

# WIZO

Special  
Centennial  
Edition

# Review

January 2020 / No. 341



WIZO

Doing What  
Matters

# 1000



*H*ow proud we are of our allegiance to WIZO, a truly magnificent movement of doers and givers that has inspired and built the nation of Israel and provided hope for countless Israelis since 1920.

This is the magnificent Jewish spirit powered by thousands of years of history and energized by WIZO's accomplishments in its first 100 years that embraces and empowers our brothers and sisters who dwell in our spiritual homeland, *Eretz Yisrael* - the same people who also live in our hearts and the hearts of our WIZO sisters all around the world.

Our *mitzvot* define the tasks and rituals of our lives and through WIZO we are honored to translate these mitzvot into a way of life. For this we thank you, WIZO, for the platform on which we perform the mitzvot that cements the *Derech Eretz* in our lives.

Ha Shem wants us to excel first and foremost in *Derech Eretz* and there is no more compelling expression of this than *hakaras ha'tov*, a genuine and heartfelt 'thank you' for all things large and small, simple or life-changing.

To WIZO, for the *mitzvot* that you perform, and for allowing us to share this journey, a journey that fills us with great joy. We thank you.

And we wish you Mazal Tov as you continue your path of righteousness.

*The Falic Family*



**WIZOUK**

*Founded 1918*

The Mother Federation congratulates

**World WIZO**

on this significant birthday.

**100 years of changing lives and building futures**

for vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens of Israel.

As we enter the next 100 years together we look forward  
to continuing this vital work, strengthening Israeli society.

**Mazel tov!**



# MAZEL TOV to WIZO

*100 years of Sisterhood  
100 years of support for the State of Israel  
100 years of caring for the citizens of Israel  
100 years of ensuring the future of Israel*

**Paulette Cherny,  
President WIZO AUSTRALIA  
together with all members of  
WIZO New South Wales | WIZO Queensland |  
WIZO South Australia | WIZO Victoria |  
WIZO Western Australia**

*Salute World WIZO for their ongoing  
commitment and their continuing work*

*May we continue to work together for at least another 100 years  
to build an even stronger  
**Eretz Israel***



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**Published by The World WIZO Marketing & Public Relations Division**

This magazine was written and compiled by Ingrid Rockberger and Tricia Schwitzer with assistance from Yonatan Sredni and Blanka Sipos



## Contents

06	<b>Editorial</b>
07	<b>Message from President Rivlin</b>
09	<b>Centennial Greetings from World WIZO President Esther Mor</b>
11	<b>Centennial Greetings from Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive Prof. Rivka Lazovsky</b>
12	<b>Message from Avraham Duvdevani, Chairman, World Zionist Organization</b>
13	<b>Message from Isaac Herzog, Chairman of the Executive, Jewish Agency for Israel</b>
14	<b>A Letter to Becky</b> Chaverot write a letter to Rebecca Sieff on WIZO's Centennial
15	<b>Timeline</b> 100 Years of the WIZO Movement
42	<b>The WIZO Centenarians' Club</b> A salute to WIZO centenarians around the world
47	<b>100 Years of WIZO periodicals</b> WIZO magazines 1920-2020
48	<b>Education in Israel the WIZO Way</b> 100 Years of WIZO education
58	<b>In a Hostile Environment</b> WIZO representation at the UN
62	<b>Caring for our Most Precious Jewels</b> 100 Years of WIZO childcare
66	<b>If Only They Were Still Here</b> WIZO's 'Vanished Federations'
70	<b>Tomorrow WIZO Will be Yours</b> Aviv from yesterday until tomorrow
76	<b>WIZO Around The World</b> WIZO federations then and now
98	<b>They Came from the Four Corners of the Earth</b> 100 years of WIZO caring for new immigrants

## From the Editors



Ingrid Rockberger



Tricia Schwitzer

Dear Chaverot,

When preparations for the 2020 Centennial EGM got underway in April of last year we immediately said “there has to be a magazine.” We discussed various ways of producing the magazine, realizing that to give a detailed account of WIZO’s first one hundred years would require something akin to an encyclopedia, and we had neither the time nor the resources to do that.

Instead, we decided to produce an overview of selected topics, but with a comprehensive Timeline, illustrating the wide variety of WIZO’s activities and projects over 100 years.

We also offered federations, individuals and companies the opportunity to buy space in the magazine to congratulate WIZO on its centennial. What we did not anticipate was the unprecedented level of support that we received, as evidenced by the paid greetings in this magazine.

Your support and contribution has been overwhelming and we are deeply grateful. The warm and impassioned greetings from you, our federations and chaverot, show that you feel as we do – a deep love and respect for WIZO, a united international sisterhood that stretches around the globe.

The downside to that is that we could not include some articles that were in our original plan; however, we hope that the finished product is useful to you as a source of WIZO knowledge, inspiration and pride.

Our research took us to the National Library and the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem, as well as searching through WIZO publications – The Saga of a Movement and WIZO periodicals over a 100-year time span.

We approached the federations to help us with a short history of each one of them – and they did not disappoint. Facts came to light which were not known previously, for example we learnt that, in 1939, several federations destroyed all their files and archives as the Nazis closed in...

### **Take a walk through the magazine:**

The **Timeline** comes first, followed by a salute to WIZO members around the world who are as old or older than WIZO – **the Centenarians Club**. Searching in the National Library

we discovered that WIZO periodicals started in the 1920s – see some examples in **100 Years of WIZO Publications**.

Our WIZO schools are our pride and joy; check out the article **Education in Israel the WIZO Way, Then and Now**. WIZO was given NGO status in the UN in 1959 as a compliment and recognition of its work with babies and children. Today, things are different and ‘our ladies at the UN’ in New York, Vienna and Geneva, are constantly defending Israel and the Jewish people. See the article - **In a Hostile Environment**.

**Caring for our Most Precious Jewels** walks you through a century of childcare – it is well known that WIZO’s day care centers are second to none. The next article **If Only They Were Still Here** tells of the tragic loss of 14 federations as a result of World War II and the Communist regime. **Tomorrow WIZO Will Be Yours** reflects on WIZO’s younger women, who will receive the WIZO baton from their elders as the century moves on.

Our magazine ends with our all-time favorite **WIZO Around the World** – but this time with a difference – giving a short history of each federation, and **They Came from the Four Corners of the Earth** – how WIZO has been helping new immigrants – the lifeblood of the State.

With the short time frame in which to complete this task, we forged ahead with our ‘mission impossible’ at our home computers, Whatsapping and emailing from Raanana to Ramat Gan late into the night, putting all else on hold until this magazine was ‘put to bed.’ But we did it, with the support of our spouses who knew better than to encroach on our time in any way, because WIZO husbands know that when WIZO women have a job to get done, it’s best to leave them alone until it’s finished.

We hope our ‘labor of love’ serves you well in your WIZO mission...

We wish WIZO longevity and strength as it continues to strive for a more invested and equal Israeli society well into its future.

Ingrid Tricia

Ingrid Rockberger and Tricia Schwitzer



## THE PRESIDENT

Jerusalem, December 12, 2019

Dear Friends,

As you gather here in Israel for the Centennial World WIZO EGM, I send to all the members of your wonderful organization the world over, my warmest greetings.

On behalf of the State of Israel, the Jewish State that is the homeland of all members of the Jewish People wherever they choose to live, I want to express to you all our deep appreciation and admiration for all that you do both here in Israel and in your own communities to promote the wellbeing of your fellow Jews and particularly the women. Your activities are a shining example of the partnership and the mutual commitment between all Jews, whether in the diaspora or in the State of Israel.

For one hundred years now, the dedicated members of WIZO have devoted their efforts to the many worthwhile projects and programs that enhance the welfare of women and children in Israel and throughout the Jewish world. Throughout those years, your organization held high the torch, the torch of Zionism, of charity, of education, of opportunity. Your many inspiring projects have helped ensure that even the weakest members of our society have the opportunity to realize their full potential; from kindergarten to technological high-schools, you have helped educate thousands of Israeli children and enable them to take their place with dignity in our society.

WIZO has played an important role in helping to realize the Zionist dream of equality and opportunity for all citizens of Israel, whatever their religion or gender. You have helped empower women and improve the security and the status of women in education, in the work place, and in society in general. The work of WIZO has not only promoted their welfare, it can even be said that thousands of women and children owe their very lives to your commitment.

For all this, and for your dedication and devotion, I thank you from the bottom of my heart on behalf of all the people of Israel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Rivlin', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Reuven (Ruvi) Rivlin

**On the occasion of WIZO's centenary**  
we pay tribute to the global sisterhood,  
friends of WIZO and our faithful following  
who have contributed so greatly  
with passion and commitment to our movement

*Happy 100<sup>th</sup> birthday*



*Esther & Emanuel Mor*

May WIZO be assured of longevity  
as it faces a new era with fresh hope.  
May we always be united for the greater good,  
selflessly giving for an empowered Israeli society



# Centennial Message from our President



## My Dear WIZO family,

On 11 July 2020, WIZO will be 100 years young, and is still going strong. It is an amazing milestone that should not be taken for granted. The events of the 20th century saw many social movements become obsolete. As the largest social Zionist women's voluntary movement in the

world, we can all be proud to be an integral part of the WIZO legacy.

Our magnificent movement was established in 1920 by pioneer women in a male dominated society. Since then the world has changed considerably with major changes in all fields of life. The prolific 20th century witnessed two world wars and the Holocaust where many WIZO members perished, while others fought with the Partisans and Resistance movements. The 20th century also bore witness to the industrial, social rights, technology and communications revolutions, and saw empires fall, geo-political changes and the re-birth of the Jewish homeland.

Our founding mothers were part of the suffragette movement that fought for the woman's right to vote. Thanks to their dreams, determination, passion, vision and wisdom, they created a movement capable of adapting to the changing reality in which it operates, while maintaining its core goals. This special edition of the WIZO Review documents many of the amazing milestones and events along the way.

WIZO's pioneering services to the society in Eretz Israel eventually became the foundation of the national social services. WIZO plays an important role in decision-taking and policy-making within the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency, the World Jewish Congress and other Jewish and Zionist institutions – that impact on the whole of the Jewish world. WIZO's active participation, through its representatives in the UN and in national and international conferences, is impressive.

During its first 100 years, WIZO has provided services to hundreds of thousands of individuals. If we add the services we also extend to their families - WIZO has literally touched the lives of millions of Israelis, and given them opportunities to better themselves, their communities in particular, and Israeli society in general.

On a personal note, I am proud to be your 7th President and to follow in the footsteps of exceptional women: Rebecca Sieff, Rosa Ginossar, Raya Jaglom, Michal Modai – may their memories be blessed; Helena Glaser and Tova Ben-Dov – to whom I wish good health and longevity.

WIZO derives its strength from you - its loyal volunteers, benefactors and donors and I am one of you – elected by our members.

It is a great honor and privilege for me to be your President at this time, and to launch the Centennial celebrations - very possibly our greatest collective achievement. Each of us is a link in the chain of WIZO generations that brought us to this very moment; each of us proud and fortunate to be able to selflessly give to those that were dealt a bad hand in life. Each of us able to make their dreams come true.

We have a huge responsibility to guarantee WIZO's continuous success - there is still so much to be done. I know that together we will remember the past, celebrate the present and look to the future – all the time doing what we do best for the benefit of children, youth and women - as we did yesterday, as we will do tomorrow.

Let us all welcome in the next 100 years of WIZO activities.

God bless Israel, God bless WIZO, God bless you all.

In appreciation,

Warm regards.

Esther Mor  
President, World WIZO

## Presidents of World WIZO

Rebecca Sieff	1920 - 1963	Raya Jaglom	1970 - 1996	Tova Ben-Dov	2012 - 2016
Rosa Ginossar	1963 - 1970	Michal Modai	1996 - 2004	Esther Mor	2016 - present
		Helena Glaser	2004 - 2012		



On the occasion of  
**WIZO'S CENTENARY**

I congratulate our members, donors,  
friends and staff worldwide on

**100 years**

Of tireless work to support Israeli society  
and rebuild our Jewish state

May we celebrate another century of vision,  
endless efforts, and commitment to improve the lives  
of children, youth, women and elderly across Israel

**I am proud to lead  
WIZO's Sacred Mission**

**Prof. Rivka Lazovsky**



# Centennial Message from our Chairperson



**One Mission. One Sisterhood. One Hundred Years.**

This special edition of the WIZO Review will be distributed during the 27<sup>th</sup> World WIZO Enlarged General Meeting, where we will launch together the beginning of our centennial celebrations.

On the eve of our centenary, I reflect on the inspiring journey our sisterhood has made together to reach this extraordinary milestone.

It was once wisely noted that the “Difference between ordinary and extraordinary is the “extra”.

To me, the “extra” in WIZO’s long and anything but ordinary journey is each and every one of you, my WIZO sisters.

One hundred years ago, when our founding mothers, Rebecca Sieff, Dr. Vera Weizmann and Edith Eder, first embarked on this WIZO journey upon a visit to pre-State Israel, they created a sisterhood with one mission: The creation of a safe haven and an equal society for Jewish women, men and children from every corner of the world.

Indeed, nearly a century has passed since July 1920, in which WIZO has expanded into a global network of federations and hundreds of thousands of women have joined our global movement.

Together, we took a leading role in the establishment and the success of the only Jewish State in the world.

Together, we have moved mountains, cultivated the earth and breathed life into our foremothers’ dream. Together we have created an empire – an Empire of Good.

This WIZO empire is the legacy of generations of WIZO leaders and members who always walk the extra mile to raise the extra smile; the happy smile of a child in a WIZO day care center; the empowered smile of a woman in a WIZO shelter; the hopeful smile of a dispirited youth in a WIZO youth village.

Chaverot, one hundred years - whether celebrated by an individual or an institution, is a testament to the ability to survive, adapt and grow.

As a third generation of WIZO leaders, I am proud to be the Chairperson who has steered this great WIZO motherhood into its centennial year.

Over the past eight years, I have led WIZO’s largest modernization process. Together with the World WIZO Executive members, our CEO and the professional teams, I have adapted our Empire of Good to offer new services, renovated facilities and innovative programs to meet the changing needs of Israeli society.

Today, our Empire of Good is more vital, relevant and sought-after than ever!

In the spirit of our foremothers’ legacy, I have brought my insight, long experience and professional knowledge to inform, involve and inspire our federations on each of my missions and create a stronger WIZO sisterhood.

More recently, I have also formed a new WIZO volunteer force – the WIZO Graduate Association.

With thousands of graduates to date, this network of alumni from WIZO’s schools and youth villages will join our WIZO chaverot in Israel and around the world to continue developing, improving and contributing to the success of our beloved State of Israel.

Chaverot, let us be proud we have reached this year with so many members of our WIZO family to celebrate so many accomplishments and milestones.

Let us look forward with even greater confidence, to all that we will do together in the future.

AM ISRAEL CHAI

With warmest wishes,

Prof. Rivka Lazovsky  
Chairperson  
World WIZO Executive

## Chairpersons of the World WIZO Executive

Hadassah Samuel 1949 - 1951  
Rosa Ginossar 1951 - 1963  
Raya Jaglom 1963 - 1970

Aya Dinstein 1970 - 1978  
Ruth Izakson 1978 - 1984  
Michal Modai 1984 - 1996

Helena Glaser 1996 - 2004  
Tova Ben-Dov 2004 - 2012  
Prof. Rivka Lazovsky 2012 - 2020



הסתדרות הציונית העולמית  
World Zionist Organization

יו"ר ההנהלה הציונית | Chairman of the Executive



28 November 2019 – 29 Heshvan 5780

Ms. Esther Mor  
President, World WIZO - Women's International Zionist Organization

Shalom and Greetings,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to offer our congratulations to WIZO on the Centenary since its foundation as an organization and one whole century packed with significant activity.

WIZO is renowned for its establishment and operation of a landmark network of children's day nurseries and its extensive work to protect the rights and status of women across Israel as well as in many other spheres.

WIZO's goals and activities are a true reflection of the concept envisaged by Theodor Herzl – namely, to build a society of excellence in a Jewish state. The organization's concerted endeavors are acknowledged and admired as being key to creating change - improvements that have permeated the fabric of Israeli society.

I congratulate you on your significant achievements – may you progress ever forward in your mission, overcoming the many challenges remaining on the path towards creating a society of unqualified excellence in the State of Israel.

In appreciation,

Most sincerely,  
Avraham Duvdevani,

Chairman, World Zionist Organization

Jerusalem,  
Cheshvan 5780  
November 2019

**יצחק הרצוג**  
יו"ר ההנהלה

**Isaac Herzog**  
Chairman of the  
Executive



Dear friends,

I am honored to congratulate the historic WIZO movement on reaching this spectacular milestone, the Centennial. What makes this achievement so astonishing is that 100 years since its foundation, WIZO has maintained its position as a pivotal, vibrant, far-reaching organization devoted to meeting the basic needs of Israeli society.

During my tenure as Minister of Welfare and Social Services I had the pleasure of working very closely with WIZO, which encompassed the largest scope of operations by any organization with which we collaborated.

Among its greatest accomplishments is the number of olim who came to Israel thanks to WIZO.

I have for many years witnessed the dedicated professionalism and unabashed Zionism of the women of WIZO, which catapulted the organization to the pinnacle of the Israeli third sector and granted it international acclaim. May the next one hundred years generate continued success and prosperity in your distinguished organization, for the benefit of the People of Israel.

Sincerely,

  
Isaac Herzog

Chairman of the Executive

## Letter to Becky



Dear Becky,

As we approach our centennial, we join hands across oceans to celebrate 100 years of WIZO. We, the federations of the world, are grateful for your vision in creating for us the framework of unity and contribution to a cause so much greater than ourselves.

It was you, dear Becky our incomparable mother of WIZO, who left this legacy of infinite worth to the people of Israel, and in so doing, you placed upon our shoulders a huge responsibility. You entrusted us knowing that it would take the world to build the homeland. You gathered us by your side from all corners of the globe, to march with you under the banner of WIZO. And how proud that makes us when we look back at our federations' triumphs in breaking new ground since the days of our inception into this great movement.

*When you vowed 'to build the framework of social services for the wellbeing of mothers and children, and to raise the living, educational, social and professional standards of women, for the benefit of the family and the country,' at the founding meeting of our magnificent WIZO, we picked up the gauntlet, one by one, country by country.*

We are proud to have helped turn your words into deeds and we remember with deep respect our past leaders, volunteers and supporters who rose each morning with WIZO in their hearts, who gave so much for the realization of dreams.

Now, it is our time to rise and we do. So, indulge us, dear Becky, as we ask, how are we doing? We are the leaders now, the volunteers, the supporters. We are your world today and we know that words alone are not enough to provide the bricks and mortar. We know the gravity of our mission.

We all strive hard, despite the challenges of the day, to provide and protect, to constantly build and maintain WIZO's path to the future for Israel's citizens, a path that is not paved with gold but paved with excellence and necessity.

WIZO's path leads to protection and resilience for vulnerable babies and infants, a path on which parents walk with peace of mind knowing their children are safe while they work. WIZO's path is a road to opportunity, a gateway to hope for countless youth equipped with a vocation for a productive future, a path that also leads to new frontiers in cutting-edge technologies for tomorrow's world by the investment in WIZO education that we make today.

WIZO's path is a path to refuge for every woman who begged her partner in vain not to hit her or her children. On this path, empowered women empower women, building confidence to resist the abusers and the bullies in the home and in the workplace. On this WIZO path, young women learn to make beneficial life choices – they have a voice and they learn how to use it.

In your image, we raise the flag of WIZO and wave it with passion for our beloved Israel. We do it not for ourselves but for the movement we are privileged to serve. We are forever proud to be the WE in WIZO, excluding no one, embracing all who embrace us with deep appreciation of one to the other.

And so dear Becky, as we gaze upon your portrait hanging in our WIZO offices all over the world, we can assure you we know our obligations. Can we assume that behind that resolute persona, there lies a smile of approval?

We are, most sincerely,

Your WIZO Chaverot

# Thank You



Rebecca Sieff



Vera Weizmann



Edith Eder

Thank you to Rebecca, Vera and Edith who, 100 years ago, gave us WIZO.

Accompanying their husbands as part of a British Zionist delegation to Palestine in 1918, Becky (as she was always affectionately known), Vera and Edith wanted to see the situation of the women and children in the *Yishuv* for themselves.

They were horrified by what they saw. After the First World War, the Jewish population had dwindled due to expulsions (by the Turks who ruled Palestine until 1917), illness and famine.

With the defeat of the Germans, the League of Nations granted Great Britain a mandate to govern Palestine, and the Balfour Declaration of 1917 declared, "His Majesty's Government views with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

The task in hand was overwhelming and an enormous challenge to the Zionist leaders of the day. These Zionist women were no longer content to be 'wives of,' and returning to England they realized something drastic had to be done.

In the early 1900s, Zionist women's organizations were formed in several countries including England, Austria, South Africa and Ireland. In 1907 at the 8<sup>th</sup> Zionist Congress in The Hague, an organization called the "League of Women for Cultural Work in Palestine"

was established with the aim of assisting women who had settled in Palestine. In England, the wives of the Zionist leaders set up a "Ladies Committee", which, in 1918, became the Federation of Women Zionists (FWZ) under the leadership of Rebecca Sieff.

## Founding Conference

Under the auspices of the FWZ, Becky, Vera and Edith called upon the leaders of these Zionist women's organizations to convene in London in July 1920 to discuss the establishment of an international women's Zionist organization.

At the end of two days of intensive discussions on many topics, the resolution was proposed on July 11<sup>th</sup> and passed on the 12<sup>th</sup>:

*"That this Conference of Representative Women Zionists of various countries resolve to form a Women's International Zionist Organization to promote the welfare of women and children in Palestine and to carry out specific work in the reconstruction of Palestine."*

## 100 years of WIZO activities

On the following pages you will see through the decades, through a century, the amazing and wonderful work of WIZO, which makes us all so proud to be part of this movement. Through months

of research we have highlighted as much as possible of WIZO's achievements.

We see a century of devoted and committed women who started by caring for and nurturing the impoverished women and children of pre-State Israel. As the decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the 21<sup>st</sup> roll on, the main theme throughout is 'adapting to the needs of...'

This flexibility is best described in an academic study<sup>1</sup> of WIZO published in 1977 by Hanna Herzog and Ofra Greenberg of Tel Aviv University, as described in the Preface and still holds true today.

*"The test of the continued existence and vitality of an organization depends on the measure of its success in adopting new aims and on the degree of its capacity to keep its organizational structure flexible, thereby enabling it to continue serving as an efficient instrument for attaining its renewed aims."*

## WIZO's flexibility

It is fair to say that this is the secret to WIZO's success. Over the years, successive executive committees have always been alert to the changing face of Israel's society and have adapted activities and priorities accordingly.

**As you turn these pages, feel proud to be a WIZO woman.**

<sup>1</sup> A Voluntary Women's Organisation in a Society in the Making. WIZO's Contribution to Israeli Society. Institute of Social Research, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology.

# 1920s

## July 1920

World WIZO founded in London by Rebecca Sieff, Vera Weizmann, Henrietta Irwell, Romana Goodman, Edith Eder and Olga Alman.

*Histadrut Nashim Ivriot* (Federation of Hebrew Women) founded in Jerusalem.

## 1921



British delegation at the first World WIZO Congress held in Karlsbad. Rebecca Sieff is sitting 4<sup>th</sup> from the left.



First baby clinics (Tipat Chalav) opened in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem on the initiative of Dr. Helena Kagan. The famous 'Donkey Express'. Milk was delivered to undernourished mothers who did not have enough breast milk for their babies.



## 1922

Committee for Abandoned Children established on the initiative of Miriam Sacher (one of Rebecca Sieff's sisters).



School for sewing and home economics opened in Tel Aviv.



First girls' agricultural school opened in Nahalal – founded by Hannah Maisel Shohat.

Training farm opened in Petach Tikva.

## 1924

*Histadrut Nashim Ivriot* holds first conference and resolves to include kindergartens in its framework.



In this building the first home for abandoned babies and School for Nurses opened in Jerusalem's Sha'arei Hesed district.





Improvised cots for the babies, using Jaffa Orange crates

## 1925

Establishment of Shani Enterprises for development of Yemenite handicrafts – later the WIZO Home Industries Department.

First children's playground opened in Haifa.

Start of *Begeg Zol* (cheap clothing) enterprise for collection and distribution of clothes for the needy.

## 1926



First day care center opened in Tel Aviv in the Nordia district.

First issue of *Ha'Isha* (Woman) published.



WIZO.  
Doing What  
Matters

Thank you **WIZO** Federations. You do what **matters!**

## 1927

Training farm for girls opened in Afula.

Department opened for training in home economics and kitchen gardening.

## 1928

*Histadrut Nashim Ivriot (HNI)* opens first day creches.

## 1929



Mothercraft Training and Child Care Center and School for Nursery Nurses opened in Tel Aviv .

Studiomooza  
Congratulates  
**WIZO** on its  
**100 years**  
of **Outstanding  
Achievements**

WIZO  
100  
1920 CENTENNIAL 2020

studiomooza  
graphic design  
studio | studiomooza.com

# 1930s

## 1930

Agricultural School opened at Ayanot by Aida Maimon.

*Histadrut Nashim Ivriot* and Federation of Women for Equal Rights form united list for National Assembly elections and elect Henrietta Szold as their delegate.

## 1932

Handicrafts school opened in Haifa (was Henrietta Irwell Art & Design High School).

## 1933

*Histadrut Nashim Ivriot* joins World WIZO and becomes the WIZO Federation in Palestine, forerunner of WIZO Israel.

## 1934



“How to Cook in Palestine” cookbook published by the Palestine Federation in three languages.

## 1935

8<sup>th</sup> World WIZO Conference is the first one to take place in Eretz Yisrael with 400 delegates representing 70,000 members from 44 countries.

First social welfare office opened in Haifa, chaired by Rachel Kagan.

Opening of Clothing Distribution Stores all over the country.

## 1936

Sewing and Home Economics School moves into larger premises in Nachlat Yitzhak.

## 1937

There are now 30 WIZO *tipat chalav* baby clinics throughout the country.



Rebecca Sieff obtains 1000 entry permits for Britain and Palestine for Jewish children from Germany and Eastern Europe, including Hannah Senesh (center).

## 1939

WIZO shops open in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem to sell Home Industry products.



WIZO Poland is the largest federation with 10,000 members.



EUROPEAN COUNCIL  
OF WIZO FEDERATIONS

## SO PROUD OF WIZO'S 100 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENTS

We congratulate WORLD WIZO, the visionaries, leaders, volunteers and workers of our great organization.

We stand committed at your side and wish you for the next 100 years to help more and more children and families see their dreams come true in our beloved Israel.



# WIZO'S VOICE ACROSS EUROPE

### MAZAL TOV ON YOUR CENTENARY!

Let's celebrate together WIZO's achievements  
past and present.  
Looking forward to contributing and enhancing WIZO's  
future.

The Board and Members of  
WIZO AUSTRIA



*We make a living by what we get,  
but we make a life by what we give.*

Winston Churchill



# 1940s

## 1940

Institution for orphaned immigrant children opens on Mt Carmel, the forerunner of Ahuzat Yeladim.

## 1941

Beit Hahavera – hostel for immigrant women opens in Tel Aviv.

## 1942

First WIZO youth club opened.

## 1943

WIZO begins support in maintaining the Bezalel Academy of Art & Design in Jerusalem.

## 1946

11th World conference held in Basel, is the first conference since 1939 in Geneva. Conference marked by memorials to lost federations and WIZO women members.



*Beit Haya'ed* for homeless children opened in Sarona, Tel Aviv.

## 1947

WIZO takes over the running of Municipal High School for Girls in the name of Maya Rosenberg in Rehovot, originally founded in 1935.

Additional hostels opened for post World War II women refugees.



CHW Hadassim Children's & Youth Village founded by CHW to absorb Holocaust survivors. First group of 25 children arrive from Poland – survivors of Bergen-Belsen.

## 1948



One of the signatories of Israel's Declaration of Independence is Rachel Kagan, then Chair of WIZO Israel.

22 day care centers and kindergartens, mainly for immigrant children, opened.

Convalescent home for undernourished Yemenite babies opens at Rosh Ha'ayin transit camp.



During the War of Independence, soldiers are stationed at WIZO Nir Ha'Emek to defend the valley.

## 1949

WIZO runs in the first Knesset elections together with the Association for Equal Rights for Women, with Rachel Kagan as WIZO candidate.

World WIZO Headquarters moves from London to Tel Aviv after Rebecca Sieff comes to live in Israel. Immigrant women's hostel opens in Jaffa.

Women's centers opened in Lod and Ramle to help absorb new immigrants and to develop home industries.



WIZO Nir Ha'Emek – Leisure time!



Students at Nahalal learning 'electronics'



Nahalal grape harvest, 1947-8

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# 1950s

## 1950



WIZO begins extensive work with new immigrants in the *ma'abarot* (transit camps), absorbing children into schools and youth villages, hosting families in the homes of WIZO chaverot, raising funds and providing educational and welfare services.



Students at the new premises (Uruguay House) for the Henrietta Irwell Vocational School for Girls, Haifa.

## 1951

The Equal Rights for Women Law, proposed by WIZO Knesset member Rachel (Cohen) Kagan, is passed.

Girls' hostel opened in Jerusalem.

WIZO Israel sets up first legal advice bureau.

## 1952



*Beit Olot* 'Edith Eder', Melchett House, Haifa, inaugurated as a hostel for WIZO chaverot.



WIZO's mobile libraries established.

WIZO Israel's 100th branch opened in Eilat.

## 1953



Mothercraft Training and Child-Care Center moves into new premises in Tel Aviv.

"New Zealand House" Women's Training Center opened. WIZO members' Rest Home opened in Safed.

## 1954

Home Economics Department opens first club for girls.

## 1955

Women's Training Department begins work in immigrant communities.



Martha Bamberger, Director of Home Industries Department



Hannah Levin is elected mayor of Rishon LeZion, Israel's first female mayor. She later serves as Chairperson of WIZO Israel, 1961-1971.



Shoe manufacturing course for new immigrants.

## 1957

First Aviv groups established in Latin-American federations by Fay Grove-Pollak.



First of chain of Rebecca Sieff Women's centers opens in Beersheva.



New building for the 'Baby Home' opened in Jerusalem .

WIZO clubs established in 26 branches around the country.

## 1956

Teachers' college inaugurated at Hadassim Children's & Youth Village.

WIZO's Irma Pollak sets up the first Israeli Consumer Association.

## 1958

WIZO schools become regional high schools to absorb pupils with adolescent and social problems who continue to live at home.

## 1959

WIZO is recognized by the UN as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), and becomes the first Zionist organization to be granted consultative status with ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council).

WIZO is granted representation at the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency for Israel.

Nachlat Yehuda Training Farm transferred to sole ownership of WIZO to be known as Nachlat Yehuda Agricultural Boarding School.

Operation "A Thousand Hearts for a Thousand Families" – WIZO Israel members adopt immigrant families.

Seminary for Teachers of Fashion Trades inaugurated.

# 1960s

## 1960



The first issue of *Bamat Haisha* (Women's Forum), the Hebrew periodical of WIZO Israel is published.

WIZO is recognized as an NGO member of UNICEF.

WIZO Germany is reestablished, with Hellen Israel as president.

## 1962

A decision is made to give priority to assisting social absorption of new immigrants.

## 1963

The first WIZO club for Arab women opens in Nazareth.



With Rebecca Sieff too ill to continue as President, Rosa Ginossar, the first female lawyer in Eretz Israel, is elected second president of World WIZO



WIZO Municipal High School for Girls in the name of Maya Rosenberg in Rehovot is now jointly run by WIZO and the Municipality of Rehovot as a technological high school.

## 1964



Cornerstone laid in Tel Aviv for the World WIZO Center, to be named Rebecca Sieff House, in the presence of Rebecca Sieff.



WIZO delegation led by World WIZO Executive Chairperson Raya Jaglom is the first Zionist organization to pay an official visit to the Soviet Union, as guest of the Soviet Women's Committee.

WIZO is invited to join the World Jewish Congress as an associate member.

The first annual Bible Day is initiated by Fay Grove-Pollack.

## 1965

At the 26th World Zionist Congress, WIZO is granted, for the first time, 12 members with voting rights and a seat on the Executive with full voting rights, to which it nominates Raya Jaglom.

The first annual European Aviv Seminar held in Paris.



## 1966



January 10<sup>th</sup>. Rebecca Sieff's funeral in Tel Mond is attended by thousands.

The Rebecca Sieff WIZO Center opened in the presence of Sieff family.

David Ben-Gurion attends WIZO's 3rd annual Bible Day.

## 1967

Six Day War: WIZO reorganizes to assist the war effort. WIZO centers turned into local civilian headquarters for assistance to the front.

In response to Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek's request to strengthen reunited Jerusalem, WIZO builds new day care centers in the city.

Care of Families of War Casualties Department opened by WIZO Israel.



Theodore Heuss Rest Home for Mothers of Large Families opens in Herzlia Pituach, sponsored by WIZO Germany.

## 1968

First annual bar mitzvah celebration for immigrant boys is organized by Immigrant Absorption Department.

Cornerstone laid for WIZO France Municipal High School in Tel Aviv.

## 1969

WIZO begins to work actively on behalf of Soviet Jewry.



Foreign Minister Abba Eban visits CHW Hadassim.



WIZO shops in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are a great funding source for WIZO and provide income for the Home Industries Department.

# 1970s

## 1970

WIZO marks its 50th anniversary at the 16th World WIZO Conference.



Raya Jaglom is elected third president of World WIZO.

WIZO begins activities in Air Force bases with clubs for Air Force wives and women serving in the Air Force.

## 1971

The first annual WIZO summer camps are organized in WIZO institutions for 5,000 children from development towns, border settlements and deprived neighborhoods.

## 1972



Children celebrate Chanukah in WIZO's day care center in Nir Ha'Emek, 1972.

## 1973

During the Yom Kippur War, all WIZO centers are turned into civil defense bases.

Members volunteer assistance to soldiers and their families.

Beit Heuss becomes branch of Tel Hashomer Hospital for the rehabilitation of wounded IDF soldiers who lost limbs.

## 1974

WIZO branches are opened in new civilian settlements (previously Nahal military outposts) in Sinai and the Golan Heights.

Keren Hachavera (Members Loan Fund) set up at the initiative of Rachel Kagan.



Female Soldiers from Paratroop Unit attend special course at WIZO's Training Department.

## 1975



Jerusalem Baby Home, sponsored by British WIZO, expands its activities, becoming a family center and adding a vocational school for girls.

WIZO sends a large delegation to the UN Women's Year .Conference in Mexico, which struggles against anti-Zionist tendencies.

First WIZO clubs for Druze women opened in the villages of Daliat Al-Carmel and Peki'in.

## 1976

WIZO's first center beyond the Green Line opens in Hamra in the Jordan Valley, eventually named in honor of WIZO Israel Chairperson Hanna Levin.

## 1979

WIZO Immigrant Absorption Department initiates annual competition for school children: "I Befriended an Immigrant Child." Prize-winning ceremony held at the Knesset.

First annual international Aviv seminar organized in Israel by Rachel Limon.

## Warmest wishes of congratulations to WIZO@100



Ingrid Rockberger,  
so proud to have been  
WIZO Review Editor  
2007-2017

Bringing you the WIZO news  
as it happened....

# WE LOVE YOU, WIZO CONGRATULATIONS!

## Tricia & Avi Schwitzer



# Congratulations



# Betty Crystal

## WORLD WIZO FUNDRAISING FAIRY QUEEN

# 1980s

## 1980



World WIZO's 60th anniversary.

WIZO sends a delegation to the UN Women's Mid-Decade Conference in Copenhagen.

Opening of WIZO Israel's Third Age Department.

## 1981

The Mothercraft Training Center (MTC) is closed at the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs, in keeping with early age psychologists' new policy against closed institutions for young children.

WIZO USA Federation is established in New York and Miami. Evelyn Sommer is elected president.

## 1982

Neve WIZO, four special foster family homes for children, opens in Herzlia, to house children from the MTC.

First WIZO club for Bedouin women opens in Shibli.

First WIZO club for Circassian women opens in Reihania.

Raya Jaglom initiates international WIZO campaign to allow Ida Nudel to come to Israel to be with her family on her release from exile in Siberia.



WIZO UK demonstrates opposite the Soviet embassy



WIZO Australia demonstrates to free Ida Nudel together with Members of Parliament in New South Wales.



WIZO hosts soldiers who fought in the Operation Peace for Galilee at Beit Heuss.

## 1983

WIZO Israel opens Rachel Kagan Leadership Seminar. First WIZO Shelter for Battered Women is opened in Ashdod, on the initiative of Michal Modai.

## 1984

First non-residential Therapeutic Child Center is opened in Azur by WIZO Israel Department for Family and Community Welfare.

## 1985

WIZO sends a delegation to the UN End of Women's Decade Conference in Nairobi.

The permanent premises of WIZO Jerusalem Vocational School for Girls (now co-ed), is opened at the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family.



British WIZO holds conference in Netanya with over 400 members from the UK attending.

## 1986

WIZO Paula Gold de Leonescu Parents Home for senior citizens is inaugurated in Tel Aviv on the site of the former Mothercraft Training Center.

## 1987

WIZO Israel's 24 hour emergency telephone hotline for battered women, the first in the country, is established, initiated by Ruth Tekoah.

The first and only Shelter for Girls in Distress, later named in honor of Ruth Tekoah, is opened.



Raya Jaglom (l) with Ida Nudel celebrating Ida's first birthday as a free woman.

## 1988

The first after-school center for homework assistance and hot lunches, in the Judith Moshevich Center run by WIZO Israel's Department of Family and Community opens in Tel Aviv's Yad Eliahu neighborhood.

## 1989



300 young women from Israel and around the Jewish world mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of International WIZO Aviv Seminars and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of WW II with a special seminar – "From Holocaust to Rebirth" – in Poland and Israel, initiated and organized by Rachel Limon, head of World WIZO's Organization Department, with Raya Jaglom.

With beginning of second wave of mass immigration from the Soviet Union, WIZO recruits and trains volunteers and prepares infrastructure to assist in their absorption.

# 1990s

## 1990

70th anniversary of World WIZO.

WIZO Hungary is revived in Budapest after 45 years.

Czech WIZO Federation is revived in Prague after 42 years.



European WIZO's first conference in Eastern Europe is held in Budapest.

WIZO Symphony Orchestra for immigrant musicians in memory of Hermann Gertler, is established.



Rebecca Sieff Centenary Exhibition, "Speaking for Women", opens at the Beit Hatfutsot Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv.

WIZO UK holds triennial conference in Jerusalem, attended by 450 members.

## 1991

During the Gulf War, WIZO day care centers near hospitals remain open 24 hours a day to care for children of hospital staff on duty, and other day care centers can only remain open if volunteers are on hand in case of rocket attacks during nursery hours.



Protective cots ready for children in Raanana day care center.

WIZO Israel Department of War Widows is expanded to include Single Parent Families, following the arrival of many single parent families from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

WIZO Israel's Department for Immigrant Absorption is awarded the Knesset Speaker's Quality of Life Prize.

## 1992

International Symposium on Anti-Semitism held in the framework of 20th World WIZO Conference in Tel Aviv. Thirty refugee children from Sarajevo absorbed by WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Boarding School.



Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opens WIZO day care center in her name in Sderot.

## 1993

First two multi-purpose day care centers for high-risk children opened in Jaffa and Jerusalem.

WIZO center for Bedouin women opens in Nujidat in the Galilee.

Canada Hadassah-WIZO holds 75th anniversary celebrations and 34th National Convention in Israel.

## 1994



The Helena Glaser Center for the Treatment and Prevention of Domestic Violence, Ramat Gan and a similar center in Jerusalem are opened.

WIZO Nahalal School and Youth Village chosen by Regional Council as center for environmental education for entire Jezreel Valley.

## 1995

WIZO Israel organizes mass demonstration of women's organizations in Tel Aviv, to alert the public to increase in spouse murders.

WIZO delegation to UN Women's Forum in Beijing led by WIZO Israel Chairman Helena Glaser.

WIZO opens second shelter for battered women in Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family in Jerusalem.

Committee for Advancement of Women in Politics set up by WIZO Israel.

## 1996

WIZO's 21st World Conference marks the movement's 75th anniversary and the 3000th anniversary of Jerusalem.

WIZO Israel holds first annual seminar to mark "The International Day Against Violence in the Family."

## 1997

WIZO education system adapts to changes in Israeli education. Matriculation exams are now emphasized in all WIZO schools.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the first Zionist Congress, the 1997 International WIZO Aviv Seminar, "From Basel to Jerusalem: From Vision to Reality," begins in Basel and concludes in Jerusalem.

## 1998

Two graduates of WIZO schools, Shaul Mofaz and Uzi Dayan are appointed Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff of the IDF.

## 1999

The 1999 World WIZO Plenary welcomes presidents of new federations in Eastern and Central Europe: Hana Finkelstein, Latvia, Zuzana Vesela, Czech Republic and Rachel Konstanian, Lithuania.



Rachel Konstanian addresses the Plenary.

WIZO Israel's Department of the Status of Women plays a major role in the passage of a law for the prevention of sexual harassment.

The Adisia embroidery project for Ethiopian women is founded in Afula.



Celebrating our mother Tova Ben-Dov,  
World WIZO Honorary President.

Imma, you are our inspiration. Your hard work, boundless love and dedication to WIZO has touched the lives of so many people and made Israel a better place. We are so proud of you.

YOUR LOVING CHILDREN, ANAT SCHREIBER, TAMAR LAZARUS & ODED HADANI

Congratulations on the

**WIZO  
CENTENNIAL**



Being part of this celebration makes us feel proud as members of

**WIZO Belo Horizonte  
Minas Gerais  
BRAZIL**

WIZO South Africa

FAMILY MATTERS  
HAPPY 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
WIZO South Africa family

What do.... Mothers, Ambition, Toddlers, Teens, Equality, Rehabilitation and Second chances have in common? ....

These are all **WIZO MATTERS !**





The Executive and Members of  
Adei WIZO Italy  
congratulate you on

*100 Golden Years*

With every good wish for  
your continued success

*Mazel Tov!*




**WIZO  
BELGIUM  
LUXEMBOURG**



**100 YEARS  
BY YOUR SIDE**

**WIZO  
Ireland**



**MAZEL TOV!**

MAY THE LUCK OF THE IRISH  
BE WITH YOU FOREVER!

**WIZO Sweden**  
Congratulates you  
on 100 golden years  
We are proud to share your  
journey into the next century

**Mazel Tov!**



On Your 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



**The Chaverot of  
WIZO Denmark**

congratulate you and all the visionary leaders,  
volunteers, and workers around the world  
on your remarkable achievements

We are so proud to play our part  
in the sacred work of this charitable organization

# 2000 - 2009

## 2000

1,000 WIZO women participate in the 22nd World WIZO Conference in Tel Aviv, marking WIZO's 80th anniversary.

The World WIZO website [www.wizo.org](http://www.wizo.org) is launched.

WIZO Israel opens the first School for Political Leadership for Women in Jerusalem.

WIZO Israel plays a major role in the fight against sex trafficking, led by lawyer Meira Segev, Chairperson of the Department for the Status of Women.

## 2001

64 young women participated in the International WIZO Aviv and Lapid Seminars.

Brenda Katten, chairperson of World WIZO's Public Affairs and NGO department and WIZO South Africa chairperson, led by Tamar Lazarus, are at the forefront of the struggle against anti-Semitic and anti-Israel demonstrations at the Durban Anti-Racist Conference.

WIZO France Municipal High School closed.

The majority of WIZO's day care centers are computerized and connected to WIZO Headquarters.

## 2002

Delegates from 26 countries attend WIZO's Annual General Meeting.



The Girls' Basketball Team at the Canada Hadassah-WIZO Hadassim Youth Village wins the Israeli national high school championship and plays in the World Championship in Brazil.

Re-branding of WIZO by the World WIZO Publicity and Information Department promotes a fresh, up-to-date image for the 21st century.

"Safety is in our Hands" Campaign launched by Helena Glaser, to reinforce shelters, provide gates and guards and safety roads around projects in sensitive areas and at WIZO institutions.

Ravid Ben-Ze'ev, 17, from WIZO Nir Haemek School and Youth Village, elected first female chairperson of the National Student Youth Council.

Special hotlines set up for women to advise on work issues, sexual discrimination and harassment and rights of single mothers.

Children with special needs integrated into WIZO day care centers. Israel's first class for autistic children opens in Rehovot day care center.

## 2003

Seventeen orphans from the Former Soviet Union are welcomed at CHW WIZO Hadassim.

With every fourth child living under the poverty line, WIZO launches a "Poverty is not only Food" campaign, initiated by World WIZO Vice President and Chairperson Helena Glaser.

A suicide bomber hits at the doorstep of WIZO Haifa, killing 17 year old Smadar Firstater, a student at the WIZO Art and Design High School.

Neri Bloomfield College of Art and Design and Teacher Training becomes an independent not-for-profit entity. Eight hundred students attend the school.

## 2004

800 delegates attend the 23rd World WIZO Conference, now called the Enlarged General Meeting (EGM).

Graduates of WIZO School for Political Leadership begin to succeed in municipal politics.

World WIZO begins a campaign to fight the New Anti-Semitism.

WIZO Israel goes on a mission to Poland, "A Journey in the Footsteps of a Federation that Disappeared."

Pilot WIZO day care center opened at Weizmann Institute of Science for onsite day care at science and high-tech industrial parks.



Helena Glaser is elected the fifth President of World WIZO.

## 2005

World WIZO launches its first International Membership Campaign.



The WIZO Baby Home, now the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, sponsored by WIZO.uk, celebrates its jubilee. WIZO Israel launches first national emergency hotline for women who suffer from violence in the family and children at risk.

## 2006

Annual General Meeting dedicated to WIZO's 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary with celebrations at the President's Residence and the Knesset.

WIZO Neri Bloomfield Academy of Design and Education authorized to award BA degrees to its graduates.

WIZO builds a protected day care center against Kassam missiles in Sderot.

## 2007



Noted Israeli artist Menashe Kadishman designs a special Haggadah for WIZO Israel to support women and children.

WIZO Schools join the "Israel Youth Award Scheme".



On WIZO's centennial, the WIZO Israel Federation thank the global WIZO sisterhood, for supporting us in our work and giving us the opportunity to create a better future for Israeli society.

**Ora Korazim**

Chairperson  
WIZO Israel

# 2000 - 2009

## 2008



At the initiative of Helena Glaser, a new WIZO Federation is opened in India.

## 2009

Over 1,000 delegates participate in the 24th World WIZO Enlarged General Meeting (EGM) celebrating WIZO's 88th anniversary.

Following the ongoing firing of Katyusha rockets at the Negev town of Sderot, a Saving Sderot campaign is launched at the World WIZO EGM.

WIZO is awarded the Israel Prize, the country's most prestigious award, granted annually on Independence Day at a special ceremony in Jerusalem.



Three WIZO presidents (l to r): Michal Modai, Helena Glaser, Raya Jaglom

Dedication of WIZO Nir Ha'Emek's first "Mishpachton", a foster home for children at risk.

The Lego Company of Denmark donates 1000 Lego kits to the Bruce and Ruth Rappaport Day Care Center in Sderot to help Israeli children cope with the trauma and fears caused by rocket fire.



WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim Boarding School and Residential Home celebrates its 70th anniversary.

*Congratulations on your  
100th anniversary  
and best wishes for the next*

**100** Years

Whoever saves one life"  
"saves the world entire

**חזק ואמץ**

WIZO FINLAND



*BUILDING THE WIZO LEGACY*



With our deepest love and admiration  
for the extraordinary people of ISRAEL  
and WIZO volunteers  
around the world  
on the occasion of the  
WIZO CENTENNIAL

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AM ISRAEL CHAI!  
THE GROISMAN FAMILY



# 2010 - 2019

## 2010

WIZO's MOR (Meeting of Representatives) celebrates World WIZO's 90th anniversary.



WIZO brings 500 disadvantaged youth from across Israel together to celebrate their bar and bat mitzvahs at the Kotel.

## 2011



WIZO Nir Ha'Emek hosts European Wheelchair Basketball Championship.



WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village celebrates its 90th anniversary.

WIZO's Early Age Division initiates a countrywide healthy eating campaign aimed at enhancing children's meals at WIZO's day care centers.

WIZO approves three year plan to upgrade its computers and computer systems.

## 2012



Tova Ben Dov is elected sixth president of World WIZO.

## 2013



“Personal Relations”, a short film created by the young filmmakers of the WIZO Helena Kagan Community Center for Youth and Communications in Jerusalem, wins First Prize in nation-wide film competition.



WIZO Israel Chairperson Gila Oshrat leads a mission to Poland to honor the memory of the vanished Polish federation.

CHW Nahalal wins prize for dormitory education and groundbreaking initiatives in leadership education.



Inauguration of Ecological Garden at WIZO Nir Ha’Emek for Research and Protection of the Quality of the Environment.

WIZO Men’s Hotline established.

## 2014



WIZO’s Early Age Division teams up with the Green Light organization to launch innovative road safety educational programming for two-year-olds.

Using the hashtag #SpreadingLight, WIZO chaverot around the world participate in The Shabbat Project, calling on women across the globe to promote Jewish unity by lighting Shabbat candles in their homes and communities.



WIZO Germany 'spreading light.'

During the IDF’s Operation Protective Edge, WIZO’s schools and other institutions are opened to accommodate hundreds of families from the south.

## 2015



Ghada Kamel, long-time chairperson of WIZO in the Druze town of Daliyat El Karmel, receives the President’s Prize for Volunteerism.

# 2010 - 2019

Students at WIZO Nir Ha'Emek Youth Village establish "A Day Without Hunger" to battle apathy surrounding the issues of poverty and hunger in Israel.

Two new specialty educational tracks: Fire & Rescue services at WIZO's Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village, and veterinary medicine at WIZO's Gan VaNof Youth Village are introduced.



WIZO students receive the Gold Award at Israel Youth Award presentation at the British Ambassador's residence

## 2016



Esther Mor is elected World WIZO's seventh president.



WIZO art exhibition, "Women and their Olive Trees" painted by Jewish, Christian and Muslim women from the Afula area, is exhibited at many locations in Europe including the European Parliament in Strasbourg and the UN in Geneva.

Law computing maternity allowance for self-employed women promoted by WIZO Israel approved by Knesset.

## 2017

WIZO Nir Ha'Emek is awarded the Ministry of Education's prize in Educational and Economic Achievements in Agriculture for Israel's northern district.

Inauguration of a new rocket-proof WIZO Day Care Center in Sderot.

"The Aurora", a solar lawnmower created by tenth grade students from the CHW Hadassim Youth Village wins the national "Fuel Choices and Smart Initiative" competition, held by the Prime Minister's Office.

Makom BaLev opens in Be'er Sheva providing emergency housing and treatment for 16-26-year-old women at extremely high risk.

## 2018

CHW Hadassim Youth Village wins the National Award for Educational Excellence.

WIZO celebrates 70 years of independence of the State of Israel at gala event honoring all WIZO's schools and youth villages and their contributions to shaping the country.



Photos from inaugural event of WIZO graduate organization.



WIZO Nachlat Yehuda's Fire & Rescue Cadet Program celebrates its first graduating class.





“The Mother Federation” WIZO UK celebrates its centennial and elects Ronit Ribak Madari as Chairperson, the first Israeli to hold the position.

WIZO Emergency Campaign launched to help communities in the South suffering from rocket fire.

First leadership training program for Haredi women takes place.

“Academia” Girls Leadership program opens.

New "Social Order Leadership" program for Druze is launched.

## 2019

Following a four-year struggle waged by WIZO, which included an appeal to the High Court of Justice, the Ministry of Education announces equal terms of study for 9,500 special education students.

Samir Azzam, a graduate of WIZO’s Political Leadership Program, becomes first woman to serve on city council of Isfiya, the second largest Druze village in Israel.

WIZO Ireland officially becomes an independent federation.



World WIZO President Esther Mor attends WIZO Ireland's inaugural dinner.

*Majal Tov*  
**WORLD WIZO**  
 for  
**100 years**  
 Following Tikun Olam  
 from generation to generation

WIZO Chile

# The WIZO Centenarians Club

As old, if not older, than WIZO, the members of our centenarian club are precious, not least for their long years of service, vibrant history and resilience in hard times. As WIZO reaches its own impressive 100-year milestone, we salute our oldest members around the world for whom WIZO has always been a source of pride.

## Australia

**Nancy Shenker** - the eldest of five sisters, was born in London's East End in 1917. She left school at 14 to work as a seamstress.

In 1941 she joined the Royal Air Force and became a WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force). During this time, she met her late husband David, a Lancaster bomber wireless operator, and they were married in 1946. Their son was born in 1949.

In 1958 the family emigrated to Christchurch, New Zealand. The first person she met in Christchurch asked if she would like to join WIZO and she has been a staunch WIZO member ever since. Nancy and David moved to Melbourne, Australia in 1985.

In Melbourne, Gertie Mark asked Nancy to join the revamped WIZO Dafna group, known today as WIZO Zahav. Together with Gertie and the late Fay Weintraub, Nancy became one of WIZO Zahav's first co-councilors. The following year she became president, a position she held for nine years.

**Elsa Hellinger** is a proud and active member of WIZO Victoria who celebrated her 100th birthday in 2019. The eldest of six children from a religious family, Elsa was born in 1919 in the former Hungarian city of Michalovce (today in Slovakia). Her father was a shopkeeper, and her mother, a home maker, was a member of WIZO.

As a child, Elsa had many non-Jewish friends but with the rise in anti-Semitism and the Nazi regime, the family unit disintegrated. Elsa and her sisters were sent on a perilous journey to escape deportation.

Elsa moved from village to village, eventually moving to Budapest, where



*Elsa Hellinger in 1943*

she found work wherever she could and slept anywhere she could find a bed.

In April 1942, Elsa met her husband, John Hellinger, a jeweler from Bratislava who had escaped from a forced labor camp.

The Germans invaded Budapest in March 1944 and Jews were forced to wear a yellow star and observe a curfew. During the bombings Elsa hid in a cellar belonging to John's landlady. She worked in a factory where she made raincoats for the army. When the Russian army surrounded Budapest, Elsa and John were forced to move again. Unable to find work, they hid in a cellar, half-starved. In May 1945, they were found by a Russian officer who liberated them.

John and Elsa married in Prague one month later. In 1946 their son was born. In the years following, life was difficult under communist rule. They traveled to Bratislava and took a secret transport to Vienna, from where they flew to Paris on false papers, arriving in Melbourne in June 1950. Within the first week of their arrival, John found a job working for an Italian jeweler. Elsa found jobs working in clothing factories.

In 1952 their daughter, Asha was born. In 2004, after 60 years of marriage, Elsa's husband John passed away.

The surviving members of Elsa's family, her sister Margaret and brothers Erwin and Ernie, all eventually settled in Australia.

Even at the grand old age of 101, Elsa is still active. Her advice for future generations of WIZO leaders and for her grandchildren is simply, 'be honest and live life to the full, because you never know what will happen tomorrow.'



(l-r) sitting: Erwin Meisels (brother), Tom Hellinger (son), Elsa Hellinger and Asha (daughter) standing: Emily (granddaughter), Mark (grandson), Ben (grandson) and Hayley (granddaughter)

**Szanka Fellner** celebrated her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday two years ago with an aptly named very old fortified wine called 'The Veteran' at the senior citizens' facility that she calls home. Born in Stryj, then Poland (now Ukraine) in 1914, Szanka recalls a happy childhood until 1941 when the Nazis occupied Stryj and she was forced into hiding with her mother and sister. She describes vividly the miracle of her survival after her father was taken from her home.



Szanka Fellner with WIZO South Australia Past President Miriam Millingen (photo taken in 2015)

Following the war, a new life awaited Szanka, and in 1954 she arrived in South Australia. For over 60 years, she has been an active and much-loved member of the WIZO Tikvah group in Adelaide.



Szanka Fellner with her family

## Chile

**Renée Cogan** was born in Argentina in May 1921, as a teenager she emigrated to Chile where she married her husband of 66 years, Jaime Cogan z"l. Her involvement in the WIZO movement started in the mid-1950s. Renee rose through the ranks of the executive to become the president of WIZO Chile from 1973 to 1995.



Renée Cogan

Renée was responsible for the creation of CEFI, established to support poor communities in Chile through the active volunteerism of Jewish women nationally. She explains the rationale behind her passion for WIZO and the creation of CEFI:

"WIZO represents the 'university of life' where our activities exemplify our Jewish values of Tikun Olam. Israel has always been central in my life. Thanks to WIZO I have great satisfaction knowing that the women are being empowered, the children are being educated and youth at risk are strengthened.

As a Jewish woman, I also wanted to ensure better opportunities for the most vulnerable in Chilean society and so I created CEFI, an organization that allows us to give back to the country that welcomed us. This has strengthened ties between Chile and Israel. Today CEFI is a network of 13 schools for vulnerable and disadvantaged children all around Chile.

Renée believes that to be a WIZO woman is to be a woman who adapts to change, demonstrating commitment and passion for the movement. She says that teamwork is crucial to strengthen and grow our sisterhood. Loyalty to our shared WIZO values and dedication to helping the needy in Israel and in Chile is very important to her.

"In a world that changes so fast, it is important to hold fast to our values, our identity and mutual support and respect for the other. This is the advice I give to my children and their children. This way we will continue to build a better world."

"Age is measured in spirit, not years. WIZO has been my source of inspiration. Having new challenges every day to achieve our goals, to help others, to strengthen friendships, help me stay young, active and enthusiastic. I feel satisfied and accomplished thanks to WIZO.

I am loyal to my Zionist principles. Through WIZO Chile, I was able to contribute to the development of Israel through our projects. This strengthens my identity with Medinat Israel. This is my Zionism."

## France

**Hélène Gross** was born in Paris in October 1922. Her involvement with WIZO goes back to World War II.



Hélène's French Resistance ID card

Hélène explains, "In 1944 I joined the French Resistance where I met a group of very militant female activists. We forged papers and smuggled Jewish children out of the occupied zone. Some of these

women were WIZO members. One of their missions was to destroy all the WIZO files so that they did not fall into the hands of the Nazis.

For many years, H el ene held the position of treasurer of WIZO France, responsible for the wills and bequests department. She describes herself as the ‘Minister of Finance’ who counted every penny, constantly looking for potential donors.

She looks back to the inauguration of the Cumet Day Care Center in Modi’in. “It is my fondest WIZO memory. It sticks in my mind as the positive outcome of our immense efforts.



*At the opening of Cumet Day Care Center*

H el ene has sound advice for the WIZO leaders of tomorrow. “Always be humble and act in a correct and good way and never stop working. And to my children I say, just be yourselves and always convey your Jewish identity.

I am almost 100 years old and have a huge desire to live. Everything interests me. WIZO volunteering is a real source of youth and I am the best proof.” H el ene says.

She passed on her love for Israel to her family who visit Israel every year,

“And that is my Zionism,” H el ene explains, adding, “it is the continuity of a deep attachment firmly rooted in my Parisian heart.”

**Reine Moutot** was born in 1920 in Tlemcen, Algeria. She and her husband moved to Grenoble, France in 1959 and the following year she joined WIZO.

“It was thanks to Mrs. Weismann and Mrs. Blum. Those ladies were so warm and caring but in the early days it was

not so easy to be accepted. Some WIZO members thought that because I was from Algeria, I rode around on a camel! They thought my background made me primitive, but once I had invited them to an elegant dinner at my home, they soon saw how refined and cultured I really was. That certainly changed their minds!”



*Reine Moutot*

Until 2017, Reine was an active member of the WIZO Executive in Grenoble. Among her many roles, she headed the Literary Committee and edited articles about WIZO Grenoble in the national Jewish newspapers.

She recalled the meetings and the events where she was so often called upon to sing melodies in Hebrew and Arabic that she had learned from the past in Tlemcen.

She says, “I would still like to do more. I am curious about everything, I still have my cheeky sense of humor. WIZO does keep me young. There is no doubt that when you want to help others, when you invest in a cause, you remain young. My spirit is strong, my mind is young - but I can’t say the same for my legs unfortunately.

To the leaders of tomorrow and to my children, I say, make your own way. Be sincere, lively and strong. Do it with all your heart, but always be true to yourself. WIZO is the most beautiful cause and you will feel such pride sharing that feeling about WIZO. I know I do!”

## Italy

**Hilde Friedmann** was born in Berlin in August 1919 and has lived in Milan since 1957. She recalls the difficult years during and after World War II.

“I saw the rise of Nazism with all its horrors and crimes. My parents, sensing doom, forced me to go to England. They saved my life, but they could not save their own. They did not return from Auschwitz...”

While Hilde was in London, she was active in WIZO and when she moved to Milan, a friend introduced her to Adei WIZO.



*Hilde Friedmann with Adei WIZO President Susanna Sciaky*

“That was how it was, a friend takes a friend. I remember so many parties, dances, bazaars. Every year a special event took place - Adeissima, such an elegant gala with a thousand people in attendance. So memorable! There was such a spirit of sisterhood. We were one big family of volunteers.”

Hilde has sound advice for the younger generation of WIZO members: “Give of yourselves,” she says, “live well but stay humble and stay united. Help those who need it. Be mindful that WIZO was present, always by the side of Israel when there was nothing but desert and swamps.”

When asked to define her Zionism, Hilde explained, “I was born with Zionism and I grew up with Israel in my heart. Of course, I see WIZO as my Zionism. I am glad that it exists. I love WIZO and Israel. We at WIZO, we are women, we work with heart. I wish WIZO a very happy 100<sup>th</sup> birthday!”

**Flora Albahari D'Acampora** was born in Bosnia in August 1919.

During World War II, she and her parents were saved by an Italian officer, Valentino Della Campora, and after the war they married. Despite her husband being a Catholic she always maintained her Jewish faith. The couple had three children.

Flora has always had the volunteering spirit, working with Jewish families and at the Jewish old people's home in Florence, and was an active member of the Jewish Community.

Flora worked tirelessly for Adei-WIZO baking cakes, preparing meals, embroidering little dresses and making hundreds of Shabbat challah covers for sale at the annual Adei-WIZO bazaars.

While sympathetic to the pressures on young women today, here is Flora's theory on how they could 'sell their time' for WIZO: for example, collecting children from kindergarten, taking youngsters to swimming or tennis lessons, organizing parties etc., and the proceeds of which could be donated to WIZO.

*(Interview conducted by Lilly Gabbai)*



*Flora Albahari D'Acampora in her kitchen*

*Note: Sadly, Flora passed away after this interview was conducted in the summer of 2019. We have included her story with the permission of her family and extend our sincere condolences on their loss.*

**Marcella Bolaffi Ascoli** was born in Florence in April 1917. She moved to Torino when she got married.

She has been an active member of the Torino Branch of Adei WIZO since the 1950s. Marcella recalled that her friend insisted that she became involved and she was grateful for the beautiful memories that she was able to take into her senior years. She spoke of the many friends she made, and the warm atmosphere of the meetings. Marcella attended many national meetings as well as participating in WIZO conventions in Israel, where she visited WIZO day care centers. She was always extremely impressed with WIZO's work and proud of the part she played.



*Marcella Bolaffi Ascoli*

She was responsible for finding goods to sell at fundraisers and she helped organize many of the fundraising dinners.

Her advice for today's members is simply to believe in the goals of WIZO and to take part in national meetings because they are an opportunity to share experiences and to learn. She also believes in the 'seeing is believing' effect of trips to Israel to experience WIZO's work firsthand.

*This interview took place with the help of her daughter, as Marcella is no longer able to communicate.*

## United Kingdom

**Stella Lucas** was born in 1916 in East London. She attributes her love of volunteering to the advice given to

her by her father when she was just 13 years old. "You must go out and make a contribution to society and the community," he said.

WIZO came into her life when, as a 23 year old young married woman, she and her husband settled in North London. The ladies of the community approached her and with volunteering in her DNA, she immediately got involved.

If you ask Stella what were the highlights of her WIZO volunteering, she will tell you, 'all of it!' Her refusal to slow down is remarkable. She continues to keep busy, helping others, supporting WIZO and Israel, playing bridge and enjoying friendships and family.

Throughout the decades, Stella's Zionism has been a constant motivator. To her, Zionism means Israel, and as she will tell you, "I love Israel."



*Stella Lucas*

Asked what advice she would give to the younger generation, Stella replied: 'Always stand up and be counted but do not push. Be good to your country and do not turn your back on anyone in need. Whatever you choose to do, put your heart into it, do not make excuses - just get on with it!'

*A sincere thanks to our federations for their help in preparing this feature.*

# CONGRATULATIONS



**WIZO SWITZERLAND** is proud to be part of the World WIZO movement since its first hours in 1920. We are happy to support those who care for underprivileged children, youth and women in Israel and offer them a brighter future.

Hoping to continue and contribute for at least another 100 years.

# 100 Years of WIZO Publications

From the earliest days of WIZO a publication was produced, and not only in English. At various times the magazine was translated – by volunteers – into Hebrew, Yiddish, German, French and Spanish. The WIZO Executive thought it was so important to inform and educate their members, thus uniting them and giving them a feeling of sisterhood from very early days.

The title went through several changes – from Pioneers & Helpers, Palestine WIZO Newsletter, WIZO Review Digest and finally WIZO Review and special editions with different names.

Reading through these journals (most of which are housed and preserved in the National Library and Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem) we get illustrated and heartfelt accounts of life in Israel, in addition to WIZO activities.

And our favourite WIZO Around the World was already appearing in the 1930s under the title “Round Our Federations,” giving information about WIZO activities around the globe.

Gradually, individual federations started producing their own magazines.

The WIZO magazines provide a chronicle and diary of 100 years of WIZO.



Covers of WIZO magazines through the decades

# Education in Israel the WIZO Way Then and Now

WIZO's network of schools started with WIZO's founding, and throughout its 100 years has continuously provided excellence in education

WIZO's impressive educational framework of today was borne out of the necessity to instruct young women, not merely to learn but also to *survive* the dreadful conditions in Eretz Israel in the aftermath of World War 1.

This reality was clear to our founding mothers, Rebecca Sieff, Dr. Vera Weizmann and Edith Eder, who had visited Palestine in 1918, at a time when the Jewish population had dwindled due to expulsion, disease and famine. The situation of women, both the *chalutzot* (pioneers) and the city women from the old *yishuv* (pre-state Jewish community) was unbearable.

At the founding meeting of World WIZO on 11th July 1920 in London, Edith Eder, an educator, reported on the need for an agricultural college for young women of Eastern European descent.

## Evolution of WIZO's schools

Agricultural training for women began in the *Maon* later to be known as The School for the Study of Housekeeping and Agriculture, with Hanna Maisel Shohat as the principal. Courses were held on growing fruit and vegetables, bee-keeping and lessons in home management. The Nahalal Youth Village (sponsored by Canadian Hadassah WIZO

WIZO students studying science  
1953 and 2013....







Students working on the farm – WIZO Nir HaEmek 1947

& WIZOUk), formerly The School for the Study of Housekeeping and Agriculture was set up in 1923 as a farming school for Eastern European immigrant women.

During the early 1920s, the *Moetzet Hapoalot* (Women's Council), the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund (which allocated land) set up the Working Women's Farms. Funds were needed for their operation, at which point WIZO stepped in and the initiative became a joint one. WIZO support sustained the foundation of two of these farms, now WIZO youth villages, namely the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Switzerland and WIZO USA) and the WIZO Gan VaNof

Youth Village in Petach Tikva sponsored by WIZO Switzerland and WIZO Panama).

The WIZO Nir Ha'Emek Youth Village (sponsored by WIZO Argentina and WIZO USA), situated in the Jezreel Valley was also established in 1927 as an agricultural college.

In these four agricultural colleges, thousands of young new immigrants and those from the Yishuv learned basic practices of cultivation and farm life, how to raise cows and chickens, how to grow vegetables, and the principles of domestic science, which fulfilled the urgent needs of the times.

The WIZO Municipal Technological High School in the name of Maya Rosenberg (sponsored by WIZO Brazil and WIZO France) in Rehovot was founded in 1935. In 1939, WIZO Ahuzat Yeladim Boarding School and Residential Home (sponsored by WIZO Australia) opened in Haifa originally as a refugee camp for immigrant children, where the 25 child-survivors of the ill-fated *Patria* ship found a home.

The CHW Hadassim Children and Youth Village (sponsored by CHW and WIZOUk) was founded in Even Yehuda in 1945, to house Jewish child refugees from Eastern Europe.

In 1975, the vocational school at The Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family (sponsored by WIZOUk) opened in Jerusalem and in the same year, in Haifa, the Neri Bloomfield Academy of Design (sponsored by CHW).

After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, and with the subsequent Law of Return passed in 1950, guaranteeing every Jew around the world the right to return to the Jewish homeland, over 648,000 Jews, many of them Holocaust survivors and refugees from Eastern Europe, North Africa, Yemen, and the Middle East, doubled the population of the young state. Many orphaned children found a home in WIZO's youth villages.

WIZO's educational model mobilized to cater for the influx. New subjects





*Graduates of the WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village Fire & Rescue Cadets Course*

were added to the schools' syllabus, as hundreds of young immigrants were integrated into WIZO's education system, aiding their absorption into Israeli society and preparing them for meaningful army service and future employment.

### School programs today

Today, the range of subjects and programs offered by WIZO schools and youth villages reflect both the diverse needs of its pupils and the continuation of its founding principles of education and care towards an empowered Israeli society.

The **Ahuzat Yeladim Boarding School and Residential Home**, home to 100 youth between the ages of 7 and 18 who suffer from behavioral, emotional and psychiatric problems, offers comprehensive education, intensive therapy and counseling complemented by a therapeutic petting zoo, student bakery and other extra-curricular activities to improve life skills and self-esteem. Many students achieve success in their future independent lives, serving in the IDF and going onto further education.

The **WIZO Secondary Vocational School at the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family** in Jerusalem also caters for youth with severe learning difficulties who have failed in other schools. The school offers three vocational tracks: chef training, hairdressing and music and sound production. This life-enhancing school

regularly receives accolades from the Ministry of Education for its excellent record of over 80% of pupils finding employment on completion of their vocational training.

This pattern of success is also evidenced at **The WIZO Maya Rosenberg Municipal Technological School** in Rehovot, where students' education is tailored according to their individual needs and capabilities. Students, many of whom are new immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, are afforded a second chance to excel in a range of vocational studies including jewelry manufacture, fashion design and film production.

The **CHW Hadassim Children and Youth Village** successfully combines educational content with values both within the youth village and in the local community, equipping students

through a full academic course of study in preparation for university enrollment, with specialized programs for outstanding students as well as students who are experiencing difficulties with their studies. The village also houses foster family apartments catering to children aged 6 to 15 as well as an emergency center for children at risk.

Among the students living on campus are Jewish teens on the *Na'aleh* program, who have immigrated to Israel without their parents. Since its inception, the youth village has successfully absorbed and integrated generations of immigrants.

In 2018, the Hadassim Youth Village was awarded the coveted Israel Education Prize for Excellence in Education.

The **CHW & WIZOUk Community and Comprehensive School** at Nahalal also



*CHW Hadassim students win 2nd place in Ilan Ramon Space Olympics competition 2016*



These young chefs from WIZO's Secondary Vocational School Bet Hakerem won an IDF cookery competition where they had to create gourmet dishes using army field rations

serves grades 7 to 12, including new immigrants on the Naaleh program and at-risk youth. Its unique programs for outstanding students train the next generation of engineers and is at the forefront of biotechnology studies.

Students at the **WIZO Gan Vanof Youth Village** enjoy learning a wide variety of pre-university academic subjects. In addition, notable special tracks include veterinary nurse training, dog training, herbal medicine and environmental science. The campus also houses a high-tech laboratory, ecologically friendly greenhouse, a petting zoo and dog kennels.

Similarly, the **WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village** also prides itself on its varied programs, including a renowned song and dance troupe, a working farm and fire and rescue program that teaches social responsibility to at-risk youth.

Further north, the **WIZO Nir Ha'Emek Youth Village** campus houses a dairy farm, chicken coops, therapeutic riding stables and an ecological garden, with the emphasis on science and technology education. The Youth Police Academy, a one-of-a-kind study track teaching the values of social order and obedience to the law has seen great success as many graduates are recruited into elite army units and enjoy preferential enlistment to the police force.

The **CHW Neri Bloomfield College of Design & Teacher Training** in Haifa nurtures creativity in a range of subjects, including graphic design, fashion and textiles, film and culture management, photography, architecture and more. Non-academic diploma studies are also offered. The college also prepares students for professional careers as high school teachers.

Throughout its 100-year history, WIZO education has been at the forefront of Israel's development since the first green seedling broke through infertile soil at The School for the Study of Housekeeping and Agriculture, to the prospect of future space travel by students of CHW Hadassim who won second place at the annual Ilan Ramon Space Olympics Competition, hosted by the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot.

Students from WIZO schools participate in the Israel Youth Awards Scheme to enhance their social commitment by volunteerism and community projects. There is no doubt that this winning combination of excellence in education and the WIZO spirit will surely pave the way to a better future for Israel's youth, as it has done for one hundred years, and will continue to do, forever adapting and evolving to the needs of tomorrow.

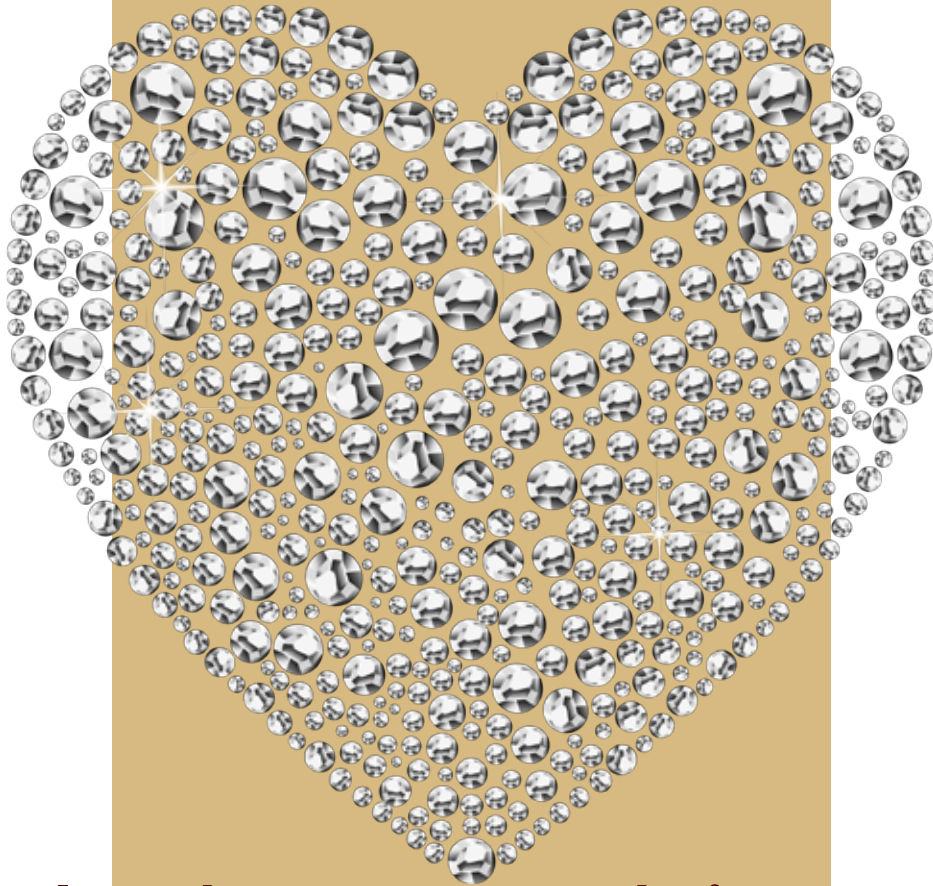
WIZO has come a long way in the last century. While WIZO's schools and youth villages have all adapted with the times, their core WIZO values remain firmly intact well into the 21st century – and beyond.

*"All a student needs is just one adult to care about them, to trust them, to worry about their future," says World WIZO Education Division Chairperson Carmela Dekel. "Through our schools and youth villages WIZO change lives. That's what WIZO has been doing for a century and will continue to do in the future."*



"Getting to know you" – at WIZO Gan VaNof Dog Training Program

**To honor the memory of my father  
Ephraim Sharp z"l (1939 - 2019)  
founder of Sharp Jewelry New York**



**I send warm congratulations to  
World WIZO President Esther Mor,  
the World WIZO Executive and federations  
around the world on 100 years of turning  
dreams into reality for generations of Israeli  
citizens.**

**Emanuel (Manny) Sharp**

*ERIC COHEN BOOKS*

*The PUBLISHER that CARES*



**Eric Cohen Books**

**congratulates WIZO on  
100 years of caring for the  
needs of the citizens of Israel**

In honor of our dear Mother and beloved 'Grandy'

**Esther Mor**  
World WIZO President

We thank you for your decades of volunteerism and giving

**Congratulations**  
**World WIZO**

for 100 Years of providing for the  
welfare of infants, children, youth, women and the elderly,  
and for advancing the status of women  
in Israel.

*Deborah, Benjamin & Michael Mor*  
*Jasmine, Daniel & Jonathan Cohen*  
*Jaime & Jordan Mor*  
*Ella, Libby & Joni Mor*

*Linda and Isaac Sagol*

*honor*

*World WIZO*

*President Esther Mor*

*and the legions of hardworking*

*volunteers here*

*and abroad who*

*have blessed Israel*

*with steadfast support since 1920*

*Continue on this righteous path  
for the benefit of Israeli Society*





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# WIZO

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WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO DESCRIBE HOW PROUD WE ARE OF EVERYTHING THAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND ALL THE LIVES THAT HAVE BEEN POSITIVELY CHANGED, ON BEHALF OF WIZO, DURING THESE 100 YEARS.

WE LOVE YOU WIZO AND WE ARE HERE FOR YOU UNCONDITIONALLY.



MERCEDES & MENAHEM IVCHER  
WIZO USA FOUNDING PRESIDENT



# In a Hostile Environment

In New York, Vienna and Geneva, WIZO representatives stand up for Israel and counter anti-Israel and anti-Semitic bias

**Evelyn Sommer writes:** The United Nations was established in 1945 as an institution to eradicate the danger of wars and create the infrastructure of conflict resolution. On many occasions it has fulfilled this objective but at other times it has encouraged conflict and dissension. The Zionism Racism equation was born at the UN. In each General Assembly session of the UN, 25% of the adopted resolutions are specifically condemnations of Israel. Only four resolutions against the rest of the world. This ridiculous situation makes a mockery of the concept of universal standards and is clear evidence of discrimination against the only Jewish State, Israel.

This year that we are celebrating WIZO's 100th Anniversary we also mark 60 years of WIZO's status as a non-governmental organization at the UN.

In order to understand WIZO's role at the UN it is important to understand our history there.

WIZO was invited by the Secretary General of the United Nations in 1959 to be a non-governmental organization, NGO, accredited to the Executive Board of UNICEF, based on the extraordinary work that WIZO was doing with babies and children. In 1960, Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested to Raya Jaglom, then President of World WIZO, to



(l-r) Gail Perl, WIZO USA Honorary Life President, Mireille Manocherian, WIZO USA Co-President, Lisa Ohebshalom, WIZO NY Chairperson & UN Representative, Evelyn Sommer, WIZO USA Founding President, Jackie Siegal WIZO UN Representative



*United Nations building in New York*

seek accreditation to the Economic and Social Council of the UN, ECOSOC, as the only Jewish NGO with international headquarters in Israel.

WIZO was officially welcomed in the September 1960 session of ECOSOC and Evelyn Sommer was appointed to head WIZO's delegation to the UN. Today, the NGO Division of World WIZO is headed by World WIZO President, Esther Mor. The representation at UN headquarters in New York is done by Lisa Ohebshalom and Jackie Siegal. The representation in Geneva is headed by Anne Argi and in Vienna by Dr Hava Bugajer-Gleitman.

### WIZO's accreditation challenged

Starting in the 1970s and 80s WIZO's accreditation to the UN has been continually challenged as we were the only organization with the name "Zionist" at the time when Zionism was

equated with racism by a large majority of countries. For many years, the Soviet-Arab front at the UN tried to kick us out or demote our status. But throughout, WIZO continued to have a strong voice in New York, Geneva and Vienna, participating in all Women's Conferences, Human Rights Council, yearly sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, programs to eliminate violence against women and girls and programs for the elderly.

These last ten years we have also been actively involved in programs of commemoration and education of the Holocaust of the Department of Public Information of the UN. We have a long history of involvement in the preparations and representation in the UN's Women's Conferences in Mexico City, Copenhagen, Nairobi and Beijing. The vilification of Zionism was born in the women's conference in Mexico City but it was also rescinded 15 years later

in Nairobi. Since the reorganization of the women's agenda into the new UN Women's section, we see a new effort to depoliticize the body and direct its work towards fighting the real enemies of women: poverty, violence, ignorance, disease and inequality. Although there is still a yearly resolution on Palestinian women blaming Israel for all their ills, this year the resolution did not come up for discussion and vote proving that, behind the scenes, there was a group of countries unwilling to allow radical forces to take over the women's agenda.

Last year we were actively involved in the Conference "Ambassadors against BDS" held under the auspices of the Israel Delegation to the UN and the World Jewish Congress, that called for action against the delegitimization of Israel. This year we cooperated with the Argentine Mission to the UN in organizing a public memorial in the Trusteeship Council, to the victims of the

terrorist attack on the AMIA building in Buenos Aires 25 years ago and we called on the international community to finally bring the perpetrators to justice.

## Supporting Israel

Today, our most important role is to offer continued support and advocacy for Israel in the face of a continued and sweeping global campaign of delegitimization. This we do with visits to ambassadors and lobbying with Heads of State during General Assembly sessions and other meetings.

We raise our voice because we understand that the ongoing international campaign to deny facts and approve dozens of resolutions of condemnation of Israel each year, is an intolerable assault on the very legitimacy of the only Jewish State and the Jewish people as a whole.

Finally, I must say that we are highly disillusioned with the UN. In 1959, when we were invited to receive our accreditation at the UN, this was based on respect for our social work for women



Rally organised by UN Watch in front of the UN Building, Geneva

and children. Since then, the UN has adopted resolutions that challenge Israel's legitimacy, equated Zionism with racism, has recommended that states halt aid to Israel, has negated Jerusalem as Israel's capital, has supported politically and economically terrorist organizations such as the PLO, Hamas and Hezbollah, and has condemned companies that do business with Israel.

In this atmosphere, our WIZO input is minimal. But we are still guided by the principle that although we are centering

our attention on all issues of direct Jewish and Israeli interest, we are also fully involved in issues such as education, participation of women in the social and political lives of their countries, climate change and environmental issues, all the major developments of our time in which the Jewish people share the preoccupation of all mankind. Let us hope that in the not so far future the UN will desist of its Israel fixation and return to an agenda of liberty, equality, dignity and human rights that was written in the original charter of 1945.



Dr Hava Bugajer-Gleitman

WIZO's main representative at the UN in Vienna is Dr Hava Bugajer-Gleitman, Past President of WIZO Austria, with Dina Baranes and Petra Winkelbauer.

Dr Bugajer is an active participant in the sessions of the NGO Committee for the Status of Women (CSW), meeting in Vienna. She represents WIZO in sessions dealing with women's rights, rights of the elderly, sustainable development

and CoNGO (Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations). Leonie Baranes and Benny Hess represent WIZO on a 'younger generation' committee of CoNGO.

**Hava writes:** "WIZO's consultative NGO status and activities, give more weight to its actions against antisemitism, anti-Zionism, BDS and Israel bashing.

Numerous commissions at the UN work on various themes. Attempts of Palestinians and their allies to politicize these professional activities are increasing. It is important not to give up and not to leave the international floor to the Islamic fundamentalist NGOs and their governments.

"Our group has organized side events on gender specific medicine and we hold the credit for first placing gender sensitive healthcare on the international agenda.

Other events have given a platform to the Ambassadors of Israel to the UN in Vienna

and Geneva, the Israeli Ambassador to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and guest speakers from Israel on narcotic drugs and crime prevention and criminal justice.

By being vocal and outspoken our WIZO team in Vienna has several success stories, for example: There was a proposal that Qatar be accepted to host a women's conference. As Qatar offered to cover all expenses, the request was welcomed at first. Only I opposed, arguing that Qatar discriminates against women, attendees would have to wear the Abaya or remain inside during the conference etc. Eventually, both committees rejected Qatar as host.

NGOs and civil society are often considered partners and are gaining influence in western democracies. In spite of singling out Israel and in spite of the attempts to exclude NGOs at the UN, our participation and activities are an essential part of our being "Ambassadors of Israel" and are supportive for WIZO.



(l-r) Jana Urbah, Einat Wilf, Anne Argi

For many years WIZO has been represented at the UN in Geneva by Past President of WIZO Switzerland, Anne Argi, who is accompanied today by Jana Urbah, Joanna David Mangin, Silvia Prist and Adriana Rottenberg.

The team observes and reports on the UN activities in Geneva, but also organizes events in the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

### Jana Urbah writes:

"The United Nations is notoriously hostile to the Jewish State; a principal reason anti-Israel bias is able to flourish at the UN is because Israel is the *only* country in the world with an agenda item dedicated to it in the UNHRC. At every UNHRC session, 10 items are discussed.

Agenda Item 7 requires that the impact of the Israeli occupation on human rights in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories and the question of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination be discussed at each of the UNHRC's triannual sessions.

In June 2018, the United States withdrew its membership on the UNHRC citing

a lack of confidence in the Council's credibility. Former US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley accused the UNHRC of chronic anti-Israel bias noting that "when the Human Rights Council treats Israel worse than North Korea, Iran and Syria, it is the Council itself that is foolish and unworthy of its name. It is time for the countries who know better to demand changes."

This year, WIZO Lausanne invited Dr Einat Wilf, an Israeli intellectual, academic and former Knesset politician to speak on behalf of World WIZO during the Item 7 debate in the UNHRC. WIZO specifically wanted Einat Wilf to speak as Israel is referred to as the "Zionist entity" or "Zionist regime" by Iran and many intellectuals throughout the Arab world, as well as by groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and the PLO.

European WIZO branches face considerable challenges in their fundraising efforts because the word *Zionist* has appeared in our title since WIZO's inception in 1920. When trying to raise funds for events which extend beyond the Jewish community, WIZO may be called on to defend the scope of our activities or to reassure donors that our

Organization is non-political. Some Jews, certainly younger ones, prefer to distance themselves from Zionism because the word has been manipulated so successfully by Israel's regional enemies as well as the Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement (BDS).

Dr Wilf stated, "It is imperative that the next generation believes both in Israel's right to exist and in the international legal right of its people to self-determination. Young people must learn to defend Israel in the context of today's political environment where historical facts are relativized and where anti-Zionism is considered distinguishable from anti-Semitism."

**Jana concludes:** "Pro-Israel NGOs who speak in the UN provide a realistic counter narrative to what most people read in newspapers. One of WIZO's principal aims is to educate children in Israel. WIZO has an ethical obligation to teach the complexities of UN international politics to young adults when doing so aligns with our Organization's values and goals. WIZO has a unique platform to achieve this because of our presence in over 50 countries worldwide."

# Caring for our Most Precious Jewels



*Young women being trained as nurses at WIZO's Nurses' School*

Throughout its 100 years WIZO has put the greatest priority on caring for, nurturing and educating our babies and toddlers

In the early 1920s in Jerusalem, the esteemed chief rabbi, Rabbi Kook found an abandoned baby on his doorstep. Attached to its ragged clothes was a note pleading with him to take care of the child.

Jerusalem in those days housed the largest concentration of the population, swelled by refugees escaping the ravages of the First World War. Against a backdrop of poverty and malnutrition, awful sanitary conditions, disease and non-existent medical aid, mothers and their babies were dying on the streets.

At the time, no institution existed in the entire country to care for the child. In desperation, Rabbi Kook turned to the *Histadrut Nashim Ivriot* (HNI), which later became WIZO Israel. Before long, there were ten abandoned babies in the care of the HNI.

In 1924, Dr Helena Kagan founded the Jerusalem Baby Home, the forerunner to the Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family, with the help of Lady Beatrice Samuel, the wife of the first British High Commissioner to Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel, and Miriam Sacher, sister of Rebecca Sieff. Situated in the impoverished district of Sha'arei Hessed, with ten cots improvised from orange crates, it was the first baby home not just in Jerusalem, but also in all Palestine. Subsequently, it expanded to include day care centers, kindergartens, a child welfare station and a mothercraft training center, and in 1955 it transferred to a larger campus in Beit HaKerem.

## *Tipat Halav* clinics and day care centers

Three years previously, Dr Kagan had initiated the first '*Tipat Halav*' (drop of milk) station in Jerusalem's Old City, which



Azour WIZO kindergarten 1954

cared for the needs of pregnant women, new mothers and their infants. The *Tipat Halav* station trained new mothers on the importance of hygiene, nutrition, breastfeeding and childcare. There was also a sewing room where mothers could repair baby clothes or make new ones under the guidance of a professional seamstress. Fresh pasteurized cows' milk was also supplied free of charge to nursing mothers who were unable to feed their babies due to inadequate nutrition. Fresh cows' milk was also delivered to the

mothers who lived outside the Old City every day by 'Donkey Express' where an old man rode a donkey laden with bottles of milk in buckets of ice.

By the 1930s, WIZO *Tipat Halav* stations operated throughout the country and to this day, baby welfare clinics, although now run by Israel's Ministry of Health, are known as *Tipat Halav* clinics.

The first day care center was opened in Tel Aviv in 1926, and in 1929, the WIZO

Mothercraft Training Center, also in Tel Aviv, opened its doors to care for sick and abandoned babies and infants, as well as premature babies in a specialized high dependency unit. The Mothercraft Training Center housed four nursery schools on the premises, and a training school for the *metaplot* (day care center caregivers) to fill the vacancies in WIZO's expanding portfolio of childcare services.

## Caring for immigrant children

During and immediately after the end of World War II, as refugees from Europe arrived, amongst them numerous orphaned babies and children, WIZO cared for many of these children in the WIZO baby homes. WIZO chaverot all over the country opened their homes to refugee children, young girls and mothers.

After the establishment of the modern State of Israel and the subsequent ravages of the War of Independence, Israel faced a new challenge - the mass immigration of Jewish refugees from North Africa and the Middle East, amongst them many babies and children. A lack of reasonable accommodation resulted in some 227,000 of these refugees being housed in tent cities in treacherous conditions.

WIZO mobilized, dispatching its considerable nursing forces to care for



Children at the WIZO Baby Home Jerusalem 1940s



*Kabbalat shabbat at a WIZO day care center*

the mothers and their babies, caring for the sick in makeshift hospitals, and manning *Tipat Halav* welfare stations to look after the mothers and babies, but in the cramped, flea-infested *maabarot* (tent cities) only diseases like malaria and polio thrived, and many babies died in the nurses' arms.

With every new wave of immigration to Israel, WIZO has been the first to welcome and attend to the needs of the mothers in the care and education of their infants.

## Leader in early child care

Today, WIZO is Israel's leading organization for early childhood care and education, with over 180 regulated day care centers countrywide where vital programs encourage curiosity, experimental learning, speech and reading abilities. Educational games, music activities, movement, art and story time are geared to enhance muscle tone, coordination and increase children's attention span.

WIZO fosters an ethos of equality from

birth in its early education strategy. In its 19 comprehensive (multi-purpose) day care centers operating extended hours, particularly in areas with a high incidence of dysfunctional families, WIZO provides the additional services of child psychologists and social workers who work with the families encouraging participation to achieve closer bonds of understanding and support. Provision is also made for older children to come to the center after their school day to enjoy a hot meal, activities and help with their homework in a supervised and safe environment.

Babies and toddlers receive all the nourishment they require, receiving carefully balanced meals that include the vitamins and minerals required for healthy growth. The standardized menu plan is worked out by WIZO's team of nutritionists and is prepared in the day care center kitchens to high standards of kashrut and quality.

In Sderot, an area under constant siege by terrorist missiles, WIZO operates three rocket-proof day care centers and the Margaret Thatcher Center for the Family

providing vital coping strategies and counseling to both parents and their children traumatized by ongoing terror.

For children at high risk who have been exposed to neglect and abuse, WIZO provides both short and long-term protection and care in 18 foster homes with parents dedicated to raising them. The children are given security, counseling and support. Each has an individual rehabilitation program that addresses his or her physical and emotional trauma.

A free telephone hotline for parents of young children operates, offering advice and a listening ear. WIZO also operates a support program for first time mothers, helping them to deal with post-natal depression, to build a strong bond between the new mother and her child, which is so crucial to development.

With an eye to the future, and to engage the young in healthy respect for the environment, WIZO adopts a 'green' approach, encouraging budding gardeners to appreciate the delights of growing plants in ecological gardens.





Group activity at a WIZO day care center

## High standard of early education

WIZO's early education syllabus, regulated and standardized throughout the country, is set by the WIZO Pedagogic Center, run by the WIZO Early Age Division. On site at the WIZO Tel Aviv headquarters, various courses including emergency situation training and day care management are held to equip caregivers and day care center managers with important tools for their work. The WIZO Pedagogic Center has branches in Beer Sheba, Sderot, Haifa and Jerusalem. Training is in line with regulatory requirements and is designed to adapt therapists' skills, providing them with the ability to work with children and families in a tailored manner. WIZO also adopts innovative learning and communication tools to transfer knowledge and peer learning.

WIZO is and has always been mindful that *'the children's future is in our hands and Israel's future is in their hands'* and it is by this reasoning that WIZO continues to champion the rights of Israel's parents to the very best start in life for their children.



Concentrating on the story with Abba



Children learning to enjoy books as part of the WIZO "Pajama Library" project



Gliwice, Poland. WIZO baking course

# If Only They Were Still Here...

"The future historian will have to dedicate an appropriate page to the Jewish woman in the war. She will take up an important page in Jewish history for her courage and steadfastness. By her merit, thousands of families have managed to surmount the terror of the times." Emanuel Ringelblum\*\*

From the darkest days of the Nazi era, stories of great heroism emerged. They are written in the annals of WIZO history. Women such as Hannah Steiner, Marie Schmolka, Miriam Pollack, Felicia Szyper, Gisi Fleischman, Selma Margulies and so many others whose actions exemplified the WIZO spirit. Yet so many stories remain forever unwritten.

Fourteen of WIZO's strongest and most active federations were lost to the evils of the Holocaust and the ensuing stranglehold of the Iron Curtain that sealed the fate of so many Eastern European WIZO Federations.

## WIZO in Poland...

WIZO Poland, founded in 1922, the largest WIZO Federation with over 10,000 members, was central to Jewish life. The tragic fate of three and a half million

Jews was sealed in September 1939, yet despite all, WIZO women organized soup kitchens in the densely crowded ghettos, saving extra food for the children, attending to the sick and giving moral support to those arriving from Vienna, Prague and Berlin.

WIZO Lodz President Felicia Szyper lived near the ghetto wall. She gathered her members in her room every week. Despite the presence of Nazi soldiers with loaded rifles, the women ended their meeting by singing *Hatikva* – The Hope. Yet hope was all but lost when all that remained was a blessed memory of six million slaughtered martyrs.

## ...in Czechoslovakia

In Czechoslovakia, home to one of the largest Eastern European federations, our WIZO sisters continued to work under cover to care for the thousands of

Jewish refugees from Germany, Poland, and Austria who had fled across the borders until the deportations from Czechoslovakia began.

### ...in Rumania

In 1931, the WIZO Rumania Federation had 32 groups and 5,000 members. From the 300,000 Jews driven out of Rumania, only 120,000 survived the transports, among them thousands of orphaned children. WIZO cared for them and sought out places for Jewish refugees from Poland to hide.

After liberation, the federation was revived in Bucharest, concentrating all its efforts on the repatriated survivors of camps who passed through Rumania, opening kindergartens and hostels, but in 1948 Rumania became a country behind the 'Iron Curtain'.

### ...in Hungary

During the summer of 1944 some 500,000 Jews were sent from Hungary to extermination camps in Germany and Poland. Those who had managed to escape deportation were pushed into ghettos, beaten, sick and starving. At a time when the entire country cowered, WIZO women were not deterred from their mission of care; the meticulous

preparations of the children's emigration to Palestine.

### ...in Transylvania

WIZO Transylvania had 54 groups and over 5,000 members when World War II broke out. It operated two *Hachsharah* (preparation) farms to train the *Halutzot* (pioneers) for life in Eretz Israel, as well as financing their *Aliyah*. When the fascist 'Iron Guard' rose to power, WIZO was liquidated and all its records burned. WIZO members continued to meet in private homes, organizing the care of refugees and orphans.

### ...in Bucovina

By 1938, the WIZO Federation in Bucovina numbered 1,200 members. As well as supporting WIZO work in Eretz Israel, the federation also assisted the local Jewish school, and promoted 'Young WIZO'. The deteriorating political and economic conditions deeply affected the population, and Jews were transported under horrific conditions to Transnistria where they met their death.

### ...in Bessarabia

WIZO Bessarabia, founded in 1935, was active in the promotion of Jewish and Zionist knowledge and supported

Jewish schools in several towns. Our WIZO sisters and all of Bessarabia's Jews met the same tragic destiny.

### ...in Yugoslavia

WIZO Yugoslavia was a strong and well-organized group of 5,000 women before World War II, but the Nazi invasion resulted in mass slaughter of Jews and Serbs in Belgrade. WIZO women in Zagreb whose husbands and sons had been deported or murdered busied themselves with relief work. They would meet in a bathroom, 15 women, packing and dispatching parcels, which would never reach their destination – *"and then there were only eight of us... We stayed on, knitting and sending money and food to the camps..."*

WIZO Yugoslavia member Rosa Hacker devoted herself to the clothing and feeding of thousands of unfortunates, rescuing Jewish victims from prison and camps, providing them with identity papers to help them escape, until she herself was sent to a concentration camp. She escaped and joined the Partisans, together with her husband. Rosa Hacker died fighting.

After the liberation of Yugoslavia, a handful of women returned and revived WIZO but shortly afterwards it



Chaverot from WIZO Rumania in a Cyprus detention camp

WIZO Slovakia 1928



disbanded as it disappeared behind the Iron Curtain.

### ...in Bulgaria

WIZO Bulgaria, established in 1924, was a stronghold of Zionist discipline and devoted service. WIZO women took immediate steps to prepare for work underground as soon as all Zionist activity was outlawed. Bulgarian Jews bore this burden with remarkable courage despite unspeakable hardships.

*"Yet no one committed suicide. No one went mad. We WIZO women took care of everything from hygiene to morale. In every town, WIZO was active."*

When, at the height of the war, 14,000 Jews were deported to Poland, just 61 adolescent boys were spared because of their usefulness in Bulgarian labour camps. The WIZO women immediately took the boys under their wing, sending them letters and parcels of food every month, and later adopted them.

The end of the war brought about the dramatic end of the Bulgarian Federation. Those who had survived the war emigrated to Israel.

The story of the Baltic Federations of WIZO - Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia - during the war years is a short and bitter one. From a total membership of 4,500, few survived.

### Rebecca Sieff visits survivors

When Rebecca Sieff visited DP (displaced persons) camps in Germany at Rosh Hashana 1946, she wondered how she would be received but she knew she had to go there.

*"Would they, who had lost their families, their friends, their homes and work - many of them losing all but life itself, want to see a woman from another world?"*

On arrival, she was cheered by a spontaneous, joyful welcome. Wherever she went she was feted. She brought hope.

She learned of the formation of a WIZO group in Bergen Belsen made up of women survivors, some from the former Polish Federation who organized themselves to assist others, and to uplift the spirit. It was a tiny ray of light in the

darkness that overshadowed communal memory, in a place where there was still no real expectation of release.

In her opening address at the Eleventh World WIZO Conference held in Basel in 1946, the first gathering after the horrors of the Holocaust, Rebecca Sieff spoke of that visit, and of her despair and of the urgent need to help the survivors.

She added, *"...and when we saw a cabled message from Rumania, immediately after the liberation, signed WIZO, saying 'We live - we work - we hope' it was a re-birth for them, an emergence from the underground to the open, fearfully depleted in numbers but unbroken in faith."*

Her words did not diminish the huge loss of 42,000 WIZO souls who perished, with vital parts of our WIZO history and stories of their own heroism etched on their hearts.

They must only serve to perpetuate the memory of those who did not survive to bear witness - and for us to continue 'to live, to work, and to hope' in their honor.

**\*\* Emanuel Ringelblum, Polish historian, educator, politician, social worker and founder of *Oneg Shabbat* (Joy of Shabbat). From 1939 until his death in 1944, Ringelblum organized a group of people in the Warsaw Ghetto to chronicle and document the annihilation of the Jews in the ghetto and elsewhere. Gradually documents began arriving from other ghettos in Poland. As the Nazis closed in, in 1943 the documents, diaries, photos were buried underground in metal boxes and milk churns. Some of the material was discovered in 1946 and 1951 and today is preserved in the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw.**

# *Mazal Tov!*

## *Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday WIZO*



We are thrilled to join you in the celebration of such an incredible milestone. WIZO has been an inspiration and a role model, showing all of us the path to change the world. WIZO, created to fill a valuable need in Israel, continues to do so unconditionally to this day.

WIZO Florida is proud to be part of the amazing WIZO movement and pledge to keep working for it another 100 years!



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Lillian Tabacinic  
WIZO FLORIDA CHAIRPERSON





# Tomorrow WIZO will be Yours

Aviv: the torchbearers of WIZO's next generation

**W**hen WIZO was created 100 years ago, its founding members were young Jewish married women who shared the WIZO vision. As the years passed with the intervention of the Second World War and the birth of the State of Israel, our founders grew older. They

looked towards the next generation on whom they could pass on the baton of leadership. A few 'Young Married Women's Groups' were formed in some countries, but they did not develop in strength, partly because they did not share the memories and experiences of the older generation, and partly because

they did not always find an open door to positions of leadership among their seniors.

Fay Grove-Pollak, Chair of the World WIZO Department of Organization and Tourism in 1957, during a mission to Latin America, understood that

*Aviv Seminar Participants from WIZO Belgium in Jerusalem in 1973*





2018 Aviv participants at the Rebecca Sieff Centre

young women needed to have their own platform to demonstrate their idealism in their own way. It was here that she created *Aviv* (meaning spring). Aviv spread rapidly to other countries, rejuvenating WIZO from within.

By 1965, there were already 300 Aviv groups in 31 countries, and the first European Aviv Conference took place in Paris, with 61 delegates. The conference was addressed by Raya Jaglom, Fay Grove-Pollak and Denise Bernard-Kahn, then President of WIZO France, who told the delegates: *"Tomorrow WIZO will be yours. Like us, you will give the best of yourselves to the most moving, and perhaps the most successful adventure of our times – the reconstruction of Israel."*

From the outset Aviv realized that although it must always be an integral part of the WIZO movement, it must have a forum in which young WIZO members could express themselves freely, outside the often-intimidating presence of their elders.

Aviv gathered pace. At the 16<sup>th</sup> World WIZO Conference in 1977 a special resolution was passed, acknowledging the contribution of WIZO's younger members and the need for an annual international Aviv seminar. The WIZO



Believe in Aviv

Constitution was adapted to permit the addition of an Aviv representative to the World WIZO Executive.

### Aviv's own project

In 1979, Ruth Izakson then Chair of the World WIZO Executive offered Aviv a six-classroom project. Aviv welcomed the proposal and the Givatayim WIZO Aviv Day Care Center accommodating 180 children was adopted. The Swedish, Belgian, British, Brazilian, Swiss and French Aviv groups each sponsored a classroom. That year, 81 delegates from 19 countries attended the Aviv seminar in Israel, the climax of which was a festive inauguration of the Givatayim WIZO Aviv Day Care Center, to which the ambassadors of the sponsoring countries were invited.

The 10<sup>th</sup> International WIZO Aviv Seminar ten years later under the heading 'From Holocaust to Rebirth' combined a reunion of delegates from previous seminars with new Aviv participants in a physical, spiritual and emotional journey which began in Paris, continued to Holocaust sites in Poland, and culminated in Israel. Over 100 delegates participated.

### Rise to leadership

Throughout the years, many former Aviv members have risen through the ranks of their federations to leadership roles; among them are Jana Falic, past



Raya Jaglom lays a wreath in Auschwitz during the 10th International Aviv Seminar: 'From Holocaust to Rebirth'

co-president WIZO USA, World WIZO Chairperson of the Executive, Rivka Lazovsky, Marla Dan past president of Canadian Hadassah WIZO, and more recently Vicky Fidanque the current president of WIZO Panama, Ronit Rebak Madari current chairperson of WIZOuk and Laurienne Baitz, acting co-president of WIZO South Africa as well as many others in federations across the globe.

But more is required from Aviv if it is to make inroads into the future. As we enter the year of WIZO's centennial, we must recognize the urgency of investing in the longevity of our movement through the education of our leaders of tomorrow. In challenging and changing times, ten decades after the first young WIZO women pioneered for change, we must adapt the original spirit of WIZO to the needs of today so that a new pioneering spirit emerges, born out of the need to continue strengthening Israeli society for the trials it is yet to face.

### Planning for the future

Perceptions must change. Instead of the often-heard proclamation of, 'yes, my grandmother was a member of WIZO' the narrative must become, 'yes, my

granddaughter is a member of WIZO.' History teaches us that WIZO was, in fact, always a young woman's movement. It was borne of women with immense vision who went against the status quo to stand up and make their voices heard for the benefit of those who dwelled in our spiritual homeland.

Today, Shena Dominitz-Falic and Rachel Shnay hold the position as WIZO Aviv representatives to the World WIZO Executive. Shena explains that her mother's passion and involvement in WIZO was a major influence. "I grew up with WIZO, it is simply a way of life."

Both Shena and Rachel use the vast and all-engaging marketing platform of social media to generate interest for their many cultural and fundraising events to attract other young women and to increase their following, building a firm base of chaverot to further the exposure, guaranteeing the next generation of WIZO USA leaders. Shena believes that at the core of Jewish Zionist women, there is a great desire to work towards a better Israel but in today's world, different strategies must be adopted to attract them and keep them engaged, enthusing them with your own passion.

### Attractive programs are the key

Danielle Balassiano Ptak, the vice president of WIZO Rio de Janeiro and director of 15 active Brazilian groups is the daughter of WIZO Brazil President Silene Balassiano. She uses the WIZO ethos and concern for the existence and maintenance of a strong State of Israel through education and social welfare to engage her Aviv members and she does it through up-to-date, enjoyable events that fit in well with the busy lives of today's working women. Danielle's 17-year-old daughter Leticia is also an active Aviv member. In Brazil, activities for girls of Bat Mitzvah age also add to the federation's success in ensuring the coming generation of WIZO leaders.

Danielle believes that 'the Zionist ideal combined with female responsibility and the avant-garde vision of WIZO that has always been ahead of its time' is an appealing message to young members.

In WIZO Panama, the WIZO Noar group for girls between the age of 17 to 23 years recently inducted 80 new members. In Durban, South Africa, *Ahava Tehora*, consisting of girls between the





Seminar Participants 2018

age of 12 to 18 years old meet regularly to have fun and raise funds under the WIZO banner.

Throughout the WIZO world, Aviv groups are active but they require more support and more tools.

In today's world, women are adept at juggling careers and family life. WIZO must accommodate this reality, and

bend to the needs of the busy women to engage for the future stability of the movement. Nowhere, more than in Aviv, does the saying 'If you want something done, ask a busy person' apply.

In federations around the world, WIZO Aviv

members work side by side with the more senior members, *"We learn from their experience, and we respect their years but we take that message and make it our own, adapting it for our own reality, realities that we must face going forward."*

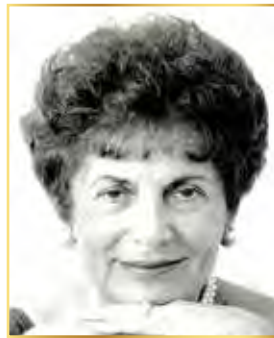
And that is the greatest challenge WIZO faces as it enters its 100th year: to ensure the continuity of the movement, and while in some countries,

Aviv - the *dor hemshech*, (continuing generation) demonstrates its strength in numbers, in others, there is still need for improvement.

Fay Grove-Pollack, the veritable mother of WIZO's Aviv movement said in 1965, *"We must give younger women an active place in our movement, so as to prepare a qualified successor generation to follow in the footsteps of the founders and builders who have made WIZO the largest international non-partisan Zionist women's organization."*

Our Aviv members are the guardians of our future, and they must be equipped with the tools to deal with the new anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment that they encounter. Federations around the world, and we here in Israel, share the responsibility to engage new, younger members and to support them, and in doing so, guarantee the future of our movement for the continued benefit of the Israeli society of tomorrow.

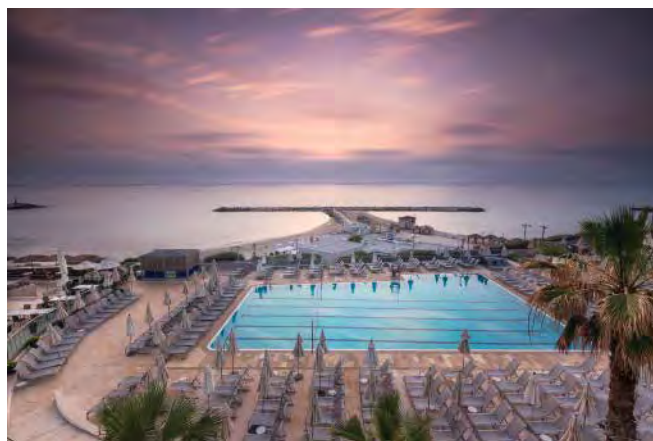
## Three Generations of WIZO leaders



In honor of my mother **Anita Jamitovsky Z"L** and grandmother **Helena Adler Schutz Z"L**, pioneering WIZO leaders in Austria and Uruguay

I, Prof. Rivka Lazovsky, Chairperson of World WIZO, salute all members of our grand WIZO family  
On our century-old legacy of Zionism, care and Tikkun Olam

We are thrilled to welcome WIZO delegates to the  
**2020 Centennial EGM**



On behalf of Ronnie Fortis,  
Country General Manager of Hilton hotels Israel  
and the Hilton team  
**we wish you an enjoyable stay with us!**

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## Argentina

OSFA (*Organizacion Sionista Feminina Argentina*) WIZO Argentina was established in Buenos Aires in 1926. The first president, Mrs. Rebecca Rubinstein, headed a 27-strong executive.

By 1946, OSFA WIZO Argentina had spread throughout the entire country, with 171 groups and 12,500 members, publishing the first Spanish-language WIZO Review (*Revista Osfa*), and raising funds for its on-going sponsorship of the newly built Afula Agricultural School (now the WIZO Nir Ha'Emek Youth Village). The federation opened local social clubs for Jewish women and their children in Argentina. In addition, sewing workshops, a kindergarten and the OSFA library were established as well as the creation of 'Young WIZO'.

Membership grew with the arrival of Jewish immigrants to Argentina before and after World War II, and the federation rose to the challenge of looking after their welfare.

Throughout its long and vibrant history, OSFA WIZO Argentina has been active in promoting Israel identity, advocacy and women's issues, and establishing and maintaining warm links with local and national municipal bodies to which OSFA's welfare department distributes food, toys and clothing to people in need.

In more recent years, fundraising and cultural activities have included performances by The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra with its conductor Zubin Mehta, the Urban Rosh Hashana Limmud fair, the Night of Talents and annual concerts featuring the federation's sponsored *Infanto Juvenil Retiro* orchestra comprised of children and youth from poor local districts in a joint venture between OSFA-WIZO Argentina and the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires.

Today, the OSFA WIZO Argentina executive board consists of 27 members headed by president Chela Elfman.



World WIZO President Raya Jaglom on a visit to Argentina in 1976



OSFA WIZO Argentina today

## Australia

Following the visit of an emissary from World WIZO, the Australian WIZO Federation was officially founded in 1937, and active Australian women Zionists were incorporated under the WIZO umbrella. The founding president was Ruby Rich-Shalit.

Work during the war years focused on the plight of European Jewry. Since then, under the strong leadership of its presidents, WIZO Australia has grown in strength, solidarity and numbers.

Today, there are WIZO groups in five states, and every six years the federation headquarters alternates between Melbourne, Victoria, and Sydney, New South Wales. The federation also enjoys the support of *WIZO Keshet Groups* established 25 years ago by Rose Toms and comprised of non-Jewish Zionists who greatly contribute to the work of WIZO Australia in practical ways.

In 1940, WIZO Australia adopted *Ahuzat Yeladim Boarding School and Residential Home*, originally a tent city to house needy immigrant children. WIZO Australia's ongoing sponsorship has seen *Ahuzat Yeladim* transformed into a world-renowned specialized therapeutic youth village for children suffering from behavioral or emotional problems.

In the 1980s, WIZO Australia members played a major part in a worldwide WIZO campaign in support of Soviet Jewry for the release of refuseniks to allow them to immigrate to Israel. The federation continues to advocate on issues pertaining to women and Zionism.

The groups organize a wide range of cultural and fundraising events, including major gala functions, dinner dances and educational seminars. The federation also maintains a strong presence on national and international forums on issues relating to women, Israel and the Jewish world.

As well as its flagship project, *Ahuzat Yeladim*, WIZO Australia maintains many projects in Israel, including day care centers and the *Makom Balev* project that offers temporary shelter and vital support to vulnerable young women, and the sponsorship of Bar/Bat Mitzvot for underprivileged children.



*Delegates and Observers at the Fifth Interstate Conference. Sydney March 1958*



*The WIZO Australia Triennial Conference Melbourne May 2019 with Rolene Marks, World WIZO Executive Member for Israel Advocacy (3<sup>rd</sup> row 3<sup>rd</sup> from left)*

## Austria

In 1921, the Zionist Women's Organization of Austria participated in the First International Conference of WIZO in Karlsbad and realized the benefits of amalgamation under the WIZO banner.

WIZO Austria was founded under the presidency of Erna Patak. Not only her charisma and ambition but also her personal contact and direct exchange with Theodor Herzl contributed to the success of WIZO Austria.

From 1939, as a result of the *Anschluss* and following the extinction of Jewish life in Austria, all WIZO branches were shut down but some WIZO women continued their WIZO work in helping women to escape Nazi Germany and Austria, and in the provision of meals and shelter for some 38,000 Jews until 1942 when Vienna's Jewry was deported to Theresienstadt.

Shortly after the liberation of Austria, four WIZO survivors met in Vienna in 1946, and WIZO Austria was reborn under the presidency of Dr. Ada Neuspiel.

Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 WIZO Austria has become a guardian of Austrian Jewish culture and one of the most important links between Austria and Israel.

WIZO Austria maintains warm relations with civic and national dignitaries. WIZO Austria's Honorary President Dr. Hava Bugajer-Gleitman initiated and continues to lead a strong WIZO presence at high-level meetings and

international forums at the United Nations in Vienna. The federation is active in Israel advocacy and the fight against anti-Semitism.

Today, the federation supports two day care centers in Israel, and Karin Maier-Winter is the current WIZO Austria President. She and her executive focus on donor appreciation and retention, and their impressive variety of high-profile fundraising and cultural events actively engages younger membership to ensure continuity of the movement.



*A WIZO Charity Bazaar in the 1960s, at the prestigious Palais Auersberg (l - r) Marga Cohn, Rosa Javor, Netty Türk, Betty Beckermann, Mrs. Mandelbaum, Helene Laufer, Esther Horn, Dr. Dorothea Engelberg (WIZO Austria President at that time), Dora Reicher, Martha Braun, unknown, unknown, Agi Keller*



*Executive members 2019 (l - r) Dr. Yana Hauptmann, Dr. Corina Ruzin, Jasmin Kapp, Marina Heifez, Blandina Baranes, Rita Dauber, Dr. Catharina Grau, Karin Maier-Winter, Dr. Hava Bugajer-Gleitman, Caroline Shklarek-Zelman, Karen König, Petra Winkelbauer-Ackermann, Cathy Heller, Ariella Woolf*

## Belgium-Luxembourg

A women's Zionist organization, *Cercle des Femmes Sionistes*, had been established in Antwerp in 1897, the same year as the Basel Zionist Congress, and it became WIZO Belgium in 1920.

The first president was Miss Rosa Ginsburg and the other members were wives of the principal Zionist advocates of the time. Among their earliest activities were Bible courses and Hebrew lessons.

The federation functioned actively until the outbreak of World War II when all organized Jewish life ended abruptly. The chaverot who remained in Brussels joined the Civil Defense Committee. At great risk to themselves, they helped Jews hide from the Nazis, and brought food and comfort to the internees at Malines, the starting point of the deportations.

After the war, WIZO Belgium-Luxembourg tried to revive its sadly depleted ranks and new, young forces joined. Many past leaders and members of WIZO Belgium-Luxembourg have since made aliyah to Israel.

Currently, there are three WIZO sections in Belgium; Antwerp, Brussels and Liège and one in Luxembourg. A promising and active new Aviv group in Antwerp was recently opened by Marie Joshua Querido who was inspired by her participation in an Aviv Seminar in Israel.

The federation's many fundraising and cultural activities include art auctions, bridge, concerts, lectures, film nights and prestigious panels in the European Parliament Headquarters.

The Belgium-Luxembourg Federation sponsors the Neve Nof Day Care Center in Lod. The current president is Varda Cywie.



*WIZO Antwerp 1973 (seated l – r) Mr & Mrs Komkommer, Mr & Mrs Ingber, Marcelle Beck*



*WIZO Belgium-Luxembourg Board Meeting Nov. 2019*

## Brazil

In 1926 the WIZO Brazil Federation was created by World WIZO special envoy Ida Bension. The founding president was Scylla Schneider.

The WIZO Brazil Federation focused on enlightening Jewish women in Jewish traditions, encouraging Jewish education for their children and supporting World WIZO to improve conditions for women and children in Eretz Israel.

Due to the political situation between 1937 and 1942 activities ceased, but under the authorization of the Brazilian Red Cross, WIZO Brazil was reestablished in 1942. From 1944, WIZO Brazil steadily expanded to other cities, with new groups formed in Curitiba, Recife, Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, Belém and Brasília.

The federation created cultural groups in various languages such as Yiddish, Portuguese, French, German and Hungarian, circulating educational material on Jewish culture and Zionist subjects to all the centers.

In 1947, the first issue of 'Corrente' was published, providing a link between WIZO chaverot throughout the entire country.

In 1949, Rachel Geiger represented WIZO Brazil in the first Plenary Assembly of World WIZO, in the newly founded State of Israel.

Today, WIZO Brazil has approximately 3,000 members organized in 13 centers. Besides its many fundraising and cultural initiatives, the federation works hard in Israel advocacy to strengthen links with Israel, to combat anti-Semitism and to preserve Judaism in the Diaspora. WIZO Brazil ensures its bright future by active participation of Aviv members. The current WIZO Brazil President is Mrs Silene Balassiano.

WIZO Brazil proudly sponsors The Maya Rosenberg Municipal Technology High School, Antoinette & Leon Feffer, Schnetrepler and Givatayim Day Care Centers, and the Hadera Community Center.



*WIZO Brazil (no exact date known)*



*WIZO Brazil First President  
Scylla Schneider*

Today, CHW has more than 20 centers and 50 chapters across Canada, offering a wide range of events and activities throughout the year with the annual CHW Gala being the major fundraising event. Canadian Hadassah-WIZO (CHW) passionately supports programs and services for Children, Healthcare, and Women in Israel.

The current president is Marilyn Libin.



*CHW 1941 members*



*Current leadership of the 13 WIZO Brazil centers*

## Canada

The Canadian affiliate organization predates WIZO by three years to its founding in 1917. When Vera and Chaim Weizmann made their first visit to Canada in 1921 Vera Weizmann met with Mrs. A J Freiman, the president of the (then) Hadassah Organization of Canada, that later became an affiliate of WIZO to be known as Canadian Hadassah WIZO (CHW).

That same year, legendary Russian Zionist Dr. Shmaryahu Levin attended the first historical WIZO convention and inspired Canadian delegates to undertake a specific and major project in Palestine, which would play a vital part in the provision of the necessary skills of survival in Eretz Israel - the Chana Maisel-Shochat Agricultural School at Nahalal.

In 1947, the federation's second sponsored school, the CHW Hadassim Children and Youth Village was established.

CHW has grown to be a major partner in the upbuilding of the modern State of Israel, sponsoring many WIZO projects as well as others not under the auspices of WIZO in the areas of medicine and science.



*CHW 2018 Board of Directors*

## Chile

In 1926, World WIZO emissary Mrs. Ida Bension gathered a small group of Jewish women to lay the foundations of the Chile Federation. The first president was Raquel Pomeranz.

In the 1930s, WIZO Chile added many groups and started its unique model of support for national schools. The federation aids 13 municipal schools for disadvantaged children around the country, all bearing Israeli names.

The political turmoil in the 1970s caused many Jews to emigrate to other countries, but despite a decline in its membership the federation was able to continue.

WIZO Chile has always mobilized assistance in the face of disasters at home, while maintaining its admirable support of WIZO projects in Israel. Jewish education, current affairs, leadership, Israeli-themed entertainment, are all covered in the busy annual agenda. Since 2011, the federation has held a 'WIZO week' with many different events each day appealing to the wider community. The yearly review *Nosotras Somos* is an important means of communication distributed to the entire Jewish Community.

WIZO Chile maintains close ties with many non-Jewish municipal and national institutions. In 2007 President of WIZO Chile, Susy Baron, was invited by the government of Chile to take part in the 10th Regional Conference on Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, in Quito, Ecuador.

Today, there are over 40 WIZO Chile groups in four regional branches with over 3,400 members, sponsors and friends. In Israel, WIZO Chile supports nine WIZO day care centers.

The current WIZO Chile President is Yael Hasson.



WIZO Chile Chaverot 1993



Five Presidents (l to r). Standing: Susy Baron, Yael Hasson, Agnes Mannheim. Sitting: Renée Cogan, Juanita Muchnick (z'l)

## Colombia

WIZO was established in Colombia in 1942 by Miss Rachel Smiley, an emissary of the World WIZO Executive to Bogota. Even though there were some 6,000 Jews living there at the time, there was very little interest in Zionism, although other Jewish organizations existed.

Miss Smiley rallied a few capable and interested women and WIZO Colombia was born. The first president, Mrs Ruth Benchetrit, succeeded in developing the work and established the foundations for WIZO fundraising helped by her husband Dr Benchetrit, who had been prominent in Zionist work in Venezuela before they moved to Colombia. By 1946, membership in WIZO Colombia had grown to almost 700 members.

Over the years the work of WIZO Colombia has been hampered by serious crises within the country, which has brought many challenges.

Today, the WIZO Colombia president is Deborah Sibony who, together with her executive committee, organize many fundraising activities including golf and bridge tournaments, Rosh Hashana gift sales, Chanuka and Mothers' Day gatherings, galas and the very popular annual bazaar. Members also enjoy cultural and educational seminars.



(l - r) Marianne May (hon. president), Bela Himelfarb (vice president), Anna Avinami (treasurer), Debora Sibony (president), Rebeca Guttman (treasurer), Hannah Kuperman (secretary)

## Costa Rica

The history of WIZO in Costa Rica begins in 1941 by World WIZO emissary, Miss Rachel Smiley from Canada. The WIZO Costa Rica Federation was founded with 25 members under the presidency of Mrs Fanny Schyfter. The establishment of the State of Israel brought great impetus to the federation.

WIZO Costa Rica has been active since its earliest days in promoting Jewish traditions and Zionism, celebrating the festivals and commemorating important dates in the Jewish calendar. Fundraising and cultural events are built around the festivals, such as the annual Purim Festival.

Throughout the years, a considerable number of Jews from Costa Rica emigrated to Israel, including many of the second generation of WIZO members. The WIZO Costa Rica Federation actively encouraged and supported their aliyah.

Today the federation focuses on the continuity of Jewish life in Costa Rica and identity with Israel through its many



cultural and educational programs directed at both older and younger members of the community.

WIZO Costa Rica has one section, WIZO Jai Sara Rose, which is blessed by young leadership. WIZO Cost Rica's president is Debbie Lukowiecki.



*The Executive Committee 1960: (l to r) Ana Guzowski, Abela Chernacov, Tobel Cosiol, Fanny Mishkowski, Paulina Rubinstein, Gucha Wohlstein, Fruncha Fishman, Ana Gudes, Eugenia Kellerman.*



*The Executive 2019 with guest personality Esther Lev (7<sup>th</sup> from left) (l to r) Nicole Angel, Sari Weisleder, Vanesa Reifer, Karen Fishman, Yael Lukowiecki, Debbie Lukowiecki (president), Esther Lev, Ety Majchel, Vanesa Guzowski, Erika Rubinstein, Lynn Dachner, Gaby Rubinstein*

## Denmark

WIZO Denmark was founded in 1931. Because Zionism was unpopular among the majority of Danish Jews in the years immediately following the Balfour Declaration, it was first given the name of Jewish Women's Association. The president of the association was Mrs. Addi Gruen. The group focused on giving lectures, organizing study circles on Jewish culture and Zionist history and engaging in social work.

During the German Occupation, all WIZO Denmark membership funds were devoted to providing refugees with clothing but when persecutions began in 1943, the work of the association came to a standstill. The majority of Danish Jews survived the war through the famous rescue of Danish Jews to Sweden by the Danish Resistance.

By the end of World War II, hardly any Jews were left in Denmark.

In 1946, the Jews who had been smuggled to Sweden returned and a few of the veteran Zionist women met to re-establish WIZO in Denmark under the presidency of Mrs. Meta Melchior after first dissolving the Jewish Women's Association. WIZO Denmark then concentrated its efforts on building its ranks, and raising funds for the new Jewish State.

Today, WIZO Denmark engages in cultural and fundraising activities, with an emphasis on supporting weaker sectors of Israeli society. The federation co-hosts events with other Danish Jewish organizations, advocating for Israel and strengthening links with Jewish and national bodies.

The federation supports the Lotus Day Care Center in Karmiel and the Pardess Katz Afternoon Center for Ethiopian children.

The current president is Dorrit Raiter.



*WIZO Denmark Executive Members 1947*



*WIZO Denmark Executive 2019 (l - r) Karen Henriksen, Lone Nachmann, Monica Salimanov, Dorrit Raiter, Ora Ohsri, Katrine Abrahamovitz*



*Karen Melchior Executive Member WIZO Denmark*

## Finland

WIZO Finland was founded in 1924 in Viborg (which became part of Russia after World War II) and later in 1926 in Helsinki. In 1946, it was established in Turku.

During World War II, WIZO in Finland was able to continue its work relatively unhindered, despite the looming uncertainties.

After the war, WIZO in Helsinki was able to focus its activities on the fledgling Jewish State, organizing Hebrew courses and lectures on Jewish and Israeli subjects. The World WIZO Bible Day formed the basis for many cultural and fundraising activities. The federation also supported the aliyah of many of its members, and encouraged its youth to study in WIZO institutions in Israel.

WIZO Helsinki continues to be blessed by loyal Christian friends, known affectionately as ‘godparents’ for their generous support of the federation’s sponsored project, the Shaviv Day Care Center in Herzlia.

Today, WIZO Finland’s president is Ann Wardi. She and her hardworking executive organize many fundraising events bringing the generations together with the help of women from WIZO Turku.

The main fundraising event is the annual WIZO Bazaar in Helsinki which attracts 800 – 1000 guests, with a smaller one in WIZO Turku. Other events include a Shabbat dinner, lectures and a reception hosted by the Ambassador of Israel to Finland thanking WIZO Finland’s Christian supporters. WIZO Finland’s Aviv group of young professionals are laying foundations for the next generation of WIZO leadership in Finland.



WIZO Finland President Ann Wardi (center in white jacket), executive and friends hosted at the Israeli Ambassador’s residence in Helsinki

## France

In 1924, a group of women who shared a deep love for Eretz Israel and Judaism created *Union des Femmes Juives de France pour la Palestine*.

In 1935, following a visit to Paris by World WIZO President Rebecca Sieff, Dr Vera Weizmann and Mrs Fay Grove Pollack, the *Union des Femmes Juives de France pour la Palestine* was incorporated into World WIZO and WIZO France was born.

With the rise of Nazism in Germany, many Jewish families moved to France and new WIZO groups were formed in Paris. As the situation worsened, WIZO in France worked in relief and rescue work initiated by Youth Aliyah to save Jewish children from Nazi Germany. At the outbreak of World War II WIZO France concentrated on humanitarian efforts to help the families of soldiers in the Foreign Legion.

In June 1940, during the German occupation, WIZO France went underground. Its offices closed and the chaverot burned all the records. The few WIZO members who remained concentrated on humanitarian efforts at great personal risk, including ‘WIZO’s Clandestine Service for the Placement of Children’ saving the lives of 1,250 Jewish children and providing crucial assistance to Jews who were in hiding to evade deportation.

After the war, WIZO emerged and continued to work. Children whose parents had perished in Nazi death camps were found and placed in the care of Jewish families and Jewish orphanages.

Today, WIZO France has 30 branches throughout the country. Apart from a whole host of cultural activities, WIZO France’s primary function is fundraising and raising the status of the movement within French society through high profile events such as the annual golf day, gala dinners and the literary prize.

The current WIZO France president is Diana-Paola Levy.



(l-r) WIZO France President Diana-Paola Levy with executive members Daniele Grosman & Isabelle Aknin

## Germany

WIZO Germany was founded in 1929. The founding president was Mrs. Jenny Blumenfeld. Prior to this Zionist women’s organization, the ‘*Bund Zionistischer Frauen*’ was already actively working for Eretz Israel and doing local welfare work for the Jewish refugees and women and children from Eastern Europe.

Work continued until the exodus of many of the Jews from Germany in 1933 when Hitler came to power. Immediately after World War II, when Europe was liberated, the survivors were brought to the Displaced Persons Camps in Germany where they formed small WIZO groups. WIZO work consisted mainly of the organization of kindergartens, infant welfare stations and the care of pregnant women and nursing mothers in these camps. This later extended to courses in sewing, knitting and toy making and Hebrew and English language studies.

The rebirth of Jewish life and Jewish organizations in Germany after the Holocaust was met with some resistance, nevertheless WIZO Germany's members continued working with unbroken spirit for the common cause of helping underprivileged women and children in Israel.

It was only in 1960 that WIZO Germany was reactivated under the presidency of Hellen Israel from Düsseldorf. In 1964, WIZO Germany offered to build a convalescent home for mothers in Israel, in the name of the first German Federal President after the Holocaust, Theodor Heuss. This institution was to become WIZO Germany's flagship project, 'Beit Heuss'.

Today, WIZO Germany has developed into a well-respected and flourishing organization with over 10,000 members in nine local groups. Every year, the groups organize fundraising and cultural events that attract considerable community support.

All these events, as well as the publishing of the various WIZO magazines, are being sponsored and supported by both Jewish and non-Jewish members and friends of WIZO Germany. Thanks to their support, WIZO Germany successfully provides continuous and sustainable financial help for WIZO projects in Israel.

WIZO Germany's current president is Nicole Faktor.



*WIZO Germany Executive 2019: (back row l – r) Julia Davidovski, Sabina Morein, Riwa Sandberg, Nani Drory, Alexandra Cukierman, Revital Kalish-Czarny (front row l – r) Orly Licht, Nicole Faktor (president), Dr Shoshana Feingold-Studnik*

## Greece

The WIZO Greece federation was founded in 1934 but with the Nazi invasion and the liquidation of the Greek Jewish community in 1941 all Jewish activities ceased.

After World War II, it was Victorine Camchi, a beloved leading figure in the much depleted Jewish community who rallied to promote Jewish educational activity, but the civil war of 1950 resulted in a wave of emigrations and the ranks of the organization were again depleted.

In 1963, WIZO Greece was revived, and cultural and educational activities including special celebrations to promote Jewish traditions, were reinstated.

Today, the federation has branches in Athens, Thessaloniki, Larissa, Volos and Halkida and actively raises funds through a busy program of coffee mornings, card lunches and educational seminars to raise awareness of Israel.

A major event is the Bat Mitzvah celebration, which is a great source of pride and engages interest in WIZO from both mothers and daughters.

Every year, the chaverot of WIZO Greece organize a bazaar, which takes place in the Jewish school in Athens. Funds raised go towards helping impoverished Jewish families in Greece and supporting WIZO projects in Israel.

The current president is Gratsiella Bourla Konstantinis.



*WIZO Greece President Gratsiella Bourla Konstantinis with Bat Mitzvah celebrants*

## Guatemala

WIZO Guatemala was founded in 1941, and was very active during World War II in the areas of Jewish education and Hebrew studies. In 1976, Guatemala suffered a terrible earthquake and WIZO immediately rallied to help the victims of the catastrophe by sending aid to the affected areas. Throughout its history, the federation has always been active in both fundraising for WIZO projects in Israel and supporting the needy in Guatemala through educational sponsorships and provisions.

WIZO Guatemala engages in a full range of fundraising and cultural activities, which appeal to all age groups, and are mainstays of the community calendar - the annual Mothers' Day Luncheon, Purim dinner catered by the members of the committee and courses for Bat Mitzvah girls and their mothers. Every Jewish festival is marked with a gathering, which is always well attended. Additionally, family bingo,

distributing Rosh Hashanah gifts and the distribution of fundraising cards in the synagogue are well supported.

The hardworking executive board consists of 20 women including four new young members, who practice their Zionism through their allegiance to WIZO. The WIZO Guatemala President is Ruth Sibony Azulay.

## Holland

In 1923 the Jewish Women's Organization for Practical Work in Palestine was affiliated to WIZO and changed its name to WIZO Holland. The first president was Mrs. Bosman-Cohen. Its primary focus was to raise funds for the newly built agricultural training college at Nahalal.

The 1933 slogan of WIZO Holland was *'To be a member of WIZO you do not have to be a Zionist, but we will do everything in our power to make you one.'*

By the end of the 1930s WIZO Holland's membership had grown considerably but the German occupation in 1940 put an end to all organized WIZO activities. Of the 120,000 Jews who lived in Holland prior to 1939, only a small number survived the concentration camps.

In 1946, the *Women's Section of the Zionist Federation* was formed by the Jewish women who had survived. A few WIZO leaders who had returned to Holland from the United States were elected to its board and attempts were made to revive the Dutch federation but failed through lack of survivors. The Women's Section concentrated on local welfare work, caring for thousands of Jewish war orphans.

The revival of WIZO Holland came in 1948 and the organization grew steadily throughout the following years gaining the respect and support of both Jewish and civic circles. Bible Day events, bazaars, the sale of WIZO Home Industries' products in the WIZO shop in Amsterdam were all popular attractions.

Today, the federation has five branches: Amsterdam, Friesland, Gelderland, Brabant and Rotterdam. The WIZO shop, the only Jewish shop left in Amsterdam, still operates. Bazaars, bridge drives, luncheons and coffee mornings are held throughout the country as well as major events such as the annual literary prize and Rosh Hashana flower project.

The current president is Michaja Wiener.



2019 WIZO Holland Executive at the WIZO Shop in Amsterdam (WIZO Holland President Michaja Wiener 4<sup>th</sup> from left)

## Hong Kong

The Jewish Women's Association (JWA) of Hong Kong, has a long history of supporting WIZO and many other causes in Israel. The JWA story began with the influx of Jewish immigrants escaping from China and Russia after World War II. Since those days, the association's gala balls are the high point of the Jewish community social life in Hong Kong. Recently, the association donated funds towards the renovation of a WIZO women's shelter in Israel. Today, the JWA co-presidents are Shani Brownstein and Marissa Racca.



(l – r) Marissa Racca and Shani Brownstein visiting a WIZO shelter

## Hungary

The first WIZO group was founded in Budapest in 1929 and from 1934 'Young WIZO' groups were active in Budapest and other towns. By 1939, there were 19 groups with over 2000 members involved in all Zionist activities and sponsored 'hachsharah' work for girls, even setting up a girls' hostel. With the growing threat of Nazism, interest in Zionism and Eretz Israel increased.

WIZO Hungary was able to function during World War II – even up to Purim 1944, until the Nazis occupied Hungary and deported most of the Jewish community to their deaths.

After war's end, by 1946 the federation was active again until they were shut down by the Communist regime in 1950.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, and on the initiative of World WIZO President Raya Jaglom, WIZO Hungary was reborn in spring 1990, and in December of that year the European WIZO conference was held in Budapest.

Today, Kate Koves is the president of WIZO Hungary. WIZO members – both Jewish and non-Jewish – are mainly from Budapest, but the federation is supported by women from around the country.

The federation is extremely active, holding fundraising and cultural events. Most important is holding communal events at Tu Be'shvat and Chanukah and a communal seder night.

The federation was thrilled and honored in 2019 when they hosted the annual European Council of WIZO Federations (ECWF) conference in Budapest, and celebrated the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the federation.



ECWF Conference 2019

including women's empowerment events, medical and health awareness workshops and the Shabbat challah project.



Prof. Rivka Lazovsky, Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive on her visit to Mumbai in 2018, at the memorial in Nariman House, Mumbai to Rivka and Rabbi Holtzberg. 3<sup>rd</sup> on the left – Yael Jhirad



WIZO Hungary President Kate Koves (l) and World WIZO Chairperson Rivka Lazovsky at WIZO Hungary's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2019

## Ireland

A women's Zionist Society operated in Dublin in 1900, and in 1904 the Dublin Daughters of Zion was founded. When, in 1918 the Federation of Women Zionists of Great Britain and Ireland (now WIZOuk) came into being, these organizations were brought under its auspices.

Since 1918, Irish Zionist women have worked faithfully with WIZOuk supporting the (then) Jerusalem Baby Home, contributing funds to set up wards in transit camps, scholarships for training courses, after school facilities and more.

In early 2019, after 100 years working with WIZOuk, the WIZO Ireland Federation was established as an independent federation. Karen Eppel is the founding president.

WIZO Ireland has one branch in Dublin and enjoys generous support from the small but active Jewish community, as well as many non-Jewish friends, who attend fundraising events such as coffee mornings, appeals and annual dinners. WIZO Ireland is also active on social media sharing news about WIZO's work and advocacy tools to combat anti-Zionist sentiment.

In November 2019, World WIZO President Esther Mor traveled to Dublin to attend WIZO Ireland's inaugural dinner where she delivered the keynote speech in honor of the federation's independence.



At WIZO Ireland's inaugural dinner. 5<sup>th</sup> from left World WIZO President Esther Mor

## India

WIZO in India was originally founded in 1927 by Mrs Ida Bension under the auspices of Lady Rachel Ezra, of the famous Sassoon family. The ladies initially formed WIZO groups in Calcutta, Bombay (today Mumbai) and Rangoon. The Bombay group was the most active, with some 150 members at its peak, until political conditions curtailed its activities.

During World War II, WIZO concentrated on local war and refugee relief work, including the WIZO club in Bombay, that provided entertainment for Jewish soldiers stationed in the city. After World War II most of the community emigrated to Israel and other countries. Remaining WIZO members kept activities alive until the mid 1960s when the groups closed.

WIZO India was revived in October 2007 by World WIZO President Helena Glaser. The new president was Yael Ralphy Jhirad who remains president to this day. However, a year after the opening, tragedy struck when Rivka Holzberg z"l, who was present at the inauguration was killed with her husband, the local Chabad rabbi, during the Mumbai terrorist attacks

Today, the federation has one group situated in Mumbai and the ladies organize lectures and cultural events,

## Israel

Before World WIZO was founded, women in Palestine had already formed a women's organization 'Association of Jewish Women' to assist the poorer elements of the population, particularly in Jerusalem where there was a concentration of Jews mainly from Oriental communities, who were living in disastrous conditions of poverty, resulting in a high rate of infant mortality. It was a result of this dire situation that the first home for abandoned babies was set up in the Sha'arei Hesed district.

During the 1920s these women teamed up with women from WIZO and Moetzet Hapoalot to give courses in home economics, housekeeping and hygiene. They also set up a home industries department to enable women to 'work at home' and earn a living.

In 1933 the groups re-organized and officially became the Palestine Federation of WIZO, the forerunner of WIZO Israel.

Throughout the decades, the women of WIZO Israel have always adapted their activities according to the needs of the population and the current situation in the country. After World War II they were extremely active in helping refugees from Europe, and the WIZO schools absorbed orphan refugee children.

Gradually women's centers opened all over the country, including in Druze villages, where local women still meet for a variety of courses and social activities,

Today the federation provides a wide range of services for the women, youth and children of Israel including hotlines for parents, leadership and empowerment courses, legal advice bureaus and activities for the prevention of violence in the family, including the only hotline for violent men in the country. WIZO Israel is responsible for many laws passed by the Knesset affecting women's rights.

Today's chairperson of WIZO Israel is Ora Korazim.



1940s: Women at a WIZO ceramics painting class



Violence against women - WIZO protest march

## Adei WIZO Italy

In 1931, the ADEI WIZO Italia Federation was born, adopting the same aims as its forerunner *The Associazione Donne Ebree d'Italia (ADEI)*, founded in 1927 to undertake welfare work in both Italy and Palestine and to safeguard Jewish culture and traditions in Italy.

Since its beginnings, the Italian federation was revered within the Jewish community and beyond. Jews who had fled Germany in 1933 sought refuge in Italy and the federation concentrated on relief work for them. In 1938 Italian Jewry was subjected to rigid racist laws. Members of the ADEI WIZO federation came under scrutiny, and they destroyed the federation's records. Some WIZO members who had not succeeded in fleeing the country continued at great personal risk to assist the refugees until they met their tragic end in Nazi extermination camps.

Between 1944 and 1945, wherever a city was liberated, WIZO reopened its doors, first in Naples, then Rome, Ancona and in Northern Italy.

After the Proclamation of Israel's independence, and following an appeal sent out by World WIZO to all the federations in the Diaspora during the War of Independence, ADEI WIZO mobilized to rebuild its ranks, initiating many fundraising events and cultural activities.

Today, the Italian federation has 16 branches. Each branch organizes cultural events on Jewish heritage, women's issues, the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and Israel advocacy as well as fundraising events such as bazaars and luncheons.

The main annual fundraiser of ADEI WIZO is the *Adeissima Gala*, a tradition of WIZO Milan for almost 40 years. Attracting a distinguished audience, this elegant fundraising dinner also serves to raise the profile of WIZO's important work. The ADEI WIZO *Adelina Della Pergola Literary Prize*, held every year since 2000, is a very prestigious event that highlights and rewards Jewish authors, attracting media interest and raising the cultural profile of the Jewish world.

The president of ADEI WIZO is Susanna Sciaky.



ADEI WIZO Executive Members 2019 (President Susanna Sciaky is 7<sup>th</sup> from left)

## Jamaica

WIZO in Jamaica was founded in 1943. As in other isolated Jewish communities, WIZO membership was always small and today, the downward trend regrettably continues, due mainly to emigration. The federation still operates today under the long-term presidency of Jennifer Lim (since 1968) who continues to host events in her home.

Today, the focus of WIZO Jamaica is now on local social welfare causes and cultural events, Holocaust memorial and Jewish festival get togethers.



Circa 1970s. President Jennifer Lim is 4<sup>th</sup> from left (front row)

## Mexico

In 1938 World WIZO emissary Mrs. Ariel Bension launched WIZO Mexico with a 35-strong membership headed by founding President Sara Palacci. In the early years, the federation concentrated on fundraising for WIZO institutions in Palestine but eventually added more educational work as membership grew and new groups were formed countrywide.

Three years later, the federation introduced a monthly bulletin, the Mexican WIZO Review, which brought the community closer to WIZO's work. Today it is a weekly and monthly digital news source reaching 10,000 families in the community with a strong presence on social media.

Ever since its foundation, WIZO Mexico has had a dynamic cultural committee. The Hebrew Ulpan, which has operated without interruption since 1953, continues to attract full classes. In later years, new subjects relating to the Jewish world and Zionism were added to reflect the changing needs vis-a-vis Israeli identity and spiritual enrichment.

WIZO Mexico's membership has grown from 36 members at its foundation to around 3,500 members today, comprising of women of all ages and interests.

The federation promotes strong leadership and the training of the next generation through active WIZO Aviv members who work alongside their elders and mentors.

In 2016, WIZO Mexico was awarded the prestigious Benito Juarez National Citizen Merit award for its support of various local institutions across the country and for the volunteerism of chaverot nationally.

Every year, the Mexican federation organizes 50 activities to fulfil its objectives in support of its sponsored WIZO projects in Israel.



WIZO Mexico Executive members 1951



WIZO Mexico 1959



*Chaverot from WIZO Mexico enjoying a recent Chanukah celebration at the Federation's Head Office*

## New Zealand

WIZO New Zealand was founded in 1929 under the presidency of Mrs. Rose Nathan.

The first task of the New Zealand federation was to finance specialist nurses from London to Palestine to establish mothercraft training in Palestine. Some years later, with additional funds sent by the federation, the Infant Welfare Center, 'New Zealand House' became the federation's flagship project.

Despite the small size of the Jewish community in New Zealand, the federation made remarkable strides in fundraising, making use of material sent to them by World WIZO to provide the basis of cultural events.

For a short time after World War II, membership increased slightly in New Zealand with the settling of a small number of refugees from Nazi occupied countries.

Today, the president of WIZO New Zealand is Lorna Orbel.

Despite inactivity due to the advancing age of its members, WIZO New Zealand has been blessed by its Keshet groups comprised of non-Jewish Zionists, whose participation in WIZO started when they were invited to a WIZO event at a synagogue some 19 years ago. The Keshet group members continue the work started by those they describe as their 'darling WIZO sisters'.

The Hawkes Bay Keshet Group and its sub-branches organize a host of fundraising events throughout the year including auctions, dinners and collections of donations from a support base of church goers. The chairman is Berry Small, who maintains close links with the remaining members of WIZO New Zealand and regularly updates World WIZO with news of their efforts.

## Panama

WIZO Panama was founded between 1926 and 1927 by World WIZO emissary Mrs. Ida Bension. The federation ceased to function in 1937 but in 1941 a new group was formed in Panama City.

During World War II, women gathered to knit sweaters, gloves and socks to send to the soldiers. They also collected money and prepared parcels of clothes and foodstuffs.

Throughout the years, WIZO Panama has presented a variety of events such as concerts, film exhibitions, flower sales, the Purim Ball and the Coronation of the Purim Queen.

Since the early days, the celebration of the Jewish festivals and traditions, identification with Israel, scholarships for outstanding students in Bible studies and Hebrew lessons have all played an important part in the spiritual heart of the federation.

Eight years ago, the 'WIZO Volunteering and Leadership Seminar' was implemented in which students from Jewish schools participate, motivating young people to join WIZO.

Today there are eight groups; major fundraising events include the Rosh Hashanah Bazaar, WIZO Star, Sponsor A Child, the Rebecca Sieff Raffle and the Pesach Sale of Haggadot.

WIZO Panama chaverot are also committed to social assistance in their own country under the name of *Damas Judias Panameñas WIZO*. The federation supports relief work in natural disasters as well as, among others, the Oncology Hospital, the National Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, the State of Israel Public School, the State of Israel Nursery, the Maternity Hospital of the Public Hospital and the Children's Hospital.

In Israel, WIZO Panama supports three WIZO day care centers, two laboratories and a fully equipped cafeteria at the CHW Nahalal School and, in partnership with WIZO Switzerland, the WIZO Gan Va'Nof Youth Village in Petach Tikva where in 2017, WIZO Panama inaugurated the Yad Mordechai Synagogue.



*WIZO Panama members circa 1957*





*WIZO Panama today: (l – r) Licha Behar, Camille Dayan, Estela Faskha, Frida A. Harari, Taly Dery, Vicky Lynn Fidanque, Bety Btsh, Joyce Yohoros, Yolanda Sasson, Delilah Silvera, Raquel Shrem*

## Paraguay

WIZO Paraguay was founded in 1944, with 86 members. The founding president was Mrs. Rosa Furman.

Paraguay was one of the countries that received the largest number of refugees in World War II and the Jewish community assisted them in every way possible.

Throughout its history, WIZO Paraguay has carried out its cultural activities together with the support of non-Jewish circles.

Today, the federation is headed by Rosana Barán.

With a small Jewish community of barely 800, there is currently only one chapter but the group carries out numerous activities annually that attracts the support of the community, particularly the Jerusalem Day Lunch with traditional Jewish and Israeli foods, and the 'Friendship After Office' events. Funds are also raised through the sales of honey for Rosh Hashana, and the federation also participates in the *Comilona Teleton*, a national funding initiative.

WIZO Paraguay organizes cultural events that bring women together in the spirit of unity, Jewish values and Zionism. The federation believes in bringing older and younger members together to honor older members and to assure the continuity of traditions.

## South Africa

In 1932, the Women's Zionist Council of South Africa became affiliated to World WIZO. The founding president was Dr. Hedwig Reinhold. The federation changed its name to WIZO South Africa in 1998.

The federation sponsored its first project in Israel in 1957 – the Mothercraft Training Center in Tel Aviv. Today, WIZO

South Africa sponsors the Neve WIZO foster homes, Ichpat, three WIZO day care centers as well as other unaffiliated projects.

WIZO South Africa has been far-sighted in planning for the next generation since its earliest days, with many former Aviv members taking active leadership roles on the Executive.

The Federation has five centers: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria, as well as community groups in smaller towns.

The numerous cultural and fundraising events at both national and regional levels include fundraising campaigns and award dinners with guest speakers from Israel, and gatherings focusing on Israel, Zionism and women's issues.

Faithful Christian Zionist members and supporters also join the Federation to engage in Israel advocacy and countering the BDS movement. Of note is the Federation's Wheelchairs of Hope Project where Israeli-designed wheelchairs are donated to needy communities, attracting valuable media coverage.

With an eye to the future Junior Aviv member Ahava Tehora is in charge of a group of girls aged 12-18 who meet regularly to organize fundraising events.

Currently the acting presidents of WIZO South Africa are Laurienne Baitz, Lee Joffe and Tamar Lazarus.



*South Africa Women's Zionist Council 1939*



*Participants at the 2018 WIZO South Africa National Conference*

## Spain

WIZO Spain was started in 1933 in Madrid, but activities ceased soon afterwards due to the Spanish Civil War and World War II. The federation resumed in 1949 and was fairly active in Madrid and Barcelona. In 1960, these two cities experienced an influx of Jews from North Africa, where WIZO had been operating clandestinely.

In the 1960s, the chaverot concentrated on Jewish education for their children and held Hebrew classes and Bible Day events for their members.

They held an annual bat mitzvah celebration for their daughters and founded a Jewish kindergarten for children aged 3-6. Another achievement was to organize summer and winter camps for their teenagers.

In 1968 the federation was visited by World WIZO President Raya Jaglom who motivated members to form new groups in Madrid, Barcelona and Malaga, and gave them the incentive to sponsor a day care center.

The Federation was inactive for some years until Chairperson of the World WIZO Executive Professor Rivka Lazovsky visited Spain in 2014 to encourage the federation to renew their activities once again. Professor Lazovsky joined the chaverot in Madrid for their Sponsor A Child event, which officially relaunched the federation; she also met with 15 women who function as the Executive of the federation, each of whom was highly impressive, motivated and committed to the future of WIZO Spain.

Currently, each year the federation organizes a breakfast and one or two gala lunches. Astrid Mizrachi, the president told WIZO Review that although it is very difficult to raise funds and hold activities, each function they hold is very successful.



Guests at a WIZO Madrid Event



Prof Rivka Lazovsky (l) with Astrid Mizrachi 2014

## Sweden

WIZO Sweden was founded in 1931 under the presidency of Mrs. Selma Arnheim. During World War II, Sweden became a refuge for thousands of Jews escaping Nazi-occupied countries. The federation mobilized to assist them, distributing clothing, food and items of furniture.

After liberation, many more refugees arrived from German concentration camps and WIZO was charged with their salvation. Chaverot formed a 'neighborly helpers' rota to ensure continuity of care for the needy. Members took courses in childcare and nutritional cookery to become more proficient in their caregiving. They visited refugee camps and acted as hosts to the new arrivals who, having lost husbands and wives in the Holocaust, were eager to re-marry and start new families. WIZO provided essential household items and attended to the needs of new babies and their mothers and took care of 'special charges': Jewish children from Bergen-Belsen suffering from tuberculosis.

Among the refugees were former WIZO members from other countries who were interested in learning about WIZO developments in Palestine.

WIZO Sweden, always faced with the problem of assimilation in the community, is constantly disseminating Jewish and Zionist information. In the spring of 1974, the federation organized a demonstration on behalf of Soviet Jewry with great success.

Today, despite the depletion of the Jewish community in many areas of Sweden, the federation works hard to attract new members by disseminating Israel advocacy and information on WIZO's vast network of programs in Israel to the wider community, collaborating with non-Jewish organizations to broaden its reach.

The current president is Susanne Sznajderman-Rytz.



WIZO Sweden President Susanne Sznajderman-Rytz and her husband Salomon

# Switzerland

WIZO Switzerland was founded in Zurich in 1927 by Founding President Mrs. Anna Mayer.

During World War II, the federation attended to the urgent needs of refugees in addition to its fundraising for WIZO's work in Eretz Israel. Towards the end of the war, several WIZO chaverot from neighboring countries succeeded in escaping from the Nazis to Switzerland.

With the birth of the State of Israel, WIZO Switzerland entered a new phase, strengthening Jewish culture and identity as well as reaching out to non-Jewish circles for support using educational material produced by World WIZO.

Over the years, 16 WIZO groups were created. In 1957, WIZO joined the Swiss Zionist Federation and became the strongest Zionist body in Switzerland. In 1959, the federation answered World WIZO's plea for sponsorship of the Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village and in 1970, the federation began sponsorship of the Gan VaNof Youth Village as well as 18 WIZO day care centers, two youth clubs and the Ma'alot Tarshiha Music School.

To fulfil its considerable fundraising commitments, WIZO Switzerland organizes a variety of events including grand gala dinners, Sponsor A Child luncheons, bazaars, flea markets, Rosh Hashana flower drives, concerts and dance shows.

Today's president is Eva Wyler. She pays tribute to past presidents throughout the years: Carola Kaufmann, Ada Lichtenstein-Hauser, Berty Half, Blulette Nordmann, Odette Brunschvig, Elly Abraham, Trudy Dreyfus, Ruth Dreyfuss, Lucie Gideon and Anne Argi and the thousands of Swiss volunteers who have contributed to Swiss WIZO's success.



WIZO Switzerland Treasurer (l) Jacqueline Rothschild and President Eva Wyler



WIZO Switzerland Vice Presidents (l) Joelle Kamp and Stephanie Denery-Bernadete

# United Kingdom

In 1918, WIZOuk, formerly *The Federation of Women Zionists (FWZ) of Great Britain and Ireland*, was founded by Rebecca Sieff. Its constitution provided for the setting up of an international Zionist organization and two years later, in 1920, WIZO as a global movement, was born.

During World War II, the FWZ was active in aiding Jewish refugees from Europe and encouraging British Jewish women to contribute to the war effort. Notable during this period is the FWZ's sponsorship of the passage to the UK of a thousand Jewish boys and girls from the German Zionist youth movement and the setting up of a shelter farm in Scotland for 200 children from the *Kindertransport*. The FWZ assisted refugee women in finding work and opened the Balfour Club for Jewish soldiers based in the UK.

With the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, Rebecca Sieff and the World WIZO Executive transferred operations to Israel.

Since its earliest days FWZ (WIZOuk) continues to sponsor the largest amount of WIZO projects, including its flagship project The Rebecca Sieff Centre for the Family in Beit Hakerem, Rainbow House in Haifa, two shelters for abused women, over 100 day care centers, women's centers, the Margaret Gold Music Center and the Margaret Thatcher Center for the family in Sderot.

WIZOuk, fondly known as 'the mother federation' organizes many cultural initiatives to grow awareness of WIZO's work in Israel to promote co-existence projects, in both the UK and in Israel. Of note are The Olive Tree Project, and The Commitment Awards. Major regional and countrywide fundraisers include Jewish Women's Week, Sponsor A Child and Rebecca Sieff Day events. Branches throughout the UK hold regular gatherings appealing to all the generations.

In 2018, WIZOuk celebrated its centenary, electing Ronit

Ribak Madari as chairperson. Ronit, an Aviv graduate, is the first Israeli to head the UK Federation.



1941 Outside 75 Great Russell Street, WIZO Headquarters. Back row, 3rd from left Rebecca Sieff, 5th from left Miriam Sacher. Front row center Fay Grove-Pollack



l – r Sarah Levi, Jill Shaw, Ruth Sotnick, Eden Harel, Esther Mor, Ronit Ribak-Hadari, Michele Vogel, Kineret Munitz, Ilana Metzger

## Uruguay

There was a WIZO group in Uruguay as early as 1933, but it was not until 1941 that WIZO Uruguay was established under the presidency of Mrs. Mania de Baltar. Prior to 1941, WIZO in Uruguay was under the direction of the Osfa WIZO Argentina Federation.

During World War II, our Uruguay chaverot mobilized to help those trapped in Europe. Large-scale campaigns were carried out among Jews and non-Jews to raise funds, and to organize public demonstrations. It was during this time that WIZO in Uruguay rose in stature as large numbers were drawn to its ranks and considerable funds were raised to build the Henrietta Irwell Vocational School for Girls in Haifa, which was opened in 1944.

The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 brought new impetus to the work and numerous educational and cultural events centered around the World WIZO Bible Day publications that attracted much interest and press coverage. The federation concentrated efforts on Jewish education and Hebrew teaching, with a strong Aviv presence.

Under the presidency of Anita Jamitovsky, WIZO Uruguay organized emergency campaigns at the time of Israel's Six Day War with impressive results.

Today, WIZO Uruguay continues to focus on cultural events. The federation actively supports local Uruguayan causes by donations of clothes and household goods.

The current president is Nadine Hakas.



WIZO Uruguay members enjoying a cultural gathering

## USA

After years of strenuous efforts and negotiations by World WIZO President Raya Jaglom with the presidents of the Hadassah organization, the WIZO flag was officially raised in the USA in 1982 and WIZO USA was born under the presidency of Evelyn Sommer.

The first WIZO group in the USA was WIZO Florida founded one year earlier under the chairmanship of Mercedes Ivcher. Further chapters were soon established, including WIZO New York (1982), San Diego, Boston, Chicago, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Atlanta.

Since its inception, WIZO USA has swiftly laid strong foundations in Jewish social circles, joining major US umbrella organizations. WIZO USA Founding President Evelyn Sommer is the long-term WIZO NGO Representative to the United Nations in New York. The federation attracts strong support from major donors for its many and varied high-profile fundraising events and cultural events that have enabled great investment in their sponsored projects. There is active Aviv membership across its branches since the first Aviv group in America was launched under the name of 'Yonit' in 1983, comprising members originating from many Latin American countries.

Today, WIZO USA has three major branches, Miami chaired by Lillian Tabacnic, New York chaired by Lisa Ohebshalom and Los Angeles chaired by Gina Raphael. The WIZO USA Federation's co-presidents are Judit Groisman and Mireille Manocherian.

The Aviv Representatives to the World WIZO Executive are

currently Rachel Shnay from WIZO New York and Shena Dominitz-Falic from WIZO Florida.

WIZO USA sponsors a wide range of social welfare and women's empowerment programs as well as several day care centers. The jewel in the federation's crown is undoubtedly the WIZO Nir Ha'Emek Youth Village which has been admirably invested under the joint sponsorship of WIZO USA and WIZO Argentina.



WIZO USA leaders at the 2019 National Conference

## Venezuela

WIZO Venezuela was established as a federation in 1945 with Reina Attias as its founding president. Prior to this, two separate WIZO groups operated, in Maracaibo and in Caracas.

Since its earliest days, the federation's activities centered on Jewish history and education. In the 1970s WIZO Venezuela had some 2,000 members organized in eight groups, including many Aviv members, who planned cultural events around Jewish holidays, significant dates in the Israeli calendar as well as fund raising activities such as Sponsor A Child.

A tradition upheld for almost 40 years is the communal Bat Mitzvah. For six months prior to the ceremony, WIZO volunteers prepare the girls in all aspects of Jewish values and culture and the communal ceremonies are both eagerly awaited and well-attended.

In recent years, due to political upheaval and economic unrest, WIZO Venezuela has scaled back on fundraising. Nevertheless, the federation remains active, fulfilling an active role within the community. The president of WIZO Venezuela is Ena Rotkopf.



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*Tova Ben-Dov  
Hon. Life President  
World WIZO*



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*Isaac y Alegre Smeke  
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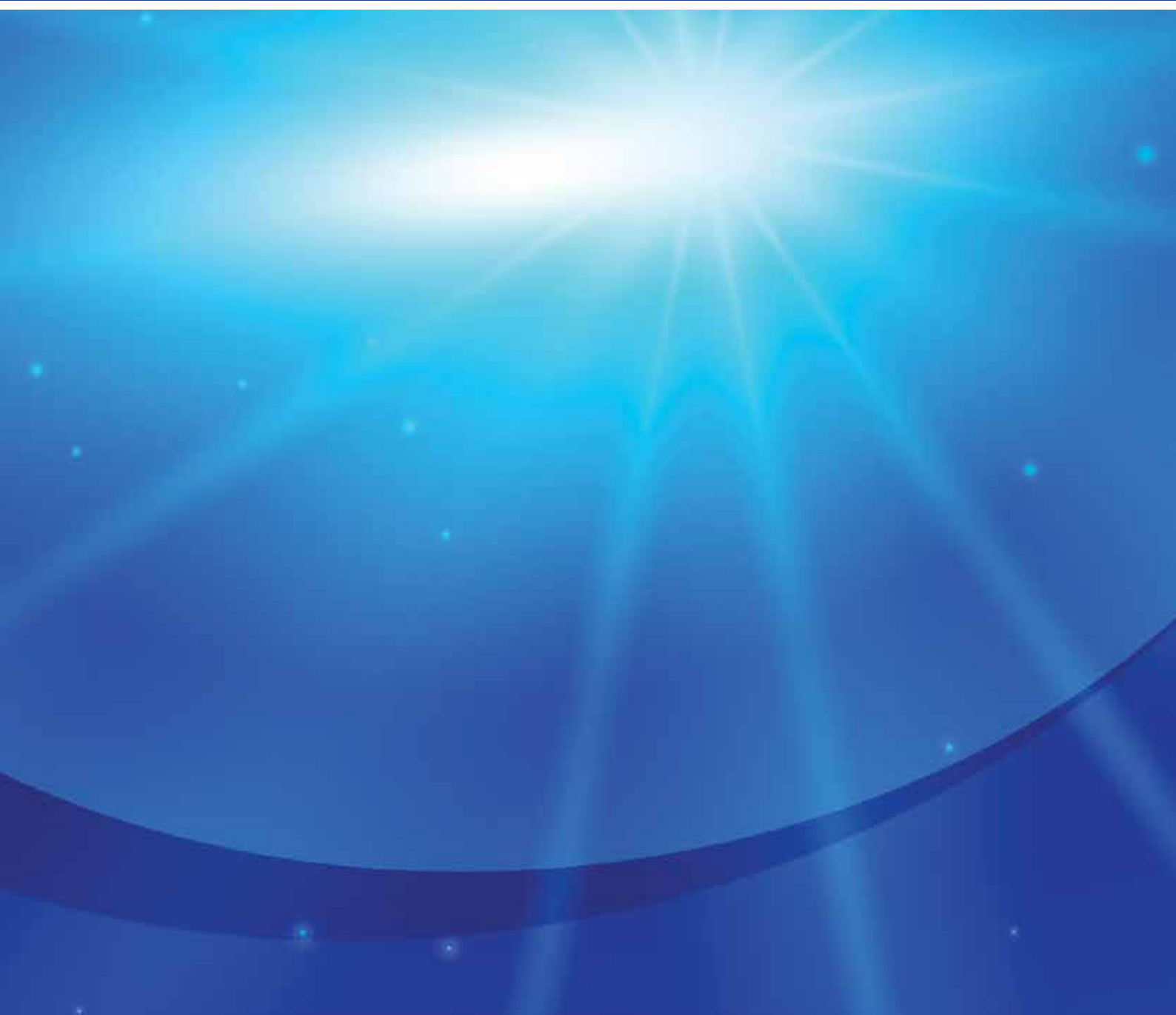
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WHO LAID THE FOUNDATIONS OF WORLD WIZO





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For 100 years of devoted service  
to the Jewish people and the State of Israel*





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*Jerusalem*



*are delighted to wish a huge "Mazeltov" to the wonderful  
women of WIZO on the occasion of this extraordinary  
milestone*



*Your vision, commitment, and inspiration has paved  
the way for the miracle that is  
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Commercial department

# They Came from the Four Corners of the Earth



*WIZO nurses assisting mothers and children off the boat as British soldiers look on*

**“And I will bring them out from the people and gather them from the countries and will bring them into their own land...” Ezekiel XXIV, 13**

The words “WIZO” and “Aliyah” have been linked since the organization’s founding a century ago. Since its inception, WIZO has played a major role in the absorption of Jewish immigrants from around the globe, especially youth, with a special focus on providing them with vital skills and vocations to thrive in Israel.

At the founding meeting of WIZO in 1920, extensive discussions were held about various aspects of the lives of women and children in Palestine, and decisions and plans were put in place to advance their welfare and provide training and vocational courses for expected influxes of immigrants. As

early as 1925, in order to give Yemenite women immigrants the means to support themselves, the Shani Enterprises for the development of Yemenite handicrafts was set up.

## Youth Aliyah

Youth Aliyah was launched in 1934 by Recha Freier, and by 1979 it had helped more than 120,000 children from Europe and North Africa. WIZO’s training farms, agricultural schools and later its vocational schools were established in order to provide a home and an educational center where young girls newly arrived from Europe could be



Immigrants disembarking at Haifa

trained and prepared for a constructive life in pioneering Palestine. In Germany in the 1930s, WIZO was instrumental in providing immigration certificates to many girls, and soon after, as the situation in Central Europe deteriorated, it opened the doors of its schools to boys as well. It also adapted its curricula, teaching and psychological services to the needs of the young immigrants, and gradually introduced additional languages of study in order to facilitate their integration.

## Decisive WIZO role

Recha Freier herself was the first to acknowledge the decisive role of WIZO and its first president, Rebecca Sieff, in the launching and achievements of Youth Aliyah, as she wrote in her book, *“Let the Children Come,”* at the beginning of 1932. She had approached the Zionist leaders in Germany to help her get some Jewish youths out of the country. The youths had been fired from their jobs because they were Jewish, but the leaders of the community laughed at her because they could not believe the danger was real.

Freier was also turned away by Henrietta Szold, but she did not despair. She appealed to WIZO in England and met with a ready response. *“The members of the Central Committee of WIZO in England were in favour of a scheme for Youth Aliyah, as we in Berlin wished to carry it out, and this was due to the influence of the inspired and inspiring personality of Rebecca Sieff, with her deep and sure instinct for the good of her people...”*

In 1938 when the German authorities were still allowing Jews

to emigrate, Recha Freier came to England to plead for a thousand immigration certificates for youths in the Hehalutz movement in Germany. The British officials refused, and again she turned to Rebecca Sieff *“who never disappointed me if the cause was a great one.”*

Rebecca Sieff put up a terrible fight with half a dozen ministries and other official bodies, refusing to take no for an answer. Finally she wore them down, and within a few weeks the thousand youngsters landed on the shores of England, and eventually all of them made their way to Palestine.

By 1940 Youth Aliyah had brought 6,270 boys and girls, 15 to 17 years of age to Palestine, and secured their education and training in agriculture. By 1940, 3,200 WIZO graduates, 17 to 22 years old, hailing from Central and Eastern Europe, had become absorbed in the life of Palestine as farmers' wives, agricultural workers, instructresses, housewives, kitchen workers, and children's nurses.

## After the War

With the end of the Second World War, another 'battle' began – to persuade the British to allow the refugees from war-torn Europe to immigrate to Israel. Indeed, the following was a resolution of the WIZO Executive Conference held in 1945 in Palestine:

*“We identify ourselves with the determination of the Yishuv to defy all attempts to deprive our brothers and sisters who have succeeded in breaking through the stranglehold of Europe of the possibility to attain their one desire and hope – to restart life in Eretz Israel.”*

Illegal boats from Europe plied the Mediterranean Sea attempting to break the British blockade. Many succeeded, reaching the shores of Israel at night, where members of the Haganah and WIZO nurses were waiting to help the immigrants off the boats and whisk them away to safety.

In the closing session of the WIZO conference in Basel in 1946, Hadassah Samuel, Chairman of the Palestine Executive said that, *“in the past seven years, 100,000 new immigrants have arrived in Palestine and 70 new settlements have been created. These new immigrants differ from the pre-war immigrants, having had no previous training, some are older and broken in health and spirit. ....WIZO has to constantly adapt its institutions and services to the new conditions. ....the care of women and children in the detention camps now form part of WIZO's program, as well as WIZO women going out as emissaries to the DP camps. Whatever other organizations might do, it will always be WIZO's task to see that the food and beds are there for our Olim when they arrive.”*

## Detention camps

The detention camps Mrs Samuel referred to in the above statement were camps set up by the British Mandate authorities to temporarily house illegal immigrants.

One such detention camp was at Atlit in the north of Israel, where WIZO nurses set up a “WIZO Hut” to care for babies and young children. There was very little equipment and general basic necessities provided for the newcomers and this was where WIZO stepped in. A vivid

portrayal of WIZO's work in this camp is described in the WIZO Readers Digest of November 1945. *"Apart from providing clean white cots with mosquito nets, bath tubs, treatment tables and cupboards stocked with diapers baby suits and all other necessities, we had to run a clothing drive among our friends in Haifa as some of the children were simply dressed in rags, including one six year old who had been in Buchenwald for four years of his short life."*

end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century over one million former Soviet Jews had arrived in Israel.

In November 1984 in Operation Moses and in 1991 Operation Solomon, the Israeli government brought over 20,000 new immigrants from Ethiopia to a new life in the Holy Land.

WIZO branches throughout Israel where both the Russian and Ethiopian immigrants settled, organized and

Aside from activities specifically held for the new immigrants, there was always a sympathetic ear and helping WIZO hand to assist immigrants with problems and challenges of living in a new country, and this continues today.

## The Na'aleh program

Today WIZO's immigrant absorption activity in its schools is done through the *Na'aleh* program.

*Na'aleh* (a Hebrew acronym for "Youth Making Aliyah Ahead of Parents") is a joint project of the Jewish Agency and Israel's Ministry of Education that was established in 1992. The program provides unaccompanied Jewish high-school students from around the world the chance to start or complete their high school education in Israel, with the goal of having them stay in Israel after school, join the IDF and make Aliyah.

Every year, hundreds of teens from all over the world come to study in Israel and participate in the *Na'aleh* program, which gives them all they need to integrate and succeed as Israeli citizens.

*Na'aleh* programs exist at the Nahalal and Hadassim WIZO youth villages and this school year, for the first time, a program opened at WIZO Nachlat Yehuda Youth Village with over two dozen Jewish students from the FSU living and studying on the campus.

Whether it is help with the language, vocational training, support, assistance, or any of the other myriad of challenges new immigrants face with making a new home in Israel, WIZO, as it has been for a century, is there. Today's new immigrants are Israel's future.

*Ethiopian immigrants celebrate their bar/bat mitzvahs at the WIZO Afula Community Center 2017*



## WIZO and Aliyah in the State of Israel

In 1950, The Law of Return was passed, guaranteeing every Jew around the world the right to return to the Jewish homeland. Between 1948 and 1952, 648,000 Jews immigrated from Eastern Europe, mainly Holocaust survivors, and from North Africa, Yemen and the Middle East, doubling the population of the young state.

In the 1950s WIZO began massive work with new immigrants in the *ma'abarot* (transit camps), absorbing children into schools and youth villages, hosting families in the homes of WIZO chaverot, raising funds and providing educational and welfare services.

## Soviet and Ethiopian Aliyah

Throughout the decades, WIZO has assisted immigrants from all countries, the most prominent in recent years being the influx of immigrants from Ethiopia and the Former Soviet Union.

The early 1970s witnessed the first large wave of Soviet Jewish immigration, marking the success of the "Let My People Go" campaign - a campaign the WIZO federations worldwide were especially active in. The Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, and the second mass wave of Jews from the former Soviet Union continued. By the

ran numerous projects to help Israel's newest immigrants, including clothing drives, social and cultural events, help with Hebrew and children's schoolwork.

## Western immigration

There were also tens of thousands of immigrants who came from Western Europe, USA, Canada, South Africa and Australia. Many of the women who came from these countries had already been active in WIZO in their countries of origin, and were happy to find WIZO groups 'who spoke their language' in many WIZO branches. There was an Aliyah Department in World WIZO for some years, but eventually this activity was transferred to WIZO Israel and became the Immigrant Absorption Department.



*Na'aleh students at a WIZO event*

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*its blessed work and activities*  
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to support World WIZO  
for the next 100 years.

Mazal Tov!



## MEXICO

מזל טוב



100 anniversary  
it's TIME to celebrate

the JOYS of TODAY the memories of yesterday  
and the hopes of TOMORROW.



The Executive and Chaverot of WIZO Holland congratulate World WIZO and global WIZO leaders, volunteers and workers on this milestone.

Let's continue our good work together!



Mazel Tov to our beloved WIZO on 100 years of dedication to the citizens of Israel.

We are proud to support you.

Jose and Bahie Zaga  
Mexico

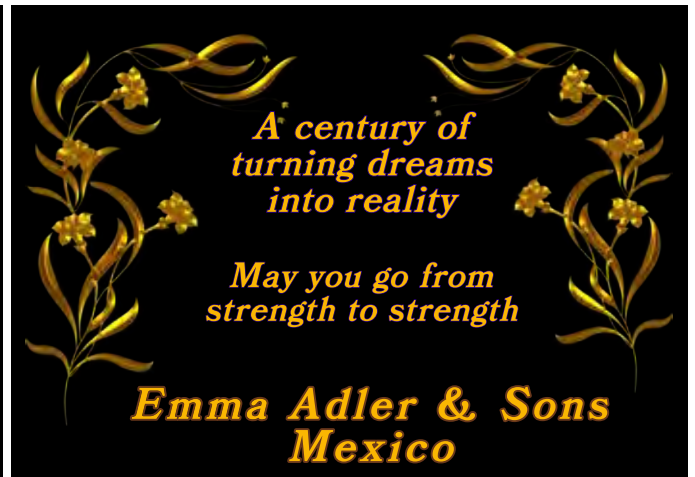


*Mazel Tov to our beloved World WIZO*

**100 Years of Excellence**

*May your future be forever golden*

JACOBO & RACKEL ALFILLE  
MEXICO



*A century of turning dreams into reality*

*May you go from strength to strength*

**Emma Adler & Sons  
Mexico**

*As WIZO celebrates 100 years, we thank our federations and partners for their unwavering support.*



*We also pay tribute to the endeavors of our past leaders in whose footsteps we are all proud to walk.*

**The World WIZO Executive**





# WIZO France



## Proud to be a WIZO woman

Standing strong and fighting at your side for our wonderful WIZO projects

*In the footsteps of WIZO France's past Presidents Ellen Djian, Gilberte Djian, Odette Kurtz, Nora Gaillaud, Michèle Berenfus, Nathalie Cohen-Beizermann and Joëlle Lezmi, with the leadership of Diana-Paola Lévy*

**Proud** to belong to an organization created back to 1920 by visionary women who contributed to the Israeli miracle

**Proud** to contribute to the success of its 800 institutions and educational programs

**Proud** to raise funds to help children thrive in our schools and daycare centers

**Proud** to support the development of therapeutic programs for families suffering from trauma

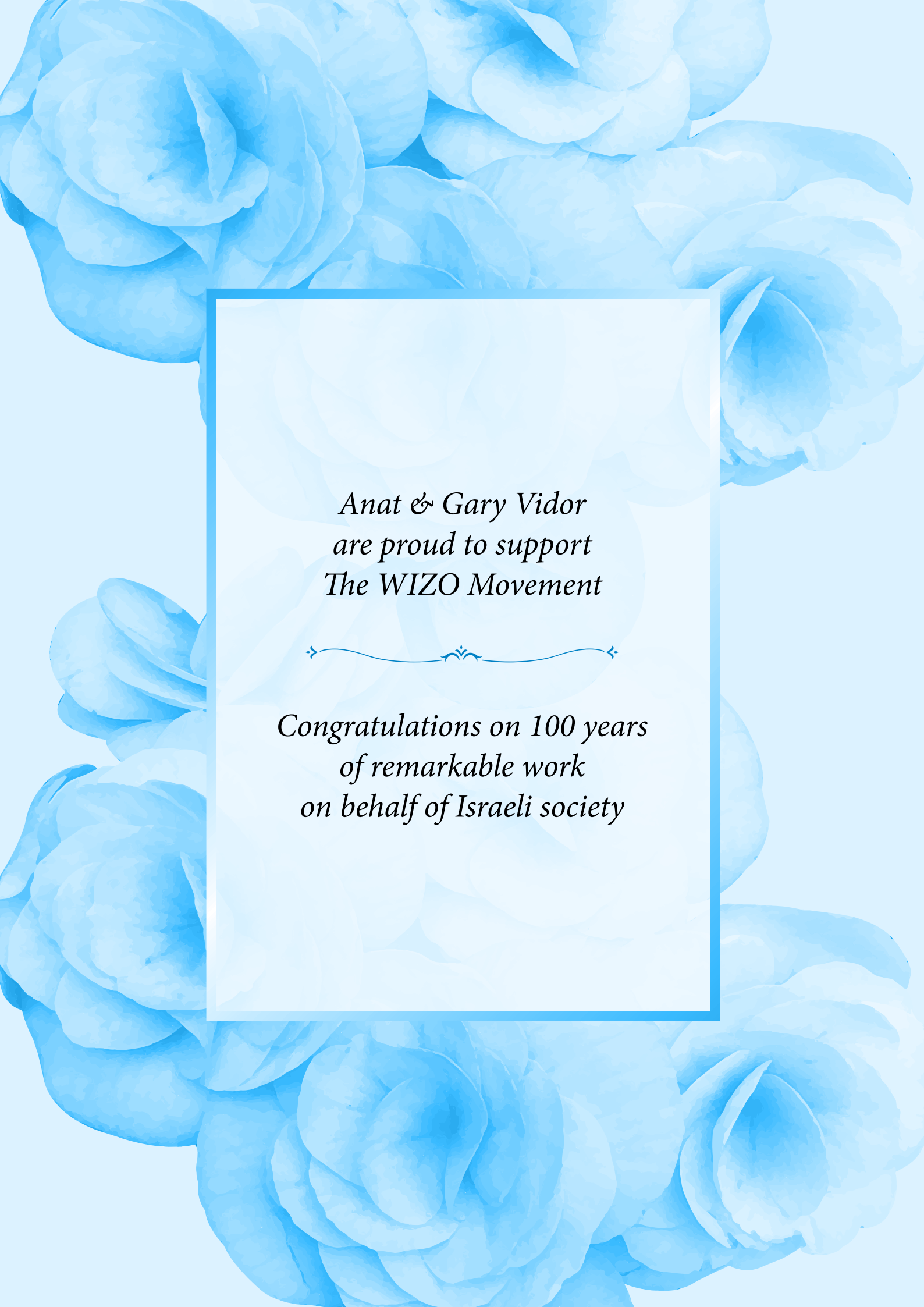
**Proud** to advocate for the status of women

**Proud** to be one of the 250,000 volunteers around the world working for WIZO every day

[wizofrance@wizo.fr](mailto:wizofrance@wizo.fr)



6000 French supporters from 22 to 106 praise WIZO and celebrate their 100 years of achievements.



*Anat & Gary Vidor  
are proud to support  
The WIZO Movement*



*Congratulations on 100 years  
of remarkable work  
on behalf of Israeli society*

## **A SALUTE TO WIZO ON ITS CENTENNIAL**

This landmark anniversary celebrates one hundred years of impact on Israeli society from the legacy of the earliest WIZO pioneers who prepared the ground for the following generations to continue to build for the benefit of Israeli society.

It is with a deep appreciation for the rich WIZO history that we strive harder to answer every challenge now and in the future. The importance of WIZO on Israel is incalculable. Its impact is evidenced in the achievements of the people and the great contribution that Israel makes to the wider world.

As we enter our second century, WIZO will continue to build on its history and its achievements to turn the obstacles of today into opportunities for tomorrow.

I applaud all those who share the WIZO vision. Every volunteer, every supporter, every donor, every worker, every caregiver, and every educator plays an integral role in our mission.

**WIZO. DOING WHAT MATTERS**



*Anita Friedman*

WIZO USA joins World WIZO

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Celebrating 100 years of commitment to the  
children, women and families of Israel



May we continue to go from strength to strength

Co-Presidents

Judit Groisman & Mireille Manocherian

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Honorary Life Presidents

Jana Falic & Gail Perl

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Founding Presidents

Mercedes Ivcher & Evelyn Sommer

WIZO USA Executive Board