel. These packages are a Tzedek and Tikkun Olam Tour and either a cultural tour or an adventure tour.

AUJS Academy is a stand-alone six week program. In addition to the traditional Gadna and Desert Experience options, we have added two new Academy options to the program: Sviva and Politics.

National Conferences

Executive Conference - February

Held at Lake Eppalock, near Bendigo, in 2008, AUJS Executive Conference brings together many of the AUJS executive members from around Australia and New Zealand. The key themes of the 2008 conference were 'Challenge', 'Innovate' and 'Create' and participants looked at each theme and extrapolated from each different ways of applying them to AUJS.

Winter Retreat – July

AUJS Winter Retreat was held at Fitzroy Falls near Bowral from the 7-10 July. Attended by over 100 participants, the Conference effectively combined night activities and engaging educational activities. A highlight of the conference was a presentation by an Israeli and a Palestinian student from the Arava Institute.

Political Training Seminar - September

Political Training Seminar was held on the 31st August at the Jewish Community Centre, Canberra, and the 1st and 2nd of September at Parliament House. The first day featured David Olesker and Israel Advocacy skills workshops. Speakers included Senator Stephen Conroy, The Hon. Robert McClelland MP, Michael Danby MP, Mark Dreyfus QC, MP, The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP, Mike Kelly AM MP and political staffers.

NZ Ski Trip

AUJS held a successful Ski Trip in New Zealand from the 4-8 September, 2008, with about 30 participants.

Many thanks to Hillel NSW for all their help with National Conferences.

Projects

Orientation Weeks

Orientation weeks and O-camps were held across the country in February and March, 2008. The structure of O-weeks has changed significantly since the introduction of voluntary student unionism. New members were given orientation packs with information about the community and various other gimmicks in a JNF environmentally-friendly green bag.

Israel @ 60

AUJS moved Israel Week to first semester to coincide with Yom Ha'atzmaut and the huge celebrations for the 60th. AUJS Israel Week took place from 5 – 15 May on over 20 campuses around Australia and New Zealand. Campuses supplied students with among many things Israeli food and drink, BBQs and Yom Ha'atzmaut Birthday cake. In Perth, they created a 'kibbutz' with a petting zoo on campus. In Melbourne, a Bedouin tent was set up at Swinburne University. In Sydney, there were Krav Maga sessions, Hebrew name bracelet making and large projectors displaying different images of Israel in the middle of campus. Thanks to the support of the ZFA, Aliyah Centre, WIZO, JNF and MDA, Israeli showbags were distributed nationwide with t-shirts, books, flyers, CDs and gimmicks.

Holocaust Awareness Week

Holocaust Awareness Week was held around the country in September. It educates both Jews and non-Jews about the atrocities of the Shoah. The general theme of Holocaust Awareness Week in 2008 was student life in the Holocaust.

Political Activities

Building relationships with non-Jewish student leaders is a priority for AUJS politically. We also support Jewish students running in campus elections.

AUJS made a joint submission with the ECAJ to the Senate Inquiry into Academic Freedom, highlighting anti-Israel bias on Australian university campuses and the issue of funding for some Australian universities, particularly ANU. A huge thanks to Peter Wertheim and Michael Weiss, the AUJS Political Affairs Director, for drafting the submission.

AUJS ran a Genocide Awareness campaign, with events held in Sydney and Melbourne. In Sydney, an evening presentation was co-hosted by AUJS, the Armenian community and the Darfur Support Network to discuss genocide.

Student Leadership Program

The AIJAC/AUJS Student Leadership Program took six non-Jewish student politicians on a week-long educational mission to Israel in July 2008. These students are leaders of various student political parties and are from NSW, Victoria, WA and ACT.

Alumni

The first Jewish student union was founded at the University of Sydney in 1948. In celebration of 60 years of successful activity, AUJS held an Alumni Gala Dinner at the MacLaurin Hall at Sydney University on 16 September, 2008. It was a very memorable evening with the funds raised supporting the Dave Burnett Fund. The highlight of the evening was an address by General Chaim Zibosc, a character of comedian Rodney Marks.

Region specific activities

The regions are the backbone of the Union and they have all been particularly active this year.

Victoria

AUJS Victoria has been very inventive in 2008, with a number of successful new initiatives, notably Corporate Drinks, a mini career fair for law and commerce students, and the production of the 'iJew' sticker. Social events included a Purim ColourFUNK party with about 380 people, a Yom Ha'atzmaut afterparty and the DeFrost welcome back party. Sporting activities include a Soccer Tournament and a Mixed Netball competition. They had guest speakers including Paul Bartrop and Michael Danby MP. Together with the ZYC and Hagshama, AUJS participated in the fundraiser for Sderot, with the support of Glicks. The annual AUJS Ball was held on 11 September, 2008 at Lincoln of Toorak.

AUJS is very grateful for the support of the State Zionist Council of Victoria and the Jewish Community Council of Victoria.

New South Wales

NSW highlights include a Shabbat dinner, the annual Pub Crawl, Political Training Seminar, Harbour Cruise AUJS/Hillel Gift of Life program and many others. AUJS joined with many other young adult organisations for the successful Young Adult Yom Ha'atzmaut party at CherriJam. Many international students were placed with families for Pesach. Weekly shiurs were also held at Sydney University, UNSW and Macquarie University. The AUJS presence at the University of Wollongong is also particularly noteworthy.

AUJS NSW was deeply honoured to receive the Sydney D Einfeld Memorial Award for Service to Israel and the Community from the JNF. An AUJS Grove of 1000 trees has been planted in the Australia-Israel Friendship Forest in the Galil, Israel.

A large part of AUJS' success in NSW is thanks to the support it receives from the community and in particular the Jewish Communal Appeal, The Shalom Institute, Hillel Jewish student services, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, the State Zionist Council and Mandelbaum House (at Sydney University).

Western Australia

AUJS WA continues to produce strong leaders and hold a wide variety of events, including a Mexican-themed Shabbaton, an indoor Soccer Competition and a blood drive with the Red Cross. Unfortunately, the annual WA Political Training Seminar was cancelled at the last minute when Troy Buswell resigned as state opposition leader and re-elections were called.

Smaller regions

The numerous activities of AUJS Canberra and AUJS Adelaide are particularly noteworthy, given the small and remote nature of these communities. AUJS New Zealand has been present at all major conferences and continued to develop, particularly its educational focus, in 2008.

Organisational Development

In addition to our wide array of annual program and activities, 2008 has been a year of huge organisational development for AUJS.

Professional Staff

Brandon Srot commenced as the AUJS Executive Director in February 2008. He is a wonderful asset to the AUJS team and it has made a great difference to the operations of AUJS to have a full-time professional staff member. We are very grateful to the Jewish Communal Appeal of NSW for their support of this vital initiative.

Another exciting initiative is the appointment of an AUJS Shlichon. Tal Dror, the 2008 Aviv madrich, arrived in Melbourne in October. AUJS is very grateful for the generous contributions of the Pratt Foundation, the Jewish Agency and the ZFA towards the AUJS Shlichon.

Brendan Bensky has been appointed our Israel Programs Director for the next two years. It is very exciting to have a former AUJS activist and Education Director return to AUJS in a professional capacity.

Other developments

Thanks to the generous support of a donor, AUJS renovated our Sydney office in January 2008 and we now have an excellent working space that has made a huge difference to our operations.

We have also greatly improved our email communications to members with standardised professional newsletters. AUJS also utilises SMS and Facebook.

Communal Relations

As one of six Executive members of the World Union of Jewish Students, AUJS is held in high esteem by Jewish student unions around the world. It is exciting to see WUJS creating programs again for Jewish students. Four AUJS Executive members were privileged to attend the WUJS student delegation to Prague, Poland and Israel in June.

AUJS established an agreement of association between AUJS and the American Jewish Committee. The agreement is not a partnership or joint venture, but lays the foundation for closer co-operation between AUJS and AJC. We have already worked together on the My Israel Video Competition and future projects mooted include AJC support for the New York component of LDP and joint engagement with young foreign affairs staff.

Thanks to all our communal partners and the ECAJ, ZFA, UIA and JNF especially. You have been a great support to AUJS this year, as in every year, and we look forward to continuing the excellent relationship between our organisations.

Jessica Roth

AUJS President



WIZO AUSTRALIA'S 2008 REPORT TO THE ECAJ

Once again, WIZO Australia's executive and membership has completed a most successful year under the direction and leadership of its President, Jo Gostin, and Marlis Cohen as Honorary Treasurer.

The State Presidents are Esther Wakerman (New South Wales), Paulette Cherny (Victoria), Miriam Millingen (South Australia), Anne Topelberg (Western Australia) and Myrna Freed (Queensland). All State Presidents are also Vice Presidents of the Federation. Rony Bognar is Immediate Past President.

WIZO Worldwide

On July 11, 1920 Rebecca Sieff, Dr. Vera Weizmann, Edith Eder, Romana Goodman and Henrietta Irwell founded WIZO in London. They were all proud, independent-minded Zionist women with the goal of helping women and children in Israel. Having visited Palestine-Eretz Israel with their husbands and seeing the conditions, or lack thereof, in which people were living, these women decided to take action. They addressed these urgent needs and established social, welfare and educational services and institutions, that later became the foundation for the infrastructure of the Israeli society as we know it today.

WIZO has grown as a non-party, world-wide movement of 250,000 women in 50 Federations world-wide, with its headquarters in Israel. WIZO has had consultative status at the UN from the year 1959 with ECOSOC (Economic and Social Commission), and from 1960 with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Education Fund). As a non-Governmental Organisation, this special status gives us unique

and special opportunities to be part of the United Nations family. World WIZO has been very active and well represented during previous UN Women's conferences and World WIZO has permanent representatives at the UN – in New York, Geneva and Vienna. WIZO is represented at all meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women giving Jewish women a voice in this largely hostile forum.

Today, WIZO in Israel maintains a comprehensive network of services and projects for the care of children, youth, families and the elderly from all sections of the community. All of WIZO's services fulfill vital social welfare needs and many of WIZO's facilities are specifically designed to assist in the integration of the vast number of immigrants who have come to Israel during the past 60 years.

WIZO is an acknowledged leader in the field of child care and maintains 164 projects for children of pre-school age. Over 14,000 toddlers attend WIZO's day care centres. For teenagers, WIZO conducts eleven secondary agricultural and vocational schools, at which 6,600 pupils prepare for careers ranging from agriculture to computer technology and from electronics to secretarial skills. WIZO also maintains a community college for post-high school studies.

WIZO runs 54 youth clubs throughout Israel and some 22,000 youngsters find opportunities for supervised study, recreation, sport and friendship. WIZO's work for the women of Israel is centred on 200 women's clubs, including several that cater especially for Arab, Druze, Bedouin and Caucasian women. WIZO is actively involved in advancing the status of women, with a committee for the advancement of women in politics and four information centres on women's rights. WIZO also provides vocational training and advancement for women. WIZO has established Schools for Political Leadership in Jerusalem, Be'er Sheva and Haifa to train women for political office and provides a wide range of services for families, which include shelters and a hotline service for battered women, centres for the prevention and treatment of domestic violence, summer camps for needy mothers of large families, legal advice bureaux on family matters, centres and groups for single parent families, and a computerised information centre for single-parent families.

WIZO's services extend through to the Third Age, with 100 social clubs and sheltered employment clubs, a parents' home and a phone-in assistance service.

TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

On May 19-21, 2007 WIZO Australia held its 21st Triennial Conference in Melbourne. A highlight of the conference was our guest Tova Ben-Dov, Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive. Tova was accompanied by Elad Schneorr who was then Creative Director of World WIZO. Elad came to Australia to participate in the launch of our most ambitious campaign, the House of Dreams, the erection of a new multi-purpose building at WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim.

ENLARGED GENERAL MEETING (EGM) JANUARY, 2008

This year's EGM, held in Tel Aviv, was particularly significant as WIZO is celebrating its 88th birthday together with Israel's 60th anniversary. Over 1,000 delegates from around the world attended the meeting where they were informed and enlightened. Lectures were given by leading Israeli dignitaries and members of the World WIZO Executive. WIZO Australia's President, Jo Gostin, was given the honour of being co-chairperson of the Conference and WIZO Australia was proud to have 40 delegates participating in the Conference.

WIZO TOUR TO ISRAEL

Prior to the EGM, the WIZO Australia delegates spent 4 days touring Israel and visiting the WIZO projects sponsored by WIZO Australia:

- *The Chorley Day Care Centre* in Ra'anana has 103 children in 3 classes. During the visit,

WIZO Keshet, a non-Jewish group of committed Zionist ladies in Queensland, pledged to raise funds for new curtains at the crèche.

- *WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim* in Haifa boards more than 90 emotionally disturbed teenagers. Over the last year several improvements have been made to the school – the complete refurbishment of the kitchen and dining room; the erection of an all weather state-of-the-art basketball court and the erection of a shell over a stage

which is used for graduation ceremonies and an outdoor theatre. The House of Dreams, a multi-purpose building which will house counseling rooms and rooms for various workshops is currently being built, and construction is under way for the complete refurbishment of two new dormitories.

- *The Fanya and Godel Korsunski Youth Club* in Kfar Saba which offers gymnastics, drama, karate and after school programs. The Youth Club coordinates a major soccer program and hundreds of youth from Kfar Saba and local Arab villages take part. The club is currently undergoing a large extension and renovation.

- *The Raya Jaglom Day Care Centre* in Tel Aviv, is one of six Australian day care Centres where there are four classes for 120 children. 80% of the children are from single parents.

- *The Hatzor Air force Base* which houses four WIZO day care centres and crèches which provide a service to the staff and crew of the base.

Today, WIZO is as vital, pioneering and pertinent as ever, ready to deal with new challenges and safe in the knowledge that its membership worldwide will always be there to support this very important work. Looking at the modern technology we have at our fingertips, we can only stand in awe at the work of the previous generations of WIZO women, which were achieved in far more difficult and often dangerous circumstances.

WIZO, one of the largest Women's International Zionist Organisations in the world, is celebrating its 88th birthday. WIZO derives its strength and longevity from its Federations and volunteers worldwide, our members and Chaverot (friends) who are the movement's ground force and backbone. WIZO Australia is grateful for the support and generosity of its members and friends and together we continue to

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It gives me pleasure to present my first Report on behalf of NCJWA Ltd.

I took over as National President at the Quadrennial Conference, held in Sydney, June 2007.

National Council of Jewish Women of Australia works to promote social justice, human welfare and for the advancement of women locally, nationally and internationally.

We are affiliated with ZFA, ECAJ, UIA, JCA, AWC and ICJW. As one of the oldest Jewish organisations in Australia, we proudly celebrated milestones: in 2007 Brisbane's and Victoria's 80th Anniversaries, , this year NSW Division 85th Anniversary. In 2009 will be celebrating WA Section 80th, Gold Coast 40th and S.A. Section 80th Anniversary.

NCJWA serves the Jewish and general community in Australia, as well as fundraising for NCJWA Israel Projects. In Israel, we have completed many KKL Projects in partnership with JNF Australia and will continue in the future. NCJWA has been supporting the ILAN Foundation for Handicapped Children in Tel-Aviv, for over 30 years. Haifa Rape Crisis Centre protects women who escape from domestic violence situations. At the Haifa University, we support Ethiopian students by providing scholarships.

As an Affiliate of ICJW, the UN Anti-Racism Conference, Durban II, is of great concern to NCJWA and all Jewish people. Dr. Geulah Solomon OAM and I met in 2007 with the Hon. Alexander Downer MP, then the Foreign Minister seeking

Government support to prevent a repeat of 'Durban I' in 2001, which was a horrific demonstration of antisemitic and anti-Israel propaganda. Also, Dr. Solomon and I have made the same approach to the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, Minister for Office for Women. We are proud that Dr. Solomon represented ECAJ at the Jewish NGO's May 2008 pre-Conference Strategy planning meeting in Geneva on the same topic.

I am proud to represent NCJWA at the Australian Women's Coalition, the only Jewish organisation among 20 National organisations in Australia, an advisory body to the Commonwealth Government on women's issues.

NCJWA – NSW Division were the first to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Israel, in November last year, in the presence of the Israeli Ambassador H.E. Mr. Yuval Rotem and other distinguished guests. This date has now been accepted by other NCJWA Sections, including Victoria, for an annual "Israel Day" event. We were very proud to attend the Australian Parliament in Canberra, March this year at the passing of a Motion congratulating Israel on its 60th Anniversary; a very moving moment for us all.

The Sydney Catholic "World Youth Day" recently, saw a wonderful celebration of friendship, with over 100 young 'pilgrims', at 'Fanny Reading House' participating in Israeli dancing and sharing Israeli food with our members.

Women's issues are prominent in NCJWA's platform, empowerment and education of women as leaders and community members, the advancement of women as individual and activities on behalf of disadvantaged women. NCJWA participated in the Australian Citizenship Test Review.

Dr. Anne Morris of S.A. presented a submission on "Reduce Violence against Women and Children, also contributed to the "Inquiry into Gender Pay Equity and associated issues relating to increasing female participation in the workforce".

NCJWA voiced its opinion to Government on the U.N. Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

We celebrate Human Rights Day in December in all Sections.

Recently we held forums in all Sections on Trafficking Women, showed a film 'The Jammed', involved speakers from the Commonwealth Police and members from 'Project Respect' dealing with this issue. In April / May this year we hosted Prof. Haya Itzhaky, Professor School of Social Work Bar Ilan University, as key note speaker at the 'Am I at Risk' Domestic Violence forum in Melbourne, she also travelled to Canberra and Sydney.

We run projects to assist single women in Melbourne.

In Sydney, a "Mum for Mum" project to assist young mothers and their babies, as alternative to 'grandmothers'. NCJWA has Jewish Cancer supports groups in all Sections.

NCJWA is taking a very active part in strengthening women's involvement in the community, particularly in the area of inter-faith and inter-cultural activities in all Sections. In Melbourne, we invited Muslim, Christian, Bahai and Buddhist and Hindu women to share and learn about the Festival of Passover, by inviting them to a women's Seder.

We work with the Turkish Muslim organisation (AIS), co-organising interfaith dinners and various festivals. Recently we participated in the Ramadan Iftar Dinner, and learned more about what we have in common, what binds us, rather than what divides us. Vice President Di Hirsh represents NCJWA in the Asia Pacific Centre for Inter-religious Dialogue at the Australian Catholic University, as part of the preparations for the Parliament of the World's Religions to be held in Melbourne, December 2009.

The community service, NCJWA Professional development Mentoring services continues in NSW. Mentoring has provided a professional guidance for Jewish women entering or returning to the workforce. In Victoria we operate 3 Senior

Citizens Clubs and 3 Golden Age Clubs for elderly Russian migrants, residents of Housing Commission flats, we organise all Jewish festivals, and run regular Club meetings on fortnightly basis, supported by Jewish Care.

The plight of Jewish women unable to obtain divorce, particularly in Israel, has been brought home to NCJWA members around Australia, as they viewed two documentaries on the subject.

NCJWA continues to support Jewish and non-Jewish causes.

Jewish education is the other area of interest for NCJWA, offering support for all Jewish Day schools, plus an annual Melbourne University scholarship for a final year Hebrew language student in the name of our founder Dr. fanny Reading. The annual NCJWA Victoria award in the name of Life Governor, Sylvia Gelman AM MBE is a prestigious award, bestowed to a woman who is an outstanding Jewish educator.

I wish to congratulate Robert Goot AM SC, President of ECAJ, his Executive and office team for their excellent work on behalf of Australian Jewry. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with ECAJ and wish you continued success in your work.

Rysia Rozen OAM

President

September 2008



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN JEWRY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOVEMBER 2008

It is my pleasure to submit my final report to the ECAJ on behalf of the Union for Progressive Judaism, the roof body of Progressive Jews in Australia, Asia and New Zealand.

UPJ's mission is to unite 19 Progressive congregations and 6 affiliated organisations through mutual support and consultation, religious and community programs and educational opportunities to affiliated bodies and members of the community. The past two years have been a time of transition and growth, including the departure of our first Executive Director at the completion of her most successful term of office and the appointment of a new Executive Director who is focused on the development of the organisation throughout the region and in ensuring that the voice of Progressive Jews is heard at all levels of the community.

It is pleasing to report that the organisation has continued its commitment to excellence in educational programs started by Janice Alper; increased its efforts to develop the organisation as a true regional representative; and, in partnership with ARZA and the UIA Progressive Trust, increased its financial, moral and political support for Israel.

A few highlights from the past year include:

- **Regional conference:** In November 2007 Hobart, Tasmania hosted the conference "L'Chaim" for more than 75 delegates, from Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore, and all parts of Australia, including rabbis, cantors, educators, youth directors and Community Shlichim, as well as congregational and organizational lay leaders. Focused on celebrating recent achievements and planning for the future, the conference was a success at every level. In October 2008 the Conference, with the theme "Living the dream- together" will be held in Melbourne and feature a number of outstanding speakers and teachers from our region as well as from Israel and America.
- **Project News:** This online subscriber newsletter provides news and views from the region, Israel and the Jewish world - particularly the Progressive Jewish world – and continues to be widely read throughout the region and internationally.
- **Delegations:** Regional delegates traveled to two major conventions abroad. 18 representatives joined delegates from 27 other countries at the World Union's gathering in Israel in 2007. Five regional representatives attended the URJ's Biennial in San Diego, California in December 2007 and used the opportunity to meet international counterparts, develop social networks, access resources and they were able to bring back a range of ideas and initiatives for future activities.
- **Leadership development:** The commitment to develop new leadership remained a priority, with delegates sent to the Beutel program and scholarships provided for training and professional development, including the CAJE conference. We are currently establishing a network of graduates of a number of our past leadership development programs, including the Beutel Program and the Nahum Goldmann program in order to build on their training and to encourage their involvement in community projects and organisations.

- **Moetzah:** The Council of Progressive Rabbis is a vital and integral part of the UPJ. Together we are currently researching options for a new Siddur to be used throughout the region. It is particularly pleasing to note the recent appointment of a Cantor for the Brisbane Progressive Jewish Congregation, and the appointment of new rabbis to our congregations on the Gold Coast, in Auckland and Hong Kong.
- **Professional development:** As part of our commitment to maintaining and developing the calibre of the professionals serving our community we actively encourage and support those who seek formal training and qualification as a rabbi, cantor or educator. UPJ provides loans to those undertaking approved courses and these funds are converted into grants as the person returns and works in the region.
- **ARZA:** The Association of Reform Zionists in Australia continues its work of promoting Israel under the tireless leadership of Ian Samuel. ARZA is in the process of developing an exciting new website that will serve as a portal to information promoting Israel and Progressive causes.
- **UIA Progressive Trust:** The activities of the UIA Progressive Trust have included hosting a visit by the President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, Uri Regev, in 2007 and the Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, Iri Kassel, in 2008. Through this Trust we continue to provide vital funds to support the work of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism and its work with refugees and migrants.
- **Netzer:** UPJ's support for Netzer has been maintained including financial support and their involvement in many aspects of the lives of UPJ and the congregations. We never cease to be impressed by the dedication and talent of the leadership and are delighted to have them as part of the UPJ leadership team. The programs of outreach to smaller communities in Australia and to New Zealand have been most successful and we particularly commend their

initiative to develop a leadership program in an Aboriginal college in Queensland.

- **Shlichut:** In August of this year Melbourne Shaliach Yossi Cohen departed after a highly successful 3-year shlichut and his replacement – Dana Bar-Zuri - arrives in September. The Sydney Community Shaliach, Sharon Shteinbock, will be with us until May 2009. The importance of maintaining a strong program of shlichut is undoubtedly being challenged by the dramatic increases being mooted in the costs but we are committed to maintaining the consistently high level of our Schlichim.
- **Educators' Network:** The skills and expertise of the lay and professional educators in the region have been linked through the establishment of an e-mail based network and the development of a "Virtual Resource Centre" for the region. At the conclusion of recent ZFA Educators' Conference, we held a special seminar for the UPJ educators, with scholarships provided for them to attend the conference and other programs, including Limmud Oz and the CAJE conference in America.
- **Social Action:** This period has seen the establishment of a new program of social action, including personal projects for Bar / Bat Mitzvahs, help for an aboriginal college and the development of regional social action programs. We are extremely fortunate to have the services of Nicky Maor who is driving the development of this broad range of social action projects. We have also recently received funding provided by the United Nations, via the Union for Reform Judaism, to establish a regional program to provide funds to eradicate malaria.
- **Executive Director:** After completing three years of outstanding service as an educator and leadership developer, Janice Alper returned to her home in America. Our new Executive Director, Steve Denenberg, is spending a great deal of time visiting our congregations around the region, in order to fully

understand their goals and needs and to ensure that future programs meet these objectives.

- **Executive Committee:** This group meets by teleconference every 6 weeks. Earlier this year they met with the presidents of our constituents and members of the Moetzah in Sydney to work on issues of concern and need that they had identified. The gathering also included an address by Ambassador Yuval Rotem and one by the CEO of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, Vic Alhadeff.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and constituents of the Union for Progressive Judaism, I would like to extend our gratitude to and support for the wonderful work undertaken by the ECAJ on behalf of the Jewish community. It has been a great pleasure to work in partnership with Robert Goot and his committee, as well as the wonderful staff. It is my hope that this partnership will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Phyllis Dorey

President

Union for Progressive Judaism

September 2008



MESSAGE FROM PHILIP CHESTER
PRESIDENT, ZIONIST FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA
TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN JEWRY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008

It is with great pleasure that I extend warm greetings on behalf of the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA) to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) on its 2008 Annual General Meeting.

In this Israel's 60th anniversary year, the ZFA has continued to expand our programmes in keeping with our mandate to bring innovative, relevant and cutting edge programmes to the Australian Jewish community and in line with our commitment to strengthen the ties between Israel and the Australian Jewish community in all spheres, with some particular examples as follows:

Israel@60

One year ago we launched the 'Israel@60' campaign which saw a broad scope of celebrations take place Australia-wide throughout Israel's 60th year. Together with our State Zionist Councils, and in many cases in conjunction with the Israeli Embassy, we covered a range of political, cultural, educational and other realms - from the sell-out major Yom Ha'atzmaut festivities, to the widespread ZFA Israel 60th Oration with Naomi Ragen; from the historic bipartisan resolution passed in Australian Federal Parliament congratulating Israel, to the specially-commissioned commemorative postage stamp issue displaying Israel's twelve Prime Ministers; from the electrifying Idan Raichel Project concerts, to the international 'My Israel Quiz' for primary school students.

In celebrating such a momentous occasion in Jewish history, all of these activities left indelible prints on us all. The Australian Jewish community presented itself with strength at every turn and demonstrated its strong commitment and connection to Israel.

This is one of the most notable and memorable outcomes of the past year – our Australian Jewish community proudly gathering and focusing on Israel in times of celebration, as well as mourning and solidarity, stemming from the full spectrum of age, background and ideology.

Education

The ZFA is committed to ensuring the future and the distinctiveness of the Jewish people by furthering Jewish, Hebrew and Zionist education, fostering spiritual and cultural values and teaching Hebrew as the national language.

Our educational input – both formal and informal - spans the entire gamut of the community with our programs reaching a wide range of areas and groups.

In elevating the status of and investment in Jewish and Zionist education and educators within our community, the ZFA's 6th Biennial Australian Jewish Educators' Conference in August gathered over 300 educators from across Australia and New Zealand providing professional development, educational content and tools, enrichment, sharing and networking.

The conference energised participants to continue the crucial task of telling the story of our past, dealing with the challenges of the present and ensuring a brighter Jewish future for the Australian Jewish community.

Israel Programmes

The ZFA continues to be the gateway to Israel programmes with increasing numbers of enquiries, participation and stronger partnerships between organisations.

The ZFA has always been integrally involved with Israel programmes and is the local Australian *Taglit-Birthright Israel* partner and the Australian *MASA* representative. We continue to broaden our involvement in Israel programmes and work in partnership with many organisations.

Looking Ahead

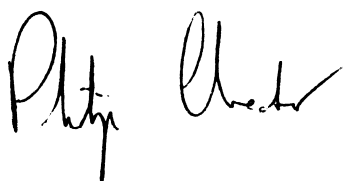
The ZFA understands the importance of strategising for the future and addressing the ongoing development of the Zionist Movement in Australia.

In this vein, the recent ZFA Biennial Conference was a platform to specifically analyse and discuss contemporary attitudes towards Israel across a range of demographics and practical implications of current trends, with a special focus on 'Generation Y'.

This is part of the ZFA's priority to provide inclusive fora and relevant programming in our efforts to nurture and enhance Australian Jewry's connection with Israel.

I wish to congratulate Robert Goot for his leadership and direction of the ECAJ, in this his first year in office. The ECAJ has continued to effectively represent the Jewish community to the Australian Government and to other institutions and organisations in relation to issues of concern. Robert, together with the ECAJ committee of management, should be commended on a successful year in office and their ongoing communal activism.

I look forward to continued cooperation and partnership between our two national roof bodies, wishing you *hatzlacha rabba* for the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Alston". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Auckland Jewish Council

מועצת יהודי אוקלנד

The representative organisation of Auckland Jewry

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

Activities

The year up to June 2008 has been full of activity for the Auckland Jewish Council.

Some of the major events for the year include:

- Hagai Segal: The Auckland Jewish Council arranged for Hagai Segal to visit Auckland and speak to the community. Hagai is a well known expert, commentator and journalist specialising in Middle East affairs. His address was attended by over 100 people with insights that were frank and extremely illuminating.
- March of the Living: Endorsement from the Governor General was obtained for this tremendous trip and series of activities that enables a group of young people to fully appreciate the Holocaust. This support will assist in raising the profile and integrity of the programme.
- Hell Pizza: A series of advertising Billboards were erected promoting the Pizza chain. These glorified the Hitler and the Nazi regime. The Auckland Jewish Council acted promptly and got these taken down. We received an apology from the advertising agency, Cinderella. The advertising standards authority considered the complaint lodged by the Auckland Jewish Council to be closed following these actions.
- Maurice Williamson: Maurice made an inappropriate comment referring to concentration camp survivors. These comments were out of character coming from a long-time friend of the Jewish community. His apology was accepted and this was communicated to his party leader.

- Naftali Tamir: Mr Tamir retired as Israeli Ambassador to New Zealand. Together with the New Zealand Israel Trade Association a farewell from the Auckland Jewish community was held.
- Yuvel Rotem: Mr Rotem was appointed as Israeli Ambassador to New Zealand. The Jewish Council has had a number of meetings with him and the number 2 in the Embassy, Eli Yerushalmi. These meeting have emphasised the concerns of the local Jewish community.
- Wellington Cemetery Desecration: Unfortunately further attacks against the cemetery in Wellington occurred. Once again the perpetrators have yet to be found. This raises a concern for all Jews and all New Zealanders.
- Tariana Turia: Ms Turia made a series of comments drawing parallels between gang patches and the yellow star Nazis forced to Jews wear. These comments were factual incorrect, belittled the holocaust and were offensive. We have attempted to get them withdrawn but this proved fruitless.
- Madmen: Sky / Prime TV placed a series of anti-Semitic advertisements on billboards and in time magazine. While it would have been possible to take action against the advertisers, the advertising agency and the publishers the Jewish Council took a more measured approach. We ensure that the billboards were removed promptly. We received a full apology from the advertisers. We got a full page apology published in time magazine; this has never happened before.
- Durban 2: Under the auspicious of the United Nations there is an attempt to have a second anti-racism conference. The first one held in Durban, Durban 1, turned into an anti-Semitic diatribe. The Canadian and Australian governments have announced they will not attend and have withdrawn all support for the proposed conference. The Jewish Council has written to the government asking that New Zealand also withdraws. So far we have had no response.

- Liat Orkim: While not the role of the Jewish Council to look after Israeli tourists in New Zealand it is important to ensure that there are smooth relationships between Jewish visitor and the New Zealand authorities. As such the Jewish Council played an active role in managing the interface between the family together with its supporters and the Police as well as other search and rescue groups.
- Wellington Regional Jewish Council: The Auckland Jewish Council has worked hard to cement strong relationships with Wellington. They are the second biggest Jewish Community in New Zealand and it is important that we work closely together and present a united front on major issues.
- Charitable Status: The Auckland Jewish Council has applied for registration, under the charities act. This will mean that all donations to the council are tax deductible. We expect to have this confirmed shortly.
- New Zealand Jewish Council: Having a formal constitution and incorporated status is considered important for the national umbrella body. As such we are working on getting appropriate structure and rules put in place.

The Auckland Jewish Council

The Auckland Jewish Council is the representative body of the wider Jewish Community. It has as its members the diverse variety of Jewish groups within our community. The Auckland Jewish Council is inclusive of Jewish groups of all religious affiliation.

- Auckland Chevra Kadisha and Benevolent Society
- Auckland Hebrew Congregation
- Auckland Jewish Burial and Benevolent Society
- Australasian Union of Jewish Students Auckland

- B'nai Brith Lodge
- B'nei Akiva
- Habonim Dror
- Hadassah International
- Jewish Oral History Group
- Jewish Social Club
- Kadimah College
- Maccabi
- New Zealand Israel Trade Association
- The Council of Jewish Women
- The Progressive Jewish Congregation of Auckland
- WIZO.
- Zionist Federation of New Zealand

These organisations elect the executive who are responsible for the activities of the Auckland Jewish Council.

Estimates of the total number of Jews in New Zealand in 2004-5 put the figure at around 10,000. Of this at most half are within the greater Auckland Region. It is in their interest, on lay matters, that the Auckland Jewish Council represents them publicly to the press, politicians and in other ways as appropriate.

The Auckland Jewish Council focuses on making New Zealand a place where all Jews are free to practise their religion away from discrimination, anti-Semitism, and harassment.

The New Zealand Jewish Council

The New Zealand Jewish Council is an umbrella organisation, non-religious, with representatives from the main community groups. It has regional affiliates

throughout the country with the most active being in Auckland, Wellington and the Waikato.

The current presidency of the New Zealand Jewish Council resides in Auckland and is the responsibility of the Auckland Jewish Council.

The Council speaks for the New Zealand Jewish community on matters of defamation, Jewish issues and ethnic affairs and also aims to co-ordinate cultural and social activities.

The role of the New Zealand Jewish Council includes:

Working with the media to ensure that there is a fair representation of Jews and Jewish views.

- Ensuring that local and national government has a clear understanding of the issues affecting Jews in New Zealand, and gaining appropriate attention for such issues where necessary.
- Being the prime sponsor of the Community Security Group (“CSG”), and ensuring that it has the structure and resources necessary to carry out its important activities.
- Encouraging a wider public understanding of what it means to be Jewish in New Zealand.

Community Events

The Auckland Jewish Council has been a key sponsor of a number of community events and activities. These are wide ranging and have included:

- Sponsorship of Radio Shalom providing Jewish broadcasts.
- Meeting with various overseas dignitaries.
- Organising speakers including Michael Ronen, Moshe Ya’alon and Hagai Segal.
- Contributing to sponsoring of Israel Week

Political

The Auckland Jewish Council maintains its active role in safeguarding the political presence of the Jewish Community. It does not take a partisan approach but focuses on the issues that are important to Jews in New Zealand – continuing its close contacts with all the parties as required.

In this regard, it also recognises the insidious danger of one-sided views at a governmental level, often under an anti-Israel guise, and is gathering resources to address this.

In view of the fact that anti-Israel sentiments can often mask, or lead to anti-Semitic ones, the Council has decided to embark on an active wave of public education correcting some of the more prevalent distortions of fact regarding Israel and the wider Jewish community, to coincide with the 60th anniversary of Israel.

Media

The Auckland Jewish Council and New Zealand Jewish Council continue to monitor the local media to ensure balanced reporting on items relating to Israel and the Jewish people. Reporting on the Middle East is often biased against Israel. Last year, this was directed mainly at Israel; however, as a result of comments made in the media by various government officials, there was some attention focused on the local Jewish population as well. As time has distanced us all from the passport scandal, this has largely settled down. The Council continues to keep a watchful eye on news reports and documentaries etc.

Last year the Auckland Jewish Council imported copies of the book “Myths & Facts –Guide to the Arab Israeli Conflict” and copies are still being distributed where evidence suggests a lack of balanced knowledge.

Other publications continue to be reviewed by the council as they come to attention.

International Representation

The Jewish Council has affiliation and maintains contact with:

World Jewish Congress

Eur-Asian Jewish Congress

Commonwealth Jewish Congress

Executive Council of Australian Jewry

These channels keep New Zealand informed about world issues as well giving the avenue to express a New Zealand viewpoint.

Overseas Events

Overseas events do have impact on us here in New Zealand and are sometimes a cause of concern. The Jewish Council maintains a careful watch on international affairs and takes action where appropriate. Current events:

- In the ***Middle East***, including the Iranian Holocaust Conference, statements and nuclear issues.
- Possible extremist potential in ***Australia*** and worldwide.
- Calls for ***academic boycotts*** by, for example, British academic institutions and journalists are all closely monitored, as is their reporting here in the local media.

- ***Israeli Actions in Gaza and Lebanon.*** While it is not the role of the Jewish Council to either support or criticise the actions of the government of the state of Israel the Jewish Council is often asked for its comments. In these cases appropriate political spokespeople from outside the Jewish Council are put in contact with the media organisations.

Other Activities

Christian-Jewish relations

Christians are a majority of the population of New Zealand, 2.04 million out of the total population of 4.3 million. Christian attitudes, where negative to Jews, are largely based on religious anti-Semitism and ignorance. Hopefully with increasing dissemination of balanced information, some attitudes will be improved. Good relationships with many Christian leaders are maintained.

The Council of Christians and Jews was established in Auckland and Wellington about 25 years ago. They are affiliated to the International Council of Christians and Jews and do good work but on a small scale.

The Jewish Council sees its role as fostering better understanding between the communities.

Holocaust education

The Jewish community has since World War 2 continued to inform New Zealanders about the Shoah by putting up monuments, holding regular observance of Yom Hashoah to which non-Jews are often invited, and maintaining numerous museum displays.

The challenge is to maintain the Shoah education among younger generations, including the Jewish community. As survivors pass on and the uniqueness of the Shoah becomes blurred by more recent genocides this need becomes even more important.

Recent developments in this area include:

- The promotion of the March of the Living program – with a letter of endorsement from the Governor General.
- The work of the Oral History Group, which has now extended its scope to include Jewish History as well as Holocaust material, and is transferring all interviews from tape to CD. Approximately eighty interviews completed to date.

Jewish-Muslim Relations

With increasing immigration, particularly of Asian people, the number of Muslims in New Zealand has gone up rapidly from 13,545 in 1996 to 23,631 in 2001 (according to the optional question in the census). In 2005 the number of Muslims in New Zealand is estimated at 40,000. (New Zealand's total population is now estimated at 4.3 million).

New Zealand Muslims come from about 35 different nationalities. The Muslim community in New Zealand does not typically have a high profile however, as a result of 9/11 and the recent London terror attack, this profile has increased. Jewish-Muslim relations occur mainly in the framework of inter-faith groups which exist in many centres. There has been tension in recent years because of the Israel-Palestine conflict but there have also been strong attempts to prevent that conflict outside New Zealand from harming good relations within New Zealand society. Although individual Muslims speak out against Israel in the media from time to time, there are no Muslim leaders who publicly attack Israel or Jews, and vice versa.

An area of increasing concern remains the very active efforts by anti-Israel activists on University campuses, with demonstrations, often vehement and misleading articles to student magazines and a strong presence at relevant public talks. At times we have had passionate Jewish student response to this, but at the moment there would appear to be a dearth of such interested students on campus. The Council is considering options available so as not to leave the many charges and distortions unanswered.

Auckland Regional Ethnic Council

20 years ago Auckland Jewish Council was one of the founding members of the Auckland Regional Ethnic Council. We continue to play an integral role with this group ensuring that they are aware of the Jewish point of view and that all ethnic groups are free to practise their beliefs and traditions in New Zealand without prejudice or discrimination.

Security Issues

The Community Security Group "CSG" provides the community with regular updates and advice in relation to security matters. The Jewish Council is the primary sponsor of the CSG and, in addition to providing significant direct financial support, elicits funds and equipment from other groups within the community as well as performing a mentoring role for the group.

As security issues become more troubling world-wide, this dedicated group of volunteers does an outstanding job of keeping our community safe, and deserve our fullest appreciation.

Diplomatic Relations with Israel

The New Zealand Jewish community has been strongly affected by the closing (due to fiscal cut-backs) of the Embassy of Israel in August 2002. Official Israeli representation strengthened the community's Zionism and helped in the public defence of Israel when required. The nearest Israeli diplomatic presence, for the last 3 years, has been in Australia (Canberra). There has been an Honorary Consul of Israel in Wellington – Mr David Zwartz, the immediate past President of the New Zealand Jewish Council. He has now resigned and no replacement has yet been appointed.

Conclusion

The Auckland Jewish Council has been very active and we should like to acknowledge the efforts from the entire executive: Peter Bruell, Dan Cohen, Stephen Goodman, Vicky Gross, Geoff Levy, Boris Lubetzky, Mike Nathan, and Edward Robinson. They have all made great contributions to the activity of the Auckland Jewish Council and assisted in what has been a successful year.

We trust that we can count on the support of the member organisations and the wider Jewish community for the year ahead. As an independent organisation we receive no money from any other community group or

organisation and are totally funded from contributions received from supporters. We, once again, ask for your continued financial support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Goodman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Goodman
Co-President
Auckland Jewish Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Levy', with a large initial 'G' and a flourish.

Geoff Levy
Co-President
Auckland Jewish Council



MACCABI AUSTRALIA REPORT TO ECAJ AGM NOVEMBER 2008

Maccabi Australia has continued to grow since I reported to you last year. We now have adopted the Maccabi Victoria by-line of “Connecting Our Community Through Sport”.

MACCABI AUSTRALIA BOARD

At our recent AGM, two new Members were elected onto the Board – Lisa Borowick and Dr Ilan Kogus. Lisa will be the new Treasurer and Ilan will head up the new portfolio of leadership development.

The rest of the Board consists of Harry Procel – President, Barry Smorgon – Chairman and Vice Presidents Tom Goldman OAM, Sam Parasol OAM, Michael Swibel and Helen Synman.

The next 12 months will pose a great challenge to our movement particularly with the innovative step of employing an Executive Director. The structure of the Board going forward will involve a much greater responsibility of each Board Member looking after particular departments/portfolios as per our Constitution.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Barry Smorgon has become the Chairman of this new committee which has been put in place to create a strategic direction for Maccabi Australia. It has been involved with development of fundraising plans, branding and corporate

identity whilst taking a holistic approach to the strategic direction of Maccabi Australia and its member states.

NATIONAL SPORT

6th Lawn Bowls Carnival Adelaide – December 2007

This annual event continues to provide a wonderful outlet for Jewish lawn bowlers. It is pleasing that the event was held this year in Adelaide where the Jewish community now numbers fewer than 1,000. It is hoped that the legacy from this event in Adelaide will be positive.

26th Junior Carnival – Auckland January 2008

Unfortunately Australian participation was lower than we expected and it seems that most of the participant's parents struggled with the idea of sending athletes to New Zealand as opposed to an interstate Carnival. Only 154 competitors in total participated at this well organised event at Kings College in Auckland.

27th Junior Carnival - Sydney January 2009

Early indications are that this will be another well attended Junior Sports Carnival. It is expected that between 700 and 1000 children will participate and the hub for the sporting events will be Moriah College. The Chairperson of the Organising Committee is Jackie Villensky.

28th Junior Carnival - Perth January 2010

Maccabi WA has already indicated that it wishes to conduct this event with an experienced group of young leaders.

INTERNATIONAL SPORT

Pan American Maccabi Games – Buenos Aires – December 2007

Australia sent a team of approximately 100 athletes, management and supporters to the 11th Pan American Games in Buenos Aires. This was a huge event with more than 3000 athletes from more than 20 countries participating. The Australian delegation was led by Lisa Borowick and the team performed extremely well, winning many medals over a wide range of sports.

18th Maccabiah Games – Israel July 2009

Preparation of the Australia delegation is well under way with Tom Goldman OAM being chosen as the Head of Delegation and Lisa Borowick as the General Manager. More than 70 officials have already been put in place. We have now completed our nomination process with more than 700 nominations for the team being received, and selections across many sports have already commenced. It is expected that the final number for the team will be approximately 400-450.

It is hoped that the Jewish students who will be involved in Shnat programs will again be able to attend the Opening Ceremony to support the Australian Team.

2nd Maccabi Australia International Games – Sydney December 2010

Following the success of the 1st Games in July 2006, Australia will be now making these Games a permanent fixture on the international Maccabi sports calendar, however following consultation with our International Friends we have decided to move the timing of the event to the Christmas holiday period to promote greater participation from the Northern Hemisphere. Jeff Houseman has been chosen as the Chairman of the Organising Committee and the sporting events will be once again held at Sydney Olympic Park

ASIA PACIFIC REGION

On behalf of Maccabi World Union, Maccabi Australia has begun to help develop this region. In Hong Kong we have already established 2 junior soccer teams

under the Maccabi banner. In October President Harry Procel will be visiting Shanghai with the view to beginning activity there also. It is hoped that both Hong Kong and Shanghai together with Singapore will be able to send delegations to our Junior Carnivals over the next few years.

CHALLENGE TOUR – ISRAEL APRIL 2009

Preparations have begun together with Access with the view to sending up to four participants to this All Abilities Tour organised by Maccabi Great Britain.

STATE MEMBERS

Victoria

This year the Leon Haskin Tennis Centre had its official opening, with over 300 people in attendance. There are 8 plexi-cushion courts and it is one of only 3 venues in Melbourne including Melbourne Park which are recognised as a practice venue for the Australian open.

Russell Jaffe recently completed four years of outstanding service as President of Maccabi Victoria. Maccabi Australia greatly appreciates the close working relationship we have had with Russell. Miles Clemans took over the Presidency at the Maccabi Victoria AGM in August.

New South Wales

This year Maccabi NSW became part of the NSW Jewish Communal Appeal. It is now one of 18 constituent members of this organisation.

The home of Maccabi administration in Sydney, the Hakoah Club was recently sold and Maccabi will be looking for a new home for its administration by May 2009. Maccabi NSW Executive is working actively with the Board of the Hakoah Club towards this end and to find a new home for many of its sporting Clubs.

Western Australia

Maccabi WA is preparing a Hall of Fame which will have its first induction in March 2009. They also conducted a successful Family Day in October 2007, the proceeds of which contributed towards the new change rooms at the Jewish Centre in Perth, which they hope to be completed by the end of 2008.

Queensland

Maccabi QLD continues to grow under the enthusiastic leadership of Josh and Gabby Magnus. Together with their Executive they are hoping to host a Junior Carnival in the next 3-4 years. This would be a very positive outcome considering the last Junior Carnival in Queensland was in 1989.

South Australia

As referred to earlier there was a lawn bowls event held in Adelaide. This together with some Junior Basketball activity is a positive sign for the continuity of Maccabi in this region.

CONCLUSION

Nationally we have over 8000 members and continue to grow. We see our role as a very important one not only for the benefit of our members but also for the benefit of the entire Jewish Community.

Harry Procel

President

COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT

By Josie Lacey, O.A.M.

During the past year, we have continued our participation in the various multi-ethnic and multi-religious organisations, and continued to develop our excellent relations with the various ethnic groups and religious bodies.

Freedom of Religion and Belief Project - HREOC Steering Group

I am an ad hoc member of the seven person HREOC Steering Group for the *Freedom of Religion and Belief Project*, the purpose of which is to provide expert advice, help ensure quality control and direction to the planning, conduct and completion of the project and report.

A Discussion Paper has been completed and there has been a call for submissions, due at the end of January and I hope that our community will participate. Information is available at www.humanrights.gov.au/frb, or by calling I (02) 9284 9600 or 1800 620 241. Submissions close on 31 January 2009, and the e-mail address is frb@humanrights.gov.au .

World Youth Day and the Papal visit

Some members of the NSW JBD met with the organisers to discuss the implications for the Jewish community, and particularly the enactment of the Stations of the Cross. As it turned out, after further discussion and correspondence, the presentation and the accompanying commentary were reasonably well crafted to meet our major concerns. I believe that the sympathetic hearing which we received illustrates the importance of the atmosphere of goodwill which has been built up through cordial relationships over the years.

Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence, Rabbi Geoffrey Kamins, Robert Goot, David Knoll, Rabbi Zalman Kastel, John Landerer, and I, as well as two youth delegates, Judith Levitan and Josh Levin were received by the Pope at an interfaith event for forty people.

An interfaith forum entitled "Australians all, face to face and faith to faith: multi-faith communities heading in the right direction" was presented by the Apostolic Nuncio to Egypt, Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald. It included key responses from Australian Jewish (David Knoll), Islamic (Ikebal Patel), Buddhist and Hindu (Mataji) leaders and community groups. A panel of twenty young (under 35 is young) people of different faiths participated. We were represented on the panel by members of the Orthodox (Judth Levitan) and Progressive (Rabbi Paul Jacobson) traditions.

International Council for Christians and Jews

At International Conference of ICCJ held in Jerusalem this last July, Dr Deborah Weissman of Jerusalem was elected international president. I met with Deborah during our visit to Israel in September.

Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils ("FECCA")

Jewish participation in the Ethnic and Multicultural Councils in the various states has been very valuable for our community. We have personal contact and friendship with the leadership of a wide range of ethnic groups, working together on a number of issues, including matters of specific importance to the Jewish community.

In NSW our presence at the ECC has been helpful in arranging meetings between the Board and representatives of various ethnic groups. It is also a base for issuing invitations to the representatives of a number of ethnic communities to the Yom Ha'atzma'ut cocktail party and other functions. I continue as a Vice-

Chairperson of the ECC of NSW and as Adviser to FECCA on Interfaith issues,
and Ian is Legal Adviser to FECCA.

Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations (APRO)

In my capacity as Interfaith Adviser to FECCA, I was actively engaged together with a Baha'i colleague in the conception and organisation of the APRO Media forum held in August at the NSW Parliament House. I chaired the first session of the forum and, Natalie Mobini – Keshar chaired the second session of the Baha'i community.

The Forum was entitled "Why good news doesn't make good news", and it was addressed by APRO President Associate Professor Abd Malak, Barney Zwartz of *The Age*, Rachael Kohn, John Cleary and Stephen Crittenden of the ABC, Paula Masselos of SBS, and Jack Herman of the Press Council.

Community speakers included Jeremy Jones and leading representatives of the Baha'i Community, the Buddhist Council of Queensland, the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, the Sikh Association of Sydney, the Hindu Council of Australia and the Uniting Church.

The Hon Barbara Perry MP, NSW Minister Assisting the Premier on Citizenship, gave the concluding address.

World Council of Religions for Peace

I remain a member of the NSW Executive of the WCRP, which meets regularly at Parliament House, and which is a point of contact with the representatives of the various religious groups.

Parliament of World Religions

The Parliament is to be held in Melbourne at the end of 2009, and 8-12 thousand participants are expected. It will come just a few months after the UN Durban II anti-racism conference. At present it appears that Tony Blair will be one of the keynote speakers, and we are to expect both Rabbi David Rosen and Tariq Ramadan to attend.

At the request of the secretariat of the PWR I convened a round table meeting with CEO Dirk Ficca on the 14th March in the boardroom of the NSWJBD. The meeting was attended by Rabbis Jeremy Lawrence of the Great Synagogue, Zalman Kastel of Chabad, and Jeffrey Kamins of the Emanuel Synagogue, together with Jeremy Jones AM, Vic Alhadeff, Jessica Roth, President of AUJS, Josie Lacey OAM, and Robin Margo SC.

Nina Bassat continues to play an important role as the sole Jewish representative on the Steering Committee which meets regularly in Melbourne.

Abraham Conferences

Conferences of Islamic, Christian and Jewish participants again took place this year in Melbourne and Sydney.

This year's theme at the Sydney Conference was Reconciliation, and an excellent address on Jewish aspects of the topic and Jewish contributions to Aboriginal reconciliation was delivered by Justice Stephen Rothman.

A warm relationship has continued between all the members of the steering committee, which includes the Affinity Intercultural Foundation, the Sydney Catholic Archdiocese, the Columban Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations, the Uniting Church Sydney Synod, and the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

Centrelink Information Sheet

In May/June of this year in consultation, I prepared a rewrite of an internal fact sheet on Judaism for Centrelink following the correspondence below. The original factsheet was inappropriate. I thank Rabbi John Levi for his helpful advice.

Hi Josie,

"The Multicultural Services Branch recently received a request to develop an internal fact sheet on Judaism, outlining the implications for Centrelink; particular in relation to religious obligations. The purpose of the fact sheet is to provide a broad overview on Judaism and reinforce the message that staff should be exercising religious sensitivity when interacting with customers who are from a diverse cultural and/or religious background.

I understand that you are an executive member of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, the peak Jewish community organisation in NSW. As you come so highly recommended, we seek your input on the fact sheet prior to internal clearance. Could you please comment on the content and accuracy of the information? Your input would be greatly valued.

"Happy to discuss Regards, Hanadi

"Heads of Churches" Statement on Israel

Ian and I met with Professor Michael Stone in Jerusalem this September of this year, and I once again expressed our gratitude to Professor I Stone for his most valuable intervention in helping to deal with the Statement. Michael is Professor Emeritus of Comparative Religion and Armenian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He will be visiting Australia shortly and I will arrange a meeting in my home with representatives of the Armenian community as I did on a previous occasion.

Another aspect of the Statement was the quite intense antagonism towards Israel and anti-Semitism displayed by some of the participants on their websites, which is a cause for concern, although some of the more outrageous manifestations have since been withdrawn. Two examples below:

LITTLE TO CHEER FOR AS ISRAEL TURNS 60 - Kevin Bray

Dr Kevin Bray is chair of Australians for Justice and Peace in Palestine and of the Canberra Ecumenical Working Group on Palestine-Israel.

"The tragic story of Palestinians' dispossession (a postwar terra nullius) and its outrageous, continuing aftermath (death, imprisonment, poverty, denial of human rights, confiscation of property, illness, dehumanisation, brutalisation and lack of access to resources) are well documented by many...Excluding Nazi

genocide, the parallels with many of the horrors recalled at Yad Vashem are striking...

While we should condemn suicide bombings, rockets and other forms of violence, and mourn the loss of innocent Israeli lives, we can surely understand the utter hopelessness that drives young Palestinians to such extremities...While Hamas extremism cannot be condoned, nor can Israel's deliberate (and far more devastating) collective terrorism against the whole Gazan (and wider Palestinian) population.

This brings us back to the Rudd/Nelson motion that celebrated Israel's 60th year and failed to condemn the occupation and misery experienced by Palestinians. It was an outrage, and should not have been offered in the name of an Australia that believes in a fair go."

Visit to Yad Vashem: Rod Benson

Rev Rod Benson is an "ethicist and public theologian" with the Tinsley Institute. The offensive section was removed from his blog following ECAJ objection to the piece.

Today (Monday 10 Dec 2007) we moved from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, with important diversions. The first was a visit to Yad Vashem, the permitted to take pictures inside the museum.

Second, having heard many stories from the lips of present-day suffering Palestinians and concerned Israelis, Yad Vashem is testimony to the fact that Israel has failed to learn from its most painful 20th-century heritage. History repeats its worst as well as its best. The tragic irony is that what was perpetrated against European Jews by Nazis in the 1930s and 1940s is very similar to what is being perpetrated against Palestinian Arabs by elements within the Israeli political and military elite today. Indeed it is arguable that the same reprehensible ideology is at play and appears unstoppable.

Critics may denounce me for making the connection, on several grounds, and it

is politically incorrect to speak these words from the cultural perspective I inherit. Yet I have no doubt that the connection between the practices of extremist Nazism and extremist Zionism is valid. Of course there are differences too: the most obvious of which are that European Jews did not employ suicide bombers to make their political points; and that the Israeli apparatus of oppression and suppression is vastly more sophisticated than anything the Nazis used.”

National Dialogues

I continue to participate in the ECAJ the National Dialogue of Muslims, Christians and Jews, as well as the as the annual dialogue with the Uniting Church which Jeremy Jones chairs for the ECAJ.

Josie Lacey OAM



A group of organisers, speakers and attendees at the 2008 Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations Media Forum at Parliament House Sydney

REPORT TO THE ECAJ, NOVEMBER 2008

**Peta Jones Pellach,
Interfaith Consultant**

The following activities were undertaken in my capacity as ECAJ consultant.

February: Keynote speaker at Asia-Pacific Interfaith Symposium on *Women, Faith and a Culture of Peace* at Griffith University

February: ANDCMJ (Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews) meeting

April: Dialogue with the Uniting Church in Sydney – presentation on Pesach

June: Limmud-Oz – session on 'Speaking as a Jew', describing interfaith activities, very well attended

July: World Youth Day activities –

1. Organised session for 'pilgrims' staying at Shalom College, with presentations by Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence and myself.
2. Organised 4 representatives from Moriah College to participate in preparatory event at Santa Sabina College, Strathfield

September: Jewish speaker at September 11th event of the Cantenian Society, at St Mary's Cathedral, *One God in a Divided World*

October:

1. Jewish speaker at Faith and Ecology Network event (invitation by NSWJBD)
2. ANDCMJ consultancy for Parliament of World Religions
3. ANDCMJ meeting at Shalom College

November: Dialogue with the Uniting Church on *Sin and Repentance*, in Melbourne

In addition, I undertook a number of activities that informed/ complemented my role with the ECAJ.

April: During my visit to Israel, I consulted with members of International Council of Christians and Jews

May: In Washington DC, participated in the Annual Conference of the American Jewish Committee – many sessions on interfaith dialogue, under leadership of Rabbi David Rosen.

Attended session with Abdurrahman Wahid at Georgetown University, jointly hosted by university and corporate sponsors, through invitation by Racelle Weiman.

**Interfaith and Public Diplomacy Report for the 2008 Annual Meeting
of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry**

Jeremy Jones AM

The Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims & Jews

I am grateful to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry for giving me the opportunity to continue as Co-Convenor of the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims & Jews.

During the period in review, there were five meetings completed, with a fifth scheduled to take place between the time of the preparation of this report and the 2008 ECAJ Annual Meeting. This was welcome activity after a hiatus in the meeting schedule resulting from an internal dispute within the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils. During the period between meetings, there was also active contact with AFIC and National Council of Churches in Australia representatives on a range of issues.

The meetings generally address a specific theme, as well as providing the opportunity to canvass issues affecting one or more of the participating communities. In the year in review, we completed a cycle of discussions on the way in which values are transmitted between generations, with participation from young adults from the communities.

We also had a series of discussions exploring what the Faiths say about what happens after death to Believers and to others. ECAJ participants in the discussions were ECAJ Life Members Jeremy Jones and Josie Lacey, Rabbis Jeff Kamins and Jeremy Lawrence, Councillors Yair Miller and Peter Wertheim, Education Consultant Peta Pellach, and Etty Ayalon, Leanne Donde and Slava Inberg. The ECAJ President is an ex officio member of the ECAJ representation.

The ANDCMJ also took up a number of matters relating to religion and society. Letters were written on subjects including the scheduling of the 2020 summit on Pesach (attachment 1) and the Parliamentary Apology to Indigenous Australians (attachment 2). There was also considerable discussion on international interfaith activity and the contribution we can make, as three faiths, to national and international affairs.

At the request of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Thailand, I organised a small group of Jewish, Christian and Muslim representatives to meet a delegation of Thai Muslims and Buddhists. The venue selected, The Great Synagogue Sydney, was conducive to a wide-ranging and constructive conversation which included a worthwhile discussion on Islamic-Jewish issues.

The ANDCMJ is also consulted, from time to time, by Government when it seeks a view on interfaith matters, although in the past year APRO (see below) has become an additional reference point.

I have had the opportunity to talk about the work of ANDCMJ and Australian Jewry's interfaith activity at a number of significant international conferences, in Australia and overseas, during the period in review. The Australian Government and the European Union, the co-hosts of the inaugural Australia/Pacific/Europe Youth Interfaith Forum invited me to speak on a range of issues, including the achievements of the ANDCMJ, in Perth in December 2007. This was highly significant, as a majority of participants from Asia had never met a Jewish person and I was able to promote Dialogue while answering many questions on Judaism and the Jewish people. I also place on record the significant contributions by the two Jewish delegates, Dara Podjarski from Australia and Tobia Zevi from Italy.

At the Second World Peace Forum in Jakarta, there was also a great deal of interest in both the ANDCMJ and Dialogue in Australia in general. It was clear that many participants were sceptical towards, or against, relations between

their own faiths and Jews, but were forced to reevaluate their prejudices in the light of the Australian experience and the warmth of the relationships which have developed on the personal level.

I also had the opportunity to discuss the ANDCMJ at the International Scholars Abrahamic Trialogue in Jordan and also at the working sessions of the Jewish People's Policy Planning Institute, two organisations I participate in ad personam.

The ANDCMJ is recognised internationally as an example of "best practice" in Dialogue. The ANDCMJ and other ECAJ dialogue programmes have brought great credit to the Australian Jewish community and to Australia generally. I thank the ECAJ for giving me the privilege of playing a part in this work.

Uniting Church in Australia/ECAJ National Dialogue

18 Years ago, then ECAJ President Leslie Caplan AM (z.l.) oversaw the establishment of a formal National Dialogue between the ECAJ and the Uniting Church in Australia. The impetus for the establishment of the Dialogue was action by members of the UCA which had created enormous tension between the ECAJ and the UCA. Calm and intelligent leadership by Leslie Caplan and the moderator of the UCA, Rev Dr D'Arcy Wood, brought these two national peak bodies together in which has proven to be a long, constructive journey together to a point of growing understanding and respect.

I was a member of the very first ECAJ component in the Dialogue and continue to co-chair meetings.

In the period in review, ECAJ participants in the Dialogue have been ECAJ Honorary Life Members Josie Lacey and Jeremy Jones, Rabbis Ralph Genende,

Phillip Heilbrunn, Jeremy Lawrence, David Freedman, Paul Jacobson and Gersh Zylberman, Grahame Leonard, Peta Pellach and Shomrit Nothman.

The meeting in Melbourne in November 2007 covered the topics 'What Happens After We Die?' and 'How Do We Talk about G'd Credibly in a Post-Modern World?'. Rabbi Ralph Genende led discussion on the first topic and Josie Lacey on the second.

The Meeting in April 2008, in the UCA offices in Sydney, covered Easter/Passover and continued the discussion on talking about religious concepts in contemporary Australia, with major presentations from Rabbi Lawrence, Peta Pellach and Rabbi Kamins.

As well as discussing this issue, the Dialogue members discussed the nature and development of the Jewish community and the UCA.

The Dialogues have evolved to include religious studies and a general discussion. Text studies have invariably lead to intellectual and philosophical discussions which help us develop deep mutual identity and respect.

The general discussions often include questions on Israel, antisemitism, international affairs or other issues which it is important to discuss frankly and openly in an environment of trust and goodwill.

We have now completed 26 Dialogues and there is every indication that the process, which has had an impact far beyond the individuals who participate in it, will continue well into the future.

Anglican Jewish Australian Dialogue

Grahame Leonard is the Chair nominated by the ECAJ of the AJAD. The AJAD had its fourth meeting just prior to the 2007 ECAJ Annual Meeting. The meeting had a full and constructive agenda, with many matters of importance to the

relationship between the Anglican Communion and Australian Jewry discussed, covering areas where we work well together and including some which are rarely discussed at such forums, such as political activism masquerading as religious advocacy and relations of each group with other faiths.

The Dialogue was temporarily suspended due to the retirement of Grahame's co- convenor Dr. Ray Cleary AM. Grahame reports that "the Anglican Primate of Australia Dr. Phillip Aspinall has confirmed that a replacement will shortly be advised and that the dialogue will resume in early 2009. Meantime we have succeeded in extending the dialogue to the grass roots of both communities and the initial Inaugural Joint Dinner will take place in Melbourne on 20 November 2008."

Annual Conversation of Australian Catholic Bishop's Committee and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry

It was my privilege to continue to serve as the ECAJ Co-Chair of the Annual Conversation of the ECAJ with the Australian Catholic Bishop's Committee.

The Annual Conversations, which commenced in 1998, have always proven to be constructive in furthering the dialogue in Australia, for providing input into global Catholic-Jewish dialogue and for building a firm friendship grounded in intellectual, personal and theological mutual respect.

In 2008, there was no formal conversation as the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, for the second year. In 2007 the ACBC organised a major international activity which was set at the scheduled time of past Conversations and which also involved the Jewish Community. The central event was a day-long congress at NSW

Parliament House to discuss "The Role of Religion in Achieving Peace in the Middle East". The ACBC brought Archbishop Chacour, Melkite Catholic Archbishop of Akka (Acre), Haifa, Nazareth and all Galilee, and Dr Mohommad

Sammak, secretary-general of the Lebanese Christian-Muslim Committee for Dialogue and secretary general of the Islamic Spiritual Council in Lebanon, to Australia to address the event, and as none of the Israeli invitees were able to come to Australia for the event I was asked to represent the Jewish viewpoint.

During the past year, the World Catholic Youth Day and the Papal visit Jewish community have, in an unprecedented way, exchanged information, news and analyses to better assist in mutual understanding.

It is envisaged that an Annual Conversation will take place in 2009, adding momentum to an important relationship.

Public Diplomacy

In addition to contributing to the ECAJ decision-making process as Honorary Life Member, I have continued to both represent the ECAJ and promote its activities in a number of domestic and international contexts, generally as ECAJ-designated co-convenor of a number of formal interfaith dialogues and as its expert analyst of antisemitism

As the ECAJ-designated representative on the Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations, I participated in a number of committee meetings and was a Plenary Panel speaker at the Religion and Media Forum held at NSW Parliament House on August 25. In my presentation, I shared experiences as a media spokesperson for first the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and later with the ECAJ, as well as my work as a journalist for JTA, The Jerusalem Report and Australia/Israel Review. My presentation was well-received at a function which, to a large part due to the efforts of ECAJ Life Member Josie Lacey OAM, was impressive and successful.

Ad personam or due to my professional position with AIJAC, I have represented Australian Jewry and been able to brief opinion-shapers and legislators on the work of the ECAJ in a variety of areas, but most often in regard to the ECAJ's

programme of interfaith dialogue and the Racial Hatred cases prosecuted through the Federal Court.

For example, in February, I was a participant in The Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism, hosted by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. I have participated in every meeting of The Global Forum and was a plenary speaker at the 2008 Forum, which was also (for the first time) attended by representatives of B'nai Brith and the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. There was a great deal of interest in the cases under Australia's racial hatred Act, the attitude of the Government to Al Manar, relations with Christians and Muslims and the position on Australian campuses. There was also a special, invitation-only, working session on the Durban Review process, at which I spoke and conveyed the position of the ECAJ.

I was appointed to the Global Committee, which works on specific projects between meeting, with other members coming from Israel, the US, Canada and the UK.

Throughout the period in review, I also received a number of requests to assist university students researching matters relating directly or indirectly to the activities of the ECAJ during the past twenty years. I have done what I have been able to do to assist research, in the belief that the ECAJ's outstanding contribution to our community, to Australia and world Jewry should be both documented and recognised as one of remarkable achievement.

Jeremy Jones AM

October 2008

Attachment 1:

* * * Australian National Dialogue * * of Christians, Muslims & Jews

The Hon Kevin Rudd MP
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
ACT 2600
11 February 2008

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to express our concern at the date selected by the Federal government for holding the 2020 Conference, which falls within the Jewish festival of Pesach (Passover) between 19 and 27 April 2008. Australians who observe the Jewish faith will therefore be precluded from attending and taking part in the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference, as stated by the government, is to undertake broad, long-term planning for Australia and its people, focusing on themes that bear most directly upon the nation's future. As the Conference and its outcomes will be relevant to the lives of all Australians, regardless of religion, it is vital that no part of the Australian community is excluded, or is made to feel excluded. By effectively excluding observant Jews from the Conference, the government will deny them the opportunity to enhance the quality of its deliberations, and will also compromise the integrity of the event as a truly national undertaking embracing all parts of the Australian community.

Although the government has asserted that observant Jews will be able to make their contribution to Australia's long-term planning other than by direct participation in the Conference itself, through written submissions or other mechanism, the Conference will provide participants with an opportunity for a direct and free-flowing interchange of ideas which will not be available through other mechanisms.

Prime Minister, we pride ourselves on being an inclusive, tolerant and multi-faith community that encourages co-operation and mutual respect among all citizens and we urge you to reconsider the matter carefully and set another date for the Conference that will ensure that all Australians who may be invited to contribute to it are able to attend.

The Conference will be discussing plans that will be important to Australia for many years to come. A delay of several weeks or months is surely a small price to pay to ensure that this important event truly encompasses the entire nation.

Yours sincerely

Three handwritten signatures in grey ink are displayed horizontally. The first signature on the left is 'Ikebal Patel', the middle one is 'Graeme Mundine', and the one on the right is 'Jeremy Jones'.

Ikebal Patel (Australian Federation of Islamic Councils),
Graeme Mundine (National Council of Churches in Australia),
Jeremy Jones AM (Executive Council of Australian Jewry)

Attachment 2

* * * Australian National Dialogue * * of Christians, Muslims & Jews

The Hon Kevin Rudd MP
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliament House
ACT 2600
21 February 2008

Dear Prime Minister,

The Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims & Jews welcomes the apology offered to Indigenous Australians by the Federal Government last week in Parliament. Faith communities in Australia have long held hope that our Federal Parliament could acknowledge the past and the pain that many of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters have suffered.

An apology to the Stolen Generations as recommended in the 1997 'Bringing Them Home Report' is an important part of the process of Reconciliation. The apology should be seen not as an end to the Reconciliation process, but rather as the beginning of a new chapter in the quest by Indigenous Australians for complete equality with their fellow Australians.

We see the apology as a significant landmark in the ongoing pursuit of justice for Indigenous Australian comparable to the 1967 Referendum decision and the 1992 judgment of the High Court in the Mabo case.

This apology has created an atmosphere of hope and forgiveness that allows for the possibility of real advancement along the journey to Reconciliation.

The Prime Minister's plan for action, as outlined in his speech, is particularly welcomed. In particular, we congratulate the Prime Minister on recognising the need to set time bound and measurable goals.

We applaud Parliament's leadership and hope that our elected leaders will continue to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to ensure that past mistakes are not repeated and that Indigenous peoples are enabled to create their own solutions. Their voices must never be silenced again.

We call on all Australians to reflect upon the words of the Prime Minister last week and to honestly examine our own heart and conscience to recognise where we continue to fail our fellow Australians.

We too must act to diminish the many disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in our common lives.

We recognise the responsibility of each of us to act as "our brothers' keepers". We affirm that the human rights of any one Australian should be the concern of all Australians.

We reiterate our ongoing commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Australians; to a multiculturalism that draws people into Australian life rather than separating them from it; and to an Australia that is inclusive for all Australians.

The image shows three handwritten signatures in blue ink. From left to right: the first signature is 'Ikebal Patel' with a stylized flourish; the second is 'John Henderson' in a cursive script; and the third is 'Jeremy Jones' with a large, bold initial 'J'.

Ikebal Patel (Australian Federation of Islamic Councils),

John Henderson (National Council of Churches in Australia),

Jeremy Jones AM (Executive Council of Australian Jewry)

EDUCATION ADVISOR'S REPORT TO ECAJ OCTOBER 2008

By Susi Brieger OAM

National History Curriculum and the Task Force_for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education and Remembrance.

We developed a Position Paper in which we proposed the inclusion of a 'cogent and effective unit on the teaching of racism, racial hatred and genocide' and within that a case study of the Holocaust. We argued that the inclusion of the topic within the National Curriculum would provide the educational infrastructure to enable Australia to become a member of The Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education and Remembrance. This Paper built on the work of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies under the Presidency of David Knoll and during my tenure as Chair of the Education Committee.

A copy of the Paper was sent to the Minister for Education The Hon Julia Gillard. On her advice I met the Head of Curriculum Branch in Canberra to whom we subsequently sent a range of resources developed by the Sydney Jewish Museum as an example of the material that the Australian Jewish community is able to provide for the proposed units of study.

At the meeting we suggested that we could prepare a base line study of what is being offered in the area of Holocaust education across Australia. A paper was prepared several years ago by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and this could be further developed by the Secretariat and used as a basis for further investigation of the education landscape.

The Position Paper was also sent to Professor Barry McGaw, Chair of the National Curriculum Board. We are still awaiting a response.

The National History Forum to solicit input into the Framing Paper was scheduled for October 15. As this was the second day of Sukkot Jewish Schools across Australia were unable to be represented. A letter was sent by The Hon Justice Stephen Rothman AM as Co Chair of the NSW Coordinating Committee of Jewish Day Schools to request an opportunity for the Co Chair of the Committee (Susi Brieger) to meet the Chair of the History Forum, Professor McIntyre.

Susi Brieger as Co Chair of the NSW Coordinating Committee of Jewish Day Schools is a member of the AISNSW National Curriculum Reference Committee. The inability of Jewish representation due to the Festival of Sukkot was also noted by the Association of Independent Schools on our behalf.

At the same time, the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies through the Education Secretariat is continuing its efforts towards affecting a review of the NSW History Syllabus Years 7-10.

There has been no further development in regard to Australia's membership of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education and Remembrance.

Secure Schools Program

Member schools of the Australian Council of Jewish Schools were among schools invited by the Government to complete a self assessment security questionnaire. Key assistance was provided by the Communal Security Groups in NSW and Victoria.

Computers in Schools Plan

A number of Jewish Day Schools across Australia have been successful in their application for funding for Computers.

Sadly, Jewish Schools across Australia lost a dedicated advocate this year with the passing of Ian Rockman. We will miss his contribution to Jewish education in Australia.

Susi Brieger OAM

13/10/08