

Colin Gee - President 1984-1986

I was president of the shule from 1984 to 1986 when our community was approximately 200 families strong.

The executive at that time with myself were Sidney Cohen, Charles Lewis, Jonathon Avery Gee and Harvey Rosenfield and our monthly meetings were held in my dining room (pic 1), and our sometimes "heated discussions" had a habit of continuing long past midnight!

Reverend Tann had served our community almost since its inception; however it was generally felt that the community now needed a new religious direction, and it was during my presidency that he departed for pastures new.

After a short period of being without a Rabbi, through the good offices of Dayan Ehrentreu, Joel and Ruthie Portnoy came to see us with a view to taking the helm as our new Rabbi and Rebbetzen, and again after various meetings at my house and a "trial shabbaton", it gave me great pleasure to offer him the position. The minister's old house on Delahays Drive was sold and a new property at 75 High Elm Road was purchased, which is now one of the main focal points of Jewish communal life in Hale.

Rabbi Dov Hickson was then head of the cheder, and a re organisation was instigated together with Aviva Salem to bring it up to the standards required.



photo 1



photo 2

During this period, myself and the vice president (and our respective wives) began the unenviable yearly task of personally allocating seating for the Yamin Tovim in shule to each and every member, and there were many fraught moments during the lead up to the high holidays.

Hale Community Youth was very active socially at this time and also a major fund raiser for the shule, a highlight being in 1985 a dinner and dance ball and fashion show at The Midland Hotel with The Lord and Lady Mayor as guests of honour (pic2) with Bernard Manning as the star turn, and a great time was had by all.