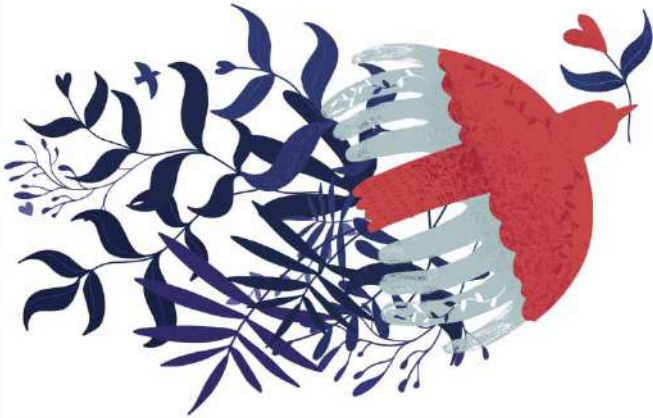


ACTION FOR POST-SOVIET JEWRY



50 Years of
ACTION

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**Celebrating
50 Years of
Action for
Post-Soviet Jewry**

Executive Director



Dear Friends,

We are so deeply grateful to welcome you to Action for Post-Soviet Jewry's 50th Anniversary Celebration.

This event is a tribute to five decades of compassion, commitment, and community. Thank you to everyone who has supported this work, from the beginning through today. You have carried forward a mission of justice, dignity, and human connection.

We gather today not only in celebration but also in reflection. We cannot ignore the pain of this moment—the ongoing war in Ukraine, the grief, displacement, and fear so many are living through. And yet, in the face of heartbreak, we also witness extraordinary resilience, generosity, and love. This community continues to show up—for one another and for those most in need.

A heartfelt thank you to our Honorees, whose courage and dedication have shaped and inspired this work across generations. You remind us why we do what we do—and why we must continue.

To Ella Goncharova and the Action for Ukraine community, thank you for your steadfast partnership. To the Boards of Action for Post-Soviet Jewry and Action for Ukraine, thank you for your vision and leadership.

To our tireless event committee—Barbara Anatolov, Doris Gordon, and Tatyana Goldwyn—your care, creativity, and many hours of work made today possible.

To the many volunteers who stepped in to help, and to our generous donors who have given financially, emotionally, and in spirit—this moment belongs to you.

Please enjoy the interactive museum walk—an immersive experience that brings to life our shared story, including rarely seen photos, letters, and voices from the archive. We are incredibly thankful to our archival partners, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center and SJMAP, for preserving and honoring this powerful history.

We also hold in our hearts the memory of those no longer with us—whose presence, passion, and dedication continue to guide us. Their legacy lives on in the work we carry forward today.

Dreamers, doers, and defenders of dignity built this organization. As we mark 50 years, we honor the past while leaning into the future, with the same grassroots and entrepreneurial spirit that fueled this work since the beginning. We are here today because of those who came before us, and we move forward to continue their work in making the world a better place.

This celebration is just one moment in a much larger story. We invite you to continue walking with us—as a donor, a volunteer, a listener, a partner, a friend.

With deep appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Kardon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Debbie

Debbie Kardon
Executive Director
Action for Post-Soviet Jewry

ACTION
FOR POST-SOVIET
JEWRY

President, Board of Directors

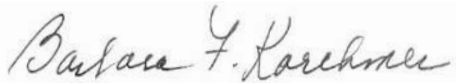
Welcome, and thank you for being here to celebrate 50 years of Action for Post-Soviet Jewry.

It is a true honor to serve as board president during this milestone year—and a deeply humbling experience to be recognized tonight. This moment belongs to all of us: the dedicated board members past and present, the generous donors and volunteers, and the incredible staff whose compassion and commitment make our work possible every day.

A special thank you to our Executive Director, whose leadership continues to guide us with heart and vision.

Together, we've built a powerful legacy rooted in justice, dignity, and care. And while we take this moment to celebrate, we know there is still much work ahead. I look forward to continuing this important journey with all of you—because the people we serve are counting on us.

With appreciation,



Barbara Karchmer
President, Board of Directors

Event Co-Chairs

Welcome to Action for Post-Soviet Jewry's 50th Anniversary Celebration!

It is an absolute joy to gather with all of you—supporters, friends, and partners from across the years—as we mark this extraordinary milestone. As event chairs, we've had the privilege of seeing this celebration come to life, and we're so glad you're here to experience it with us.

Today is a tribute to the power of dedication, memory, and community. We celebrate the stories that have brought us together and honor the legacy of those who helped shape Action's mission over the past five decades. This morning, we hope you'll reconnect with old friends, discover something new, and feel inspired by the impact you've helped make possible.

We especially thank Tanya Goldwyn, who chairs the food and decorations committee. Thank you for joining us, and thank you for being part of Action's story.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Barbara Anatolev and Doris Gordon
Event Co-Chairs

Program



Welcome

Debbie Kardon

Remembrance

Rabbi Jim Morgan

Honoree Presentations

Founders

Robert Gordon, Judy Patkin

Supporters

Barbara Karchmer
Marlene & David Bohn

Partner Organizations

The Rashi School
Combined Jewish Philanthropies

Action for Ukraine

A video message from Rabbi Kaminetsky

Introduction of Zelig Brez

Live stream greetings

Ella Goncharova and
friends in Ukraine

Conclusion

Debbie Kardon

Honoring Our Legacy



Robert Gordon, Founder

I have been involved in both business and human rights advocacy for much of my life. My professional career has centered around the convenience store and commercial real estate industries, while my passion for activism has been deeply rooted in the Soviet Jewry movement.

In 1974 I founded Action for Soviet Jewry, Inc., an organization dedicated to assisting Jews trapped in the Soviet Union. I served as its first President from 1974 to 1978 and remained a board member until 2025, later taking on the role of Board Member Emeritus. Additionally, I led the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

The Soviet Jewry Movement Archives Project, which I recently founded, is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the grassroots Soviet Jewry Movement. This initiative ensures that the stories of refuseniks, activists, and organizations are documented and accessible for future generations. By collecting and sharing personal accounts, historical documents, and archival materials, the project serves as a lasting testament to the impact of the Soviet Jewry movement and its significance in modern Jewish history.

Beyond this work, my commitment to social justice extended to the Social Venture Fund for Jewish-Arab Equality and Shared Society, where I served as Co-Chair.

I grew up in Boston and earned my undergraduate degree and MBA from Harvard. Throughout my life, I have split my time between business and activism, believing deeply in the power of both enterprise and advocacy to create lasting change.

Honoring Our Legacy



Judy Patkin, Founder

Judy Patkin began volunteering on behalf of Soviet Jews on the early 1970's following the publicity over the aborted hijacking of a small plane leading to the Leningrad trials and long prison sentences and death threats. Volunteer work continued with the founding of Action for Soviet Jewry in 1975 as a private non-profit organization to help Jews refused the right to emigrate from the Soviet Union.

In the late 1980's Judy became the executive director of Action for Soviet Jewry. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the name was changed to Action for Post-Soviet Jewry (APSJ) and we began working with whole Jewish communities. Our Adopt-a-Bubbe program began in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, when the Boston Jewish community adopted Dnipropetrovsk as a Jewish sister city. The program eventually expanded to over a dozen Ukrainian cities. From 1993 through 2019 Judy traveled to Ukraine and led this program, helping over a thousand Jewish pensioners with food, medicine and clothing in Jewish communities in eastern Ukraine and in Bobruisk, Belarus.

At present, Judy is retired.

Honoring Our Legacy



Barbara Karchmer, Supporter

There were two influences that brought me to the organization. In 1993 I traveled to the Soviet Union to meet my Russian cousins. Over the next decade I visited them annually. They wanted to emigrate to the United States and I agreed to assist them. Judy Patkin gave me critical advice concerning their interview process in Moscow, which I was able to pass on to them. Their application for Refugee status was successful and they arrived in the US in August 2001.

Also in the 1990s Rabbi David Wilfond of Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley began a twinning program with a newly formed Progressive congregation in Odessa, Ukraine. Rabbi Wilfond knew of my interest in the former Soviet Union and suggested that I might like to join the board of Action for Post Soviet Jewry.

After joining the APSJ board I traveled to Ukraine and Belarus with Judy almost every year from 2003 to 2019. That last trip in 2019 I travelled with Judy and Debbie. Because of Covid in 2020 and 2021 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 we haven't been able to return in person. We've managed to continue our work virtually, but wait eagerly for the opportunity to return to Ukraine in person.

I grew up in Scranton, Pennsylvania. I received my Bachelor of Arts degree from Wellesley College in 1961 and a Masters degree in Education from Harvard University in 1962. I taught elementary education for several years until my oldest son was born. Our family expanded rapidly. I was a full time homemaker, but I did carve out time to join some community organizations. I became a board member of the Weston METCO Scholarship Program, and the Weston youth soccer board. In addition, I coached youth soccer teams and volunteered in the Weston schools. Our family of 6 children and their spouses has expanded to include 18 grandchildren.

Honoring Our Legacy



Marlene & David Bohn, Supporters

David and Marlene Bohn have dedicated their professional and volunteer efforts to improving their communities through leadership, education, and social service. David is a former partner at Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc. (VHB), a multi-disciplinary engineering, planning, and scientific firm. In retirement, he remains active by volunteering across a wide variety of non-profit organizations. They include The Engineering Center Education Trust (TECET) in Boston, the American Red Cross, Project Bread, the Waquoit Bay Research Reserve in Falmouth, Temple Sinai in Sharon, and Action PSJ.

Marlene built a successful career leading the Human Resources and Employee Development departments, fostering workplace growth and employee well-being. Her commitment to helping others has extended into her volunteer work with social justice organizations including but not limited to Jewish Family & Children's Service (JF&CS), Jewish Vocational Service (JVS), as well as her synagogue, Temple Sinai. Marlene now serves on the Board of Action PSJ's NGO Action Ukraine, furthering her commitment to global humanitarian efforts.

David and Marlene are proud graduates of UMass/Amherst, where they met in 1974.

Together, David and Marlene have instilled values of community service and education within their family. They are the proud parents of Jeffrey Bohn and Laurie Bohn who is married to Matt Curley. Their family continues to grow with their beloved grandchildren, Sarah and Benjamin.

Combined Jewish Philanthropies

For 50 years, Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) has been a steadfast partner in our work, offering generous financial and strategic support from the very beginning. Our shared commitment to the Jewish community in Ukraine—particularly in our sister city, Dnipro—has forged a powerful and enduring partnership.

From the early missions to Ukraine to our 2019 delegation to rapid-response efforts during COVID-19 and the ongoing war to our recent Two Wars, One Heart mission, Israel and Ukraine have been bound together by a deep sense of responsibility. We have worked in unison through minds, hearts, and hands to bridge history, respond to the present, and safeguard the future.

Together, we have stood against antisemitism, faced a global pandemic, and responded to war—ensuring that the most vulnerable and isolated Jews are not forgotten. And together, we have strengthened a Jewish community that, after emerging from the fall of the Soviet Union, now fights for its very right to exist.

For their generosity, resilience, and unwavering partnership, we honor CJP with deep gratitude.



The Rashi School

We are proud to recognize The Rashi School as a vital organizational partner. At the onset of the war in Ukraine, their community—parents, grandparents, and alumni—stepped up with heart and purpose. Through their Call a Bubbe/Zayde program, Russian-speaking volunteers offered connection and comfort to isolated elderly Jews. Rashi also led two major drives, resulting in hundreds of aid boxes. One shipment brought emergency supplies to children in Dnipro seeking shelter; the other delivered lifesaving winter gear—thermal underwear, heat warmers, and flashlights—to vulnerable seniors facing harsh blackouts. Their dedication embodies the Jewish values of care, connection, and action.

Life-changing education | World-changing students

The Rashi School provides transformative educational opportunities that inspire students to be empowered and engaged learners, embrace their Jewish identities, and grow up to be leaders who make our communities—and our world—a better place.



Board of Directors

Barbara Karchmer
President, Executive Committee

Carol Clingan
Vice President, Executive Committee

Sergey Broude
Treasurer, Executive Committee

Tatyana Goldwyn
Clerk, Executive Committee

Barbara Anatolev

Zale Anis

Melinda Harrison

Asya Bashina

Boris Katz

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Evgenia Doktor

Dewey Yoo

Doris Gordon

Judy Patkin
Executive Director Emerita

Robert Gordon
Founder Emeritus

Board of Directors

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Chair, Action for Ukraine
Executive Director, Action-PSJ

Barbara Karchmer

Sergey Broude

Barbara Anatolev

Marlene Bohn

Zelig Brez

Igor Romanov

Anna Salik

Haya Proslava



Thanks to Our Donors

With Deep Gratitude

Allies Circle \$5,000

Anonymous X2
Joyce Branfman
Gilda Buchbinder
Doris & Robert Gordon X2
Hecker Family Advised Fund x2
Barbara & A.W. Karchmer x2
Ery & Laura Magasanik
Stephen Patkin

Partners Circle \$1,800

Anonymous
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Sharon Schumack
Beth & Michael Moskowitz
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Janice Winokur

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Rachek & Joel E. Reck
Sharon Rivo
Miriam Rosenblum &
Sheldon Benjamin
Robert Strassler

Leadership Donor Circle

Newly Formed– Will you join in?

Annoynous
Combined Jewish Philanthropies.
Betsey Gidwitz
Lipsky Family Foundation

We are honored to recognize the founding members of our newly launched Leadership Donor Circle Campaign—a year-long initiative to strengthen Action for Post-Soviet Jewry for the road ahead.

This powerful partnership ensures our organization's fiscal security, supports the implementation of innovative and lifesaving services such as telehealth and mental health care, and enables rapid response to the ever-evolving emergencies of war.

We invite you to join the Leadership Donor Circle with a leadership gift of \$18,000.00, \$25,000, \$50,000, or a four-year commitment of \$100,000. Your support helps secure Action-PSJ's future and meets the urgent needs of Ukrainian Jews at this critical time.

We can continue to act with compassion, speed, and impact.

**ACTION
FOR POST-SOVIET
JEWRY**

50 YEARS OF DEDICATION
TO
EXIT VISAS FROM
THE SOVIET UNION
AND TO
JEWISH LIFE IN THE
POST-SOVIET ERA.

Doris and Bob Gordon



Mazal tov to
Debbie Kardon P'10, '12, '16

and Action for Post-Soviet Jewry
on 50 years of unwavering support for the
Jewish communities of the former Soviet Union.

From your friends at The Rashi School.

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Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters is proud to support Action PSJ!

JBBBS transforms the lives of children, adults with disabilities, and their families through the power of one-to-one relationships. Make an impact and get involved with us today!



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Big Brothers Big Sisters.
OF GREATER BOSTON

Visit www.JBBBS.org

Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) Joins

Action for Post-Soviet Jewry

In celebrating the extraordinary achievements and contributions of

the Founders: Judy Patkin and Bob Gordon

the Supporters: Barbara Karchmer and Marlene and David Bohn

the Partners: The Rashi School

and the Event Chairs: Barbara Anatolev and Doris Gordon at Celebrating 50 Years of Action

Thank you for also honoring CJP as a partner. We appreciate all that you do to foster Jewish life and make our world a better place.

May you go from strength to strength.



JCRC is honored to celebrate Action-PSJ's 50th anniversary and their support for our Ukrainian Jewish community.

Thank you to Debbie Kardon and Ella Gonchorova for great leadership during a time of turmoil and strife in Ukraine. We wish for peace and autonomy in Ukraine.

Marlene and David Bohn

Congratulations Bob Gordon
A founder of the



Preserving & sharing stories of the
grassroots Soviet Jewry movement.

sovietjewryarchives.org

Miriam Rosenblum & Sheldon Benjamin



The Wyner Family
Jewish Heritage
Center™
at AMERICAN ANCESTORS

To our friends at
Action for Post Soviet Jewry:
We salute your vital
work over 50 years,
and we're honored
to partner with you!

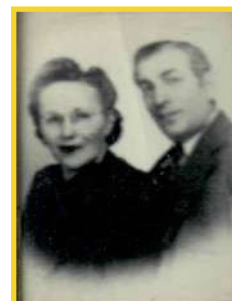
In Memory of
Rosalind Kaplan
who was a board member
of PSJ
And dear friends
Natasha & Yuli Glazman
(and daughter Alla Kan)
who came to
Boston from Kiev.

They greatly enriched our
community and our lives.

Sharon Pucker Rivo

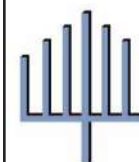
Mazel Tov
to the founders and
all the dedicated volunteers and staff
for 50 years of ACTION!

**Michael Luckens
Sharon Schumack**



In memory of my
beloved grandparents
who were born in
Ekaterinoslav (Dnipro)

Carol Clingan



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SINAI

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781.784.8081
www.temple-sinai.org

To our heroes
Marlene & David Bohn
Thank you for
your leadership.

- Your friends at
Temple Sinai

Sending profound appreciation to
Action for Post-Soviet Jewry
for fifty years of dedication and
service to uplifting vulnerable Jews
in the former Soviet Union.

Your tireless advocacy is a light
that guides us all.

From your friends at

jalsa

JEWISH ALLIANCE FOR
LAW & SOCIAL ACTION

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Thank you

Action-PSJ Team

Bella Cameron
Benjamin Timbers
Pavel Zlatin

Greeters

Saul Kardon
Jonah Schwartz

Alphagraphics

David Barron, Photographer

Denise Sternburg, DKDesign

Mark Copeland, Musician

Jewish Heritage Network

Ora Catering

Shana Gondelman, Zoom Lady

The Menorah Center

The Needham Police Department

The Village Club

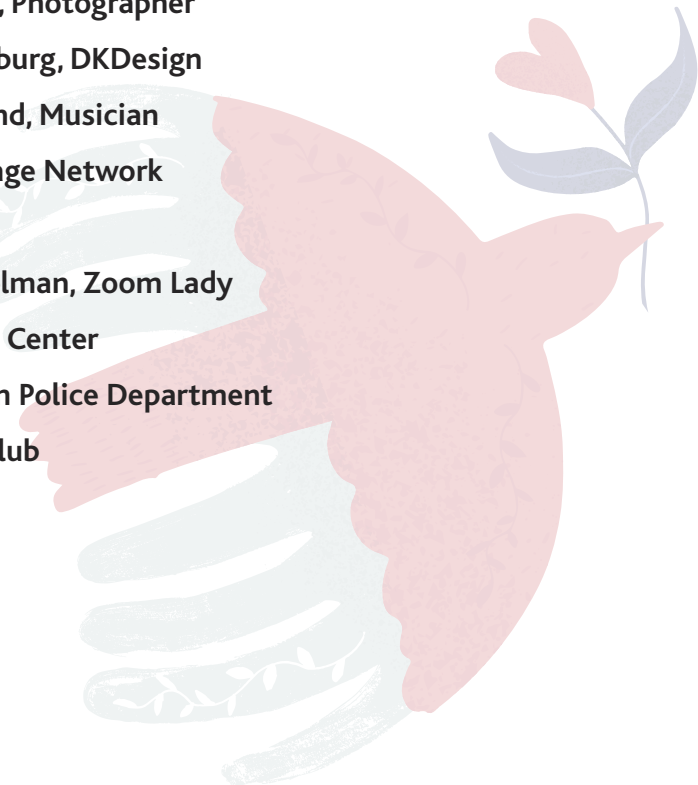
Mazal Tov to APSJ
for 50 years
of incredible service
to the Jewish People,
and to Debbie Kardon for
her magnificent leadership!

**Marla and Simon
Olsberg**

SJM P
SOVIET JEWRY
MOVEMENT
ARCHIVES PROJECT

On behalf of all at the
**Soviet Jewry Movement
Archives Project**,
congratulations to Bob
(SJMAP's board president)
and Judy.

We celebrate your
tireless efforts on behalf of
(post) Soviet Jews and
raise a glass to you!



Scan these QR codes to explore archived primary source materials from Action for Post-Soviet Jewry, the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center, the Soviet Jewry Movement Archives Project, Judy Patkin's trip book, Nadiya Sadirova's commissioned artwork *Indestructible Beauty*, and the Center for Jewish History.



APSJ website



SJMAP website



Wyner Center



Judy's Trip Reports



Indestructible_Beauty

We hope you enjoyed the museum walk and primary source exhibit, which showcased some of the highlights, stories, and impact that Action-PSJ has had and continues to make.

Stay tuned for an interactive virtual display coming soon to our website—a space where you can ask questions and share your own memories and stories.

We are grateful to Doris and Bob Gordon for their support in making this initiative a reality.

A LEGACY OF ACTION
50 Years of Grassroots Impact

Fighting Antisemitism in the Soviet Union

Action for Soviet Jewry's Lifelong Mission

For decades, Jews in the Soviet Union faced systemic anti-Semitism. From government propaganda to travel restrictions, imprisonment, and public shaming, life for Soviet Jews was fraught with persecution. Action for Soviet Jewry, a grassroots, volunteer-based organization, stood on the frontlines, documenting these abuses, advocating for freedom, and aiding those seeking to escape oppression.

The Soviet Anti-Jewish Campaign

Throughout the 20th century, Soviet authorities promoted anti-Zionist and antisemitic propaganda. Jews were falsely accused of being disloyal citizens, working for foreign powers, or seeking world domination. University programs, criminal legislation, and public incineration campaigns reinforced these falsehoods, making life for Jewish citizens increasingly difficult and dangerous.

ActionPSJ.org Support Action-PSJ

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Explore archived primary source materials from the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

A LEGACY OF ACTION
50 Years of Grassroots Impact

A Fight for Life and Freedom

The Katz Family & Action for Soviet Jewry

For decades, Soviet Jews endured oppression, denied the right to emigrate, practice their faith, or live without fear. Those who applied for exit visas—"let us emigrate"—were persecuted by the KGB, denied medical care, and often imprisoned. Many were sent to labor camps or psychiatric hospitals, facing brutal treatment. Figures like Anatoly (Anat) bravely spent years behind bars simply for seeking freedom.

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Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Explore archived primary source materials from the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

A LEGACY OF ACTION
50 Years of Grassroots Impact

Advocacy and Action

The Political Legacy of Action for Soviet Jewry (ASJ)

What began as a small grassroots effort with a handful of staff and dedicated volunteers quickly became a force for change. Action for Soviet Jewry understood that securing freedom for Soviet Jews required more than protest—it demanded political action. Through cultivated relationships with elected officials, relentless advocacy, and strategic campaigns, ASJ made sure that the plight of Soviet Jews was never ignored.

The Crisis Soviet Jews Faced

For decades, Soviet Jews endured oppression, denied the right to emigrate, practice their faith, or live without fear. Those who applied for exit visas—"let us emigrate"—were persecuted by the KGB, denied medical care, and often imprisoned. Many were sent to labor camps or psychiatric hospitals, facing brutal treatment. Figures like Anatoly (Anat) bravely spent years behind bars simply for seeking freedom.

ActionPSJ.org Support Action-PSJ

SJMAP Soviet Jewry Movement Archives Project

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center Explore archived primary source materials

ACTION FOR POST-SOVIET JEWRY



50 Years of
ACTION

1974 – 2024

ACTION FOR POST-SOVIET JEWRY

CELEBRATING
THE PAST,
PRESENT
AND FUTURE

Looking back
with pride
and moving
forward
with purpose.

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