



At The BOARD

Working for the political and physical security of the community



NSW JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES • Ph: 9360 1600 • Email: mail@nswjbd.com

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Police learn lessons of the Holocaust

A groundbreaking educational program for the NSW Police Force enables police commanders, superintendents and officers to better understand the effects of racial hatred and intolerance on immigrants to Australia.

The program is facilitated by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies in partnership with the Sydney Jewish Museum.

Titled "Securing our Diversity: Policing in a Complex Environment", the educational content was developed by the museum's education department in consultation with the Board's Education Secretariat.

The three-part program is run at the museum.

Using the prism of the Holocaust and in particular, the ongoing effects of state-sponsored terror on its victims, participants learn lessons which they can apply to their interactions with people in their everyday working lives. These include refugees from various African nations where state-sponsored



Holocaust survivor David Benedikt, clinical psychologist Renée Symonds and Sudanese refugee Dor Achiek ... addressed the police officers.

terror has been a feature of life in recent times.

The seminar is now an integral component of senior police training programs across NSW.

Eighteen police superintendents attended the most recent session.

The superintendents met with a Holocaust survivor and a Sudanese refugee, after which they participated in a museum tour with a particular focus on state-sponsored terror.

An interactive workshop convened by clinical psychologist Renée Symonds drew the issues together.

Board of Deputies President David Knoll opened the seminar by commending the role of the NSW Police in responding promptly to antisemitic incidents, which he said were at an all-time high.

He pointed out that the Jewish community uses the lessons of its

history to promote social cohesion in NSW.

Holocaust survivor David Benedikt recounted his experiences, explaining the effects of Nazi terror on his later life as an immigrant to Australia in the 1950s. His reactions to authority, in particular police, were reinforced by the testimony of recently-arrived Sudanese refugee Dor Achiek.

Participants later acknowledged the usefulness of the seminar and its powerful impact.

Meeting with key players



Board of Deputies CEO **Vic Alhadeff** met up with Israeli Foreign Minister **Tzipi Livni** at a Conference on Confronting Global Antisemitism, held in Jerusalem by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. The conference provided insights into issues of concern to the community. Alhadeff used the opportunity to pay a solidarity visit to Sderot.



New York human rights lawyer **Anne Bayefsky** (centre) addressed a Board of Deputies breakfast for communal leaders, hosted by **Ruth and Bob Magid** (pictured). The Board of Deputies arranged a series of media briefings and interviews for Bayefsky, who delivered the ADC Oration in Sydney. Photo: Ingrid Shakenofsky

Advocacy skills for students

500 high school students are undertaking advocacy training through a program run by the Board of Deputies and the State Zionist Council of NSW. The program delivers tools on how to advocate on behalf of Israel and Jewish issues. The students are from Masada College, Moriah College, Emanuel School, Academy BJE and BPJE. Pictured are Masada participants **Jo-Elle Stein** and **Kara Sandler**.





From the President

The strongest and most durable steps that can be taken to fight antisemitism are in the education sector.

On 11 July, 2008 the editorial in *The Australian* said: "As fascinating a film as it is, school students need more than *Rabbit-Proof Fence* to inform them 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 to a broad 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".

Mr Coutts-Trotter had given a speech to school principals in which he committed to reinserting teaching about racism, genocide and the Holocaust into the history curriculum for Years 7-10. That commitment is welcome, and we are working with the Department of Education on the mechanism to give it effect.

The Department is also working to target anti-semitism in its anti-racism policies and education programs. Research which the Board provided demonstrated that anti-racism policies which do not target antisemitism can result in a reduction in racist behaviour without a reduction in antisemitic behaviour.

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

In this issue you will read about a program being provided to the NSW Police. This program is the result of years of work undertaken jointly by the NSW Police and the Board of Deputies.

The many achievements which are reported in *At The Board* exemplify the bulwark against anti-semitism that we are building.

When I took office four years ago, I made a promise that the Board would make astute choices about when to make statements and when to engage in quiet dialogue. Whenever communal unity appeared likely to fray, the Board of Deputies worked to keep the fabric of our community whole. In addition, we said we would ensure voices were raised and in a united fashion on issues of vital concern to our community.

It is for the community to judge whether the last four years have taken us forward in achieving those goals. I believe the Board is demonstrating high levels of achievement, relevance to the Jewish and wider communities and implementing carefully-calibrated strategies in the interests of the Jewish community.

Our ancestors teach us we are not obliged to complete the work, but neither are we free to desist from it.

It is with that principle in mind that I have been honoured to spend four years as your President. I thank the community for the tremendous support we receive. I wish my successor every success in continuing the important work of the Board of Deputies.



David D Knoll



Member of the JCA family of organisations



From left: Israeli Ambassador Yuval Rotem, Premier Morris Iemma, State Zionist Council of NSW President Frank Levy, Board of Deputies President David Knoll, ECAJ President Robert Goot AM SC, Zionist Federation of Australia Immediate Past President Ron Weiser. Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky

700 celebrate Israel's 60th

700 people, including diplomats, MPs and captains of industry, turned out to celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary at NSW Parliament House. Premier Morris Iemma expressed the state's support for Israel and its pursuit of security and peace, and Ambassador Yuval Rotem proposed a toast to the Queen. The event was co-hosted by the Board of Deputies, State Zionist Council of NSW, Executive Council of Australian Jewry and Zionist Federation of Australia.

Tears at untold story

TEARS flowed as Moran Levy held audiences spell-bound with her remarkable account of her grandfather, a Romanian guard who saved Jews during the Holocaust.

Her unique story was a highlight of the eastern suburbs and north shore Holocaust remembrance ceremonies.

Levy related how the story of her grandfather, Theodor Criveanu, had come to light only when a diary which he had written was discovered, in which recounted his deeds. Yad Vashem verified his story and duly declared him a member of the Righteous Among the Nations.

Jill Margo AM related her connection to the Holocaust while growing up in South Africa, and Matthew Foster read extracts from Eli Wiesel and Primo Levi.

900 people turned out for this year's ceremonies - the largest number in years. Organised by the Board Holocaust Remembrance Committee, the Rookwood service featured



Moran Levy lights a candle in honour of her grandfather, Theodor Criveanu, a Romanian guard.

addresses by Israeli Embassy Deputy Chef de Mission Eli Yerushalmi, Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins and survivor Ruth Leiser.

A recent innovation - the brainchild of Rabbi Gary Robuck - is Mitzvah of Memory, designed to introduce bar/bat mitzvah-age students to the Holocaust. In addition, a name-reading ceremony was held at the Sydney Jewish Museum, the theme being doctors and their role in the Holocaust. Guests included NSW Governor Marie Bashir, Opposition Leader Dr Brendan Nelson, his adviser Tom Switzer and Shadow Treasurer Malcolm Turnbull.



Moriah College students at Holocaust Remembrance Week.



150 educators at seder with a difference

Education Minister John Della Bosca was the keynote speaker as 150 educators and education decision-makers came together at an unprecedented Educators Passover Seder.

Organised by the Board of Deputies and held at Sydney Girls High School, the rationale behind the function was to introduce educators to Judaism and the Jewish experience.

Monash University Associate Professor Mark Baker spoke on the themes of slavery, education, leadership and freedom as they relate to the Passover story and the Jewish condition.

The concept of freedom was further expressed by guest speakers Sabina Van Der Linden-Wolanski, Joe Barda and Alla Pilman, each of whom related their unique personal story.



From left: Sydney Girls High School Principal **Margaret Varady**, Board of Deputies President **David Knoll**, Education Minister **John Della Bosca**, Department of Education Director-General **Michael Coutts-Trotter**, Education Committee Chair **Susi Brieger**, **Felicia Huppert**, **Renée Ferster-Levy**, Associate Professor **Mark Baker**. Photos: Ingrid Shakenofsky

The function was the third such event organised by the Board of Deputies, following a Trade Unions Seder in 2006 and an Interfaith Seder in 2007.

The Educators Seder was generously funded by the JCA LotBen Fund in memory of Lotka and Bernard Ferster.



Eva Gold, Board of Deputies Vice-President **Robin Margo SC**, **Sabina Van Der Linden-Wolanski**.



Joumana Dennaoui, a teacher from Granville Boys High School, at the Educators Seder.



Uri Windt, **Roma Shell**.



Board of Deputies Education Manager **Lynda Ben-Menashe** with students from The Entrance High School.

Reaching Regional NSW

The community's outreach to Regional NSW continued apace recently when Board of Deputies CEO Vic Alhadeff and Education Manager Lynda Ben-Menashe addressed 200 students at four Central Coast high schools in a day.

The excursion was prompted by separate invitations from students and teachers of Studies of Religion and Modern History.

Alhadeff and Ben-Menashe spoke on "The Jewish connection to Israel", "The treatment of Jews in Germany", "Judaism and Peace" and other syllabus-related topics.

They also provided printed and audiovisual resources, promoted the Board of Deputies' education website www.jjs.org.au and encouraged visits to the Sydney Jewish Museum.

"It was a great opportunity to visit the schools and offer our resources," said Ben-Menashe. "We addressed students at The Entrance High School, St Peter's Catholic College, Henry Kendall High and Wyong High. In fact, we had more requests than we could accommodate, so we will return to the area."

The feedback was overwhelming, as expressed in an email from a teacher at St Peter's Catholic College: "Thanks ever so much. The students were abuzz with comments ... They were excited about all they had learnt, telling my class all about it. Great job!"

The visit was undertaken as part of the Board of Deputies' Speaker Service.

250 students come together

250 students from five north shore schools came together on two occasions in an innovative intercultural program titled "Respect, Understanding and Acceptance".

Devised by the Board of Deputies Education Secretariat, the program brings together students from Brigidine College (a Catholic school), the Hamarzkaine Arshak and Sophie Galston Armenian School, the Australian International Academy (a Muslim school), Davidson High School (a government school) and Masada College (a Jewish school).

The first part of the program was held at the Sydney Jewish Museum and the second at Masada College. A third event will bring the students together at the Armenian school for a day of discussion and sport.

NSW Opposition Leader and

Member for Kuringai **Barry O'Farrell** launched the program with an inspirational message to the students to speak out against racism.

Kuringai Mayor **Nick Ebbeck** opened the forum at Masada, emphasising that 179 nationalities are represented in Kuringai and that the forum symbolised the harmony in which they co-exist.

Rabbi **Paul Lewin** introduced the students to Jewish religious rituals, and Masada students demonstrated the use of *tefillin*.

Board of Deputies CEO **Vic Alhadeff** concluded the forum with an appeal to the students "to have the guts to step out from the crowd and speak out when you see someone being isolated, marginalised or discriminated against".

In both venues, the students had interactive sessions with Jewish, Muslim, Armenian, Aboriginal and Catholic speakers.



Opposition Leader **Barry O'Farrell**.



Students **Khadija El Helou** (Muslim), **Shannon Baker** (Catholic), **Danielle Sussman** (Jewish), **Zareh Ohanian** (Armenian) and **Andrew Beveridge** (Anglican) at the Masada symposium. Photos: Nadine Saacks



Opinion-makers at lunch

The Board of Deputies Luncheon Club provides a forum for opinion-makers to engage with leaders of the Jewish community. Speakers in 2008 have included: **Geoff Corrigan MP**; **Barbara Perry MP**, Minister for Juvenile Justice; **Julie Owens MP**, journalist **David Hardaker**; **Joe Hockey MP**, Shadow Minister for Health and Ageing; political strategist **Bruce Hawker**; **Mike Baird MP**; former Australian

Ambassador to Israel **Ross Burns**; Israeli Major-General (ret) **Uzi Dayan**; **John Ajaka MP**; **Jason Koutsoukis**, the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Israel correspondent; and Israeli **Ilana Mealem** and Palestinian **Mutassim Abu el Hawa** of the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies.

The Luncheon Club is generously hosted by Shaw Stockbroking Director **Harold Milner**.



Journalist **David Hardaker**.



SMH Journalist **Jason Koutsoukis**.



Uzi Dayan.



ECAJ President **Robert Goot** AM SC, **Julie Owens** MP, Shoah Committee Chair **Alan Gold**.



John Ajaka MP.



Mike Baird MP, **Josh Koonin**.



Dr Ginni Mansberg, **Yosi Tal**.



Israeli **Ilana Mealem** and Palestinian **Mutassim Abu el Hawa**.

Emergency management

An agreement allowing for greater support and services during an emergency affecting the Jewish community has been implemented by the NSW Jewish community and the State Government.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Department of Community Services (DoCS) disaster-recovery manager **Wendy Graham** and Board of Deputies President **David Knoll**.

It formalises the relationship between the Jewish Emergency Management Plan (JEMP) and DoCS, and the role of the Board

of Deputies as a peak advisory agency to DoCS about the needs of members of the Jewish community who have been affected by a disaster. JEMP will act as a support agency to DoCS under the NSW State Disaster Plan.

A community-based initiative under the auspices of the Board of Deputies, it aims to provide a co-ordinated management plan to deal with emergencies, whether natural, medical or terrorist-related, which have affected NSW Jews locally and overseas.

• **Contact: JEMP 1300 JEMPAU (1300 536 728)**



Board of Deputies Social Justice Committee Chair **Josie Lacey** OAM, **Barbara Perry** MP.



Board of Deputies Vice-President **Yair Miller**, **Geoff Corrigan** MP.



Danny Goldberg, **Bruce Hawker**.



Joe Hockey MP, **Ross Burns**.



Wibke Brun (centre), the daughter of a Nazi SS officer who was executed for his role in the plot to assassinate Hitler in 1944, addressed a Board of Deputies breakfast on the story of her father as related in her book *My Father's Country*. She is pictured with Professor **Colin Tatz** (left) and Goethe Institute Director **Klaus Krischok**.

From the CEO



The breadth of issues reflected in this edition of *At The Board* gives a sense of some of the critical matters with which the Board of Deputies deals on an ongoing basis.

Our mandate is to make New South Wales a better place to be Jewish - whatever that means.

It can mean working with the Catholic Church to minimise the possibility of adverse reaction to the Stations of the Cross.

It can mean working with the Board of Studies to ensure Jewish students are not disadvantaged by HSC exams falling on Simchat Torah. It certainly means building bridges with other faith groups to engender greater understanding of Jewish issues.

All this and so much more comprises the work of the Board of Deputies.

The importance of the advocacy program which the Board of Deputies is running for high school students in conjunction with the State Zionist Council of NSW cannot be over-estimated.

The marketplace of ideas is more than just a marketplace; it can be an inhospitable battleground. The need to equip our youth to be confident in their identity with the knowledge and

tools to be able to advocate on behalf of Jewish issues and Israel is paramount.

Masada, Moriah and Emanuel have embraced the program and inserted it into their curricula. BJE and BPJE are also on board.

The story on the program which enables senior police officers to better understand the effects of racial hatred and intolerance on immigrants to Australia is, similarly, of major importance.

The Board of Deputies continues to reach out to different sectors, ranging from opinion-makers to Regional NSW to other faith groups to school students of other backgrounds.

A program which our Social Justice Committee supports is *Filling The Gap* - a scheme whereby dentists voluntarily service Aboriginal and Islander communities, working through the Wuchoperrn indigenous health service (see the website www.fillingthegap.com.au).

It is important to note that none of the work of the Board of Deputies would be possible without the support of the JCA.

Vic Alhadeff