



# Durban United Hebrew Congregation

## DUHC Annual General Meeting 2015: A New Chairman

**Michael Greenbaum**

The past year's events and achievements were the focus at the recent DUHC Annual General Meeting. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and called on Rabbi Zekry to deliver the opening address. Rabbi Zekry said it was good to see such a good attendance at the AGM. He said "Kol Hakavod" to outgoing Chairman Warren Shapiro, saying Warren was the right chairman at the right time for the community. He said he had worked well with the Chairman and thanked him for his dedication as the DUHC Chairman over the difficult past year experienced by the community. He welcomed the incoming Chairman Maurice Sacher.

Rabbi Zekry informed the congregation that Rabbi Mark Friedman was leaving Durban to return to Johannesburg. He thanked Rabbi Friedman for his contributions to the Umhlanga Jewish Day School and wished him success in his new position in Johannesburg. He then made the community blessing and said "May we go from strength to strength."

Chairman Warren Shapiro then presented the Council's Annual Report, reviewing the past year's significant events including the Special General Meeting in January 2015 which saw 91% of the congregation voting for the sale of the DUHC Silverton Road property. He said that the buyer, Curro Holdings, was still waiting for municipal approvals before the sale would be finalised after which future changes would include converting the Perling Hall into a Shul while the special task team investigates the various possible new sites for relocation. The Chairman made special mention of the DUHC Chazzan Jaron Kalomonowitz and thanked him for his exceptional contribution, abilities and commitment to the Shul as Chazzan over the Yamim Noraim. The Chairman urged members to attend daily services as it was increasingly difficult to obtain minyanim.

The Chairman thanked Rabbi Zekry for his advice and support over the past year. He wished Rabbi Friedman success in Johannesburg and thanked him for his valuable contributions over the past 4 years to the DUHC and to the Umhlanga Jewish Day School. The Chairman then thanked the Great Synagogue Office staff, the Choir and especially Rev. Bryan Lurie, saying he was an asset to the Shul. The Chairman made special mention of the late Denise Wartski z"l whom he praised for her community commitment and involvement. He especially thanked Maurice Sacher and Sidney Lazarus for their invaluable contributions and commitment to the DUHC's wellbeing and for again leading the fundraising drive for the Rosh Hashana booklet which raised a significant amount towards the congregation's finances.

The Chairman said it had not been an easy decision to step down at this time but he had to do so for personal and professional reasons. He said the DUHC needs a Chairman with the time and ability for the position. The Chairman closed his report by thanking the Executive and Council for its support over the past year. He said it had been an honour for him to serve as Chairman. He finally thanked his wife, Lauren, for her constant support and encouragement.

The Honorary Treasurer Mr. Lawrence Levy then presented the Treasurer's Report informing the congregation that the financial year had closed with a lower deficit than for the previous year. Mr. Levy noted that expenses are constantly reviewed and he especially mentioned that lack of sponsorships of Shabbat Brachot and Kiddush evenings have increased Synagogue Womens Guild expenses. He urged the community to sponsor and support what the Shul provides for our enjoyment.

The Chairman opened the floor for general discussion where topics discussed included defining the relationship of the DUHC with the Umhlanga Jewish Centre. Mr. Aubrey Nathan congratulated the Chairman on his work and said that accolades must be given to Rabbi Zekry after his 30 years of service at the DUHC.



The highlight of the evening was the election of the new Council which includes many new young dedicated individuals with foresight, commitment and direction, and the appointment of Maurice Sacher as the new DUHC Chairman. The congregation wishes Maurice Mazal Tov, and thanks him and the Council for their personal dedication while always working in the best interests of the synagogue and the community.

From left to right: Warren Shapiro, Alex Zingol, Rabbi Zekry, Maurice Sacher and Norman Ganz



# Umhlanga Jewish Centre

The UJC welcomes Angie Sacks and children Aaron and Noa from Johannesburg, who have recently joined our community. Angie has taken up an administrative and marketing position at the UJC and can be contacted on [ujc@iafrica.com](mailto:ujc@iafrica.com) for any queries or information about shul services or upcoming events at the UJC.

We welcome back Oren Cohen who participated in the most recent 'March of the Living' to Israel and Poland.

Gilad Friedman represented the Jewish community and the latest HWPL event called 'Peace this together'. *Peace This Together* is a

monthly dialogue series where prominent religious leaders in South Africa come together for the purpose of comparing and contrasting religious texts/scriptures to identify as religious leaders from Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, African Hebrew, Bahai, Christian and Sikh backgrounds analyse and discuss their sacred texts. This month the event was hosted by the Bahai in Durban.

Mazel tov to Gilad Friedman who has been selected to be a fellow in the upcoming Nahum Goldmann Fellowship Program, taking place in Israel later this year.



Angie Sacks with her children Aaron and Noa



Oren Cohen at March of the Living



Gilad Friedman and Moulana Moosa Olgar at the interfaith event



Youngest member of UJC meets Carmela Heilbron and Jack Puterman



# Umhlanga Jewish Day School

**Jessica Stout**

On the 22nd of April, Umhlanga Jewish Day School commemorated Yom Hazikaron. We remembered the service and sacrifices of IDF soldiers, policemen, victims of terror and their families. Rabbi Zekry spoke to students about his time in the army and touched on the lives of friends who died serving their country. The Grade 7, 8 and 9's presented a moving assembly remembering those who had fallen for the State of Israel.

In the evening the UJDS choir opened the community Yom Ha'atzmaut festivities at the Durban Jewish Club, singing an ensemble of beautiful songs.

The next day, we celebrated Israel's 67th birthday at the school. Six stations were set up and the students were given the opportunity to eat Israeli foods, have their faces painted, learn Israeli dancing, go through

"Israeli army training" with Oz, make posters of #StandWithIsrael and write and place letters to Hashem in the "Kotel". These letters will be placed in the Kotel in Jerusalem later this year.

Grades 4 – 9 went to Clubventure on the 29th of April for a fun filled team building day. They were split up into two groups of mixed ages and had to compete in an amazing race challenge and obstacle course. Many of them overcame their fears during these events, and learnt to work together in order to complete the tasks successfully. The day culminated in a refreshing swim in the pool. It was a memorable and spirit building day excursion.

The older students are busy preparing for their first set of exams for the year. We wish them all behatzlacha.



Grades 6 to 9 students at Clubventure



Morah Meltz with some of the students putting their notes in the Kotel



Gilad Friedman with the Grade 4's tasting Israeli foods



Celebrating Israel's Birthday