



South Bucks Jewish Community

ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year ended 31st August 2014



CHAIR'S REPORT

This marks the end of my 3rd year as Chair. It continues to be a privilege to serve the community and I would like to thank everyone for their support over the last year.

The Religious calendar

This has been a stand-out year in the number of Bar/Bat Mitzvah's which we have celebrated. Because of these special services, the KT and others where we have welcomed members of the wider community (friends and family and local scouts attended our service, and we had visiting Ministers at our Pesach Seder), I regularly receive feedback from visitors on what a warm and welcoming community we are, and what inspiring sermons our Rabbi, Rachel Benjamin delivers.

I would like to thank our Rituals and Practices Committee for all the work that they do behind the scenes to support our Rabbi and to make sure that all the things are in the right places at the right time at all of the festivals. This was a particular busy year as we re-located temporarily to Coleshill Village Hall. But it is lovely to be back in the newly refurbished Friends Meeting House.

I am grateful for everyone who helped to lead services, to the choir, the HHD musicians and to Debbie and James for their guitar playing. I am particularly grateful to those who led services while Rachel was away on the last part of her sabbatical in the first few weeks of the year.

Finally, I take this opportunity to formally thank Rachel for all of her hard work, her thought provoking sermons, and the thought and energy that she puts into all aspects of SBJC life.

Outreach

With the troubles in the middle-east and beyond, this has been a difficult year, but I am pleased to say that over the summer, when the troubles were at their worst, we had the hand of friendship extended to us by the Quakers of Amersham and from the Mosque at Aylesbury. Some of us recently attended a lunch with the Quakers, and we are working on future shared events with both the Quakers and the Mosque.

As people have been reaching in to us, we have reached out to the wider community: We raised £1,811 for Cancer Research when a number of us walked for Relay for Life, we made bunting for the Noah's Ark Hospice, and made 'thinking of you' cards for Palestinian and Israeli children affected by conflict (both of which activities were also shared with the High Wycombe Jewish-Christian-Muslim Group). We also planted trees at Heartwood Forest. We made cards for Save A Child's Heart, presented a cheque to the Quakers to help with their building project, and raised funds for Sparkles (a local charity helping children with Down's Syndrome).

Fund Raising

As well as raising funds for other local charities, we have been busy raising funds for ourselves, and you will see from the Finance report that for the year ending 2014, we have a financial surplus. We work hard to keep our costs to a minimum, and benefit hugely from the sponsorship from many of our community, either in financial donations, or in the donations of time and equipment.

We have had some imaginative fund raising activities this year – home made kippot (thanks Debbie Davies), the Pesach Hamper (thanks to Vanessa Harker for thinking of that), as well our bric-a-brac stall – which turned into two events as the first was a complete wash-out, with Helen Cohen got us a last minute slot at the Chalfont fair, thanks to all who helped with that. Thanks also go to the cake bakers who helped Eli and Jo raise funds for us at their Open Garden event. Thank you too, to everyone who bought a 5775 calendar, and raffle tickets for the Salt Beef. As they say in the advert, every little bit helps.

Social activities

In the summer Cynthia and Geoff hosted a tea-party – we enjoyed a relaxing afternoon in their lovely garden, and Helen and Alvin once again hosted a lunch after the Rosh Hashanah service.

Book club continues to meet on a regular basis, we had a few "Kitchen Table" events, where we had the opportunity to get to know each other a bit better. We had our annual bowling trip and a bank holiday walk.

And for the younger families, a Pesach film, as well as the Rosh Hashanah and Chanukah parties which continue to be enormously popular.



Education

This year, following the departure of Robin Moss, Rabbi Rachel has taken over as head teacher. With the support of the teachers, Cheder continues to thrive, and it was lovely to see so many reach Bar/Bat mitzvah age this year, and to see Becky supported by her class mates and teachers at the KT service in November.

We need to explore further how we can best meet the needs of the community in the context of Adult Education – and it would be good to hear from you to see what it is that would suit you best.

And last but certainly not least...

This year marks the end of an era, Julia and Raymond Freeman who have been so supportive in many ways have decided to stand-down from Council. Raymond has led on Security issues for some years now, and Julia as our membership secretary has been the first voice of SBJC that many people hear. I am very grateful to them for their support over the years, and hope they enjoy their rest, but not so much that I can't rope them in to help at the occasional event!

This year Geoff Hassell answered my call for help with the weekly email – and he has had a real impact. I am really pleased to say that the Hassells come as a pair, and Cynthia has agreed to help organise social events, a role which we have had vacant for some time, so she is welcomed with very open arms.

Julia has been supported in membership by Louise Cook, and again, we had a response to our call for help, and I am very pleased that Katie Winterstein has agreed to take over as membership secretary. Thank you too to Zac Davies who has offered to help Jacqueline Cohen in updating the web-site, and to Debbie Davies who has taken over editorship of Hagephen.

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 2014. 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.

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

Amanda McFeeters



Treasurer's Report Period 2013 – 2014

This report covers the period from the 1st Of September 2013 to the 31st of August 2014.

During this period we have recorded a small surplus of **£3559.95**, the surplus is the direct result of increase in donations (1.7% increase year on year), increase in subscription (4% increase year on year), the later linked to inflation adjustment of the subscriptions and new members joining our community during last fiscal year and reduction in expenses.

Rabbi's office cost decreased 7% year on year, as a result from reductions in HMRC/NI costs

Cheder costs reduced by more than 54% with the departure of the Head Teacher, which functions were absorbed by Rachel Benjamin and James Davies

Kol Nidre expenses (selected donation entities) went up due to increase in Kol Nidre donations income and LJ Capitation also up in line with increase of subscription.

Remaining expenses showing a trend of reduction.

For the next fiscal year we are anticipating the return of 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 will be necessary to take further actions.

Jorge Rososchansky

Rabbi's Annual Report 2014

It's been another busy SBJC year. When I look back over it, I feel proud of what we have achieved, not only within our congregation, but in the wider community, too.

Within SBJC, this year in particular has been notable for the five Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremonies we have celebrated. It began with Carolina Rososchansky in January, continued with Sarah Bealing in March, Georgia Simmons in July, Kim Kling in August, and concluded with Jacob Harker in December. What a pleasure it has been to accompany our students along their journey to Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and to see them mature and grow in understanding and commitment. I believe that five B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies in one year is a record for SBJC. This bodes well for the future, and shows the growth in the younger age groups.

It was also wonderful to introduce a couple of new babies to the congregation, with the Baby Blessings of Ella Winterstein and Harriet Gardiner. At this point, I must also mention the efforts of Carolyn Barkin, in bringing a wonderful group of young families, with Gan-aged children, to SBJC. At the time of writing, I have just attended a Hanukkah party at the home of Yaron and Katie Winterstein, and there (as Hanukkah Hannah!) I distributed gifts to 25 young children – and there were several who had not been able to attend, so the number would have been even higher. That also is very encouraging for our future.

If you were to visit Ley Hill School on a Sunday morning in term time, you would find it a vibrant and exciting place – especially if it is a morning during which Gan (Toddler Group) and Kabbalat Torah (post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah group) are meeting. Then you may well encounter some 40+ youngsters, engaged in Jewish learning and activities. Our Cheder teachers, Yudit Collard Trembl, James Davies, Phoebe McFeeters and Zac Davies put a lot of work into preparing for their classes, and giving our students the best Cheder experience possible. Sally Geneen, assisted by Karen Levy, provides a warm, creative and delightful atmosphere for our youngest ones, with their families. And Gerard Geneen and Ruth Harris, together with myself, make up the team that teaches our Kabbalat Torah students. I am so grateful to the whole Gan/Cheder/KT team – they are wonderful people, and fulfil such an important role in our community.

We can easily forget how much this life-blood of our community has grown, and it is a huge positive for SBJC.



So, I was delighted when R & P and Council decided to honour Yudit and the Geneens at Simchat Torah this year. They do so much for the community (not just teaching), and it was an honour to thank them publicly for all they do.

One of the highlights of SBJC's year is always the Kabbalat Torah service – and this year was no exception. Becky Bealing was our sole KT student this year, and the service was led by her (brilliantly – and what a fantastic sermon), with the help of Zac and Phoebe (who were KT two years ago) as well as Jessica Geneen and Amelia McFeeters (who will be KT next year). KT is one of my favourite events, as I can just sit in the congregation and kvell!!

I took the last two months of my Sabbatical (from two years ago) from mid-April to mid-June and, again, must thank all those who led services, and our teachers who kept Cheder going smoothly and well. Amanda and I have agreed that, instead of six months' Sabbatical every six years, I will take three months every three years, which will make life easier for the community.

My gratitude continues to go to the Rabbinic Support Group – Debbie Davies, Harvey Gritzman, Amanda McFeeters and Mark Simmons – who are enormously helpful to me, in keeping me sane (well, more or less!) and certainly feeling supported and encouraged in my work.

Yom Kippur again began with a moving rendition of Bruch's Kol Nidrei by Gerard, Sally and Jessica Geneen, followed by Alvin Cohen's beautifully sung Kol Nidrei. I am enormously grateful to Gerard Geneen and Debbie Davies for coming to the fore (again) to help out our choir over the High Holy Days, as it enhances the services and adds so much.

A number of social events this year - tea at the Hassell's, Rosh Ha-Shanah lunch at the Cohen's, Kitchen Table Sundays, Bowling, for example – have been enjoyable and, at times, informative. I am so pleased that Cynthia Hassell has agreed to take over SBJC's Social Calendar. Her dynamism and enthusiasm will be just what is needed, and I know that there will be some fantastic events coming up.

Well done to Helen Cohen, David Collett and David Silverstone for all their help with fête stalls, and Amanda for the SBJC calendar and the salt beef raffle!

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. We far exceeded our goal, and raised nearly £2,000. A terrific effort by all, and a sign of our commitment to the outside community, of which we are an active part.

The Wycombe JCM (Jewish-Christian-Muslim) Group in which I participate continues to be a source of enrichment and new friendships, though we have had our challenges this year, as events in the Middle East unfolded, and as we continue to learn about each other. Our Mitzvah Day activities together were especially meaningful, and I am grateful to Ruth Harris for joining us that day.

It was a privilege to be involved in the multi-faith World War One commemoration in Chesham, which was a poignant and moving event.

Again, this year, after a six year gap, we visited our friends in Bensheim, Germany, to celebrate with them the 30-year anniversary of the Auerbacher Synagogenverein. Rabbi Harry Jacobi, Anita Epstein, Wallace Wormley, Raymond Freeman, Harry Davies and I were privileged to make that trip. We were pleased to renew friendships, and make new ones, and benefit from the warmth, generosity and hospitality of the group, and to again visit sites of Jewish importance in the local area. Our trip was a moving and special experience.

I echo Amanda's words about Julia and Raymond Freeman. It will be very strange not to have either of them on Council! They are such an important and integral part of the community, and have contributed in so many ways, both in Cheder, Council, Security and Membership, and in other ways that are not so visible, but equally important. Thank you, Ray and Julia.

It is wonderful that Katie Winterstein has agreed to take on the Membership Secretary role, and I look forward to working with her to develop and grow our community.

There are always many thanks to be made at this time, not least 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 (with a special mention of Vanessa Harker) for the work they do over the year, to make sure our services and festivals run smoothly – and especially this past year, with the challenge of moving out of the FMH for several months; to James and Debbie Davies, for their musical support – and leading – of services; to Anita Epstein, for her administrative help and support; to Geoff Hassell who is sending out an ever more inventive and creative Weekly E-mail, and just takes everything in his stride; to our lay service leaders; to those who open up the FMH for services; 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.

Finally, I am immensely grateful to Amanda for her support, and for all she does for SBJC, supported so well by her family.

When we look back over the past year, I think we can feel proud of our achievements, the number of activities and events that have taken place within SBJC, and our involvement in the wider community. That pride should not make us complacent, however, as we need to maintain the momentum. 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 increased participation and involvement in all aspects of our community's life.

Rabbi Rachel Benjamin

R&P Report

Gill Parker *(to be submitted as a separate document)*

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

During this past year we have gained six new families who have joined as full members, and a partner of an existing member has become an Affiliate. We also welcome back Amanda & David Sacker who remained as Friends whilst living a distance away. Due to re-location we have lost a couple of families who I am sure will keep in touch with us. Also now some of our 'grown-up children', some of whom have been members all their lives, are establishing themselves with other communities to suit their locality. There will always be welcome for them at SBJC.

The new members/friends we welcome this year are: Sheena, Saul, Delarishé & Daltanie Edwards, Domingo Salazar, Rebecca, Joel & Ethan Stern, Gerald, Caroline, Maer & Elie Darmon, Edith, Nick & Noah Rosenthal, Andre, Anita Elliott & Olivia Katz & Maurice Scott.

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

	2012	2013	2014
Total number of members	187	194	207

In addition, we have 9 Friends/Affiliates.

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

ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ended 31st August 2014

SBJC is a member of Liberal Judaism (LJ) and a registered charity number 1098078

SBJC BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st AUGUST 2014

<u>Assets</u>	2013	2014
BANK ACCOUNTS		
<u>General Fund</u>		
Current Account - TSB Including Adj	£8,607	£13,204
Current Account - HSBC		£770
Deposit Account - TSB	£476	£476
Reserve Account - Santander	£47,157	£47,228
	£56,240	£61,678
 <u>Building Fund</u>		
Natwest Incl Adjustment	£248	£243
Barclays	£0	£0
HSBC	£24	£0
Santander	£6,167	£6,893
Scottish Widows Bank	£47,225	£0
Virgin Bank	£46,892	£58,316
Bath Building Society	£45,024	£83,226
	£145,580	£148,678
 <u>Other Assets</u>		
Religious Regalia	£6,553	£6,553
 TOTAL ASSETS	 £208,373	 £216,909
 Represented by		
General Fund	£57,322	£60,882
Building Fund	£145,580	£148,678
	£202,902	£209,560
 Subscriptions and other income received in advance	£384	£580
Creditors (Cheques / Expenses not cashed)	£5,088	£6,769
 TOTAL FUNDS	 £208,373	 £216,909

South Bucks Jewish Community (SBJC)
Income and Expenditure Account
For the Year ending 31st August 2014

	2013	2014
Income		
Subscriptions	£35,197	£36,592
Donation / Other Income	£36,897	£30,585
Total Income	£72,094	£67,177
Expenditure		
Rabbi Office	£40,294	£37,659
Other Expenses	£28,053	£25,958
Total Expenditure	£68,347	£63,617
Surplus / (Deficit)	£3,747	£3,560
General Fund Brought Forward	£53,575	£57,322
General Fund Carried Forward	£57,322	£60,882

SBJC Income and Expenditure For the Year Ending 31st Augsut 2014

	2013	2014
	Last Year	
INCOME		
Subscriptions	35,196.65	36,592.05
Donation	10,262.64	7,910.83
Kol Nidre	3,465.00	6,053.00
Gift Aid Subs	8,367.64	8,188.23
Gift Aid Others	2,053.43	2,372.36
Cheder fees	1,752.00	2,616.50
HHD Tickets	555.00	0.00
Fund Raising	1,449.00	0.00
Funeral & Burial fees	6,720.72	1,543.55
Calendar	37.00	0.00
Grant	350.00	333.60
Miscellaneous Income	1,700.46	0.00
Bank Interest	0.16	70.94
Matching Donations with Fund Raising	183.82	1,496.25
TOTAL INCOME	72,093.52	67,177.31
EXPENDITURE		
1 Rabbi's Office	40,293.63	37,659.32
Funeral and Burial Fees	10,394.82	8,684.25
L J Capitation	5,123.25	7,638.75
Cheder Sub-Total	6,882.30	3,179.20
LJ other	225.00	200.00
Friends House	1,438.50	693.00
Other halls	766.25	1,171.00
Kol Nidre donation	400.00	2,000.00
Fund raising costs	499.26	370.73
Insurance	847.08	698.68
Photocopying	216.00	288.00
Miscellaneous + Admin.	600.14	355.56
Advertising/Mrketing	186.00	376.99
Bank charges	328.46	301.88
Pesach/Shavuot/Others	146.23	0.00
TOTAL Expenditure	68,346.92	63,617.36
Surplus / (Deficit)	3,746.60	3,559.95

1 The Rabbi Office expenditure includes salaries, tax, expenses and synagogue expenses

South Bucks Jewish Community (SBJC)
 Building Fund Accounts
 For the Year Ending 31st Augst 2014

	2013	2014
Income		
Donation	2,086.24	0.00
Bank Interest	1,723.89	2,861.91
Gift Aid		236.25
Total Income	£3,810	£3,098
Surplus / (Deficit)	£3,810	£3,098
General Fund Brought Forward	£141,770	£145,580
General Fund Carried Forward	£145,580	£148,678



AUDITORS STATEMENT ON THE SBJC ACCOUNTS FOR 2013-2014

I certify I have audited and found correct SBJC Accounts for the Financial Year 2013-2014

Dated: 12th December 2014

H D Baker
FCA FiiA