

FEDERATION OF ZIONIST YOUTH - 100 YEARS ON

A Review of the First 100 Years of the UK's No. 1 Zionist Youth Movement / By Paul Lenga

1910-1912

First attempts to form a National Zionist Youth Movement. Provincial groups began corresponding.

1915

Various Provincial Societies called a conference and formed "the Junior Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland" (the JZF)

1917

The Balfour Declaration spurred Zionist activity and by 1918 there were 30 JZF branches.

1918

JZF became the Young Zionist Council and the YZC was joined by the London societies.

1921

At ZF Conference, certain impracticalities in the YZC were recognized. A resolution was proposed to set up a national Young Zionist movement and the Conference approved the foundation of the Association of Young Zionist Societies, with Shlomo Temkin as President.



FZY 1948 Summer School near Bristol



The FZY Mazkirut of 1935. Including Abe Harman, founder of the Hebrew University and former Ambassador to Washington (far left) and Rita Levy (bottom row, second from right).



FZY Summer School at Rhuddian – 1934. Abba Eban is at the centre-right in the back row.

1935

At a Conference merging the Association of Young Zionist Societies with the University Zionist Federation, the name "Federation of Zionist Youth" was adopted. Nat Goldenberg became President and Aubrey (Abba) Eban took over as Editor of the "Young Zionist". Membership was about 2500.

1939-1945

During the war, the male membership of FZY was drafted into HM Forces or evacuated to the provinces. FZY virtually ceased all activity, but the FZY office managed to keep open and in touch with its spread out members.

1945-1948

Palestine was back in the limelight and provincial societies again flourished.

1949-1950

Settled conditions in England and the Middle East following the establishment of the Jewish State meant that FZY began to lose its unity and became an association of many individual units loosely affiliated. Many provincial societies closed down and were not replaced.



1949. FZY Annual Conference, Anglo-Palestine Club, near Piccadilly Circus.

(left to right) Stanley Bloom, Arthur Meth (standing), Abba Levy, Abe Grabman, Levi Bakstansky, Bernice Margolin.

1950

FZY's first Shaliach, Avram Eisenstadt, arrived. He saw the need for a closer link between FZY and Israel, and instituted the "Shnat Sherut" scheme in Israel. Generally, the Movement was still not strong.

1952-1955

Donald Silk became chairman of the Edgware Society, whose delegates took over the Mazkirut, of which Donald Silk was elected Vice Chairman. Edgware Society acted as a "Shadow cabinet", and set up new societies in Bournemouth,

Wembley, Westcliff and Marylebone. Subsequently, Donald Silk became Chairman of the Mazkirut and Jack Dare was appointed provincial organizer. The Movement expanded. North London, Manchester and Liverpool groups were formed. Donald Silk's "Operation Black Diamond" led to the formation of groups in South Wales (Merthyr Tydfil (!), Swansea and Cardiff). Groups were also started in Birmingham and Leeds (an original member). Policy of having 6 weekend schools and 2 leadership seminars a year plus regional conferences was instituted.

1956-1957

Shnat Sherut flourished and the movement had 20-30 active societies. Provinces were stronger than London. Summer Schools were popular. Leading personalities of the time included Stuart Squires, Sidney Shipton, David Chanan, Norman Morris and David Firestone.

1960-1961

David Glass was elected chairman and with Baruch Deutsch arriving as the new shaliach, the tide turned after a period of stagnation.

1962-1963

Avraham Shilo replaced Baruch Deutsch as Shaliach. The Provinces were strengthened, with new societies in Liverpool, Manchester, Blackpool, Southport and Nottingham.

1964-1965

Hafinjan societies, which had been introduced in the early 1960's as feeder groups for the Young Zionist Societies, started to flourish. Fund Raising projects in Israel were started, the initial projects being a Kindergarten and Library in Eilat.



FZY participants on Summer Tour visit the FZY Kindergarten in Eilat.

1965-1966

Unsettled period culminating in a successful major Folk Concert fund raising function at the Royal Festival Hall. Movement personalities of the time included Ron Savage (Sivan), John Corre and David Kosky. Moshe Lehrer, the new shaliach was a stabilizing factor.



Folk Concert fund raising function at the Royal Festival Hall.

1967

In the aftermath of the Six Day War, FZY devoted its energies to raising monies for Israel. Over 50 members volunteered on kibbutzim. The movement numbered approximately 2,500.

1968-1970

FZY expanded in the general feeling of euphoria following the 1967 War and the arrival of Dov Bet-El as the new shaliach. The general strong identity amongst the Anglo-Jewish community boosted FZY which as a broad-based movement unbridled by political affiliation, attracted new members from the whole political spectrum. Project 500 Hafinjan - a society still active today - was established in Glasgow, with affiliations remaining the largest in the movement for over twenty years.

1971-1972

Yossi Libster replaced Dov Bet-El as shaliach. The FZY office moved from Rex House in Regent Street to King Street in Piccadilly. The strength of the movement was firmly based in London, mainly in the senior societies. West London provided most of the leading personalities such as David Fisher, Colin Green, and Barry Velleman who became Chairman. FZY became less Israel-oriented in the absence of a dynamic shaliach.

1973

The Yom Kippur War was a turning point for FZY. The whole Anglo-Jewish community rallied behind Israel, and

youth in the U.K. sought an outlet for this wave of Zionist identification which as in 1967, FZY was best equipped to provide. A group of members volunteered on kibbutzim

1974-1975

The upsurge in the movement in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War continued and with the arrival of a charismatic new shaliach, Shlomo Kramer, this period witnessed the end of the era of senior society based leaders such as Graham Weinberg and Herbert Goldberg and the beginning of a new leadership which originated from the Hafinjan Societies. During 1974 North Manchester Hafinjan was established, as well as societies in Newcastle and later in Leeds. Hanegev, a senior society set up in 1971, started to rival West London as the main leadership base of the movement. Midway through 1975, Herbert Goldberg resigned, with Anthony Luder and Paul Lenga, both of Hanegev taking over as Co-chairmen.



Mr. & Mrs. Seager and daughter Pamela at the dedication of the FZY Ashkelon project, 1975, in memory of Linda Joan Seager.

1976

Malcolm Norman continued the Hanegev tradition by taking over as chairman. WIZO approached FZY with a request for madrichim for their young Ilanot groups. Subsequently, "Atid", a Manchester based movement running young children's groups (18-14 years), also applied to join FZY, which saw the immediate benefits of a feeder age-group for the Hafinjan societies. At Conference, in a revolutionary move Atid joined FZY to form a third tier to the

movement, which now extended from the 8 to 25 age range. Julian Green of Southgate Hafinjan, the first FZY member on "Machon" in Israel, established initial contact with Young Judaea, a US Zionist Youth movement with an ideology similar to FZY's.

1977

Barry Green and Paul Lenga, both from Hanegev, led the movement through a year of major expansion. New societies were set up in London, Leeds, Manchester, and Glasgow and two societies were formed in Dublin, Ireland. Michael Russ was the new shaliach. Affiliations rose and record funds were raised for the movement's FR project in Ashkelon. The year was a watershed for FZY with the balance of power shifting from London to the Provinces. Encouraged by the Mazkirut, the provincial societies started to influence the direction of the movement. The FZY office moved to Swiss Cottage.



Adrian Weisberg at Conference 1977

1978

The leader of the Provincial "lobby", Adrian Weisberg, from Exodus YZS in Manchester, became chairman in what was a revolutionary move - never in recent years had a chairman come from the Provinces. Adrian moved to London and encouraged more provincial involvement in the running of the movement - a third of the Mazkirut comprised provincial members. This year saw the Hafinjan societies' ascendancy as the major tier in FZY. The format of weekend Seminars was changed to activity-based participatory study sessions, rather than the traditional lectures and debates. With help from Rabbi Joe Wernick, the Israel Director of Young Judaea, agreement was obtained from Charlotte Jacobson, the president of Young Judaea's parent body, Hadassah and the Chairman of the WZO, for eight FZY chanichim to join Young Judea's Year Programme in Israel. A further eight FZY chanichim joined the "Machon" and in September 1978 the FZY

Year Course was born! In addition to Year Course, many senior society members joined Shnat Sherut, Kibbutz Ulpanim and the Jerusalem programme - in all over thirty members of FZY participated in Israel programmes.



Pre-qualification Seminar for the 1st Year Course at the David Eder farm.

1979

Linda Robinson of Project 500 in Glasgow became the second successive chairman from the provinces - she too moved to London to take up the post. The Friends of FZY was re-activated in London to provide financial support for the movement, particularly in the form of scholarships for Year Course. The FZY office moved to Finchley Road and subsequently to Accommodation Road in Golders Green.



FZY-niks participating in a march held for Solidarity with Soviet Jewry, Hyde Park 1982.

1980-1984

The Hanegev 'tradition' of Chairmen returned with only Beverly Green of Ilford YZS (1981), and Simon Turek from West London (1983), interrupting a succession of chairmen from the North London society: Julian Green (1980) and Eden Lenga (1981), David Aaronberg (1981-2), Richard Werth (1983) and David Gertler (1984). During this period the centrality of Israel programmes in the overall character of the movement continued to be strengthened. The senior societies became even less influential, as the average age of the movement was lowered. The strength of the movement

was in the Hafinjan societies. Arie Halfin, a shaliach with a Keren Hayesod background, boosted fund-raising. He was replaced by Mooli Lahad, one of FZY's most successful shlichim, who re-organized the leadership structure and the society base. The FZY office moved to Finchley Road. In 1984, FZYI was formed in Israel by Paul Lenga and his contemporaries in response to a call from the Mazkirut in London to set up a movement in Israel, to represent its expanding interests there.

1985

FZY commemorated its 75th Anniversary with large celebrations in London and in Tel Aviv. Ahia Yitzchaki, a University Lecturer from Tel Aviv became FZY's new shaliach. Howard Granville, of Hanegev, became chairman.

1986-1989

8 years of Year course, as well as increased numbers of participants on Israel programmes were by now starting to have an impact on the movement. Chanichim were having a major influence on their return and started to fill the leading mazkirut positions, including Chairman. Michael Wegier became chairman and strengthened the educational base and programming. He also led a change of emphasis to high quality hadracha at the younger age range. Sioux Morris succeeded Michael Wegier, the last of the Hanegev line! Shushan Manule, arrived as the new shaliach. A Hafinjan society in Leeds was set up by Year Course candidates. The younger trend of the movement continued. Numbers on Year Course increased annually - 19 went to Israel in 1989.

1990

FZY celebrated its 80th Anniversary with the "80 Years On" function in Tel Aviv, during which there was a live link-up between past and present members of FZY in London and Tel Aviv. Graham Sneader became chairman with a largely Year-Course based Mazkirut. Aliyah was given priority as an aim of the movement and Israel-oriented activities formed the focus of the movement's ideology, encouraged by a dynamic new shaliach, Arie Tsillik. Over 120 went on Israel's Summer Tours and a record 25 went on Year Course. After nearly 25 years at St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, Conference moved to a new larger venue at Oxford Polytechnic. Conference was split into 2 sections - an educational seminar followed

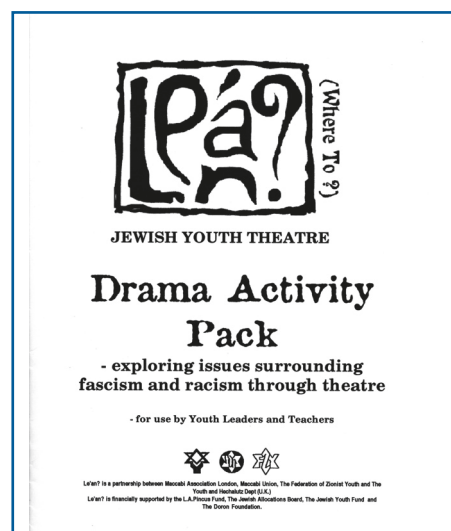
by a movement Conference for senior members. Graham Sneader was re-elected chairman with a strong Mazkirut. The Stress Centre project in Kiryat Shmona was finished and a new project, raising funds for the immigration and absorption of the new wave of Soviet olim, was started. A new Israel Programme was inaugurated - "Hadracha B'shemesh", a programme for 17 year old madrichim, which started to have a major impact on the movement's leadership structure.

1991

Despite the Gulf War, all 25 FZY Year Course chanichim see out their year in Israel - The only group in Israel to do so. Their return to the U.K. has a major impact on the movement leadership. The concept of classical madrich-chanich orientated Hadracha starts to permeate the FZY organisational structure alongside traditional peer-led techniques, upon the re-integration of the large number of Year course returnees. Dan Goldstone becomes FZY's first ever full-time Mazkir and the running of the movement becomes more professional. FZY begins to take a leading role in community activity.

1992

FZY continues to expand under new Mazkir, Adam Jenshil and Greg Allon becomes FZY's second full time worker. Lee Perlman, a professional educator, arrives as the new shaliach and immediately has an impact, strengthening the educational programming, Aliya activity and community involvement, especially via the FZY theatre production "Le'an". 2 groups (50) went on Hadracha B'shemesh. Year Course participants set up the Barzilai Hospital Radio Project in Ashkelon.



Le'an – FZY Theatre Production

1993

The Keshet Summer Camp was inaugurated in England for 14 and 15 year olds, to complete a 4 year cycle of movement activity, Keshet being followed by Summer Tour, Hadracha B'shemesh, and Year course. New movement workers, David Pleiner and Danny Weigert re-organize the movement's organisational and financial structure and start to integrate the record number of 44 Year Course participants on their return to the movement. They also further develop FZY's ideology as a pluralistic Zionist Youth movement. Dan Harverd becomes FZY's first Israel Co-ordinator, and Chaim Martell becomes chairman of FZY in Israel, taking over from Helen Gottlieb.



Keshet Summer Camp logo

1994

Over 250 people attend a grand FZY re-union in London. FZY sends 5 tours to Israel for the first time, has 2 Hadracha B'shemesh tours, another 44 on Year Course and 65 on Keshet. Dudi Schwartz arrives as the new shaliach from Israel, and FZY starts to gain the benefits of his experience as a professional educator and former Israel Programmes Director of the WZO. Gabi Shine takes over as Israel Co-ordinator and Paul Lenga is elected as FZY's President. Wayne Snyder and Dan Green, the new movement workers, start to increase Israel & community activity, and strengthen the movement at society level, especially the bogrim age group (18-22) with the Ra'anon Project. The JNF inaugurates the new FZY Forest on Mt. Heress near Sha'ar Haggai, on the approach to Jerusalem.

1995

FZY starts to increase its participation in Israel programmes and centralized movement activity, as it enters its 85th

Anniversary Year. A strengthened Mazkirut places emphasis on the societies and regional organisation. Numbers on Israel Programmes reach an all time high with 50 on Hadracha B'shemesh, 41 on Year course and an unprecedented 240 on Tour (6 tours). 95 sign up for Keshet. There are now 3 movement workers. FZY takes its first steps to becoming part of an International Zionist Youth Confederation with Young Judaea in the U.S.A and the Scout Movement in Israel.

1996-1997

Atid, the formal partnership between FZY, Young Judaea and the Scouts in Israel is formed, enhancing FZY's activities with Young Judaea and with the Scouts. The FZY office is on the move again, as the office team leaves the long-standing Finchley Road venue for a self-contained unit at 25 Oakleigh Road North, in Whetstone. The office needs to accommodate a Mazkir, two office workers, two secretaries and the FZY Shaliach (and their cars!). Steven Elstein succeeds Michael Freeman as Mazkir and Oded Regev succeeds Dudi Schwartz as Shaliach.

1998-2000

FZY opens a Northern Office at Mamlock House in Manchester, to house FZY's second Shaliach. Limor Shabtai becomes FZY's first Shaliach North of Watford Gap and works with the groups and the Bogrim in Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, Birmingham and other such outposts. She is soon joined by a Northern Fieldworker as the movement begins to reap the rewards of movement activity in the North, especially seminars and Israel programmes. A new summer camp, Ofek, is established for 13-14 year-olds alongside Keshet, and numbers on the two FZY summer camps soon increase substantially. Naomit Bloom is FZY's Mazkira and Yossi Smadja becomes the Central Shaliach.

2001-2002

FZY's office continues its meanderings to 45 the Burroughs, Hendon, with larger space and facilities, not to mention a car park for the ever increasing office vehicle fleet (there are now 4 full time office workers). FZY's increased activities in the provinces and on summer camps lead to a substantial increase in the number of participants on Summer Tours in Israel and on Year Course with 70 participants.

Michael Hollander, a charismatic Shaliach (with a strange American accent) strengthens education and leadership in the movement and Russell Wolkind becomes Mazkir.

2003-2005

Following FZY's expansion in recent years, Alon Ben-Artzi becomes FZY's 3rd Shaliach, based in Birmingham and the Central Region, alongside Shira Immergluck, the Central Shlichah in London and Sharon Schwartz in Manchester. These three Shlichim have a major educational and hadracha impact on the movement, especially with the Bogrim on campus in the Provinces. FZY sends 12 tour groups (480 chanichim) in the summer to Israel, a number which it has maintained ever since. Year Course numbers reach a record 85, and 200 attend Ofek and Keshet. Mazkirim during this period include Alan Berkley, the latest member of the Berkley clan from Glasgow who have provided generations of leaders to the movement, and Craig Sherrard.

2006-2008

The Second Lebanon War does not deter the participants on the 12 Summer Tours as only a handful of members return to the UK, FZY being the only movement throughout the world where this occurs. Year Course reaches an all time record figure of 124 participants. Ofek and Keshet have nearly 300 participants. The qualifications to be Mazkir now include CEO of a multi-national organization as well as Power Point presentations. Samuel Green becomes Mazkir, following in the footsteps of his father Colin in the 1960's. He is followed by Jonny Bunt. Onit replaces Gali as Northern Shlichah and Einav Ayalon, responsible for FZY's summer programming in Israel at Young Judaea, becomes FZY's Central Shaliach and immediately makes a major impact on the movement. After nearly 100 years of wandering, the movement now has its own permanent home at 25 The Burroughs, Hendon, thanks largely to the efforts of the Friends of FZY.



Chanichim participate in London peace rally



FZY tour chanichot take a break from the Maccabiah on the shores of the Kinneret, 2009



Chanichim at Ofek machane 2009

2009-2010

The global economic downturn starts to have an impact on FZY, especially on the summer programmes in the UK and Year Course. However, whilst many other Jewish movements in the UK witness a severe drop in numbers and even cancellation of programmes, FZY still sends 12 Summer Tours to Israel and nearly 60 on Year Course, making a total of more than 6000 participants on FZY programmes in Israel over the past 10 years. Jack Prevezer needs to add financial skills to his multi-national CEO qualities as Mazkir and Jamie Slavin takes over as Mazkir. Niv Zonis takes up the Northern Shaliach position and Einav Ayalon, is invited by the Jewish Agency to head the UK delegation in addition to his FZY responsibilities. Michael Freeman becomes full time Director of FZY in Israel. Adam Jenshil, a former Mazkir of FZY and Director of Short-term Programmes at Young Judaea/FZY, becomes the Director of the flagship Year Course YJ/FZY Programme. Due to the increase in the number of Jewish schools, socio-economic changes in the Anglo-Jewish community and the proliferation of social/ internet sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Skype, local societies or chavurot become less popular, especially in the London area, although chavurot



Michael Goldberg plants a tree in the FZY forest

remain in Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, Essex, Liverpool and Hendon, in London. The challenges presented by the new social trends result in project-based activities being set up, particularly for the younger age groups. FZY in the UK and in Israel embark on FZY's 100th Anniversary celebrations, reaching out to the Jewish Community in the UK as well as to past members of FZY in the UK and in Israel. As FZY commences its second century, it is well placed to maintain and strengthen its position as the No. 1 mainstream Zionist Youth Movement in the UK.