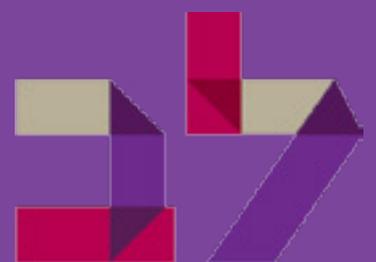


LEO BAECK COLLEGE ANNUAL REVIEW 2014-15



LEO BAECK COLLEGE



HIGHLIGHTS 2014-15

APRIL	<p>Rabbi Jonathan Keren Black was presented with his Fellowship of the College by Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh.</p> <p>The Governors of Leo Baeck College were pleased to appoint Noeleen Cohen as the new Chair.</p>
MAY	Omid Djalili was the special guest at our Annual Fundraising Dinner.
JUNE	<p>The Van der Zyl lecture hosted by Alyth Synagogue was delivered by guest lecturer Rabbi Professor Rachel Adler.</p> <p>Leo Baeck College marked the 25th anniversary of the ordination of the first openly LGBT rabbis, namely Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah and Rabbi Sheila Shulman z"l. The keynote speaker at this event was Rabbi Professor Rachel Adler who delivered an inspiring talk on the subject of 'Gays, Lesbians, Transsexuals Talking Their Way Into Judaism'.</p>
JULY	<p>Three new rabbis were ordained at Edgware & District Reform Synagogue Rabbi Dr René Pfertzel, Rabbi Dr Kate Briggs and Rabbi Julia Grishchenko.</p> <p>Leo Baeck College held an International Conference on 'Rabbis and the Great War' at West London Synagogue.</p> <p>Rabbi Dr Larry Hoffman was the guest lecturer at the Summer Institute for Jewish Leadership at Finchley Progressive Synagogue.</p> <p>At West London Synagogue, the class of '87, Rabbis Sylvia Rothschild, Jonathan Wittenberg, Michael Hilton and Stephen Howard were presented with fellowships by Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris, Principal.</p>
SEPTEMBER	Rabbi Dr Charles Middleburgh was appointed Dean of Leo Baeck College.
OCTOBER	<p>The launch of the Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus marked an exciting time in the development and growth of adult Jewish education for 21st century Jews.</p> <p>Nine rabbinic students from Leo Baeck College donned their finery and headed to Lambeth Palace for the launch of the CCJ Buddy Scheme.</p>
NOVEMBER	Leo Baeck College hosted the Inaugural Lecture for Rabbi Professor Tony Bayfield, Professor of Jewish Theology and Thought.
JANUARY	Leo Baeck College students attended the launch of Tzelem UK.

FROM THE CHAIR

I am struck by the need for our communities to be rooted in a Judaism that is accessible and robust, and imbued with a deep sense of what it means to be proudly, progressively Jewish. This need is driven by a desire to have thriving communities that are led by outstanding rabbis and Jewish educators. To deliver this, we must have a sustainable, valued and inspiring Leo Baeck College.

With this vision in mind, I took over the chair from Alasdair Nisbet in April 2014. A year on, I am pleased to say that we are, I believe, creating a College that provides a valuable intellectual and religious resource for Progressive Judaism in the UK and Europe.

Under the leadership and guidance of Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris, our students are being inspired by and learning from our academically accomplished faculty and are gaining a deeper understanding of themselves, their community and their Judaism.

The unstinting support of committed stakeholders and funders ensures that Leo Baeck College continues to provide teaching of the highest calibre and develops outstanding rabbis and Jewish educators. Our thanks to the Movement for Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism and our other stakeholders, as well as our many Patrons, Friends and long-standing supporters for their generous and continued support.

Adult Jewish learning and the creation of an exciting new space for our extensive library have been key focus areas this past year. The launch of the Lehrhaus enabled us to provide high quality intellectual learning opportunities for a broad range of adults. This, together with moving forward on the plans and options for a new library, are crucial to ensure that the College remains firmly at the heart of Progressive Judaism.

The Board of Governors continues its work in guiding the direction of the College. I would like to thank all the governors, past and present, for their hard work and continued commitment to the College. The support and wisdom of my honorary officers, Rabbi Josh Levy, Robert Graham and David Kirk has been invaluable. Thank you to each of them.

We look forward to welcoming new governors in 2015 and to working together with Rabbi Dr Deborah Kahn-Harris and the dedicated team we have, to sustain an institution that continues to be uniquely placed to provide Progressive Judaism with rabbis and Jewish educators who will inspire and innovate and enrich the lives of all our communities.

The words of Rabbi Leo Baeck remind us that “Jewish vision looks backward and forward simultaneously, that nothing exists solely for itself. Through this, there is a sense of connection that binds Jews to the past, even as it bids us as Jews to consider the present and look to the future.” Next year, 2016, will be the 60th anniversary of the founding of Leo Baeck College. I hope that you will join us to celebrate 60 years of achievement, to value all that we are today and at the same time to look forward and share our dream.

NOELEEN COHEN
CHAIR



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The 2014-2015 academic year has seen Leo Baeck College grow from strength to greater strength. We have been delighted to welcome a diverse group of new rabbinic students to the rabbinic programme – from France, Russia and the UK. Most excitingly, the Leo Baeck College Lehrhaus – our brand new adult education institute – has welcomed more than seventy students to a range of evening courses and stand-alone lectures. In conjunction with the Council for Christians and Jews, we launched a ground-breaking and innovative new programme for our trainee rabbis – partnering them with trainee Anglican and Methodist ministers with whom they can develop an ongoing interfaith relationship throughout their studies. The programme itself was launched to much fanfare by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, at Lambeth Palace in the autumn term.

Our plans for the library redevelopment are moving forward at speed. We have formally acquired the space needed and have brought in architects to begin the design process. We aim to be able to move between a quarter and a third of the library collection into a beautiful new reading space and create a more worthy space for our rare books collection. When completed, the newly redeveloped Library will provide a focal point not just for the life of the College and our students, but for the whole of the Progressive Jewish community in the UK and beyond.

Looking forward to 2015-16, we are confident of another strong intake of rabbinic students. In addition, we will be gearing up to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the College's founding. We are also looking forward to being a formative part of the European Union of Progressive Judaism's biennial conference here in London in April 2016.

As always, I wish to acknowledge all of you who help and support Leo Baeck College in so many different ways. Without your tireless support, we would not still be here, training rabbis, educators and leaders for our communities. You are the people who make our work possible. Thank you.

RABBI DR DEBORAH KAHN-HARRIS PRINCIPAL

"The enthusiasm of the students, many of whom bring skills and interests



from other areas of life, makes teaching at Leo Baeck College an exciting and often heady experience. The sense of community they generate ensures that the College is a safe place, in which people of many faiths and beliefs can challenge their views and evolve new ones."

Dr Jeremy Schonfield
John D. Rayner Reader of Jewish Liturgy

LEO BAECK COLLEGE LEHRHAUS

2014-15 saw the launch of Leo Baeck College's adult Jewish learning programme - the LBC Lehrhaus. The Faculty of the College taught a variety of courses in their areas of expertise. The courses included Biblical Hebrew, Midrash, Bible, Spinoza, Jewish Sacred Music, Kabbalah and status issues. Over seventy participants came together to learn and discuss a range of topics. Following on from their input and comments, a rich new programme is being prepared for 2015-16. The Lehrhaus has become the place for people to feed their enthusiasm for Progressive Jewish learning.

GABRIELA RUPPIN, OUTGOING LEHRHAUS CO-ORDINATOR





FROM THE DEAN

The 2014-2015 academic year saw three new students start the Rabbinic Programme, Cantor Gershon Silins, Daniela Touati and Igor Zinkov. We were also joined by auditing students who attend modules of choice without being assessed.

Our combined faculty of full and part-time lecturers gave strength and depth to the curriculum and our students have uniformly risen to any challenges their teachers have given them.

2014-15 was the academic year in which we took stock of our curriculum and teaching schedule and made some modifications based on detailed feedback from students and faculty about individual modules. We accept that the five years of rabbinic training are, unavoidably, very demanding on students and the detailed communication that we have with students and faculty enables us to identify areas where some degree of amelioration is possible.

2015 marks the second student cohort going to Haifa, where the programme under the directorship of Rabbi Dr Golan Ben Chorin has drawn valuable conclusions from the experience of the first cohort to travel there in the second semester of 2014.

The vocational track of the Rabbinic Programme benefits from having a dedicated head, Rabbi Maurice Michaels, and from the broad range of practical and theoretical modules taught on it. This is complemented by the congregational work done within constituent synagogues of the two sponsoring movements where we liaise closely with the heads of the Liberal and Reform movements.

RABBI DR CHARLES H MIDDLEBURGH DEAN

“Although we can’t understand Leo Baeck College without the British Jewish community, its work goes beyond the borders of the UK. LBC is the seed of the rebirth of what was destroyed by centuries of inquisitions, pogroms and the Shoah. Thanks to the training that so many students receive within its walls, LBC is building the foundations for the re-flourishing of a diverse and dynamic European Jewry. I feel so blessed to be part of a community that has moved from Torah study and prayers to action. A community which will be remembered not just for what it said but also for what it did.”

Haim Casas, Student Rabbi



FROM THE DIRECTOR OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Last year saw the intake of three students onto the MA in Jewish Education who all successfully progressed to their second and final year in 2014-15. They were joined by a new cohort of three students onto the first year of the MA programme, one of whom is completing the course as a full time student. Jo-Ann Myers, together with Gabriela Ruppin, Dr Leslie Bash and Rabbis Richard Jacobi and Miri Lawrence comprise the teaching faculty. Additional lecturers were brought in from the Leo Baeck College Jewish Studies faculty as well as invited guests with specialisms in different aspects of Jewish Education.



Gabriela and Jo-Ann are also responsible for delivering Jewish education modules to students on the rabbinic programme. Jo-Ann also taught a Modern Hebrew course to those rabbinic students who did not go to Israel in the spring semester.

The number of chadarim and Jewish day schools using the Eizeh Kef Hebrew curriculum is increasing year on year. We now have fifteen chadarim, including two in Belarus and five Jewish day schools using the programme. Jo-Ann provides ongoing support and training for all users and this is conducted either face-to-face or via Skype. Jo-Ann continues to provide general Hebrew consultancy and training for the communities.

JO-ANN MYERS
DIRECTOR OF JEWISH EDUCATION



“Returning to study as a mature student was a long thought out decision making process. It is one I have not regretted! The classes are small, supportive and full of encouragement and opportunities to develop academically and personally. The courses are very well structured and resources are readily available.

Staff are warm, engaging and very approachable. The MA in Jewish Education is proving to be refreshingly inspirational!”

Suzanne King
MA in Jewish Education



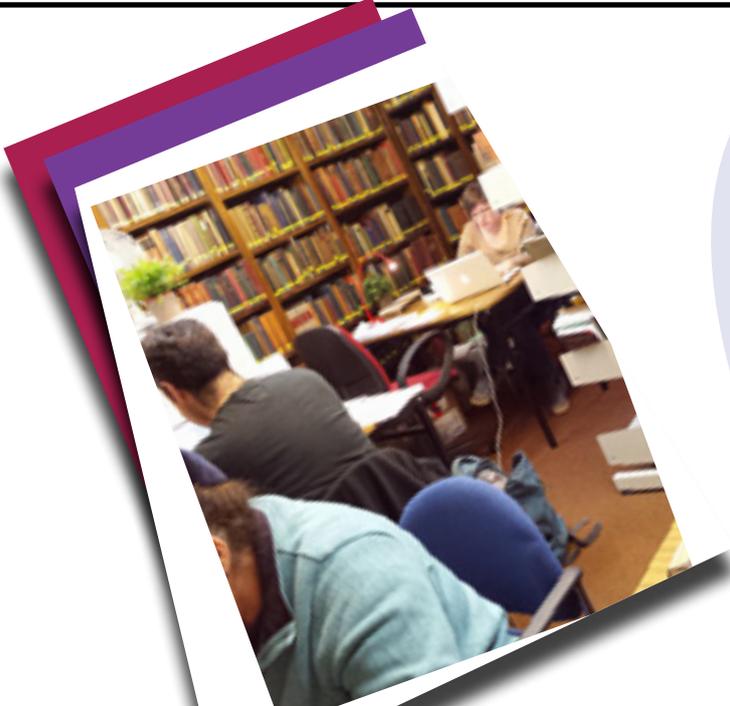
QAA REVIEW AND MONITORING

Over the last three years the College has voluntarily submitted itself to a process of review followed by annual monitoring by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. We are delighted to report that once again Leo Baeck College attained the highest level of outcome that the QAA can give following an annual monitoring report. This is a tribute to the excellent work of our teaching and administrative staff and a credit to the processes put in place to manage academic standards and enhance the quality of learning opportunities offered at the College.

VALIDATION

The Collaborative partnership with the University of Winchester, the body that validates our programmes, will be coming to an end after the 2015-16 academic year. The College is currently engaged in finding a new partnership and is in dialogue with a number of universities with whom we can work.

GABRIELA RUPPIN
HEAD OF ACADEMIC SERVICES



RABBI SHEILA SHULMAN Z"l

In late October 2014, we lost our beloved teacher, friend and mentor, Rabbi Sheila Shulman z"l. Sheila was an exceptional teacher and colleague at Leo Baeck College and an inspirational role model for generations of rabbis and students. Her memory is an abiding blessing.

LIBRARY

The Leo Baeck College library is a treasure trove of Jewish intellectual heritage. It provides unique research and study opportunities for academics, rabbis and students from across the spectrum of the Jewish community.

The library redevelopment project is underway. We look forward to sharing our plans for this exciting project in the coming year

"You really helped me by organising my spontaneous stay at the Leo Baeck College library! Everything was perfect. You were completely right - the collection is full of treasures and it is a pity that I only had a short time to experience this incredible collection. It helped enormously with my research."

A library user

DID YOU KNOW?

LEO BAECK COLLEGE LIBRARY ...

- Contains over 60,000 volumes on Jewish studies and Jewish congregational literature, similar in size to the Jewish Studies Library at Oxford University.
- Subscribes to approximately 40 academic periodicals for the latest research, as well as having back issues and historic publications.
- Houses an important collection of rare and historic books.

WE ARE PROUD OF STUDENT RABBI ROBYN ASHWORTH-STEEN

The efforts of student rabbi Robyn Ashworth-Steen brought together over 60 Rabbis and Cantors, and a large contingent of Leo Baeck College students and staff attended the launch of Tzelem - a cross-communal initiative. The project brought together vocal clerical voices to address issues of social and economic justice. The event was hosted by John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons, who spoke about his own experience as a Bar Mitzvah boy at Finchley Reform Synagogue. Speaking prior to the event, Speaker Bercow said, "I welcome the initiative by Tzelem to speak up for the cause of social justice. This is a non-partisan campaign designed to highlight some of the endemic problems that the country faces and to argue for policies which will tackle injustice and promote greater opportunity and social mobility."



LAUNCH OF TZELEM UK JANUARY 2015 AT HOUSE OF COMMONS

THANKS ARE DUE TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR CONTINUING FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF LEO BAECK COLLEGE

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