

Oxford Ramallah Friendship Association

Registered Charity Number: 1155620

Annual Report from April 2017 to March 2018



ORFA AGM Tuesday 20th November 2018 6pm Town Hall St Aldates Oxford

Cover picture from the Westgate Cultural Meridian panels by Adam Dant
www.westgateoxford.co.uk

Information about ORFA:

Patrons: Iain Chalmers, Mahmoud Hawari, Karma Nabulsi, Sir Stephen Sedley, Avi Shlaim and Yasmin Sidhwa.

Trustees: Barbara Schofield (Treasurer), Tony Richardson (Chair), Joe Carter.

Meetings: Monthly – every third Tuesday of the month 6.00 pm to 7.30pm at Oxford Town Hall. Subgroups work together on projects.

Contact: Via the website, email: orfa_info@yahoo.co.uk

Oxford Ramallah Friendship Association has been working since 2003, and became a registered charity on 4th February 2014.

Thank you to all our friends and contacts in Palestine who continue to support our friendship link and show us immense hospitality when we visit. And a big thank you **to all** the many individuals and groups in Oxford who help in so many ways to ensure that our work continues.



This Annual Report covers the period up to March 2018. Events after this date will appear in next year's Annual Report eg. Fundraiser April 2018 and Dabke visit Summer 2018.

Mazin Qumsiyeh in Oxford October 2017

This a copy of the report from the website. This was a national tour that was organised by ORFA in conjunction with other national groups. Mazin's visit represented our major project for 2017. (See further information after this report.)

On his first arriving in Oxford on the 23rd October a meal was held by Mazin's hosts with local activists and a group of Gaza students who had been to Brookes University on their Gaza bursary programme.

On the 24th he went to Wytham Woods, where several projects on birds, bees etc have been ongoing for many years. He then met the staff of the Oxford Natural History Museum, and hopefully joint projects might arise. Likewise, with his meeting with staff at the Oxford Botanic Garden (the oldest in the UK).

He then headed off to London, and then Leeds, Chesterfield and Walsall.

On his return to Oxford, on the 28th, he had a tour of Brookes University, and then we held the main Oxford public meeting in the West Oxford Community Centre. This was sponsored by ORFA and Oxford Palestine Solidarity Campaign.



There were about 100 people present who listened to Mazin's hour long talk. This started off with the British Empire's long preparation for Balfour, and its support for the earliest Zionist colonies. He then dealt with the Balfour Declaration itself, and how the British helped build the foundations of a new state, giving land and protection to the

Zionists under High Commissioner Herbert Samuel. He showed how in the present every action of Palestinians was resistance through their existence. He wound up by saying there are two threats to the human race's existence, that is nuclear war, and climate change - and the Palestinian struggle must include saving the planet.

The audience was clearly impressed and many stayed for the food, music - Chris and Delay of Delnavaz - and discussion with Mazin.

On Sunday Mazin travelled to Waltham Forest.

On Nov. 1st Mazin returned to Oxford. He had a meeting in Oxfam, which was streamed to other bases, and a meeting with the biodiversity, ecosystems and conservation research cluster group in Oxford University.



In the evening was the main meeting in the University, in St Antony's College. The meeting, titled 'Sharing the Land of Canaan', was sponsored by ORFA, and Friends of Bir Zeit University (Fobzu), and with the financial support of 'Palestine Unlocked' About 80 people attended. As well as showing a short film about the Palestine Museum of Natural History, Mazin talked about the need for one state, not a state of one religion, a state where all had equal rights. Human societies, like all things in nature, only survive with diversity. He covered the Balfour Anniversary, as he did at all his meetings.



This was again well received. Between the two Oxford Meetings £1000 was raised to support the work of the Palestine Museum of Natural History, where Mazin is the director.

Professor

Mazin Oumsiveh



Visits (self funded) to Palestine - Palestine Marathon and BPTFN Conference

Two of our members participated in the Palestine Marathon in Bethlehem and raised £309 to support ORFA's work. This year's edition supported freedom of movement and promoted Palestinian case among the international athletes. The marathon took place on March 23rd 2018 and there were over 7000 people taking part, mostly Palestinian families and athletes.



During this trip to Palestine we visited the Palestinian Museum of Natural History to further develop links between ORFA and Mazin Qumsiyeh, the director of the PMNH and his Team. During this visit we learnt a lot about the biodiversity in Palestine and the influence of the current political situation on nature. Mazin's team gave us a very informative tour explaining the challenges and improvements made thanks to donations from supporters.

We also visited the Al Amari refugee camp in Ramallah to discuss the upcoming visit of Dabke youth dancers who were coming to Oxford in June 2018. We met the President of the Women's Centre and learned about its work and current projects and classes, offering an opportunity to achieve new skills to women living in the camp. We discussed the upcoming visit with children taking part in activities organised by Children Centre in the camp.

British Palestine Friendship and Twinning Network - Conference - Ramallah - 2017 with about 100 attendees, started with speakers:

Hanan Al Hroub, Global Teacher of the year 2016. Followed by a discussion on how twinning works. There was a Right To Education speaker from Bir Zeit.

Then Mohammed Kobari from the British Council.

It concluded with a discussion on groups cooperating together.

TR went with the Walsall delegation to the Palestine Museum of Natural history.

BPFTN AGM Liverpool 10th February 2018

This was a reporting Conference on Activities. We dealt with normal business of electing officers etc.

We also had reports on Prisoner campaign, with speaker Kiri Tunks from the Teachers union.

We also had a report on trade with Palestine.

Financial Report

Fundraising:

We have raised some funds and can begin considering future projects. A big thank you and well done to Inez and Aleksandra who ran the marathon in Bethlem, and fundraised for ORFA. Other fundraising this year was largely through individuals' donations to our work: £1309 (£1089 through Localgiving). We were also supported by donations from Palestine Unlocked (£2218) and Faringdon Peace Group (£200) as contributions towards our two big projects. We fundraised £1336 at Mazin Qumsiyeh's two lectures to support the work of the Palestine Natural History Museum.

Fundraising for projects needs to be ongoing. Our charitable status means that we can claim gift aid on donations as appropriate. We have an established Localgiving account and when contributions are made through this account (see website) gift aid is managed by them.

Current/Ongoing Work:

Through the successful 2016 group visit we were able to identify two projects with our Palestinian partners: visit by Mazin Qumsiyeh in October/November 2017 (completed) and Dabke Dance Youth Group visit to Oxford June/July 2018 now completed and to be reported in next Annual Report. (Website contains report of visit.)

Future project that has been requested is to fund the renovation of the toilets that adjoin the yoga studio in the Youth Centre in Al Amari Refugee Camp. (see Website).

ORFA Accounts:

Financial period start: 02 April 2017

Financial period end: 01 April 2018

Income and expenditure

Carried forward: £3746.82

Income: £5063.85

Spending: £2396.02

Total (balance) on 1 April 2018: £6414.65

Main points:

1. Most donations are received now through the Localgiving (gift aid automatically processed): **£1089.05** in 2017/18.
2. Donations were received by ORFA to specifically support the visit of Mazin Qumsiyeh (2017) and the visit of Dabke Dance Youth Group (2018).
3. Charity Commission Annual Return 2017 has been submitted in October 2018 for the financial year shown here.

DATE		CREDIT	DEBIT	BALANCE
29/03/2017	Donation through localgiving	9.4		3746.82
12/04/2017	Donation through localgiving	61.05		3807.87
04/05/2017	Donation through localgiving	9.4		3817.27
10/05/2017	Donation through localgiving	20.15		3837.42
17/05/2017	Donation through localgiving	61.05		3898.47
26/05/2017	Donation from T R	200		4098.47
01/06/2017	Donation through localgiving	27.18		4125.65
14/06/2017	Donation through localgiving	61.05		4186.7
28/06/2017	Donation through localgiving	24.81		4211.51
05/07/2017	Sale of purses at ORFA stall (6.06.17 Galilee Quartet concert)	20		4231.51
11/07/2017	Cheque to N M to pay for Mazin Qumsiyeh's flight tickets		661	3570.51
12/07/2017	Donation through localgiving	51.65		3622.16
19/07/2017	Donation through localgiving	17.78		3639.94
02/08/2017	Donation through localgiving	9.4		3649.34
16/08/2017	Donation through localgiving	51.65		3700.99
23/08/2017	Donation through localgiving	15.41		3716.4
31/08/2017	Donation through localgiving	9.4		3725.8
13/09/2017	Donation through localgiving	67.06		3792.86
05/10/2017	Cheque to WOCA (venue for Mazin's talk on 28.10.17)		120.75	3672.11
11/10/2017	Donation through localgiving	62.31		3734.42
18/10/2017	Donation through localgiving	42.25		3776.67
06/11/2017	Membership Localgiving		96	3680.67
10/11/2017	Mazin Qumsiyeh's lecture - donations	465.5		4146.17
10/11/2017	Mazin Qumsiyeh's lecture - donations	871.2		5017.37
15/11/2017	Donation through localgiving	42.25		5059.62
17/11/2017	Invoice 1 for Mazin Q.'s books		396.81	4662.81
17/11/2017	Invoice 2 for Mazin Q.'s books		68.46	4594.35
23/11/2017	Palestine Unlocked - Mazin's visit's expenses coverage	1018.1		5612.45
29/11/2017	ORFA donation for Palestine Natural History Museum		1023	4589.45
30/11/2017	Faringdon Peace Group - contribution towards Dabke Dance Group visit	200		4789.45
06/12/2017	Donation through localgiving	22.54		4811.99
13/12/2017	Donation through localgiving	42.25		4854.24
20/12/2017	Palestine Twinning Network membership		30	4824.24
21/12/2017	Donation through localgiving	10.67		4834.91
17/01/2018	Donation through localgiving	42.25		4877.16
14/02/2018	Donation through localgiving	63.59		4940.75
21/02/2018	Donation through localgiving	23.4		4964.15
26/02/2018	Palestine Unlocked - contribution towards Dabke Dance Group visit	1200		6164.15
14/03/2018	Donation through localgiving	115.17		6279.32
21/03/2018	Donation through localgiving	88.63		6367.95
28/03/2018	Donation through localgiving	46.7		6414.65

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Agenda for AGM 20 November 2018 6pm

1. Financial Report (Treasurer and Trustees)
2. Distribution of Annual report and website updating
3. Current work
4. Ideas, future plans and fundraising.

+Appendix to ORFA Annual Report 2017/2018

Through the Charity Commission ORFA charity is classified as:

- Working in the area of education and training, arts/culture/heritage, human rights/religious or racial harmony or diversity.
- Working with the general public/mankind.

ORFA's Charitable Objects are copied below as adopted: (CONSTITUTION ADOPTED 18 OCT 2011 AS AMENDED ON 19/11/2013)

TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS (AS SET OUT IN THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT UNITED NATIONS CONVENTIONS AND DECLARATIONS) BY ALL OR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

- RAISING AWARENESS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE ISRAELI - PALESTINIAN CONFLICT IN GENERAL;
- RESEARCHING AND MONITORING ABUSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INFRINGEMENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW;
- EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW;
- PROMOTING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW;
- WORKING TO ELIMINATE ABUSES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND INFRINGEMENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW;
- WORKING TO OBTAIN AND PROMOTE REDRESS FOR THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND THEIR FAMILIES AND INFRINGEMENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW.
- PROVIDING SUPPORT TO AND RELIEVING NEED AMONG THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES AND INFRINGEMENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW AND THEIR FAMILIES.
- 2. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE UK AND PALESTINE, IN PARTICULAR IN RAMALLAH AND ITS ENVIRONS BY ALL OR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MEANS:
 - TO PROVIDE EXTRA-CURRICULAR EDUCATION TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE, INHABITANTS AND REFUGEES;
 - TO FOCUS ON IMPROVING THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN NEED, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH AND REFUGEES.
 - TO ASSIST IN PROVIDING DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY EDUCATIONAL TEACHING MATERIAL, BOOKS AND TOOLS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE EDUCATION OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUTH AND REFUGEES.
 - TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY BASED EDUCATION THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS AND RESOURCES.
 - TO HELP THE COMMUNITY BUILD SUSTAINABLE AND LOCALLY MANAGED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES.
 - TO BRING PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY BASED PROJECTS TO OXFORD TO FURTHER THEIR EDUCATION IN A WAY THAT IMPROVES THEIR SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITIES AT HOME AND ABROAD.
 - TO PRESENT MATERIAL IN VARIOUS FORMS TO EDUCATE PEOPLE IN OXFORD ABOUT THE CULTURE AND ORDINARY LIVES OF THE PEOPLE OF RAMALLAH.
 - TO SEND GROUPS AND DELEGATIONS FROM OXFORD TO PALESTINE AND IN PARTICULAR TO RAMALLAH AND ITS ENVIRONS TO IMPROVE THEIR AWARENESS AND TO BUILD COMMUNITY BASED / INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS BETWEEN OXFORD AND RAMALLAH.



