

Minutes of AJWO AGM 2017

Wednesday 8th November 2017 at the West London Synagogue

Welcome by the Chairman:

The Chairwoman welcomed Robyn Lenn, the President of the International Council for Jewish Women, from Australia, and Barbara Maddison, Vice-President of the National Council of Women and a loyal supporter of AJWO.

Apologies:

Ann Hardiment, Sylvia Graham, Anne Shisler, Judith Usiskin, Angella Carne, Daphne Berkovi, Stella Lucas, Eve Swabe, Sandra Blackman, Rosalind Wright, Wendy Fireman

Minutes of AJWO AGM 2016 were circulated

Financial Report:

Helen Reisman reported that there is **£2,044.09** in our bank account.

At the July Seminar there was a £6.80 profit, after donations to three charities. The Sixth Form Girls Conference involved expenses of £544.

Chairman's report :

She thanked Valerie Bello and West London Synagogue for hosting the AGM today.

Also many thanks to Helen Reisman and WIZOUk for supporting and hosting us at Charles House.

Over the last year Sarah Manning has continued to look after our website, thank you.

Vice Chairman Vivien Freeman has unfortunately had to relinquish her office, due to the increasing burden of family commitments. She was thanked for her quiet and efficient support over the years. Helen Reisman is continuing as Hon. Treasurer and has offered invaluable encouragement and advice which was greatly appreciated.

Louise Freedman was thanked for updating our Directory of Council members.

We say goodbye to two of our Affiliate members.

Women in Jewish Leadership has now been subsumed into the Board of Deputies and is no longer an Affiliate member. It is hoped that the important work of raising the profile of Jewish women in the community will be continued.

The Agunot Campaign has now been disbanded. Over the years it has had many successes, helping "chained women" to obtain a Get. Joanne Greenaway is now an adviser to the Beth Din in such cases.

Reviewing the past year, the chairman mentioned Modern Slavery, which was addressed by David Assersohn, the speaker at last year's AGM.

One of the highlights was the first Jewish Sixth Form Girls Conference, held in March at Hasmonian Girls School, attended by 145 students from Immanuel College, Yavneh College and JFS, as well as the host school. It was modelled on similar events held by the National Council of Young Women.

The subject was “Making your Mark” and began with a quiz on women’s emancipation and rights by Deborah Nathan.

There were three guest speakers. Gillian Merron, Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies spoke about her political career, Jacqui Nicholls spoke about how she became a fine artist, exhibiting her work all over the world, Ella Rose who was President of the Union of Jewish Students and is now a member of the Jewish Labour Movement.

In July we held our Summer Seminar on “Making a Difference in the World”, highlighting the contribution of Jewish charities in helping refugees and sending volunteers to the underdeveloped world. The speakers were Dr Judith Singer, the new CEO of Tzedek, Rebecca Singer of World Jewish Relief and Nic Schlagman from the West London Synagogue.

After amending the constitution of AJWO to permit more than one chair, Laura Marks, founder of Mitzvah Day and Deborah Nathan, chair of British Emunah were elected co-chairs.

Penny Conway thanked the outgoing chair Anne Lyons for her work over the last three years and presented her with a gift.

Laura and Deborah spoke of their aims for the future of AJWO, including attracting younger members and using social media. We still need to campaign to raise the profile of Jewish women in the community.

The guest speaker was Paula Kitching, aided by Louise Scott, who gave an illustrated talk on “We Were There Too”, the role of London Jews in the First World War. She has been working on a project to learn more about the people who were involved, including young soldiers and nurses, from reminiscences of their families and memorabilia which still exist. She told us about Florence Greenberg who served as a nurse at the Front, and her own efforts to learn more from the gravestones she has visited in the war cemeteries.

Vivien Freeman gave the vote of thanks.