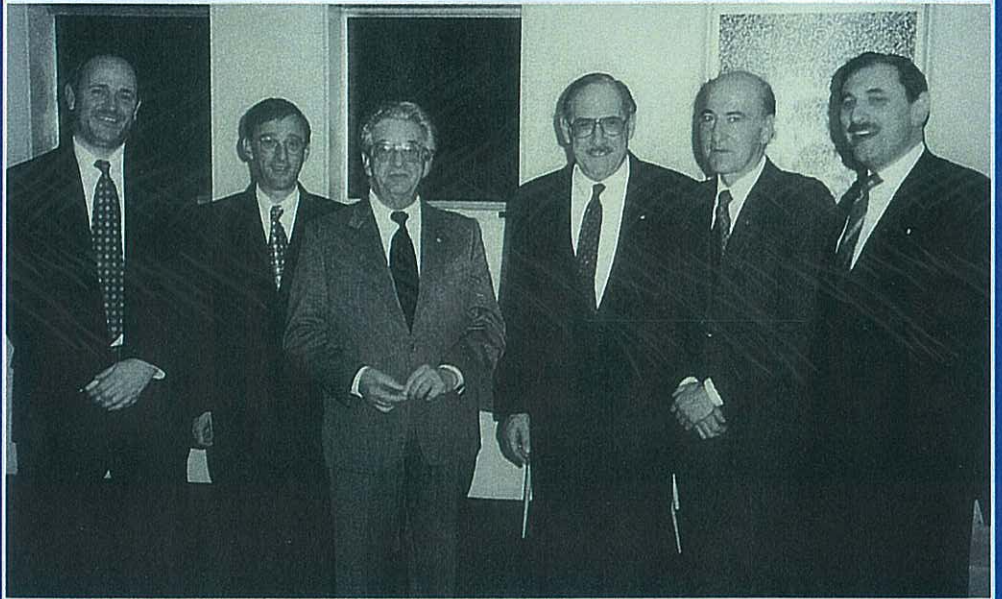


# WITH ONE VOICE



*A History of The New South Wales  
Jewish Board of Deputies*



**Suzanne D. Rutland  
and Sophie Caplan**

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## CONTENTS

### WITH ONE VOICE

Foreword from the Premier	vii
President's Message	ix
<b>PART ONE : Origins and Development</b>	
<i>Suzanne D. Rutland</i>	
Chapter 1 The Beginning Years	4
Chapter 2 The Foundation Years	24
Chapter 3 Changes in Leadership	62
Chapter 4 Newman's Second Term	88
<b>PART TWO : Watershed Years</b>	
<i>Sophie Caplan</i>	
Chapter 5 A Period of Changes	126
Chapter 6 A Period of Equilibrium	146
Chapter 7 Ex-servicemen and Immigrants	160
Chapter 8 A Prewar Refugee at the Helm	172
<b>PART THREE : A New Generation</b>	
<i>Suzanne D. Rutland</i>	
Chapter 9 A Time of Innovation	196
Chapter 10 A Changing Jewish World	250
Chapter 11 Public Relations	280
Chapter 12 Remembering the Holocaust	316
Chapter 13 Conclusion	344
Endnotes	352
Appendices	381
Index	392



ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Suzanne D. Rutland

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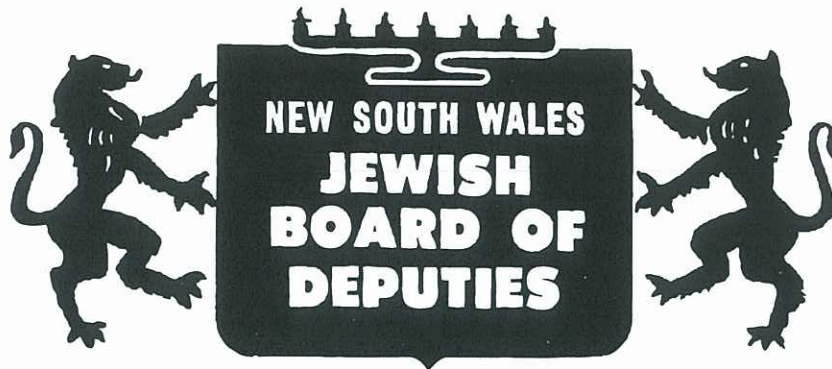


**PART ONE**

# WITH ONE VOICE

## A HISTORY OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES JEWISH BOARD OF DEPUTIES

By Suzanne D. Rutland  
and Sophie Caplan



A special publication of the Australian Jewish Historical Society

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IV



**CONTENTS**

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**WITH ONE VOICE**

Foreword from the Premier	vii
President's Message	ix

**PART ONE : Origins and Development**

*Suzanne D. Rutland*

Chapter 1 The Beginning Years	4
Chapter 2 The Foundation Years	24
Chapter 3 Changes in Leadership	62
Chapter 4 Newman's Second Term	88

**PART TWO : Watershed Years**

*Sophie Caplan*

Chapter 5 A Period of Changes	126
Chapter 6 A Period of Equilibrium	146
Chapter 7 Ex-servicemen and Immigrants	160
Chapter 8 A Prewar Refugee at the Helm	172

**PART THREE : A New Generation**

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Chapter 9 A Time of Innovation	196
Chapter 10 A Changing Jewish World	250
Chapter 11 Public Relations	280
Chapter 12 Remembering the Holocaust	316
Chapter 13 Conclusion	344

Endnotes	352
Appendices	381
Index	392

V

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## FOREWORD FROM THE PREMIER

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Premier of New South Wales  
Australia

My warmest congratulations to the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies on a half-century of dedicated work for the Jewish community and for all the people of New South Wales.

The Jewish Board of Deputies is a key community organisation in the State and the high esteem in which it is held makes it an important voice on issues that confront our society today.

Throughout its fifty years, the Board has shown us that cooperation, tolerance and unity are the keys to success in a culturally diverse society.

The Board has been a committed fighter of racism and discrimination on behalf of all peoples in our State. It has demonstrated leadership in intercultural exchange and has opened paths to dialogue and joint action with the Anglo-Australian community, the Aboriginal community and other ethnic groups, both in Australia and internationally.

As Premier and Minister for Ethnic Affairs, I send my best wishes to the NSW Board of Deputies on 50 years of service, and I wish you fifty more years of success as an influential and well-respected organisation in New South Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Carr'.

Bob Carr  
Premier, Minister for the Arts  
and Minister for Ethnic Affairs



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Peter J. Wertheim

It is with great pleasure that I welcome the publication of *With One Voice*, the history of the first fifty years of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. The inaugural meeting of the Board took place on 29 July 1945. The War in Europe had just finished and the War in the Pacific was still in progress. This was a watershed period of world and Jewish history. The world was only just beginning to uncover the horrifying details of the Shoah. The major powers and the recently-formed United Nations were determined to create a new international order of relationships based on an avowed commitment to democracy and human rights. In Eretz Israel, the struggle for the re-establishment of a Jewish commonwealth was already underway.

In Australia, Jewish refugees from Nazi tyranny had started to arrive in small numbers. They would soon begin arriving in their thousands, enriching the Jewish community and Australia as a whole with their energy and talents. Even the small number who had already arrived before the end of the War began to have a massive impact on the Australian Jewish community. These newcomers created the impetus for the creation of a broad-based and democratically-elected NSW Jewish Board of Deputies.

As today's President of the Board, I am in awe of the momentous issues which faced my predecessors in those early years - the absorption into Australia of approximately seventeen thousand survivors of the Shoah; working for the creation and continuing survival of the State of Israel; and the establishment of the Jewish day school system, to name but a few.

The events which are covered during this fifty year history include the community's reaction to the Suez crisis in 1956, the Eichmann trial in 1962, the Arab-Israeli Wars in 1967 and 1973, the War in Lebanon from 1982-85, and the Gulf War in 1991. The book also provides an account of the establishment of the

Jewish Joint Communal Appeal in 1967 which was itself a landmark event in the life of the NSW Jewish community.

This book has been in gestation for nearly four years which in itself is an indication of the outstanding dedication, hard work and painstaking attention to detail of its authors, Dr Suzanne Rutland and Sophie Caplan. Writing any kind of history is never easy. Events and the reasons why they occur are perceived differently by different people. There is never just one version. Suzanne and Sophie have performed their difficult task magnificently and, even more commendably, as a labour of love. The Board and the NSW Jewish community are deeply in their debt.

I would like to extend my special thanks to the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW for its generous grant of funds which made the printing and publication of this book possible.

Special thanks are also due to the many organisations and individuals who provided invaluable source material for the book, including Dennis Bluth and Helen Bersten of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, the *Australian Jewish News* and, most importantly, past Presidents of the Board and their families who agreed to be interviewed and supplied photographs.

My thanks go also to Margaret Gutman who has been the Executive Director of the Board since 1983, and her predecessors (then referred to as General Secretaries) Ilse Robey and Barbara Benjamin, who also provided interviews and source material. I am grateful to Marion Warms for assisting with the typing of the manuscript.

I join with the authors in thanking Rabbi Raymond Apple of the The Great Synagogue, Professor Sol Encel and Professor Konrad Kwiet for their patience in editing the drafts of various chapters and for their invaluable advice and assistance to the authors.

Ronit Rutland deserves a special thank you for her meticulous attention to detail in devising the layout and the general appearance of the book.

*With One Voice* has definitely been worth the wait. I hope you will enjoy reading it, and learning from it, as much as I did.

**Peter J. Wertheim**

President

NSW Jewish Board of Deputies

March 1998