



South Bucks  
Jewish  
Community

# ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013

SBJC BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st AUGUST 2013

<u>Assets</u>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>BANK ACCOUNTS</b>		
<u>General Fund</u>		
Current Account - TSB Including Adj	£5,621	£8,607
Deposit Account - TSB	£476	£476
Reserve Account - Santander	£47,087	£47,157
	<u>£53,184</u>	<u>£56,240</u>
 <u>Building Fund</u>		
Natwest Incl Adjustment	£248	£248
Barclays	£46,333	£0
HSBC	£24	£24
Santander	£5,217	£6,167
Scottish Widows Bank	£46,598	£47,225
Virgin Bank		£46,892
Bath Building Society	£43,350	£45,024
	<u>£141,770</u>	<u>£145,580</u>
 Debtors (Subs & other income received in advance) (Note 1)	<b>-£6,162</b>	<b>-£384</b>
Creditors (Cheques not cashed) (Note 2)		<b>-£5,088</b>
 <u>Other Assets</u>		
Religious Regalia	£6,553	£6,553
 <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	 <b>£195,345</b>	 <b>£202,902</b>
 Represented by		
<b>General Fund</b>	£53,575	£57,322
<b>Building Fund</b>	£141,770	£145,580
	<u>£195,345</u>	<u>£202,902</u>

South Bucks Jewish Community (SBJC)  
Income and Expenditure Account  
For the Year ending 31st Augst 2013

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Subscriptions	£35,937	£35,197
Donation / Other Income	£25,163	£36,897
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£61,100</b>	<b>£72,094</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Rabbi Office	£38,676	£40,294
Other Expenses	£27,507	£28,053
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£66,183</b>	<b>£68,347</b>
Surplus / (Deficit)	-£5,083	£3,747
General Fund Brought Forward	£58,658	£53,575
General Fund Carried Forward	<u>£53,575</u>	<u>£57,322</u>

SBJC Income and Expenditure For the Year Ending 31st Augsut 2013

		<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>2012/2013</b>
		Last Year	Full Year
<b>INCOME</b>			
	Subscriptions	35,937.00	35,196.65
	Donation	10,247.00	10,262.64
	Kol Nidre	440.00	3,465.00
Note 2	Gift Aid	8,880.00	10,421.07
	Cheder fees	2,691.00	1,752.00
	HHD Tickets	490.00	555.00
	Fund Raising	1,297.00	1,449.00
	Funeral & Burial fees	0.00	6,720.72
	Calendar	0.00	37.00
	Grant	0.00	350.00
	Miscellaneous Income	1,031.00	1,700.46
	Bank Interest	87.00	0.16
	Fund Raising w/ Match	0.00	183.82
	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>61,100.00</b>	<b>72,093.52</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Note 4	Rabbi's Office	38,676.00	40,293.63
	Funeral / Burial Fees	7,162.20	10,394.82
	L J Capitation	4,822.00	5,123.25
	Cheder Saalries/Hall and Costs	7,052.00	6,477.30
	LJ other	2,807.00	225.00
	Friends House	1,412.00	1,438.50
	Other halls	514.00	1,171.25
Note 3	Kol Nidre donation	440.00	400.00
	Hagephen	207.66	0.00
	Fund raising costs	489.00	499.26
	Insurance	844.00	847.08
	Photocopying	240.00	216.00
	Miscellaneous + Admin.	829.00	600.14
	Advertising/Mrketing	0.00	186.00
	Bank charges	315.00	328.46
	Contingencies / Adjustments	373.14	0.00
	Pesach/Shavuot/Others Holidays	0.00	146.23
	<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>	<b>66,183.00</b>	<b>68,346.92</b>
Surplus / (Deficit)		<b>-5,083.00</b>	<b>3,746.60</b>

South Bucks Jewish Community (SBJC)  
Building Fund Accounts  
For the Year ending 31st Augst 2013

	<b>2013</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Donation	2,086.24
Bank Interest	1,723.89
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>£3,810</u></b>
General Fund Brought Forward	£141,770
General Fund Carried Forward	<u>£145,580</u>

Notes on the Financial Statements for the year ending 31st August 2013

The basis of accounting is the Cash Receipts and Payments made

1 Notwithstanding monthly accounts are prepared on a Cash Basis, the year end has been prepared on a competency basis. Non cash movements were reflected in Debtors and Creditors

2 Gift Aid attributable to Member's subscriptions of previous year	£ 8,367.64
Gift Aid claimed from donations to the General Fund and donations to the Building Fund	£ 2,053.43
Total Gift Aid	£ 10,421.07

3 Kol Nidre Donation	£ 400.00
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4 The Rabbi Office expenditure includes salaries, tax, expenses and synagogue expenses	£ 40,293.63
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## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the South Bucks Jewish Community will be held at Ley Hill Primary School, Ley Hill, Chesham, Bucks

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2014**

**11:00 - 12:30**

**Please arrive by 10:45**

**Beverages and biscuits will be available**

### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome by Chairperson
2. Attendance and Apologies
3. Reading and approval of Minutes of the 2013 AGM
4. Reports
  - A Chairperson: Review of the Year
  - B Treasurer: Accounts to 31st August 2013
  - C Rabbi's Report
5. Election of Chairperson & Council
6. Election of Auditor
7. Any Other Business (AOB)



**SOUTH BUCKS JEWISH COMMUNITY**  
**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at 11.00 a.m.**  
**at Ley Hill School**

**Present:** Bobby & Alec Benjamin, Sue & Tom Bloch, Helen & Alvin Cohen, David Collett, Louise Cook, Anita Epstein, Raymond & Julia Freeman, Gerard Geneen, Vanessa Harker, Eli Kling, Amanda McFeeters, Alon Moss, Gill Parker, Marianne & Jorge Rososchansky, Ellen Salazar, Tricia & David Silverstone, Julian Stevens, Wallace Wormley

**In attendance:** Robin Moss

**1. Welcome by Chairperson**

Amanda opened the meeting with a warm welcome and emphasised how much Rabbi Rachel is missed whilst she is on sabbatical. With the help of our own Lay readers and visiting Rabbis services and activities were continuing well.

**2. Apologies**

Henry Amar, Ralph & Barbara Baer, Neville Belinfante, Rabbi Rachel, Harry Davies, Ruth & Graham Fowler, Sally Geneen, Ella & Philip Goodwin, Ruth Harris, Neville Levy, Marc Mendoza, Nicola & Paul Nathan, David & Amanda Sacker, Estelle & Ian Sollen, Dick Vardy

**3. Reading and approval of Minutes of the 2012 AGM**

The minutes were read and approved as a true record.

**4. Reports**

Chairperson: Review of the year.

Amanda highlighted some of the past and forthcoming activities:

Adult Ed continues with the Torah breakfasts. The recent Tu B'shvat Torah breakfast and service run by Rabbi Sandra Kviat was very well attended. It was noted by Alec Benjamin that the regular Torah breakfasts require a great deal of preparative work by the Rabbi and they aren't as well attended.

We will continue to try to hold monthly social events. Forthcoming events include a film afternoon by courtesy of the Cohen's on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> February and, on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March, a Debate hosted again by the Amar's.

The Book Club continues successfully.

Vision – Amanda explained the need to increase our membership by 30 families in order to try to meet the ultimate goal of a building of our own. Strategies include distributing business cards and posters to local organisations and all members to be invited to help with the membership drive.

Marketing – The website has been overhauled by Anita and Dick and maintained by Jacqueline Cohen.

Weekly Email – Isobel sends out the weekly Email which has been made more accessible by Dan Jay. Articles for the weekly Email should be written exactly as they are required to be presented in the Email. To enable easier access to attachments the format to be PDF.

**Action**



The link with LJ has been maintained giving us links to opportunities such as the possible chance of obtaining a portable arc.

Membership - Amanda stressed the importance of paying subscriptions on time and asked for a volunteer to help Julia with membership once a month. David Collett and Louise Cook have offered to help.

### **Education: Report by Robin Moss**

Robin gave a brief résumé of the developments this year.

The 3 year programme consisting of 6 modules is progressing well.

There is more emphasis on Hebrew which is now included in the Jewish Studies programme.

A question basket has been introduced whereby Rachel & Robin invite the children to place questions with a Jewish theme in a basket which will be answered by them.

The KT programme has been re-launched.

Regular activities include: 6 family mornings per year; an annual bowling trip; Mitzvah Day; 3 parent coffee mornings

Gan is held once a month – Debbie has handed over the leadership to Sally Geneen with the help of Karen Levy.

Challenges/Goals – To maintain and increase numbers, attendance has been stable but this year numbers have reduced; to sustain good quality lessons during Rachel's sabbatical.

Robin expressed his appreciation to several people who contribute to running a successful Cheder: Teachers: James and Yudit; Helpers: Zac, Phoebe and Beccy; Eli for administration; all parent helpers; supply teachers: Anita, David S. and Ruth H; Gan – Debbie, Sally and Karen L; Amanda for her constant support and Rabbi Rachel for her drive and enthusiasm.

Robin was thanked for his excellent leadership.

Questions:

- Could the whole community be invited to join some Cheder events and could reports of some activities be available to the community? Robin offered to present an Education Report for each Council meeting. Amanda will ensure that, where appropriate, activities will be included in the weekly Email either as a forthcoming event for the whole community or as a report of an event.
- Could Gan be a tool to raise membership? Gan allows non-members to attend in the hope that they will continue to Cheder. All Cheder families are required to be members.

Thanks to Robin for the report.

### **Treasurer: Accounts to 31st August 2012**

The Accounts were noted and David highlighted major points: As income is less than expenditure and in order to survive, David expressed the need for donations. We have in the past been given grants and we are currently re-applying for the Eranda grant. Helen added that people may find it easier to pay a donation as a monthly payment.

It was noted that a fundraising event hadn't taken place for a while and Helen suggested that as had been previously run, a bric-a-brac stall at a Country Fayre is a good way to raise funds. To be discussed at Council.



**Rabbi's report** - noted

**R&P Report – Report noted.** As the R&P Committee membership has reduced to 3 or 4, community members will be asked to take on specific tasks at each event.

5. **Election of Council Members**

Proposed members with possible positions:

Amanda - Chair

David Silverstone - Vice-Chair

Jorge Rososchansky - Treasurer

Julia Freeman - Secretary/Membership

Raymond Freeman - Security

Marc Mendoza - Finance/Marketing

Gill Parker – Chair of R&P

Wallace Wormley - Marketing/Publicity

Members of the Council proposed by Eli Kling

Seconded by Julian Stevens

Agreed by majority

6. **Election of Auditor**

Danny Baker has agreed to continue as Auditor.

Proposed by David Collett

Seconded by Raymond Freeman

Agreed by majority

7. **Constitution**

The Constitution has been updated to include Associate membership and mixed burials.

Proposed by Gill Parker

Seconded by Wallace Wormley

Agreed by majority

8. **AOB**

Ellen thanked everyone for the tremendous support she received towards the fundraising event and her Batmitzvah.

Membership list – A request was made that the membership list be altered to facilitate easier reading. The selected membership list to include all members unless they object and re-distributed providing this is in line with Data Protection.

FMH – David reported that FMH may be out of use for a period of approximately 3 to 4 months whilst their building work takes place. There is a possibility of an alternative FMH situated in Chesham – to be confirmed. FMH have invited us to make a donation to the extensive building project. It was suggested that they be a recipient at the next Kol Nidre appeal.

Hagaphen – Nicola will be stepping down from editing Hagaphen so a replacement will be needed. A request was made to revert back to paper copies. Council to consider this and the future of Hagaphen.

Seder – Places at Seder will need to be booked and paid for in advance. No late



requests will be accepted.

Amanda expressed appreciation to all members who help with so many activities and events.

## CHAIR'S REPORT

Looking back over the past year, I was surprised by how much has happened.

I started the year by attending a Shabbaton in Eastbourne. Representatives of LJ communities and other Jewish communities local to Eastbourne met to share a Shabbat morning service, and then to take part in various workshops. I attended one workshop on welcoming mixed faith families, and another on how to attract new members. During the year the chairs of communities have also shared ideas and questions via e-mail. A variety of questions are asked – from questions about membership categories and fees, to how communities break the fast at the end of Yom Kippur. It was through this email group that I got the donation of our portable ark from North London Progressive Jewish Community.

At last year's AGM Rabbi Rachel Benjamin was on sabbatical. We were ably supported in Rachel's absence by Rabbi Sandra Kviat and Rabbi Harry Jacobi, who led our Shabbat morning services in January and February, Robin Moss who led our Purim service, and Rabbi Danny Rich who led our Pesach Seder. We are also lucky to have a number of lay leaders, who are willing and able to lead Erev Shabbat services.

Very shortly after Rachel's return, she led us in prayers for Yom Ha'Shoah and we were given a moving talk by Bob and Ann Kirk who both came to England on the kinder transport, and who shared some of their experiences with us.

In April we celebrated my daughter Amelia's Bat Mitzvah, and not long after that the Bat Mitzvah of Jessica Geneen. Between those two events, we celebrated Shavuot, and Harry Davies is now the proud holder of our Best Cheesecake Cup.

It was lovely that Harry Jacobi was able to share with Rachel in the leading of our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services, and thanks too to Gerard Geneen for stepping in to help lead the choir. The music at Kol Nidre with the Geneen family and Ellen Salazar was as lovely as ever. We continued HHD with the building of the Sukkah at the home of the Harker family, and ended with Debbie and James reading at Simchat Torah. We celebrated Chanukah, and I am now looking forward to the Bat Mitzvah of Carolina Rososchansky, which we will celebrate in January 2014.

In order to support Rabbi Rachel we have established a Rabbinic Support Group, this provides a space for Rachel to share ideas and get feedback from a small group : myself, Harvey Gritzman, Mark Simmons and Debbie Davies. Rachel is also receiving administrative help from Anita Epstein. With this support I hope that we will be able to help lighten the workload of our over-worked Rabbi.

The Cheder continues to thrive, and we were really pleased that our students' film won the first LAFTA awarded at the LJ Day of Celebration in the summer (you can see the film using this [link](#)). At the end of the 2012-13 academic year Robin Moss stood down as head teacher – we wish him every success in the future. Rabbi Rachel has taken his place as head. Yudit Collard Trembl and James Davies have continued as teachers, and Zac Davies and Phoebe McFeeters have joined the teaching staff. Sally Geneen, supported by Karen Levy, continues to run Gan sessions, and the art work that we see at the end of each



session never fails to bring a smile to our faces. Gerard Geneen and Ruth Harris are helping to teach the KT class. In addition to Cheder and Gan, we have introduced early Shabbat morning services for very young children. Our first *Tots' Shabbat* service took place in November, and more will follow in 2014.

We have also taken a fresh look at adult education, we will continue with *Torah Breakfasts* (which provides an opportunity to study the Torah portion in an informal atmosphere) before Shabbat morning services, but will no longer hold these every month, instead we will alternate with the *Tots' Shabbat* and with *Brush up your Blessings* (where we look at parts of the service and brush up on what might be rusty - or for some of us, new - Hebrew reading skills).

We continue to take part in as many interfaith events as our small community can sustain including school visits, attending the human library at High Wycombe and celebrating an abridged Pesach Seder for Dacorum Interfaith group.

At the start of my tenure as chair (this AGM marks the end of my second year) my intention was to maintain our spiritual offering, which I hope you will agree that we have done – much to the credit of Rabbi Rachel and our R&P committee. Alongside this I wanted to grow the community to 120 membership units, and to ensure that we have a variety of social activities to suit a wide range of community members.

You will see from Julia Freeman's membership report that we have much more to do if we are to achieve the target of 120, this being the "magic number" required to put us on a stable financial footing. I have, though, been more successful on the social front:

We have had a number of social events including the film evening, the matzo ramble (in the snow), bowling, book club, the Jewish historical walk, a summer tea party, the new "kitchen table" sharing of stories, and our long standing tradition of the Chanukah Trail and Chanukah party, we also have the newly established "pizza, prayers and PJs". Thank you to everyone involved in organising these events. We don't currently have a social committee, but if you would be interested in helping organise a one off event, please do let me know.

We also agreed at the last AGM that we would try to do more fund raising, and we subsequently received a generous offer of matched funding up to £1,000 for any new fund raising ideas. In the last year we have had the benefit of cake sales from Eli Kling and Jo Naiman's open garden events, the sale of handmade kippot, the annual quiz and the sales of the Anglo Jewish calendar. We also took part in Mitzvah day and entered the Cancer Research UK Relay for Life. At the time of writing this report, we are just about to close our annual Kol Nidre Appeal – raising funds for the Quakers at Amersham and for SBJC. As the High Holy Days were early, we did not have time to get involved in any summer fetes during 2013, but we are planning to do so in 2014. In addition, we have set up a donations page on the Pure Charity website and re-issued reminder in Hagephen about making donation by standing order (a standing order form is also attached to this AGM pack). Thanks to generous donations, we are in surplus this year.

For me, the event that dominated the summer was the month in which we sought your help in raising funds for the Red Cross Building in Amersham. The response was amazing and we were able to put in a respectable bid on a building in Amersham. Unfortunately, as you know we were not successful, but we continue to look for suitable venues for a permanent home.

On the theme of buildings, at the last AGM we announced that building works were to take place at the Friends' Meeting House. These works have now started, and with thanks to Gill



Parker who manages the booking of halls, we have secured the small hall at Coleshill Village Hall for January to April (and potentially longer when they open the bookings for May onwards). Please keep an eye on the weekly email for notice of service venues for Shabbat mornings, and for Erev Shabbat after April.

My thanks go to everyone who works to support us in all that we do. Here is a list of committee members who have supported SBJC during 2013. There are many others who help by organising and hosting events, and I hope to be able to thank them in person at the AGM.

<b>SBJC Council Members:</b>	
Amanda McFeeters: Chair David Silverstone: Vice Chair, Finance & Building Julia Freeman: Secretary and Membership Raymond Freeman: Security Gerard Geneen: Rituals and Practices	Marc Mendoza: Finance and Marketing Gill Parker: Head of Rituals and Practices Jorge Rososchansky: Treasurer & Finance chair Wallace Wormley: Finance and Marketing
<b>Other Committee members:</b>	
<p><b>Rituals and Practices:</b> Rabbi Rachel Benjamin, Vanessa Harker, David Collett, Wendy Levinson, Sarah Murgatroyd, Yudit Collard Trembl, Neville Levy</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Tom Bloch, David Collett, Paul Nathan</p> <p><b>Cheder:</b> Teaching: Rabbi Rachel Benjamin, Robin Moss, Yudit Collard Trembl, James Davies, Zac Davies, Phoebe McFeeters Gan: Sally Geneen supported by Karen Levy Administration: Eli Kling, Mark Simmons</p> <p><b>Marketing:</b> Carolyn Barkin, Dan Jay, Jacqueline Cohen</p>	<p><b>Membership:</b> David Collett, Louise Cook</p> <p><b>Building:</b> Henry Amar, Harry Davies, Peter Davison</p> <p><b>Rabbinic Support:</b> Debbie Davies, Harvey Gritzman, Mark Simmons, Anita Epstein</p> <p><b>Communications:</b> Ha-Shavua : Isobel McFeeters Email contact: Dick Vardy, Anita Epstein Phone contact: Sue Bijum Website maintenance: Jacqueline Cohen</p>

*Ha-Shavua*, our weekly email, is our main means of communication with you. Whilst the email has been successful in getting response for my plea for help for R&P and for school visits, I have not yet found a volunteer to edit *Hagephen*. I continue to look for help in this – if you are interested please let me know.

And finally it is with sadness that I report the deaths during the year of Keith Orpen and Anne Bates, both of whom will be missed.

**Amanda McFeeters**



**Standing Order Mandate – can be used for regular donations as well as membership fee**

TO (Your Bank) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Please Pay (Our Bank Details)	Bank	Branch Title (not address)	Sort Code Number
	<b>TSB</b>	<b>AMERSHAM</b>	<b>4</b>
For the credit of (Our Account)	Beneficiary's Name		Account Number
	<b>SOUTH BUCKS JEWISH COMMUNITY</b>		<b>0 0 1 7 0 8 1 9</b>
The sum of	Regular amount in figures	Regular Amount in Words	
	<b>£</b>		
Commencing	Date and Amount of first payment	and thereafter every	Due Date and Frequency
	*Now or on _____		
* Until	Date and amount of last payment	*until you receive further notice from me/us in writing and debit my/our account accordingly	
			<b>£</b>
Quoting the reference	<b>SBJC</b>		

This instruction cancels any previous order in favour of the beneficiary named above, under this reference

Special instructions:	
Your account to be debited	Your Account Number

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The Bank will not undertake to: \* Delete if not applicable

- (i) make any reference to Value Added Tax or other indeterminate element
- (ii) advise payer's address to beneficiary
- (iii) advise beneficiary of inability to pay
- (iv) request beneficiary's banker to advise beneficiary of receipt of payment



## **Treasurer's Report Period 2012 – 2013**

This report covers the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2012 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2013.

During this period we have recorded a small surplus of **£3,747.00**, the surplus is the direct result of increase in donations (28.5% increase year on year). If not for such voluntary and exceptionally kind donations, we would have recorded a deficit.

Subscriptions dropped 2.1% year on year, despite the fact that we had approved an increase in line with inflation from 2011/2012 period to 2012/2013 period.

The level of subscription is therefore a major concern of our community. We have been active in searching for new members but, although overall numbers have increased, we have not managed to balance, in financial terms, the lost ones. As a consequence we recommended that an increase in line with inflation be applied to our fees for fiscal year 2013/14.

Rabbi's office cost increased 4.2% year on year, this is the direct result of inflation and a one off charge of HMRC/NI.

Remaining costs increased by only 2%, showing our efforts to control discretionary expenditures.

For the fiscal year 2013/14 we are expecting the return of a deficit, it is therefore important that we continue to search for ways of growing our community, which would bring additional subscription fees and simultaneously actively look for events that would generate additional income via fund raising.

We will remain vigilant of the levels of income/expenditure and will approach the community if we anticipate it be necessary to take further actions.

**Jorge Rososchansky**

## **Rabbi's Annual Report 2013**

The last (calendar) year began, for me, with three months of Sabbatical leave, and I had the opportunity to consider and reflect on my work, and how to improve the management of my rabbinic duties on my return. This resulted in positive thoughts and improvements, one of which was the setting up of a Rabbinic Support Group to support me, provide a regular sounding-board and offer practical help. It is working really well, and I am grateful to Amanda McFeeters, Debbie Davies, Harvey Gritzman and Mark Simmons for their support and help over this past year. Also, Anita Epstein has been regularly helping me with the mountain of administration with which I have to deal, and her efficient and organised approach has been of immense value to me, and to the organisation of my vast filing system.

This was particularly useful as, this year, we said farewell to Robin Moss, our Cheder Head Teacher, who moved on to advance his career. In the time Robin was with us, we made great improvements in our Cheder and gained greatly from his work with us. I have stepped back into the role of Head Teacher, and relinquished some of my teaching duties, and work in tandem with a great team of teachers: Gerard Geneen, Ruth Harris, James Davies, Yudit Collard Trembl and new teachers Zac Davies and Phoebe McFeeters (who graduated from KT class last year).

We have now 23 children in Cheder, and I believe they enjoy coming and learning with us. Not only that, but we have a thriving Gan (Toddlers' Group), run beautifully and



creatively by Sally Geneen, with the help of Karen Levy – and the newly introduced Tots' Shabbat is a real joy to see. Carolyn Barkin instituted the 'Pizza, Prayers and PJs', which has encouraged some of our younger members and their families to come along to the 6:30pm services on the first Friday of each month.

Over the year, there have been so many good events and highlights in Cheder, and I would like to briefly mention just a few: the visit of Sam Grant from the Liberal Judaism Youth Department (LJY-Netzer) to lead a session on *Yom Ha-Atzma'ut* (Israel Independence Day); the wonderful achievement of our Kabbalat Torah students, Becky Bealing, Zac Davies and Phoebe McFeeters, who won the LAFTA award by creating a video that involved all of Cheder; a Cheder outing that was led by Vivien Samson, and was a Jewish historical walking tour of Amersham; the involvement of some of our students in Kadimah (the LJY-Netzer summer camp) and Israel tour; Mitzvah Day; the KT service led by Zac and Phoebe; the Chanukkah cookery demonstration by Denise Phillips; and, in general, the enthusiasm, participation and commitment of our students and their parents, and our wonderful teachers.

The year was dominated emotionally for me by two significant happenings: my mother's serious illness, from which we are delighted to say she has recovered so amazingly. My family and I are immensely grateful for all the concern, good wishes and help, which was superb. Secondly, our attempt to acquire our own building, which, although unsuccessful, gained us pride in the way we approached the challenge and 'had a real go'. Yes, the result was disappointing, but what the community achieved in its enthusiasm for the project, and in raising funds over such a short space of time was inspiring. Our gratitude must go to Amanda and David Silverstone, for putting in so much effort and time to try to make this happen, and to everyone who offered their help.

Another highlight of this year has been the creation of a Jewish-Christian-Muslim group in High Wycombe, in which I have been heavily involved, and which will, I hope, bear fruits of interfaith co-operation and understanding in our area over the coming years.

In June, I was invited to give the address at the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Berkhamsted School for Girls (of which I am an 'old girl'). This was an honour, and led to the creation of more contacts and awareness of SBJC in the wider community.

We were saddened by the deaths of Keith Orpen and Anne Bates, at the beginning of the year. Also, several members have had to deal with difficult diagnoses and their own personal struggles with illness, and we wish them strength and *r'fu'ah shleimah*, a complete and speedy recovery.

*During the year, we celebrated the B'nei Mitzvah of Amelia McFeeters and Jessica Geneen. This coming year, we have no less than five B'nei Mitzvah to celebrate, and I think this might be a record for SBJC. There were two weddings, Beth Barber and Joe Tibold, and Nick and Michila Prag, and we wish them every happiness. We had news of several births, also, both to members, and to members' children and grandchildren, and this is a source of much joy.*

As part of our busy programmes for the year, Bob and Ann Kirk, friends from NPLS and the LJS, spoke movingly about their experiences during the Holocaust, on Yom Ha-Shoah (Holocaust Memorial Day). Following her Cheder tour, Vivien Samson gave a Jewish historical walking tour of Amersham to a large group of community members, which was fascinating, very enjoyable, and caught the attention of the local press.



It was a source of pride that SBJC again participated in the Aylesbury Cancer Research UK Relay for Life, and thanks to all who participated, supported and helped raise very welcome funds.

At Shavuot, I was able to schlep considerable nachas as my husband, Harry, won the SBJC cheesecake cup, against hot competition!! I was happy to share our High Holy Day services with Rabbi Harry Jacobi, and am grateful to Amanda and our Council for supporting this co-operation. Yom Kippur began with a particularly beautiful rendition of Bruch's Kol Nidrei by Gerard, Sally and Jessica Geneen, followed by Ellen Salazar's memorable sung Kol Nidrei. I am enormously grateful to Gerard Geneen and Debbie Davies for coming to the fore to help out our choir over the High Holy Days.

It was especially meaningful and special for me that we honoured James and Debbie Davies as *Chatan Torah* (Bridegroom of the Torah) and *Kallat B'reishit* (Bride of Genesis) this Simchat Torah, for all they do at SBJC. Their contributions are significant, and we were delighted to thank them publicly.

Amanda and her family deserve a special vote of thanks for making a new community Chanukiah, which will be more portable than our existing one. Cheder and Gan had a part in its creation, and it had its inaugural lighting at our Chanukkah party.

Individual efforts to raise funds for the community – Ellen's CD, Debbie's hand-made *kippot*, Eli Kling and Jo Naiman's Open Gardens, to name a few – all make a considerable difference, and are to be applauded. The annual Quiz is always a great success, and the SBJC Book Club continues to engage those who attend in lively debate.

It has long been my wish for us to regularly get together and hear each other's stories, and that has begun with the institution of Kitchen Table Sundays. I am grateful to Joyce Edwards for her help with this, and to Stella Vaughan for hosting the first meeting, which was both revealing and interesting.

Saturday mornings, before our Shabbat services, have been revitalised with either Brush Up Your Blessings, Torah Breakfasts or Tots' Shabbat – check the diary for upcoming dates.

There are always many thanks to be made at this time. Thank you so much to all those people I have mentioned already, for all you do to make SBJC the vibrant, warm, welcoming community it is, and for the work you do with our children, to ensure our future. Thank you to the members of our Council, for their considerable contribution to the life and running of SBJC; to Gill Parker and the Rituals and Practices Committee for the work they do over the year, to make sure our services and festivals run smoothly – and especially for organising services in new locations from January to June 2014; to Julia Freeman, for her help and support, and all she does for SBJC; to Isobel McFeeters who, on top of a heavy schedule at university, takes the time each week to send out our Weekly E-mail, and somehow takes it all in her stride; to our lay service leaders; to all who sit on committees, for the time, effort and commitment they make to SBJC; and to our members who attend and participate in the life of SBJC. You are all its life blood.

Finally, I am immensely grateful to Amanda for providing a wonderful support for the new moves that were discussed and considered following my Sabbatical leave, for the breadth and variety of her contribution to SBJC, for her tirelessness and ability to inspire others, and for the close working relationship we share.

My final two months of Sabbatical will be taken from mid-April (immediately after the Communal Seder) to mid-June. Again, I hope to return with ideas and thoughts that will be of benefit to the community.



When we look back over the past year, I think we can feel pride at our achievements, the number of activities and events that have taken place within SBJC, and the contributions we have made in the wider community. I hope that, together, we will work to make the coming year a successful one for us, seeing growth in our membership, providing support and care for each other, and more active participation and involvement in all aspects of our community's life.

**Rabbi Rachel Benjamin**

### **NEW HOME SEARCH**

As you know, our efforts to secure the British Red Cross Building in Amersham did not succeed. We did, however, raise pledges of one sort or another which would have boosted our available funds for this project to a figure in excess of £400,000. Thanks are due to all who indicated a willingness to support this effort.

This gives us hope for the future and we continue to pursue our search.

**David Silverstone**

### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

During this past year we have gained three new families who have joined as full members, one new 'friend', one family who have changed their membership from a 'Friend' to full and a partner of an existing member has become an Affiliate. Due to re-location we have lost a couple of families who I am sure will keep in touch with us.

The new members/friends we welcome this year are: Aimee, Nick, Freddie & Claudia Levy, Rowena Slope, Efrat, Deryk & Naome Thomas, Ian Parker, Nicki, Lauren & Sophie Barnard.

Below is a comparison of the total membership over the past three years.

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Total number of members	187	194	193

In addition, for 2013 we have 11 Friends.

As in the past we have continued interest being shown and we look forward to increasing our membership this coming year.

**Julia Freeman**



**SOUTH BUCKS  
JEWISH  
COMMUNITY**

**AUDITORS STATEMENT ON THE SBJC ACCOUNTS FOR 2012-2013**

I certify I have audited and found correct SBJC Accounts for the Financial Year 2012-2013

Dated: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013

H D Baker  
FCA FiiA