

**MINUTES of the 62nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of CREMORNE SYNAGOGUE
held at Cremorne Synagogue
on Sunday 30th May 2022 at 4:30pm**

Chair:

President, Harold Marshbaum, took the Chair. It was noted that a quorum of members was present, and an attendance register was separately drawn up. Harold Marshbaum declared the meeting open at 4:45pm.

Present:

David & Gillian Farbenblum, Garry Hyman, Saul Markunsky, Laurie Jaye, Lily & Cesare DiVeroli, Micheline Lane, Jonathan Hamberger, Matthew Zwi, Misha Saul, Marion & Brian Doobov, Rabbi Chaim Konceptolski, Andi & Dale Druckman, Aviva Grand, Ruth Ratner, Les Jacobson Ellen & Harold Marshbaum, Rene' & Greg Pynt

Apologies:

Rod & Carolyn Hyman, Roger Selby, Mike Swerdlin, Michael & Etta Sperber, Sue & Michael Farbenblum, Sarah & Joel Ginges, Maedinah Hyman, Carol Jaye, Orit Jacobson

Minutes of Previous Annual General Meeting:

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting were taken as read and accepted as a true record and signed by the President, Harold Marshbaum.

President's Report – Harold Marshbaum

It is my pleasure to present my President's report for the 2021 year.

Last year was probably the most difficult year in the history of the Shul as it was the first time that we were unable to have services on the High Holidays, owing to the lockdown in Sydney. Thanks to the efforts of the Board of Deputies, we were able to have shofar blowing in the Park on Rosh Hashanah and short services on Yom Kippur. These actually worked well and gave members an opportunity to connect with the Shul. However, our activity on Succot was very limited and for the second year there was no Simchat Torah celebration. For many weeks, we were unable to have Shabbat services and relied on the ingenuity and musical skills of the Rabbi and his family to have a Zoom connection erev Shabbat. Coming out of lockdown, we recommenced services but it was stop-start for many months before attendances began to return to pre-Covid numbers. Even now, it is a challenge to maintain attendances as there are still some people reluctant to come to shul, but things are slowly improving.

We have taken advantage of the quiet period to work on an upgrade of the premises which have not been touched for over 20 years. The outside has been repainted and we are working on an internal renovation which will include new seating, carpet and wood-panelling. You will shortly see a new front fence and secure entry from the street. We have made a submission to North Sydney Council to extend the building to provide a mezzanine level which will create a new room which can be used for Children's activities on Shabbat and also for shiurim where a more intimate space is required. This has been prompted by the possible availability of funds from the former Strathfield Synagogue which are intended to be offered to several Sydney synagogues. We have made a detailed submission and await advice as to whether we have been successful and to what degree.

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I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board and in the community who keep this place functioning.

- to Brian Doobov, who is here at every service and has been dealing with the ever-changing Covid regulations as well as ongoing security
- to Cesare DiVeroli who has been involved in an extraordinary amount of work in preparing a DA submission for the extension, managing the security upgrades of the premises and the refurbishment project, as well as dealing with issues on the Rabbi's residence, which have been exacerbated by the recent heavy rains
- to Saul Markunsky who has taken on the Treasurer role this year and has kept us solvent in a year where much of our regular cash flow dried up
- to David Farbenblum who keeps our services functioning
- to Matt Zwi who continues to serve on the executive and provides a wise sounding board for some of the difficult decisions that we have had to make
- to Jack Abrams who works in the background to maintain our security and take advantage of the various government grants available for this purpose
- to Garry Hyman who is constantly upgrading our IT capabilities and information system
- to Maedinah for maintaining the high standard of delicious kiddushim and aren't we pleased that we can enjoy them again!
- to Micheline Lane who is constantly looking for opportunities for educational and cultural events, although very few were possible in the past year
- to, Aviva Grand, Misha Saul and Joel Ginges for their contributions to the Board meetings and thereafter
- And to all the other members who volunteer to assist at services, kiddushim and events; it is this enthusiasm which maintains the ruach of the Shul

Joel and Misha are stepping down from the Board this year and I particularly would like to thank Joel for preparing the submission to the Strathfield Committee which was very professionally done

Andi Druckman has been working with us for 3 years now and has proved to be a spectacularly useful resource in helping with the accounts, organising events or anything else that we ask her to do; so thank you Andi.

Finally, as ever, our thanks to the Koncepolski dream team which now includes a beautiful choir as well as the most dynamic Rabbi and Rebbitzin in Sydney! You have coped brilliantly with the challenges that this year has presented and as we hopefully move back to normality, we look forward to resuming our educational and social activities as well as the continuing stimulation at our services. You are about to enjoy a well-deserved break and look forward to your return with your characteristic infectious enthusiasm.

For my part, I offer my services as President for another year with some reluctance, as I intend to travel for a substantial part of the year. Matt Zwi has kindly offered to deputise in my absence, so I can be sure that the shul will be in good hands; however, going forward we need some new people on the Board and executive with fresh ideas to take the shul forward in the coming year.

There were some questions regarding the proposed mezzanine. These were answered by Cesare DiVeroli.

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- Will the Shul be able to be used during the building process? At this stage the services should continue as usual though the kitchen and hall section will probably not be in use.
- How long will the project take? This is unknown until contractors are engaged.
- It was noted that hopefully some of the finance may come from a grant through the Strathfield Synagogue Committee.

Treasurer's Report – Saul Markunsky

I am pleased to report that despite lockdowns and closures the shul managed to keep its head above water and achieved a small positive profit.

Financially we are still pretty strong with \$543,285 In the shuls bank and \$27,566 in the Library funds account.

Of this cash, \$335,109 belongs to the Shul and the balance of \$235,742 belongs to grants that have not yet been utilized.

The accounts show revenue of \$29,105 and profit of \$36,051. This includes one off income and expense items such as government grants, repairs and Covid payments

Covid payments received from the NSW and federal government amounted to \$36 375 while repairs to the shul and Rabbi's house amounted to \$33,482.

Normalized revenue excluding one off items, was \$ 254,730 which was higher than the corresponding year. When comparing to the 2019 year, which was the last normal year of operations we have had a large drop in donations while membership has remained constant.

I would like to thank Harold and Brian for their help during the year.

A special thanks to Andi Druckman who is obliging and efficient running the back end of the shul. She has reduced the treasurer's load significantly and is a great asset to the shul.

Election of Executive and Board Members

The Chairman vacated the chair and handed over to Garry Hyman as Returning Officer. Garry stated that this was pleased to take over from Mike Swerdlin this year and thanked both the outgoing Board and to Rabbi Chaim for keeping the services going through a difficult year.

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He then announced the results of the nominations of office bearers and other directors. There were no contested positions.

President:	Harold Marshbaum
Vice-President:	Matthew Zwi
Honorary Treasurer:	Saul Markunsky
Honorary Secretary:	Brian Doobov
Board Members:	Cesare DiVeroli
	David Farbenblum
	Aviva Grand
	Micheline Lane

Rabbi's address:

Rabbi Koncepolski thanked Harold Marshbaum for his support and that he continues in good health and to the outgoing Board. There has been and will continue to be many bar/ batmitzvot and weddings through the synagogue. At this stage there are about 12 youngsters attending classes. It is always nice to see young people at services and events as people feel that they want to be connected to the synagogue. There has been a program to see many barmitzvot boys coming back to celebrate their anniversaries. He asked for a greater commitment from congregants to attend services.

General Business:

David Farbenblum requested that more people to attend services as there is often congregants wishing to say kaddish. He noted that the services had been streamlined so that they were finishing earlier. He also thanked Harold Marshbaum, Cesare DiVeroli, Brian Doobov, and all those who continued to put in hard work to keep the shul running so well. He said that it would be good to see new and younger people on the Board in the future.

H Marshbaum thanked everyone for attending, and there being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 5.30pm