

שיר השירים אשר לסלמה. ישקבמנשקויהפנתפיהגו ייטוביםדידימדייך
לחייטמנין טובים שמנותה שר שמך על כן עלמות אהבך. משכני אחך קנהוצ
הביאני המלך החדידנינו להינשמה בהך נדכידהדיך מציי למי שדים אהבך
שחררה אנינו אהבנות ידדסל כאהל קודכדי עותשלמה אל תר אני
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צדוק כהדי סתוד הבעשה לך עסק דהת הכסף. עדי שותמלך במסבונך די
נתנה דהת. דודי בינידי לך. אשכל הפך דודי לילככמעני נהימך פה עדיהתך
פה עיני יגים. הנה פה דודי אף עיני עיני קרות נפשי אידים. הדיט
בהתי. אמי בהצלת הסדו שושנת העמק. כטושנתה מהותי מן לעיני
הבנות. כתפוח כעיה עיה בקנהי כמצותה וישבתה וישבתה וישבתה וישבתה
הביאני אל ביתה יקוד גל עלי אהבה שמכני כמאשימה הפדוני כתפוחי וישבתה
אהבה אני. שמאלתה לתלאי ימי כותה כפח. השבעת עת כפנותה וישבתה
כצמחה את אהבתה סתיה אם ית עיני ואם ית עיני ואם ית עיני ואם ית עיני

The Hampstead Review

HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE
5779 | 2018/19

From The Editor's Desk

The Spirit of Hampstead Festival marked an incredible end to our 125th Anniversary celebrations. We were so grateful to our wonderful speakers including all of those who joined us from near and far. Following Hampstead's first festival of learning, we thought it would be difficult to run anything quite so special but the hosting of IDF soldiers as part of the Peace of Mind programme was inspiring for the whole community.

This year's Review reflects on some of our wonderful events during the last year combined with a clear view about how the new executive team plan to innovate and build for the future. Hopefully the team will build on the Hampstead tradition of being different as you will see in the fascinating article about our architect, Delissa Joseph and his wife Lily who missed her own one woman art show as she was detained at Holloway Gaol, in connection with the Women's Suffrage Movement.

We are busy planning our programming for the next six months which will include a second Women's Hallel on 2nd Day Succot, a fascinating new education programme with Rabbi Harris, continuing our support of Feast, leading on interfaith initiatives and collaborating with other local religious groups on Mitzvah Day. We are proud to announce that our new Scholar In Residence is a graduate of the Chief Rabbi's Ma'ayan programme with some wonderful ideas for both Shabbat and evening events.

We are grateful to Beverley Ostrin for suggesting that the editorship could become a team effort. It just leaves us to wish all our contributors, advertisers and readers a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Adrienne Powell, Tony Ostrin and Alison Grunwald

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REFLECTIONS

Rabbi Dr. Harris



Our prayers on Rosh Hashanah focus on the year ahead. On Rosh Hashanah we look forward as we formulate our resolutions and reflect on our aspirations for the future. Yom Kippur, by contrast, through its themes of confession, remorse and regret, concentrates on the past –albeit for the purpose of living better in the new year.

Looking back at the past Jewish year 5778 at Hampstead, I feel that happily, rather than any regrets, a significant sense of communal pride is in order. One key event of the year was the wonderful **Spirit of Hampstead Festival** in February held jointly at Hampstead with Mizrachi UK, masterminded by Amanda Bowman and Adrienne Powell and featuring a rich array of excellent presentations that showcased Modern Orthodox adult education. Another major event was the enormously uplifting and successful **Peace of Mind** visit, organised with great dedication and skill by Madeleine Abramson and her team, of a group of elite young Israeli army veterans to our community. The soldiers themselves, heroes who have served in the Israeli military in the most difficult of circumstances, clearly enjoyed their trip here very much and considered the time they spent able to talk through their difficult experiences with each other in a relaxed atmosphere of real psychological benefit. Each of our extraordinarily generous host families who opened their homes and hearts to the soldiers seemed profoundly moved by the experience. The community as a whole participated magnificently in the visit in several ways, donating generously to cover catering costs, volunteering time and supporting a moving and memorable Friday night dinner at Shul.

REFLECTIONS

Continued

Our **Scholar in Residence** Danielle Gedalla, the youngest of our Scholars thus far, visited us several times during the year and presented some very stimulating shiurim. The position of Scholar in Residence that we created three years ago, open only to women and designed to facilitate the development of excellent women Torah educators, has been noticed well beyond the confines of our own community and is something from which we can draw great satisfaction. As I write, we are moving towards securing our next Scholar for the new Jewish year. On Purim we held our third successive annual **women's Megillah reading**, organised by Shana Boltin – a great credit to those who put in so much hard work and preparation. There is so much else that made me proud of Hampstead this year – to name but some examples, our **Shabbat UK “Seven Ages of Community” Friday Night Dinner** with members of all ages presenting excellent and entertaining Divrei Torah, the ongoing successes including the **Book Club** organised by Lilian Goldberg, and the range of excellent **pre-Kiddush talks** arranged by Tony Ostrin.

A special mazal tov and best wishes for success to Amanda Bowman on being elected a Vice-President of the Board of Deputies this year. We have long benefited from Amanda's organisational and leadership abilities at Hampstead and it is very exciting that she is now in a position to utilise those gifts for the good of the wider community.

Michael Helfgott and Adrienne Powell stepped down as Co-Chairs at the AGM in May, both having given quite extraordinary service to our

Shul over many years and in a great many ways. People of their calibre are truly indispensable and it is very heartening, therefore, that Michael and Adrienne remain closely involved in multiple aspects of Shul life.

We can now look forward, in Rosh Hashanah mode, to 5779. Madeleine has become the first woman in the 125-year history of our Shul to hold the position of sole Chair, and I look forward to continuing to work with her and Gabriel, Michael and Henry as they each bring their ideas, expertise and wide range of talents to the task of taking our community forward.

I look forward also to continuing to work with the other members of our excellent lay and professional teams as we build on the achievements of last year and, in the spirit of Rosh Hashanah, aim still higher in the new year. I would like to close with a special word of thanks to our volunteers who shun the limelight but do so much to help our community in welfare work, in the Shul office, in security and much else, and who are an extraordinary blessing to Hampstead.

Judith and the family join me in wishing all our members and their families *ketiva vachatima tova, shana tova umetuka*. May G-d grant us a good and sweet year, replete at all levels with blessing, spiritual achievement and peace.

WILL YOU HELP US CARE FOR MORE PEOPLE LIKE PAUL, THIS ROSH HASHANAH?



Charity Reg No. 802559

Paul is living with dementia. He's been alone since he lost his beloved wife five years ago. He started coming to the dementia day centre a year ago. He's made new friends and loves to play games. "The singing's Paul's favourite," explains his niece Susan, "it always makes him smile."

It takes £3,000 every day to keep our dementia day centres open for people like Paul. Please continue your support this Rosh Hashanah.

To donate please call 020 8922 2600 or visit jewishcare.org/donate

#PeopleOfJewishCare

JEWISH CARE



Welcome

From your new Chair and Vice-Chair
Madeleine Abramson & Gabriel Herman



If we had realised how much was going on at Hampstead Shul, would we have taken on our current roles? With the Yomim Tovim being so early this year, we seem to have rushed into autumn despite a wonderful long hot summer. We became Chair and Vice Chair in May, working as a new Executive – **Henry Solomon** as our new Financial Representative with **Michael Selby** as Warden – there is still room for another Warden. We're delighted that Adrienne Powell and Michael Helfgott have not only joined the new Board of Management but also provide us with invaluable advice from their time as co-chairs. We hold them in the highest regard and hope to build on their legacy. The community will have a chance to thank them formally for their dedicated service to our *kehillah* later in the year.



We have concentrated on looking at our priorities for the forthcoming year. So what are they?

Increased Membership

This is complex. To get in new members we need lots of things in place, and all these priorities will hopefully help with membership. We are currently interviewing for a part-time **Young People's Coordinator** for ages 11-18 in conjunction with Golders Green shul. This person would run Shabbat programmes and weekday events. We would also love to employ an **Assistant Rabbi** to help Rabbi Harris and encourage young professionals and young families to join us. This is financially difficult, but we are looking at it.

Community Centre

We need to build a new Community Centre fit for the 21st (or 58th) Century. The existing building has only a few years left. The roof is leaking, the first floor is closed and it is increasingly difficult to maintain what currently remains in use. We are looking at ways to finance what is a very expensive project – probably in the order of £6-7m. We envisage vibrant uses for the building – events for local people, a nursery and a smaller synagogue. Ideally the building will include accommodation, space for Jewish charities, and an outside space for a succah.

Services

The wardens, Rabbi Harris and Chazan Gerzi are receptive to change if it conforms to Jewish law, adds to the *ruach* (spirituality) and will be acceptable to Hampstead's many sensitivities. Some of the innovations you will soon be seeing attempt to increase participation. Gentlemen will now be able to read the Prayer for the Royal Family and for the State of Israel (in Hebrew or English). Ladies will be prioritised should they wish to deliver a Sidra Summary and mothers will be able to join fathers at the blessing for their son's Bar Mitzvah or daughter's Bat Mitzvah. At festivals, gentlemen will have more opportunities to open and close the Ark. In addition, we have women-only Hallel services and Megillah readings. Discussions are continuing about re-introducing a *mechitzah* downstairs.



Communication

We need to make sure we are reaching our current members and beyond. We have moved most communication to email – does that work? Have we lost the personal touch by not phoning more often? Do you use our website? Should we increase our social networking? How do we promote events? We have started to look at these issues.

Events

Our annual programme of events is much appreciated by members and non-members alike, but we need to be more innovative and introduce new activities. These may be cross-generational or gender and age specific where this makes sense. Coming up soon - regular lunches for our older members, more theatre trips, and Israeli dancing for all.

New Involvement

We're looking to get new people involved, particularly joining the Board of Management and working in other roles behind the scenes. What is good to see is that members are prepared to help if they can see their efforts get real results.

It is incredible that a synagogue of our size manages so well with such a small staff. This in part can be explained by the dedicated and professional way they go about their work. Hampstead also have a wonderful bunch of volunteers and without them our community could not function. We would like to personally thank Rabbi Harris, Chazan Gerzi, our community manager Candice, Gilberto, Jenny and all of our volunteers. If there is anything you would like to be involved in, please contact us. We will be explicitly asking you this over the Yomim Noraim, so be warned!

Contact us at chair@hampsteadshul.org.uk

My Year As SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

Danielle Gedalla

Rabbi Chanina taught: *"I have learned much from my teachers. I have learned more from my colleagues than my teachers. But I have learned more from my students than from all of them."* Babylonian Talmud, Taanit, 7a). My year in Hampstead Synagogue began like this, learning from the seven speakers from the community as we discussed lesser known figures in the Torah in preparation for Shabbat UK. I gave the speakers a few basic references and a couple of questions about their character. Each speaker responded with better questions and gave their own impression of their character's life.

Sandra Conway took a compassionate view of Hagar, quite literally putting herself in Hagar's shoes. I think she addressed the humanity of Hagar, something that we often fail to do because we are afraid of seeming to criticise our forefathers. But on reading the text, it is impossible to fail to feel compassion for Hagar and the text is almost begging for us to feel for the mother who is watching her son die. Hugo Max raised many questions about the mysterious character, Bilaam. Was Bilaam truly evil? The text suggests so but as Hugo argued, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what qualifies him to be so evil. These were just two of the seven, but this was my introduction to Hampstead Synagogue. As a new mother with very little time to learn last year, communicating with the speakers gave me many more questions than I began with, and set the cogs in my brain working again.

Our first Shabbat in Hampstead was in December and my family felt very welcomed by Rabbi Harris, Judith, Tal and the whole community. We discussed the theory of three women making a *zimmin* at the start of *Birkat Hamazon*, a practice that has fallen by the wayside in many communities.

The practice sessions for the Megillat Esther for Purim were the first time where I felt I really got to know some of the ladies in the community. Purim evening in the snow was a celebration of the hours of hard work the readers invested and it was lovely to share this with so many women.



My two favourite talks were about the Oven of Achnai and Korach. In each, I felt characters were treated unfairly and their treatment needed justification, as well as their reactions. In the story of the Oven of Achnai, Rabbi Eliezer was excommunicated by his peers for what seemed like a small disagreement. Hopefully, we came to some resolution of his treatment and his reaction through understanding him and his colleague's outlooks on Judaism at the time.

For our final Shabbat in Hampstead, I realised that I would be speaking the week when Parashat Korach would be read in Shul. Although it seemed like a particularly rich story, reading about the aftermath of the Earth swallowing Korach shocked me so much I almost decided

to speak about something else. The extent of the violence towards the people with very little provocation seemed to be so unfair that I wondered if I would be able to defend G-d and his actions without resorting to apologetics. In the end, it was the knowledge that my questioning audience would be demanding justification for the brutality as much as, if not more than, me, which forced me to find a perspective on the story that allowed me to come to terms somewhat with the story.

Thus, I learnt the most from my students, and from the pressure of those students when I sat at home, challenging me to defend G-d and his Torah. It is for me to thank you, Rabbi Harris and the community of Hampstead for persuading me to take up this post.

Greetings from the Grunwald Family

The Grunwald family wishes the Hampstead family
a happy and healthy new year.

Welcoming Scholar In Residence 2018/19

RAISEL FREEDMAN

Raisel currently works as the Public Affairs lead at PJeS, an organisation supporting Jewish schools across the UK. Behind her drive at work lies her own education through Jewish schools here in London and at the Michlalah seminary in Israel. This passion for education led Raisel to continue studying beyond a BA in Law and Politics to complete a Masters in European Jewish History with a Merit and distinction in her dissertation. To complement this academia, Raisel undertook the Susie Bradfield Course and has now graduated from the new Chief Rabbi's Ma'ayan programme.



Married to Ben and with an almost 2 year old Amitai, Raisel and her family are looking forward to getting to know the Hampstead community. Raisel's figure skating background is lesser known but her capacity to teach, have a good laugh and engage with everyone she comes across will soon be seen in Hampstead.

Greetings from the Solomon Family

Wishing our family and the Community a happy and healthy new year

- Meta & Henry Solomon

Greetings from the Powell Family

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful new year

- Adrienne, Robin, Freddy, Barnaby and Theodore Powell

MEGILLAH ESTHER AND WOMEN'S HALLEL

Shana Boltin



Once again, Hampstead Synagogue was proud to have a women's Megillat Esther reading on the evening of Purim. With more Hampstead members participating than ever before, it truly is a joy to be able to fulfil the mitzvah of reading the Megillah together. The experience is unique, bringing together the generations of women at the synagogue in a supportive setting. We are always happy to have new women join us and you can start by just leyning a small portion. There are some wonderful learning resources that can help too.

We continued to expand women's activities this year by singing Hallel together on second-day Shavuot. With new and old tunes, we sang through the psalms and prayers and then enjoyed some tea and cheesecake. We look forward to having Women's Hallel services on Festivals throughout the year and when Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh coincide. Contact the synagogue office for more information and to get involved.

The Spirit of Hampstead Festival

Amanda Ruback

“An event of which Hampstead and the wider community can be very proud. Well done and thank you for all the hard work that went in. It certainly paid off.”

“My warm thanks to all those who put so much work into a very pleasurable day and their hard work to enrich our souls.”

“Thank you I had a really inspiring and enjoyable morning with original topics and great speakers.”

The Hampstead Shul community shared many special events to celebrate our 125th Anniversary, but none as special as the flagship final event of celebrations – the Spirit of Hampstead Festival. Bringing a Limmud-Style programme to Dennington Park Road, over 150 people participated in a jam-packed day of learning. Organised with Mizrachi UK and supported by the Chief Rabbi’s Centre for Community Excellence, we were able to offer a diverse and rich programme featuring speakers and educators from the USA and Israel alongside some of our own members and other renowned local experts. There was something for everyone, covering Torah, Israel, politics, culture and humanitarian activity with sessions ranging from Rabbi Jeffrey Saks on ‘The Miracle of Faith’ to Steven Feldman on ‘Mapping Israel’ from biblical times to today, and Howard Jacobson in conversation with Professor Anthony Julius. In addition, the Festival took the opportunity to collect food donations for FEAST!, a charity that cooks meals for homeless people in West Hampstead. A highlight of the day was hearing from Benny Davidson who in 1976 was flying for the first time and looking forward to his Bar Mitzvah when his plane was hijacked and rerouted to Entebbe.



With huge thanks to Adrienne Powell who masterminded the event and to all the speakers: Rabbi Jeffrey Saks, Rabbi Dr Raphael Zarum, Steven Feldman, Richard Abramson, Howard Jacobson and Professor Anthony Julius, David Herd and Anna Pincus, Tulip Siddiq MP and Philip Rosenberg, Gila Fine, Rabbi Andrew Shaw, Rabbi Dr Michael Harris, William Geller and Benny Davidson.



MP Tulip Siddiq



Raphy Zarum



Gila Fine



Stephen Feldman



Richard Abramson



Jeffrey Saks

Greetings from the Executive

Wishing all Hampstead members a happy new year and well over the fast

- From the Executive: Madeleine, Gabriel, Michael and Henry



Andrea Williams shares memories of a "whirlwind week" and hosting two very special Israeli visitors

I read the Shul email about the impending arrival of the Israeli soldiers and thought what a wonderful idea. I checked the dates in my diary, saw I was rather busy around that time and deleted the email. This was with some regret, as my family had hosted physically wounded soldiers when I was a teenager. I remembered the wonderful experiences we had all had and the family relationships we had forged – communicating and visiting each other for many years.

So how did we end up hosting two soldiers? Did I call Madeleine Abramson and tell her I had changed my mind? No, she called me saying "HELP!" It turned out that one of the potential host families had to cancel and they now needed a fill in. It was *besheret*. We said yes, and the next thing I know, I've joined the exclusive POM Hampstead Group on Whatsapp.

So, what is POM? It stands for Peace of Mind, a wonderful programme run by Metiv, The Israel Centre for the Treatment of Psycho Trauma, to help soldiers through the psychological impact of intense combat experiences faced during their military service. They can suffer from a multitude of psychological problems ranging from difficulties in relationships, depression, aggressiveness, sleep disturbances, substance abuse and PTSD.

The 9-month Peace of Mind (POM) programme consists of four parts; a two-day opening workshop in Israel, a week with a Jewish community abroad - accompanied by their therapists from Israel - a full day of follow-up activities and a concluding workshop, both back in Israel.

On Sunday 29th April, sixteen boys (men! Most of them are married with children and they are all around 36 years of age) from the elite Golani regiment arrived at Heathrow and made their way by coach to Hampstead Shul. They were given a welcome at the Shul from members of the community and some of the host families, and then went straight into their first group therapy session. By 7:30pm, no doubt exhausted by their travelling and first session of therapy, all the hosts were waiting to bring them home for a well-earned meal and were keen for them to meet their families. In our case, Guy and Amos were happy sitting chatting to our children (also not so little – in their 30's) and were then ready for a good night's sleep. The next day we learnt that despite the very long day on Sunday, several of the boys had already spotted the nightlife of West Hampstead and had decided to explore.

"This week of therapy is the most intensive part of the programme - being away from Israel and having the support of our community plays a crucial role in creating a safe, quiet and supportive environment."

The week continued with intensive group therapy at the Shul everyday between 8:00am and 4:30pm, during which time several lovely volunteers from the community provided lunches and extra hands with the logistics.

It was explained to us that this week of therapy is the most intensive part of the programme. Being away from Israel and having the support of our community plays a crucial role in creating a safe, quiet and supportive environment. Whilst these boys have known each other since they were 18 years old this would probably have been the first chance they might have had to share events which they had experienced and witnessed as young boys in the army.

After the therapy sessions, there were shopping outings, (Primark is a must), walks on the Heath and along the Thames, theatre (The Lion King), watching and playing football, and of course lots of bars. Also included in this tight schedule was a delicious supper at the home of Rabbi Michael and Judith Harris, a communal Friday night at the Shul, meeting the Israeli ambassador, a Shabbat service and Kiddush, and a farewell get-together at Susan and John Reizenstein's home.

It was a whirlwind of a week, and early on Sunday 6th May the boys were back at the Shul for a final but short group session. We joined them a little later for goodbyes and photos, and then the coach was waiting and they were gone.

Guy and Amos said they were a little nervous of coming to stay with a family unknown to them but very quickly settled in - you could tell

they were relaxed from the messy bedrooms! They were overwhelmed by the fact that we cared so much for them as people, for them as a group, for them as Israelis and for them for belonging to the Jewish people. They didn't realise that we in the Diaspora had such strong bonds, feelings and support for Israel and with the Israeli people.

The week flew by and at the end of it, we realised that there was a wonderful bond between us. We were so sad to say goodbye and felt privileged to have been part of the programme. We found the experience incredibly special and would have no hesitation in saying yes straight away the next time when email arrives from the Shul saying a group of POM soldiers are coming to Hampstead Synagogue.

Madeleine Abramson writes:

When we first considered taking part in the Peace of Mind programme at Hampstead we were told that the cost of the programme for the entire year, and helping to support the METIV centre in Israel, was £35,000. I shrugged my shoulders and said to myself, "If we could raise half of that it would be fine - METIV have big donors, it will be alright." I am delighted to say that our community did us proud - we raised £27,000. That is *fantastic*, and this is a big thank you to you all for your sponsorship and support. The hosts were also amazing - thank you. We are all still in touch with the group, and Hampstead hopes to do another programme in 2020! We will keep you informed. If you are interested to know more about the programme, go to www.traumaweb.org



The Israeli Sunday School

Talma Keinan

For the last three years, Kita Beit (Y3) from the Israeli Sunday School in London have attended a First Torah Celebration ceremony at Hampstead Synagogue. Members of the staff and students want to thank the synagogue community and Adrienne Powell for allowing this to take place.

Every year, children who have already mastered good Hebrew-reading skills begin learning Torah. We start this subject when we make the short trip to this beautiful synagogue where they receive their own first copy of the Torah, with their names superbly written in by a scribe. It is an extremely moving and special event for these children, made even more exceptional due to the stunning setting and incredible hospitality they receive in Hampstead. The synagogue always provides a comfortable and relaxed environment for these children, some of whom may not have visited a place of worship before, as well as a lovely kiddush snack reception – after they have received their Torah books. We feel very lucky and grateful to be able to have this ceremony in a synagogue setting.

Hampstead Synagogue is located a brisk walk from the Sunday school premises in Hampstead and the community is welcoming and friendly. The building is stunning in an understated way and everyone entering is made to feel a part of the community. Adrienne is gentle with the

children and everything is explained carefully to them so that they gain as much as possible from the experience. For some students this is the first time they see the Holy Ark being opened and the Torah being taken out.

After they receive their books, they join in the singing and dancing. The parents attend too and are impressed seeing their children enjoying this event so much. The students are clearly very proud to receive books with their names inscribed in them. Parent and student comments to us are always positive and this has become an integral part of our studies. The children are happy to return to class after this special event and begin their Torah studies.

The Israeli Sunday School, which has been teaching in accordance with curricula from the Israeli Ministry of Education for over fifty years, is a happy learning environment providing studies in Hebrew for children aged 3-13. Most of our students are children of Israelis who come to us to ensure their Hebrew remains of a high level. We also have some classes for non-Hebrew-speaking children who come to us to learn spoken and written Hebrew. Our Hebrew GCSE class has 100% success rate of A* and our nurseries provide excellent early education and stimulation in Hebrew. The school aims to develop a love of Israel, Jewish ethics and holidays and the Hebrew language, from early grammar to sophisticated literature.

Contact **Tony Ostrin** at admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk to get involved with **Interfaith through Hampstead Synagogue and Camden Council.**



Imran Khan Visits Hampstead

AN INTERFAITH PERSPECTIVE

Tony Ostrin

Eighteen months ago I was asked to represent Hampstead Synagogue on Interfaith; I readily agreed. I found myself on two committees, the first was the Three Faiths Forum Monitoring Group and the other Camden Council Faith Leaders Forum. The monitoring group had been created to ensure Camden's performance on interfaith matters followed national guidelines; this group has now been disbanded probably because it is thought that Camden is dealing adequately with its responsibilities.

The Faith Leaders Forum is led by a Camden councillor and consists of a number of lay people. It deals with specific situations which have arisen with an interfaith connection. A particular issue that seems to concern all members relates to community safety. The Jewish community are fortunate to have the benefit of the CST; they have also assisted with help and advice to other communities.

Camden has been instrumental in organising a number of half and full day conferences dealing with interfaith and I have attended these as a representative of our community. Camden is now working on Camden 2025, which has a strong interfaith element, as the council is anxious to improve the lives of all those who live within the borough.

I also attended a day organised by the Bangladeshi community and another by the Board of Deputies where there were speakers from a variety of non-Jewish communities. At present I am working with both our Local Emanuel Church in West Hampstead and the Islamic community in Cricklewood to see if there is any scope for an arrangement between the three communities. I find the work on Interfaith both interesting and rewarding. If anybody would like to join me, please feel free to be in contact.

“It’s Time To Rejuvenate Hampstead!”

Alison Grunwald interviews a very intrepid new Hampstead Chair



When **Madeleine Abramson** was teased for being one of only three women at Sussex University studying Engineering and Operational Research, her 100-strong male cohort found they'd picked on the wrong 18-year-old.

Hampstead Synagogue's newly-elected chair didn't find it difficult to deal with the beer-drinking rigger lads who teased her for being female. "There was lots of innuendo but I never took it too seriously. I had never considered how few women would be reading Engineering in 1970, I just knew what I wanted to do."

When I interviewed this age-defying grandmother of four, I discovered a truly trail-blazing woman whose hobbies outside the workplace include cycling, skiing and marathons. No surprise then that she has become Hampstead Synagogue's first ever solo female chair.

The self-confessed retired adrenalin junkie, 65, has a CV that reads like an Olympian's. I was exhausted just reading it. "I have jumped out of airplanes, done summer alpine mountaineering, rock-climbing, abseiling....and started all that in my 40s. Loved water skiing and sailing....did the London Marathon in 2001, and several half-marathons since. I've cycled London to Brighton, London to Cambridge several times, climbed Kilimanjaro and trekked to Base Camp of Everest."

With a magician's touch, Madeleine, who lives in Harman Drive with husband Richard, a retired actuary, has also squeezed in being a systems analyst team-leader, clothing buyer for M & S, and physics teacher. She has been in property development, and is still a magistrate. And during this time she somehow managed to bring up four children.

Whilst teaching at St James Independent School for Senior Girls she inaugurated and ran an outdoor pursuits group for 10 years, which included taking girls away for weekends, adventure trips abroad and running the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

She is vice-chair of JWA and is on the board of Brondesbury Sports Club.

She was joint vice-chair of Kenton Synagogue before leaving the area and coming to NW2, telling me diplomatically: These were in the days before the US allowed women chairs.

Making up for lost time and a welcome change in US shul politics Madeleine has climbed rapidly into Hampstead's lead management role. She is modest about quite how she arrived as chair after being financial rep for three years, telling me there was no-one else who wanted it. Not sure I believe her there. But now she is in place, what is her vision for the synagogue? How does she see the job before her, taking Hampstead Synagogue into the future? Was it anything like the risks of parachuting?

"Rejuvenation.... I'd like to see a new community centre open 12 hours a day for Hampstead shul members and other Jewish

and non-Jewish groups. There's always a need to stretch out our hand to other communities. In today's climate it is vital to foster good relationships with non-Jewish groups; we need to show who we are and welcome others. Ours is a beautiful shul that needs to be used to the full. But we have to accept that currently the only section of the Jewish community which is growing is the Charedi; the United Synagogue membership has nearly halved in the last 65 years. I'd love to see more young Jewish people and families joining us. Also more women becoming involved. And more professional staff to achieve all this!"

"As to the risks - it depends on what changes we make.....for example the *mechitza* and the role of women. All change encompasses risk. I loved Hampstead shul from the moment I walked through the door, but to survive we are going to have to move forward. We have a Modern Orthodox ethos and we must use that to our advantage."

Just when I thought I'd heard it all, Madeleine told me she has booked a trapeze lesson with her daughter, who married last year. "It's on the high wires in Regents Park.....and Richard and I are trekking to Macchu Pichu later this summer. I'm not good at sitting still", she said. No kidding.

Greetings from the
Ziff Family

Wishing the community a happy and healthy new year

- Jenny & Malcolm Ziff

“I Now See Where The Money Goes.”

Rachel Harris reports on how WJR supports the most vulnerable in Ukraine in March this year

I travelled to Ukraine with a group of 10 young professionals to visit some of World Jewish Relief's projects. We were traveling to Dnipro and to KriyviRog, which until then, I could not pronounce, let alone place on a map. Supported by our excellent guides and interpreters, we were able to meet with some of the beneficiaries of the local projects which World Jewish Relief's partners support and fund.



We met LDP graduate Vardan, who is an IDP from Donetsk. Before the war he worked in wholesale trade of steel and metal products. When still in Donetsk, Vardan decided to start his own metal manufacturing, but the war prevented him from starting the business in his native city, so he had to implement his plan at the new location. Vardan participated in LDP

training on “Human Resources Management” and “Effective Communication”, and was provided with legal support.

As a result of joint efforts the first product was released in 2015. In the first 10 months of the business he bought eight machines and created nine jobs, and he plans to expand. We visited his factory, repurposed from one closed down at the end of the Soviet era. It is still very much a work in progress, very cold in winter and with many structural repairs to complete. But he has huge ambition eventually to build the business and return the factory building to its former glory.

Another World Jewish Relief project we visited was to see the support that is given to the elderly and vulnerable. With the collapse of the USSR and the economic collapse of the Ukrainian state, many people have little money and often no family, as aliya is so common amongst the young.

KriyviRog is one of the major industrial centres of Ukraine with five industrial giants located in the city to take advantage of the iron ore deposits. It has a population of 630,000 with a Jewish population of approximately 15,000 but numbers have recently swelled due to the influx of internally displaced people (IDPs) fleeing the conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

The Livelihood Development Programme (LDP) has been designed to assist in employment and self-employment for vulnerable members of the Jewish community, internally displaced persons, veterans and widows of the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and people with disabilities. Many of the IDPs have a good education and work experience, but have undergone trauma and lost possessions, family and friends in the conflict. Some are suffering with stress and depression and need counselling and additional psychological support as well as practical help to get started in a new city. In some cases they have had to learn a new language.

The average pension in Ukraine is approximately £40 per month to cover all living costs. For most pensioners, this is nowhere near sufficient to cover the costs of rent, bills, food, medication and heating in the winter. There is a network of local Jewish welfare organisations, or Chesed, set up around Eastern Europe after the collapse after the USSR. These are funded by World Jewish Relief and provide welfare support to all members of the community, especially the most vulnerable, and know their needs inside and out.

I visited Nelly, an elderly member of the Jewish community, who is now essentially housebound along with her husband - they receive support in the form of home care, as they are now both disabled. It was fascinating to hear Nelly's history. She lost her leg in an accident in her early twenties, but she had a full career as a

nurse for 43 years, including being part of the medical response to the Chernobyl disaster. Now she has the early signs of dementia and is mainly bed bound in a tiny flat, upstairs and in poor condition, completely reliant on her carer to collect her pension, do her shopping and provide personal care. She is just one of the thousands of elderly Jews living in difficult conditions in Ukraine.

It was a fascinating trip; very different, eye opening, and really helped me understand more about what WJR actually does on the ground. I now see where the money goes when we give our donations at Rosh Hashanah and Pesach or at fundraising events, and it has made me want to do more to help in future. If you ever get an opportunity to visit World Jewish Relief's projects in Eastern Europe, I thoroughly recommend the experience.

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LEGACY OF EXILE

David Conway

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; sat down and wept, as we remembered Zion.

These opening lines of Psalm 137 were immortalised by the pop group Bony M. in their 1978 reggae rendition of the psalm.

That psalm was by no means the only abiding legacy of the fifty year exile in Babylon following the conquest of Judah in 586 BCE. A no less striking part of that legacy are many of the features that mark the two festivals we celebrate during the Yomim Noraim.

Consider the name of the month in which the two festivals fall. As do those of all the other months in the Hebrew calendar, its present name is of Babylonian provenance. Before the exile, the months of the Hebrew calendar were designated by the relation they stood to that in which the Exodus occurred. Exodus 12:2 reports God instructing Moses and Aaron to designate that in which the Exodus was about to begin the first month. Thereafter, the other months were called after their relation to it. That which later became called Tishrei was originally referred to as the seventh month, it being six along from that deemed the first.

At some point soon after the return from exile, months acquired their present Babylonian names, the seventh month now becoming Tishrei which in Akkadian means beginning. In being given that name, the festival the Israelites had been under divine command to observe on the first of that month soon became referred to as Rosh Hashanah, the Head (or start) of the Year. Its acquisition of that sobriquet gives indication of a further abiding legacy which

the exile conferred upon the character of the festivals that fall on the first and tenth of that month.

What became incorporated into the religious observances of these two festivals as a result of the exile was the theme of collective repentance for wrongdoing in advance of imminent Divine judgement that would seal everyone's fate for the succeeding year. The Torah itself makes no mention of such a theme in connection with either festival. Yet just such a theme forms a central element of the rituals associated with the Babylonian New Year, as has been astutely noted by the Israel-based archaeologist Stephen Gabriel Rosenberg in an op-ed piece in the Jerusalem Post in 2013. On the basis of cuneiform tablets going back to 2,500 BCE that were dug up in Babylon in 1899 and are now housed in a museum in Berlin, Rosenberg writes:

In Babylon the New Year... [was] followed by 10 days of festival... when the city of Babylon was in repentance mode. This was because the year had to be renewed, and, to ensure that it be a good one, the Emperor... had to... go through a pre-ordained ritual... On the first two days, the high priest... had to arise two hours before dawn and wash in the river Euphrates, and then offer a formal prayer to [the supreme god] Marduk... On the fifth day, a swordsman enters the temple... to cut off the head of a ram whose carcass is spread around the temple... Later that day the Emperor of Babylon is led into the temple and... forced to kneel down and make a prayer of repentance... [He] then come[s] out before the people... to show... he has made repentance... and has gained the right to continue to govern... This finally takes place on the tenth [day].

It is easy to see, notes Rosenberg, how, having observed this Babylonian festival, returning Jews might have been inclined to graft its themes of repentance and divine judgment onto the two Jewish festivals that fall on the first and tenth of the seventh

month, thereby turning the first into Rosh Hashanah and the second into a Day of Atonement where the entire *kehillah*, not just the High Priest, seeks procurement of a good coming year through *teshuvah*, *tefillah* and *tzedakah*. Chag Sameach.



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Hampstead Synagogue Book Club

Sandra Conway

A gathering of souls, a meeting of minds, a collective of lives who all share a common thread. Where would one find such a fraternity?

The Hampstead Synagogue Book Club. Born out of a love for books and the book clubs' mutual understanding of the power of a good book and its ever-insatiable ability to stir the soul and ignite the imagination, the Synagogue book club meets six times a year to discuss, unravel and feast upon the book flavour of that month.

Much could be written of each book, regarding the different perceptions we have all shared and discussed, but here I briefly recap and share with you just some of the wonderful literature that we have had the pleasure of reading.

Major Farrand's Hat by David Cesarini. The book read like a thriller investigation of a murder of a young Jewish boy and the cover up to protect the British Empire. This meeting was held at the home of Dawn Cesarini, David's widow, and we felt very privileged to hold our meeting there. Heidi Goldsmith's partner Harry gave us an insight into what it was like being in the British army as a young soldier during those troubled times. A truly inspirational meeting.

East West Street by Philippe Sands. A compelling family memoir intersects with the story of the Jewish legal minds who sowed the seeds for human rights law at the Nuremberg trials. This was a wonderful book which we all found completely absorbing.

Garden of the Beasts (Tiergarten) by Eric Larson. This book has the clarity of purpose to see the Germany of 1933 through the eyes of a uniquely well positioned family. For Heidi Goldsmith this book held a special poignancy as Tiergarten was a lovely park-like area in pre-Nazi Berlin where she was born.

Last year we read *The Dove Flyer* by Eli Amir. It was about the Jews from Baghdad that showed us the anguish of losing your homeland: a masterpiece of storytelling.

Our meetings are held in book club members' homes, where alongside our discussions we have tea and coffee and lovely cakes. Discussions are lively and it is always interesting how different our opinions are of a book we have all read. But more important it is a pleasure being part of a lovely group of people who are connected by their love of books.

Contact

admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk to be part of our inspirational book club



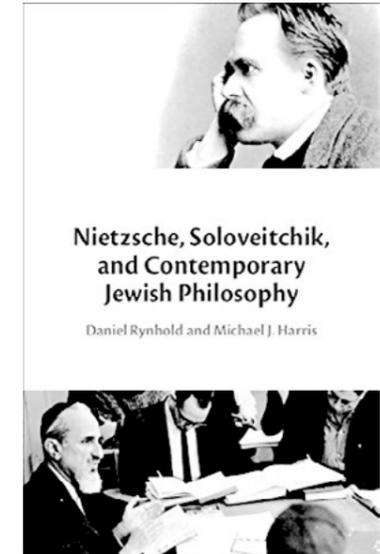
The Radical Atheist and the Great Modern Orthodox Rabbi: Friedrich Nietzsche and Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

Rabbi Dr Michael Harris

This summer I was very happy to finally see the culmination of a more than decade-long project, a book co-authored by Professor Daniel Rynhold and me, entitled *Nietzsche, Soloveitchik and Contemporary Jewish Philosophy* published by Cambridge University Press.

Many thanks are due to Hampstead members who have put up with my constantly referring to both thinkers in sermons over many years and to those who participated in a Shul adult education course on some of the topics in the book in 2016.

In a nutshell, what is the book about? Nietzsche (1844-1900) was a diehard atheist and a sharp critic of many aspects of Judaism and Christianity. Rabbi Soloveitchik (1903-1993) was the leading exponent of Modern Orthodoxy, a great Talmudist and *halakhist* as well as an expert in large swathes of secular learning. The book argues that despite Nietzsche's atheism and Soloveitchik's traditional Jewish commitment, the two thinkers have a great deal in common. Among much else, they are both very strongly life-affirming. Soloveitchik seems to take Nietzsche's critique of religion very seriously but believes that the best interpretation of traditional Judaism is immune to that critique.



Working with Daniel - originally a Londoner and now a Professor at the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Yeshiva University - on the book was an enormous pleasure, never more so than the rare opportunities we had to be in the same place at the same time without having to rely on email and WhatsApp. I remember particularly fondly a week or so in 2015 working with Daniel in his office on the YU campus in Washington Heights, New York, conveniently one minute away from an entirely kosher branch of Dunkin' Donuts.



Upcoming Book Launches

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CONFUSED BY SHAKESPEARE?

Richard Abramson has the answer for you.

“Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow”

So begins one of Shakespeare’s more famous speeches, with Macbeth lamenting the emptiness of fate. He concludes that:

*‘Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.’*

Before we take this bleak view to heart, remember that to appreciate what Shakespeare may be telling us we must consider the character who is speaking and the context. In Macbeth’s case, he is a traitorous murderer, one whose world is falling apart and who has just been told of the death of his wife. We may take it then that a truer picture of the world is quite the opposite of what he says: that life signifies a great deal, and this ‘tale’, whatever its transient importance or lack of it, points to an existence which will outlast it.

Earlier in the same play Malcolm, son of the usurped King Duncan, and destined to be king himself, speaks of the king-becoming graces. Given his character, we may take his descriptions as reliable guides to the elements which matter in life, and they all transcend this ‘hour upon the stage’ – for example, what he calls the graces of justice, verity, bounty, mercy, patience and courage.

There is a sense in many other of Shakespeare’s works of matters which go beyond the span of a life. Romeo and Juliet is utterly sad at the end, with both young lovers doomed to die and be together only, if ever, in heaven. But from the very beginning it is explained that nothing else could heal the ancient rift between their families, and following their death their statues in pure gold are to be erected, so perpetuating their memory. Juliet is Romeo’s second love; his first was for the physical, in Rosalind, but Juliet ‘doth teach the torches to burn bright’, is ‘the sun’, and a ‘bright angel’. Notwithstanding that it is through the character of a lovely and adoring young woman, Romeo is given, in Juliet, sight of the divine. That, perhaps, can outlast death.

One remarkable feature of what Shakespeare has to say on the present and the future is to be found in the sonnets. In a number of the earlier sonnets he appears to claim immortality for his works. Sonnet 18 – ‘Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day’, is one of the best known. It portrays the addressed lover as more permanent than the passing summer, and concludes ‘So long as men can breathe or eyes can see/ So long lives this, and this gives life to thee’. ‘This’ is the sonnet itself; the sonnet will last as long as mankind. Does he really believe that? To be fair, the evidence of the succeeding 400 years is on his side!

Shakespeare’s works can be taken as signposts to that part of our being which is here, now, but is rooted in the eternal. Through his plays and poems our spirits may be raised to see bright tomorrows, without end.

CHIUNE SUGIHARA

OUR FAMILY'S DEBT

Gillian Tigner-Orchudesch



Chiune Sugihara was born, of Samurai descent, in Japan on 1st January 1900. His father decreed that he should be a doctor but as he grew he wanted to teach. His father threw him out, so being destitute he went to the Foreign Office who were recruiting trainees. Sugihara had excellent language skills, specialising in German and Russian, and brokered an important deal with the Russians in the 1930s.

Japan had been cut off from the world for centuries, had hardly any trade deals but also no racism or prejudice against others. They were brought up to be obedient and honour their elders.

After the Russian deal, Sugihara was honoured and promoted, and in 1940 the Japanese sealed a pact with Hitler. The Japanese needed an embassy in Lithuania but there was only one Russian speaker. Sugihara and his family were sent to Kaunas - Lithuanian's capital - and set up the embassy. Meanwhile, the Nazis were expanding across Europe. Thousands of refugees started running.

Sugihara wandered into the shop of a Jewess and bumped into her nephew, Solly Ganor, who wanted his chanukah gelt from his aunt. Sugihara stepped in and gave the boy some money and Solly invited him to his house for Chanukah. This was Sugihara's first encounter with Jewish people.

Outside Lithuania, the Jews were escaping from round-ups, camps and ghettos and thousands of Polish Jews started to run East aiming for independent Lithuania; they knew that their respite could not last long.

Curacao is an island in the South Caribbean owned by the Dutch, who were not in a pact with Hitler - there was no visa required to go to Curacao. Would it be possible to simply "go" to Curacao?

No. One couldn't go anywhere without entry permission or transit visas. But: if the Dutch consul would stamp your passport with "Curacao - No Visa Required" and you got a transit visa through Japan, then the Russians would allow you to board a train across Russia, then a boat across to Japan on your way to Curacao. But, Japan were in a pact with Hitler.

So a delegation went to Sugihara, who sent a telegram asking his government for permission to grant transit visas. After three weeks the answer was 'No', and despite three further telegrams, Japanese officials refused Sugihara permission. The Jews of Europe were desperate; they had the "No visa required to Curacao" stamp in their passports, but without the transit visa it was useless.

Word had spread and on 27th July 1940, Sugihara looked out of his window to find a queue of Jews with their eyes raised to him.

His son asked, "Daddy, what do these people want?" He replied, "They want me to help them." The boy said, "You are going to help them aren't you?" Sugihara answered, "Yes I am!" He opened the door and interviewed the first person.

He soon received a telegram: "STOP ISSUING VISAS, WE ARE ALLIES OF GERMANY. STOP IMMEDIATELY". Sugihara continued extending opening hours and staying up half the night stamping, stamping, stamping. His wife, Yokiko, massaged his shoulder so he could stamp and sign his name. His government continued telling him to stop until they dismissed him from office.

He was moved to a hotel for two nights where he continued to stamp passports. From his departing train, he threw out blank visas and, eventually, his official consular ink stamp shouting, "Maybe these can still help you!"

In 1945, he and his family were deported to Siberia where one of his sons died. Finally released, his government shunned him for being disobedient and dishonourable and he lived most of his life on the breadline. It is estimated that Sugihara saved 6,000 people.

I knew someone who was fortunate to receive one of Sugihara's precious life-saving visas. He had stood in that queue, he had held his breath waiting to reach the front and he had his passport stamped with the visa for life. His name was Juliusz Tigner, my daddy.

I too owe my life to Chiune Sugihara.

Daddy is honoured in my grandson Alfie Julius. He is here thanks to Chiune Sugihara.

Board of Deputies Report

Amanda Bowman

It's been a busy year for the Board of Deputies with several issues of note to report. The Board speaks up and robustly challenges all manifestations of antisemitism in UK public politics, on university campuses, in the media, public institutions and anywhere else in wider society. Earlier this year, when the community had clearly 'had enough', the Board with the JLC and Community Security Trust started a campaign #EnoughisEnough to express the community's hurt and anger about the level of antisemitism in the Labour Party, and Jeremy Corbyn's failure to take strong action against it. That work continues following a meeting with the party leader in April.

The Board also worked with the Adass Yisroel Burial Society who took a lead for the Jewish Community taking legal action against Mary Hassel, the Senior Coroner for Inner North London over her 'cab rank' policy of reviewing deaths on a first-come-first-served basis that disregards the needs of the Jewish community. The High Court found against the Coroner and the Board has produced proposals for Coroner Accountability Reform.

Part of the Board's work is to advocate on behalf of Israel to Government, the opposition, MEPs and local government. Representing the diversity of our community's concerns and positions, we have worked with the UK media and supported grassroots activity. The Board has supported the Union of Jewish Students on campus and fought against boycotts of Israel as well as building relations with interfaith partners to foster positive and constructive relationships. One example of how that operates is the Invest in Peace programme. We were delighted to host the first of the Invest in Peace events at Hampstead shul, the first of its kind at a national level, where the Board and Churches together in Britain and Ireland brought Christian and Jewish communities together in support of Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding projects.

We were also delighted to host Philip Rosenberg (Public Affairs Director) and Jonathan Arkush (President) at the shul where they delighted us with pre-Kiddush talks as well as partnering with the Board for our Mitzvah Day activities.



My work at the Board has evolved over the last year. I was appointed as the Board's Gender Equality Champion in addition to my role as Vice Chair of the Communities & Education Division and Co-Chair of the Board's Social Action Group. I also represented the Board on the Dangoor Senior Leadership Programme which is run by the JLC. In May this year, I was elected as a Vice President for the 2018 – 2021 Triennium. I have responsibilities for the three years for the Defence Division covering

antisemitism, racism and extremism; religious freedom and student and campus activity and together with Jerry Lewis and Rachel Harris, Hampstead's newest Under 35 Observer, will continue to represent the synagogue's interests in our work with the Board of Deputies.

Note: In much of my life, including at the Board of Deputies, I'm known as Amanda Bowman rather than my married name Amanda Ruback.

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NEW YEAR

Hostile Language: “It’s Time to Clean Up Our Act!”

By Alison Grunwald



Henry Grunwald had his work cut out chairing a heated discussion at JW3

Ceasefire! How do we de-escalate the hostility in our discussions about Israel?

This was the aim of a UJIA-sponsored dialogue involving 200 people in July, and the first in an important series of planned conversations. Words like ‘kapo’ were banned on the evening but at times tempers threatened to boil over.

The recent gathering by some young Jews in Parliament Square to say *Kaddish* for Gazans was too much for some in the audience and I asked Henry for his thoughts a couple of days later. How had he approached what was bound to be a very uncomfortable evening?

“I was there to keep the peace. The biggest challenge was trying to lower the temperature to have a tolerant discussion – to make people think about the language they use...some of the language being used recently to attack people with divergent views on Israel has been unacceptable. I wanted to ask people to think about the effect of their words on others.”

Afterwards he received a message from a visiting Fellow at Kings College London who commented: “The majority of people in the room who may have been on the fence certainly now understand how their words can cause genuine hurt.”

Greetings from the Ruback Family

Wishing our family and the community a happy and healthy new year

- Amanda, Anthony, Anna and Tilly Ruback

THE DELISSA JOSEPHS

Lilian Goldberg

The life of the architect Delissa Joseph, who designed Hampstead Synagogue, gives us a glimpse into the lives of a group of influential upper middle-class Victorian Jews. Chaim Bermant was later to describe them as 'The Cousinhood'.

Delissa Joseph was born in 1859 and was a precocious designer from his early days at Jews College; he won a prize from the Young Gentlemen Magazine for the design of a railway brake. In his early career he became known for building office blocks, especially for his skill in building over the ticket halls of the new Underground Railway; many of these are still in use. He was the nephew of the first architect of the newly-formed United Synagogue, N S Joseph, and the cousin of Nathan Joseph, the architect of Shell-Mexx House. During the 1890s he built a number of synagogues, including Brook Green in Hammersmith, Cathedral Road in Cardiff, Brenthouse Road in Hackney, Queenstown Road in Manchester, Finsbury Park, and New Cross.

Lily Solomon was born four years later and like her brother, Solomon J Solomon, she became an artist. At that time women were unable to enter the major art schools so she studied at South Kensington School of Art, and Ridley Hall, now the Royal College of Art. Her works could be described as Impressionist in style and she was included in many exhibitions, such as at the Royal Academy, the Society of Painters in Oils, the Society of Portrait Painters, and the Paris Salon. Only a few of her paintings are known to survive, mainly interiors and landscapes.

Lily and Delissa married on 7th January 1897. They were both forward looking: he seeking to extend the boundaries of technology in architecture, she in extending the suffrage to women, both nationally and within the Jewish community. In March 1912 the JC notes in parentheses after its favourable review of her one woman show at the Baillie Galleries: *Mrs Joseph was unable to receive her friends at the private view of her pictures, as she was detained at Holloway Gaol, charged in connection with the Women's Suffrage Movement.*

In a letter to the Jewish Chronicle in 1912, Lily notes: *There is a strange inconsistency in the opposition by many Jews to the political enfranchisement of English women.* Apart from their ready forgetfulness of their own recent struggle for emancipation in this country, She was one of the first women to own and drive a car, and then in the 1920s, when she was in her late fifties, she learnt to fly aeroplanes.

Both of them were deeply involved in communal life and threw themselves into Herbert Bentwich's project to build a synagogue at Hampstead - Bentwich was married to Lily's sister Susannah. Delissa became the chairman of the fundraising committee and proposed a great Bazaar and Fair that was held at the Portman Rooms in May 1891. Its leading idea would be a (realistic) street in Jerusalem which would be designed by Mr. Solomon J Solomon and planned by Mr. Delissa Joseph.

In 1905, Solomon J Solomon built White Cliffee in Birchington, designed by Delissa, and moved there with his family. Five years later, Delissa

Joseph built and with Lily moved to North Sea Lodge described as an Indian Tower house, in Darwin Road, Birchington.

Delissa died in 1927, and Lily set up the The Delissa Joseph Memorial Fund for Jewish Women Teachers which had a holiday and retirement home in Hove, which closed in 2004. Lily died in 1940.

Both of them achieved a tremendous amount in their lives and contributed enthusiastically to the communal, technological, artistic and political environment.



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David Conway
Chatan Torah

I was born in Liverpool, moving with my family to London at the ripe old age of 4 after my father became Principal of the Norwood Orphanage. We subsequently moved to Golders Green upon his becoming head of the JFS when it re-opened in 1957. Most of my own career has been spent as a professional philosopher. [Lest anyone wonders what a philosopher is, one good definition is -- a solicitor without a client.] I taught the subject for over thirty years at Middlesex University of whose School of Philosophy and Religious Studies I was head. After leaving Middlesex, I spent several years in a social policy think-tank in Westminster. I am married with two grown-up children, Julian and Charlotte. My wife, Sue, is a theatre director and choreographer. Having been a member of various United Synagogues in North West London, I can honestly say that Hampstead is by far the best, not least on account of its inspirational rabbi and chazzan, plus its ever-friendly and welcoming congregation. I am honoured to be its Chatan Torah this year.



David Simmons
Chatan Bereshit

Soon after joining Hampstead Synagogue I realised I was part of a select group of ex-Liverpudlians who have become associated with Hampstead. Members of this group, sometimes referred to as the 'Elders of Scouse' come in two colours - red or blue. I am firmly red, which puts me at loggerheads with the Chief of the group (Tony Ostrin) who is a committed blue. I moved from Liverpool to London for work in the late 1980s. My association with Hampstead began in the late 1990s, soon after I started living in the Kilburn area of London. I discovered that Hampstead shul was but a short walk away, and that on occasion a decent Friday dinner was to be had there. The fact that I am writing this article is evidence that my association with Hampstead became stronger than the odd Friday night dinner. Credit (if that's the word) for this can be placed firmly at the foot of Michael Selby. First he talks me into helping with the Friday dinners, then he talks me into helping with shul security, then into taking over from him as joint shul security officer, and finally (until now at least) into doing Chatan Bereshit. The moral of this story is never engage in a conversation with Michael after your third rum cocktail. A mention also to Tony Ostrin who has talked me into a couple of pre-kiddush talks at Hampstead. In my role of joint security officer, I take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers who have helped on the regular Shabbat rota, and to mention there is plenty room for more volunteers. In my role of Chatan Bereshit, I wish you and your families a good and healthy 5779.

Mazal Tov

CHATANIM & NESHEI CHAYIL



Jacqueline Blomenberg
Eshet Chayil

I am delighted and honoured to have been chosen as an Eshet Chayil this year. I grew up in West Hampstead and by profession I am a Chartered Surveyor. My association with this beautiful Shul goes back many years. At the age of nine, I attended the Hampstead Synagogue Brownies which was run under the expert leadership of Debbie Seedburgh and Anita Faith whom many of you will remember. Later I joined the Hampstead Victoria Club which met in the Community Centre on Sunday afternoons for various activities. As an adult, I was married here by Rabbi Harris in March 1997, celebrated my son's Bar Mitzvah in May 2011 and my daughter's Bat Mitzvah in November 2014. As mother of young children, I helped to co-ordinate and run the toddlers' and children's services for a few years. More recently, I have taken part in the women's Megillah readings at Purim. I look forward to continuing my involvement with Hampstead Synagogue.



Rachel Harris
Eshet Chayil

I moved to West Hampstead in 2015. Since then, I have become involved in synagogue life including volunteering on the security rota, participating in the annual ladies megillah reading and writing articles for the shul magazine. Earlier this year I presented a pre-kiddush talk about my experience travelling to the Ukraine with World Jewish Relief to visit some of the charity's projects. Outside of the Hampstead community, I have been very involved in Limmud, twice taking a role on the steering group for the annual Conference: once running the inclusion programme to support Norwood residents to participate in the event, and once co-ordinating the catering for 3,000 participants. I am currently supporting the organisation by helping to develop a mentoring programme for the volunteers. In my day job, I work for the University of London in Human Resources, focusing on Employee Relations.

Mitzvah Day



Anthony Ruback

Mitzvah Day on 19th November 2017 was the busiest yet for Hampstead Synagogue members. Around 75 volunteers from the shul, The Board of Deputies, Emmanuel Church and beyond came together to support Camden's homeless in four separate activities. We started the day cooking a delicious red lentil soup and apple crumble for the Emmanuel Church C4WS night shelter that operates every Tuesday night over the winter. Our interfaith cooking activity took place at JW3 in partnership with the Board of Deputies Social Action Group (BODSA) and Emmanuel Church, with a group of Muslim, Hindu and Christian volunteers. While we chopped and chatted, we also learned a little about each others' faiths.

Teams of volunteers from the shul and the church continued throughout the day to collect food and toiletries outside Tesco and the Little Waitrose on West End Lane and shuttled the goods in supermarket trolleys back to the



shul where another team were collecting and sorting the goods to share between the church shelter and FEAST! a project that prepares and cooks a meal with residents of Conway House once a week.

Mitzvah Day gave us the opportunity to get to know people and to work together in the service of others. And we continue to look for and find ways to work with these organisations throughout the year, to deepen the relationships we are building. These projects don't happen by magic; huge thanks go to all that were involved on the day, in particular the 'team leaders' (Adrienne Powell, Judy Ruback, Sophie Shieff, Barnaby Powell, Anthony Ruback) and the 'team supporters' (Rabbi Michael, Revd Jonathan Kester, Camden Mayor Richard Cotton, Mitzvah Day Founder Laura Marks, Board of Deputies Vice President Sheila Gewolb) and our Mitzvah Day Co-ordinator, Amanda Ruback.

THE COMMUNITY CENTRE:

A Wonderful Opportunity **Gabriel Herman**

When we pray, we are privileged as a congregation to do so in the most beautiful shul in North West London. However, when we come together in our Community Centre we do so in less salubrious surroundings.

Nevertheless, our Community Centre has been the place of so many happy memories. Think of all those celebratory kiddushim. A venue for wonderful communal lunches and dinners. A place of education where you can join courses and attend the Annual Sir Isaiah Berlin Lecture. Where you can find out what you don't know by participating at a Supper Quiz.

A place for children and young adults too. A one-time home to a nursery, a cheder and youth groups such as the Den.

However there is a sad truth. The building is not fit for purpose and has a few years left before it will need to be de-commissioned. The expense of repair and making it accessible to the disabled means that the only cost effective solution is to rebuild. And here is the wonderful opportunity that presents itself to us.

Imagine being able to build a state-of-the-art community centre fit for the 21st century. A venue that will provide us – and the West Hampstead area – all we want and more. The largest public space in the immediate vicinity. A place for meetings accessible to all, and for all ages. Somewhere where we as a congregation can offer hospitality throughout Shabbat. Somewhere where young and old can meet in a modern Orthodox Jewish setting in one of the most up-and-coming areas in London. Truly, a once in a lifetime opportunity.

In the months ahead, we will be encouraging you to partner with the Hampstead executive in this exciting project. Everyone will be invited - depending on means - to contribute to the fundraising initiatives. Your business may be able to donate a product or service but contributions need not be financial. We also need volunteers to support the project behind the scenes and your time is a precious commodity too.

We also want to find potential partner organisations that could be housed in the new Community Centre and provide a unique service to us in our public spaces. If you would like us to approach companies or charities that you know would make a good fit, please let us know now.



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If you have ideas or would like to support this once in a lifetime project, please call Candice on 020 7435 1518 or email admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk

“1948 And All That”

Maurice Samuelson pays tribute to
Anglo-Jewry’s unknown warrior

I recently acquired a bronze plaque discarded by a communal organisation running out of office space. It bore the features of a young soldier and the following Hebrew inscription:

Isaiah Morris, medical doctor of the Golani Brigade of the Israel defence forces; born in Glasgow, Scotland 19 July 1917; killed in Sejera in Lower Galilee, 11 June 1948.

I then learned that this fallen hero of the Israeli war of independence had previously been a captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps. During the war in Europe he had served as medical officer to a British infantry battalion, which took him all the way from Normandy to the final battles on the Rhine where he earned the Military Cross for bravery.

In post-war Britain, Dr Morris could have had a comfortable medical career. But he never forgot that this was a Jewish as well as a British war. In Germany, hearing of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, he and a colleague jumped on a motorcycle and went to see it for themselves.

In Germany he also encountered Palestinian soldiers of the Jewish Brigade including some of its doctors who knew of his strong Zionist sympathies. They were impressed by his fluent Hebrew, which he had learned from his father, Russian-born Dr Nathan Morris, director of the London Board of Jewish Education throughout the second world war.

As a schoolboy and then as a London medical student, Isaiah had been in the vanguard of Zionist and socialist activity. In the summers of 1937 and 1938 he hitchhiked alone across Europe, including Nazi Germany, contacting comrades and relatives there and surrounding countries, including Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria.

In 1941, after Germany invaded Russia, he created a stir in the more sedate circles of the medical profession by persuading 60 fellow students to sign a letter to the national press urging Britain to stop dragging its feet before sending aid to its new-found Communist ally.

After the war, he spent two years studying for a Diploma in Child Health at Liverpool and in 1947 finally left for Palestine. His aim was to work as a children’s doctor in a kibbutz in the Negev or Galilee.

First stop was Marseilles where he worked in camps for Holocaust survivors waiting to sail illegally to British-ruled Palestine. In January 1948 he boarded a small refugee vessel which, like many others, was caught on the high seas by the Royal Navy. Together with its passengers, he was interned in British-ruled Cyprus and again worked as a camp physician.

In March, 1948, he was released and proceeded to Palestine where he immediately volunteered to join the Haganah. He insisted on a front-line posting in the forthcoming fighting rather than a staff job and was attached to the First

Amy Corps in the Galilee Campaign, being in charge of the entire area up to the northern frontier.

On June 11, 1948, half an hour after a ceasefire was supposed to start, he was killed in Sejera while attending a patient under enemy bombardment. He was buried two days later in the army cemetery at Afula. He was unmarried and was survived by his mother and father and two older brothers.

With more than 6,000 dead, Israel’s war of Independence remains its costliest conflict. Of the 3,500 overseas volunteers who took part in it, 120 lost their lives. Among the volunteers were 74 doctors, two of whom were killed. One of them was Isaiah Morris.

In its issue of August 7, 1948, The Lancet, journal of the Royal College of Surgeons, published the following tribute to him:



“Isaiah Morris was outstanding among his generation for the intensity with which he thought and acted, and for the clear light of principle which guided him. He was naturally friendly; his gaiety and lightness of heart attracted people to him, and they found a spirit of unbounded generosity and deep humanity. He was a delightful colleague and companion; he had many friends, on whom his influence was profound. He set himself the highest standards of life, and he lived up to them, selflessly devoting himself to the cause of the relief of suffering. He died as he would have chosen to die, serving humanity among his own people, where service was most needed.”

Greetings from the
Geller Family

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful new year

- Nina, William, Philip and Ben Geller



MAZEL TOV



Like every young girl growing up, I dreamt of the perfect wedding, with the perfect dress and of course the perfect man, and on 22nd October 2017 I was lucky enough to have my dreams come true at Hampstead Synagogue. Before getting engaged, Jonathan and I had actually never stepped foot in Hampstead Synagogue, being members of Radlett and Northwood alike. However, I always held a place for it in my heart, as it was within those four walls that my parents got married nearly 40 years ago. As a local to the area, I would regularly walk past, wondering what it was like inside, wishing it was as beautiful as I envisaged, so that hopefully

one day I could stand under the *Chuppah* where my parents signed their *ketubah*. Luckily for us, when we did eventually get engaged and came to scout it out we were not only overwhelmed by the kindness of Rabbi Harris, but also by the splendour of the shul and we quickly reserved the venue of our dreams. The wedding was seamless and the synagogue was everything we hoped for and more (a special thanks to Alexandra our amazing florist). It was a day we will both cherish in our hearts forever and we are now proud members of Hampstead Synagogue and look forward to our future as members of the community. **By Kate Shapiro**

The decision to hold the wedding at Hampstead was an easy one for us. The beauty of the shul, one of the most magnificent in the country, is even more apparent during a simcha, and with the stunning floral chuppah and sea of smiling faces, the setting was perfect for our big day.

Moreover, the Smith family have been members of the shul for decades, Rabbi Harris having officiated at Rich's Barmitzva in 2001. We did not want a 'textbook' ceremony, and we were extremely grateful to have the opportunity to work with Rabbi Harris on this, whose wisdom,

vision and commitment gave us a chuppah that was personal to us. It was very special for Rabbi Harris to officiate at our chuppah and impart his inspiring words to us, our family and our friends.

Following the chuppah, we were danced out of the shul and the guests travelled on Wedding Routemasters to the reception at 8 Northumberland Avenue, just off Trafalgar Square. A wonderful time was had by all. We are enormously grateful to all those who assisted in the preparations for our special day.

Raphy Howard

28 October 2017

I remember waking up on Shabbat morning feeling excited and a bit nervous. I had studied my Parasha with my Bar Mitzvah teacher, Jonathan Woolf, for the past year and I was determined, not only for him, but also for my parents, my family, Rabbi Harris and the other congregants to be proud of me. When I arrived in synagogue, I immediately felt a warmth and love from the congregation, and I immediately felt at ease. Once the synagogue had filled up with the regular congregation and my family and friends, I could not wait to get to the bima. I got called up, cleared my throat and away I went. I felt amazing and everything flowed with ease. I loved every moment and I felt that everyone in the synagogue loved it too. The only danger were the sweets being thrown from the balcony. I managed to evade them but I think one landed on Rabbi Harris. He didn't seem to mind. We were all joyous in celebration. Once the service was over, we had an amazing kiddush and I was able to celebrate with my family and friends. To round the day off, I found out after Shabbat, that Manchester United had beaten Spurs 1-0! The day could not have been any better. I would like to say a special thank you to Rabbi Harris for being so supportive, and to my Bar Mitzvah teacher, Jonathan Woolf, who taught me so much and encouraged me every step of the way. We had an amazing journey together and he helped me achieve my Bar Mitzvah dream. It was an amazing experience that I will share with my family forever.



Bar Mitzvahs

Adam Rohald

20 January 2018

I performed my Maftir and Haftorah with a short D'var Torah. My portion was Bo which explained the four questions, which were asked by the four sons, which is part of the Pesach story. My Hebrew birthday was a few days before my Bar Mitzvah which happened to be the same day I was fortunate enough to perform my portion in Synagogue for the first time.

I was also lucky enough to be invited with my parents, to the Rabbi's home, where I laid *tefillin* and spoke to Rabbi Harris about what my Bar Mitzvah day would entail and being a Jewish man in the community means to me. He got to know me better, in order to create the magnificent speech he performed at my Bar Mitzvah in the Synagogue. My heritage is South African and he made some very funny jokes, which went down well in the Synagogue. On the other hand, he was not impressed that I am a loyal Liverpool fan. "You'll never walk alone!"

After the service, the synagogue catered for a lovely kiddush, which was enjoyed by all. I would like to thank everyone at the Hampstead Synagogue for making my special weekend so amazing and a very big thank you to Rabbi Harris.



Friday Knight: Ben Helfgott

Michael Helfgott



My parents, Ben and Arza, had invited me and my brothers, Maurice and Nathan, with our families for dinner on Friday 8 June. Whilst we all see a lot of each other it is actually quite rare for us all to be together on a Friday night. And what is more, my father's sister, Mala, and her family would join the gathering. However, my parents managed to keep it very low key and never gave any hint that there may be something exceptional about this evening. In any case, why would they need to? Just being all together is special in itself.

It was a very joyful, lively evening, with all nine of my parent's grandchildren present, and it culminated in my father revealing that he had been given the honour of being made a Sir by the Queen. The news was greeted by gasps of excitement, applause and cheering. At about the same time the embargo on the media preventing them from notifying the public was lifted and the Times newspaper published the full honours list in their first edition. By the next Shabbat morning the news had already spread and I came to Shul to be greeted with delight and mazel tovs for my father.

It was typical of my parents that they were able to keep the news a closely guarded secret. Growing up in our home I was at one level aware of how my father was involved in so many different charitable and communal activities and how he often made things happen quietly and in his own way. But I never really knew the full extent of it all and even now people tell me of things that make me realise how much he downplays what he has done.

I recall a summer evening in the 1980s when I was at home and involved with my parents in an important discussion when the phone rang. I took a telephone call from an elderly gentleman who in the most polite manner you can possibly imagine asked to speak to my father as he wanted my father's advice. My father took the call in his study and some hours later when the call had finally ended my mother and I looked at him quizzically to ask what could have taken so long when we were in the midst of our discussions. He responded to us in a completely humble manner that it had been Cardinal Hume on the phone!

In the days that followed the announcement of the knighthood, messages of congratulations poured in to my father and there were many beautiful tributes in the papers. The Editor of the Jewish News, Justin Cohen, wrote a piece under the headline "Ben is a knight by deed, and finally by name".

As I sat there at our Friday night table with all our family, in the house where I grew up, I couldn't help but feel that at the age of 88 and with my father still determined to do more, this marked the culmination of a lifetime of great achievement and unrelenting commitment to many causes. In particular, Holocaust Education and Remembrance, the welfare of Holocaust Survivors and always peace and tolerance amongst Nations. What a most memorable time that Friday night was for us. How proud would my father's parents be of him and his sister Mala if they had only known what they had lived to achieve. What a Friday Knight.

Sandra Conway loves a good Jewish joke - and one man holds a special place in her heart.

Jackie Mason was born Yacov Moshe Maza on the 9th June 1931 in Sheboigan, Wisconsin, U.S.A. He was the fourth and last son of six children, but the first to be born in the U.S.A. His family were strictly orthodox, and his father, grandfather and great grandfather were all rabbis.

In 1959 he graduated from the College of New York with a Bachelor of Arts degree, and a double major in English and Sociology. At eighteen he became a cantor and at twenty-five ordained as a Rabbi in Latrobe Pennsylvania. He then led congregations as the Rabbi in Weldon, North Carolina, which only had one hundred families and the Beth Israel congregation in Latrobe.

He said that in synagogue he started telling more and more jokes, and that after a while more and more gentiles would come to join the congregation just to hear his sermons! Three years after his father died he resigned to become a comedian. He said at the time, "Somebody in this family has to make a living."

Jackie wrote almost exclusively his own material and performed on numerous shows throughout America, which led to appearances on The Perry Como show, The Dean Martin show and the Gary Moore show. Around this time The William Morris agency ordered him to take elocution lessons so that he could shed his heavy Jewish accent. He refused!



Here's A Joke!

"A magician was working on a cruise ship in the Caribbean. The audience would be different each week, so the magician allowed himself to do the same tricks repeatedly. There was only one problem: the captain's parrot saw the shows every week and began to understand what the magician did in every trick. Once he understood he started shouting in the middle of the show, "Look it's the same hat; look he's hiding the flowers under the table; hey, why are all the cards the ace of spades?" The magician was furious but couldn't do anything - it was the captain's parrot after all. One day the ship had an accident and sank. The magician found himself on a piece of wood in the middle of the ocean and of course the parrot was by his side. They stared at each other with hate, but didn't say a word. This went on for several days; after a week the parrot finally said, "Okay I give up, what did you do with the ship?"

He performed on Broadway numerous times throughout his career in critically acclaimed productions and won many awards, including an Academy Award. He holds the record for the longest one man show in the history of both Broadway and London's West End. In 1991 he married Jyll Rosenfeld and they have one daughter, Sheba Mason. There is so much about this wonderful comedian whom I have always admired. I could go on for ever.

Looking Back

May 2017 - May 2018

Michael Helfgott & Adrienne Powell

This has been an extremely successful year for Hampstead synagogue in so many ways, as we have embraced the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Shul. Whilst celebrating our past we at the same time looked forward with a creative and positive programme that incorporated ambitious events of the kind we have not attempted before, and which proved to be total triumphs.

In particular, with the backing of Mizrahi UK we held the all day Spirit of Hampstead Festival which was very well attended by members and non-members alike, and included talks by Howard Jacobson, Tulip Siddiq MP and Benny Davidson who recounted the experience of his family's rescue from Entebbe. Then we hosted 16 former IDF soldiers who were in London for the Peace of Mind programme. Rabbi and Judith Harris hosted a dinner at their home and we held a most memorable Friday Night service and dinner when the soldiers related their feelings to us. They really were fine ambassadors for Israel and filled us with great optimism for the future. It was clear that the soldiers, their nine Hampstead host families and the whole of our community benefitted hugely from the whole experience.

If we had only these events then just the efforts in putting them on and the success of them would have been enough for a community of our size. But, of course, we also had a very full programme in addition, including regular adult education learning events with Rabbi Harris and pre-Kiddush talks organised by Tony Ostrin, delivered by members including



Maurice Samuelson, Philip Rosenberg and Lilian Goldberg - and perhaps the most dramatic, touching and personal, by Gillian Tigner-Orchudesch involving her late father's survival during the War.

There was no shortage of music with Tony Ostrin acting as impresario. Robert Max and his acolytes once again gave a superb annual summer concert. Stephen Goldwater treated us at the home of David and Sandra Berzon to a part piano recital and part historical account of musical history through the last 125 years. Most memorable was his playing of Irving Berlin's *Let's Face the Music* and it culminated in a rendition of Abba's "Thank you for the Music". In December we enjoyed a Chanukah party at which Tony Tigner-Orchudesch provided the musical accompaniment to a celebratory get together to mark our 125th anniversary. There were photos and memorabilia involving the Shul's history and some public reminiscences, including from Stanley Brickman, of Hampstead's past days.

We have had regular book club meetings and our always successful annual supper quiz. We were privileged to have a Shabbat visit from Chief Rabbi Mirvis, who astonished us with his memory and knowledge of the history of Hampstead - becoming our Historian-In-Chief and praise for our Shul members as mensches.

We also enjoyed other guest speakers including the Mayor of Camden, Richard Cotton, who gave tremendous support to the Jewish community and to Israel; our local

LOOKING

MP Tulip Siddiq who continued to defend us against anti-Semitism and with whom Rabbi Harris has developed a close link, the Israeli Ambassador Mark Regev, the Prime Minister's special adviser on communities, and - on his penultimate day in office - Jonathan Arkush, who gave us a fascinating insight into what had been a difficult last few weeks during which the Board of Deputies had lead our community by making clear #EnoughIsEnough in relation to anti-Semitism within the Labour Party.

At the same time we have been successful in our shul services where we have been superbly led as always by Rabbi Harris. Chazzan Shlomo Gerzi sang beautifully and at times was joined by Lawrence Lederman's excellent choir. We should also mention Shlomo and Joy's Shabbat lunches at the Shul and all their socialising amongst our members - they are a great asset.

We must pay tribute to Rabbi Harris for all he does within the Synagogue building and outside of it. In addition to the excellence of his leyning and sermons he does so much for the welfare of our members both in good times and sad. Much of his work is behind the scenes and done in a quiet and discreet manner without attracting attention or seeking praise, and often is with the involvement of Judith and his family. Rabbi Harris has this year embarked on a demanding Dayanim programme which we support as we recognise the great benefit to the wider Jewish community of having a Rabbi being fully qualified as a Dayan. Our Rabbi has taken on a difficult task in seeking to achieve this qualification and we wish him every success with it.

We continued with our Scholar in Residence programme and enjoyed the benefit of the experienced and highly qualified Lindsay Simmonds followed by Danielle Gedalla. We believe it is good to encourage women at different stages of their spiritual development. We thank Lindsay and Danielle for all their efforts on our behalf and we look forward to continuing this programme as it strengthens the role of women within our community and enhances learning within our synagogue. The success of the programme is becoming clearer all the time and we want to credit Rabbi Harris and Judith for their endeavours in this regard.



There is still an issue as to how best to try and create a *ruach* within the synagogue building. One way is to have a *mechitza* and there have been various trials this year involving a temporary one. At the moment it is an ongoing issue to decide how to implement this in a way that will be satisfactory to the whole community.

We spent much of the year engaging with professionals to form proposals for a new Community Centre. The feedback from Camden and English Heritage were a surprise to us, as they strongly suggested the preference



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of a more modern building contrasting with the adjoining listed Synagogue building. With this and the rapidly rising costs of construction we have no choice but to scale back our ambition so we can obtain planning permission and raise funds for a building that will meet only the essential requirements of our community. This will be a challenge for the new team over the coming months.

The office has worked well this year and for that we thank Candice who has now been in the job for four years, and is familiar with the processes, the events and our members. She has been unstintingly supported by Madeleine, Beverly Ostrin, Meta Solomons and Nina Geller. Beverley has done so much in the office and was instrumental in the organising of the excellent Isaiah Berlin Lecture given last year by Daniel Taub and assisting with the Shul magazine. Nina is the heartbeat of this Shul and we all owe her our immense gratitude for everything she does.

Tony Ostrin remains indefatigable and relentlessly positive.

Tony Tigner-Orchudesch and David Simmons ensure we are safe dealing with security matters. William Geller looks after our buildings (and our people). This year he managed the replacement of the Jerusalem window for which Manny and Brigitta Davidson generously donated funds. It really is a team effort and with the valuable assistance of Gilberto and Jenny we are able to do many good things for our Hampstead community and the wider community. As we witnessed on our last Shabbat in office when President of the Board of Deputies Jonathan Arkush was our guest speaker, Hampstead retains a very special place in Anglo Jewry. We are a prestigious synagogue with a tolerant and intelligent community, a beautiful building and a much respected Rabbi. We should not let ourselves forget this and should seek to build on it.

We thank all of you for being a wonderful community and for all your invaluable and precious support. You have given us more than you can ever know and it has been the greatest privilege to serve you over the last few years. We know you are in good hands with Madeleine as our Chair. She is an outstanding leader with seemingly inexhaustible energy and drive. Anyone who was at the garden party hosted by her and Richard on a perfect day last summer or involved in the Peace of Mind Programme will know what she can do and how wonderful she is at making things happen. We wish her, her team and all the community continued success.



We wish to thank a few of the people who have given us support over the years. Michael Selby has been a superb addition to the team. Michael Haringman still does so much and is really the honorary father of the Shul.

G-d's Reassuring Promise

Rabbi Dr Raphael Zarum, Dean of the London School of Jewish Studies, gives you something to think about this Yom Kippur

The Yom Kippur Machzor is so long that as we turn page after page our minds can easily wander away from the essence of the day. But there is one little prayer that really gets to me and is a reminder of what Yom Kippur is all about. I am referring to the Thirteen Attributes of God (*Yud Gimmel Middot*). For many of us, just the first few words of this prayer evoke the traditional tune: *Adonai, Adonai, El, Rachum, vChanun, Erech Apayim...*

We recite this short text of just eighteen words over and over again at the beginning and end of Yom Kippur. Like the chorus of a song, it is the constant refrain of the *selichot* prayers in the *Máariv* and *Neilah* services. Why do we repeat it so much?

In the paragraph that introduces the Thirteen Attributes we read as follows: "God, You taught us to say the thirteen, so remember the covenant of the thirteen for us today..."

It was at Mount Sinai, after the sin of the Golden Calf, that Moses first heard God tell him about the Thirteen (Exodus 34:6-7). According to Rabbi Yochanan in the Talmud (Rosh HaShana 17b), "God said to Moses: Whenever Israel sin let them say this prayer before me and I will forgive them. This sounds fancifully magical – just recite the Thirteen, says God, and I promise everything will be OK."

What is the magic contained within these words? At first glance they seem to be a straightforward listing of God's forgiving traits – merciful, gracious, slow to anger, full of

kindness etc. As a child I never understood how cataloguing God's niceness could actually make a difference. Do we really just have to schmooze the Almighty? It seemed almost banal.

My mistake was relying on the translation of the tenth attribute. The Hertz Chumash, Jerusalem Bible and JPS all render *Noseh A-von* as forgiving iniquity. Similarly, the Artscroll translates the phrase as Forgiver of iniquity. But, respectfully, I think they are all wrong.

Noseh A-von literally means to carry iniquity. In its various forms, the Hebrew word *noseh* (from the grammatical root *nun-shin-aleph*) occurs hundreds of times in the Torah and generally means to carry, raise up or take account of. So, for example, in the *sedra* called *Naso* the heads of the Levites are *raised (naso)* in order to *count (se'oo)* them; and their job was to *carry (se'et)* the portable Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Translating *Noseh A-von* as carry iniquity transforms the entire meaning of the prayer. Instead of a list it becomes a request. I would paraphrase it like this:

God, O Lord who is merciful, gracious, slow to anger etc, *please carry* our iniquity, sin and error...

We are asking God to carry our mistakes on our behalf. The weight of our sins is hard to bear. We tend to hide our mistakes, even from ourselves, and try not to think about them. Facing up to them is painful and shameful and most of us are not ready. So, for a while, we ask God to literally take the weight off our shoulders.



The London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS) has classes and *shiurim* for adults, given by dynamic lecturers both during the day and in the evenings throughout the year. To receive the weekly updates of events, email lsjs.ac.uk.

LSJS also runs a BA and MA in Jewish Education, both of which can be studied on campus or online, as well as numerous teacher training courses. For more information about the degree and teacher training courses, go to www.lsjs.ac.uk | jane.clist@lsjs.ac.uk | 020 8203 6427.

This reading of *Noseh A-von* reminds me of that famous poem, *Footprints*, about a dreamer who sees two sets of footprints all along the sandy pathway of their life: One belonging to me and the other to the Lord. Looking back, the dreamer asks God why there is only one set of footprints during the most difficult, lowest and saddest, times in their life. God replies, "It was then that I carried you."

There is a concept in psychology called emotional containment. For example, a parent offers their child the experience not only of having their distress relieved but, more importantly, of being understood. The parent contains, or *carries*, the worries and fears expressed by the child, in order to help them come to terms with their feelings and gradually face up to them. When containment is deprived, emotional growth can be distorted. As adults we learn to contain ourselves.

God then is our parent who contains the distress we express over our mistakes. In this way God allows us the space to move on and learn to stand up to our inner fears. My approach is in line with the great medieval biblical commentator Rashi's explanation of the Thirteen Attributes episode. He writes that God is not altogether indulgent of sin, but little by little, makes an accounting of the sinner (see his commentary on Exodus 34:7 and 32:34). In other words, as we grow we are ready and able to gradually take on more responsibility for what we have done and what we have become. So God obliges.

In the last century we have seen governments and authorities – such as the Vatican, the USA, Britain and Germany – admit responsibility, apologise and begin to make amends for the specific historic injustices they have wrought on certain groups of people within and beyond their own borders. It can take years before we are ready to *noseh a-von*.

In truth our sins can never really be wiped out, but we can change our attitude towards them. Over time we can learn to carry them for ourselves, face up to the effect they have had on our lives and then learn to change. The true lesson of constantly reciting the Thirteen is that we can ask God to carry and contain our sins until we are ready to address them. This makes it much easier for us to make the first move.

That is why this little prayer means so much to me. It is both reassuring and challenging at the same time. Reassuring in that I feel relief as the weight of mistakes is temporarily lifted, but challenging in that I know my task is to learn to be more responsible and honest about myself.

The beautiful and emotional words of the prophet Isaiah also teach us this truth. God says,

Listen to Me, O House of Jacob, all that are left of the House of Israel, who have been supported since birth, carried since leaving the womb: Till you grow old, I will still be the same; Until you turn grey, I will tolerate; I was the Maker, and I will be the Carrier; I will tolerate and rescue you. (Isaiah 46:3-4).

A Tribute To FRIEDA BERGER

By Adrienne Powell



I wish to pay a tribute to a very special regular congregant who sadly died a short while ago. Her continued optimism in the face of adversity is an example to us all and one I hope I can try and emulate.

Born in Dortmund, Germany of Polish parents, Frieda (together with her brother Bernard and sister Greta) arrived in Harwich on the night of 14th/15th December 1938 as part of the Kindertransport. It was just one week before her eighth birthday. After an initial stay at Dovercourt near Harwich, Frieda and Greta were moved to a centre in Burgess Hill run by the St Johns Wood Liberal Synagogue. In due course her siblings were settled with families in Stamford Hill, whilst Frieda was placed with a wonderful couple who owned a pig farm in Rotherfield, Sussex. They ensured Frieda received a fine education at Tunbridge Wells County Grammar School.

After leaving school, she lived with other 'kinder' at a centre known as The Beacon in Tunbridge Wells. She never forgot the day a certain Rev Isaac Levy visited. He was so delighted to find one person - Frieda - who knew the Shema by heart he gave her a big hug. She also recalls being at The Beacon on 8th May 1945 and hearing the news that the war had ended.

One week before her 21st birthday Frieda moved to London with a close friend from The Beacon, and established a home in West Hampstead where she lived for more than 60 years. For many years she worked in an administrative role at a firm of consulting engineers.

Frieda was encouraged to visit Hampstead Synagogue by her sister, and became a regular congregant here. With its imposing interior and impressive dome, like the one in Dortmund, Hampstead immediately reminded her of the 'gold-gilt' synagogue that her family had attended there. It was practically identical, and she immediately felt at home.

As one of our most long-standing and regular congregants Frieda was honoured in 2016 as Eshet Chayil. She told me this was one of the best experiences of her life and she said I would never realise what this meant to her. On occasions when I walked Frieda home she explained that there was another angel in her life, her wonderful neighbour, Ian Stitt, who was always there to help her: setting her up on email, fixing things in her flat (including her fridge), taking her to medical appointments etc. Frieda received great joy and love from being part of the community in Hampstead and it was her neighbour that helped her sustain her ability to enjoy living in her flat and maintaining her independence, and then visited her every day at hospital. We at Hampstead would like to honour Ian for his selfless devotion and realisation of one of our most important commandments: *"Love your neighbour as yourself: I am the Lord... When a stranger comes to live in your land, do not mistreat him... Treat the stranger the way you treat your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were strangers in Egypt."* (Lev. 19:33-34).[1]

In a moving tribute to his aunt, Shlomo Avraham Kurrant told us: "Frieda had such a *simchas chayim* - a zest for life - and G-d rescued her, protected her and cured her so many times



that, during her final hospitalisation, she could scarcely believe that she would soon pass away, on 22nd April/7th Iyar.

Two days earlier, she dictated a list of names to be informed upon her imminent demise. It was not so much to apprise people of her situation, rather it was to alert her friends as to the reason why they would no longer be receiving the timely cards, congratulatory or comforting emails and considerate letters, photographs or gifts. Frieda loved people - adults and children - who accepted her for who she was and did not attempt to change her. To these people - family, friends, acquaintances - she was unique, a 'real character.' Essentially, Frieda was a happy, outgoing person, cherishing family, friends and neighbours, and one who wanted to improve herself. She was humanly inconsistent, stoic Jewishly, and tolerant of others.

She fulfilled G-d's command to *'Choose life, with all of your heart, with all of your soul and with all of your strength.'*

Struggling to speak a few hours before her passing, Frieda uttered her final request - the main thought that preyed upon her mind - 'Send my love to.....' and proceeded to mention many individuals. She did not need to add: 'You know I mean it,' because one knew she did.

She is sorely missed and fondly remembered. May her memory be a blessing."

What is GDPR?

And How Does It Affect Me? *Candice Janet*

▶ **The General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR)** is a legal framework that sets out guidelines for the collection, processing and retention of personal information by organisations within the European Union (EU). GDPR builds upon and strengthens the provisions of the previous Data Protection Act 1998.

You may have heard that data protection regulations relating to how we use your personal data and send communications, such as what's going on in your community, news on events, fundraising activities, products and services have changed from 25 May 2018 (GDPR). We've compiled a handy guide below for both our Hampstead members and non-members of the shul to help you opt in to continue receiving our communications according to your preferences.



Action required for Members only

Our new tool on the US Member's portal allows you to update your preferences about the type of communication you wish to receive from us. Please follow these steps:

Login to the members portal with your email and password at:

<https://myus.theus.org.uk/login/>

If you have not registered yet for this service, you can do so at:

<https://myus.theus.org.uk/register/>

Click on the **Contact Options** icon which will show a drop down menu to choose from and select the required options according to your preference.

As a member of Hampstead United Synagogue, we will of course continue to send you normal shul communications where there is a legitimate interest. However, please note that under the new rules it is very important to opt in via the member's portal to continue receiving information about our aims, ideals and ethos, fundraising activities and political campaigns if you so wish, otherwise we will not be allowed to contact you with this information. **Candice Janet**



Action required for Non-Members only

Hampstead Synagogue really wants to keep all of our friends up-to-date with everything that goes on in our community. **To do this we need your permission to hold your contact details.**

We will never pass your details to anyone else and promise to keep your details safe and secure. In addition we'll only communicate with you in a way that you are happy with; we just need your consent. Without your consent we simply won't be able to keep you up to date with what's going on. Happily, all you need to do is visit the link below and complete our short form.

<https://myus.theus.org.uk/consent-form>

Tish: What's The Verdict?

Judith Harris

Michael and I were invited as guests to a soft opening of Tish, a new kosher restaurant in Belsize Park serving European cuisine. The staff were very friendly and welcoming and ushered us to our table which was laid with a fresh linen tablecloth and serviettes. The decor was tasteful with dusky baked apple green walls and chandeliers that wouldn't have looked out of place in our Shul! Of course even more important than the decor was the food.

Michael started with Hungarian bean soup, which the proprietor, David Levin, said was his grandmother's recipe, and I had butternut squash and pearl barley risotto which had plenty of texture and flavour. For main course we had dry-aged rib eye steak, incredibly tender, and slow roast shoulder of lamb accompanied by the best chips I've had in years. Dessert was chocolate and passion fruit fondant, with

perfectly balanced flavours, for me and lemon, lime and ginger sorbets for Michael. We could tell that a tremendous amount of thought and skill had gone into creating each delicious dish. We were there on the second hottest day of the year so the air conditioning was much appreciated and the acoustics were such that we could comfortably talk to each other.

All in all very highly recommended. Tish is also open for pre-booked Friday night dinner and Shabbat lunch.



שנה טובה

Wishing you and your family a happy, healthy and sweet New Year.

**Join us for prepaid yom tov meals!
Book your table at www.tish.london/reservations**

Phone: 020 7431 3828
Email: eat@tish.london
[@tish_london](https://www.instagram.com/tish_london)

BEST WISHES FROM THE

MELLER FAMILY

AN OLD LADY'S POEM

While sorting out her husband's late aunt's home, **Sandra Conway** came across this poem. (She warns, "Remember this poem when you next meet an old person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within. We will one day be there, too!")

What do you see, nurses what do you see?
What are you thinking looking at me?
A crabby old women, not very wise, uncertain of habit, with faraway eyes?
Who dribbles her food and makes no reply
When you say in a loud voice I do wish you'd try!
Who seems not to notice the things that you do, and forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who, resisting or not, lets you do your will, with bathing and feeding, the long day to fill
Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?

Then open your eyes, nurse, you're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still, as I do at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten, with a father and mother, brothers and sisters, who love one another.
A young girl of sixteen with wings on her feet, dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet,
A bride soon at twenty—my heart gives a leap, remembering the vows that I promised to keep.

At twenty five now, I have young of my own, who need me to guide a secure happy home.
A woman of thirty, my young now grown fast, bound to each other with ties that should last.
At forty, my young sons have grown and are gone, but my man's beside me to see I don't mourn.
At fifty once more, babies play round my knee, again we know children my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead, I look to the future, I shudder with dread.
For my young are all rearing young of their own, and I think of the years and the love that I've known
I'm now an old woman, and nature is crue, "Tis jest to make old age look like a fool"

The body, it crumbles, grace and vigour depart, there is now a stone where once I had a heart.
But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells, and now and again my battered heart swells.
I remember the joys, I remember the pain, and I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years, all too few, gone too fast, and accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, people, open and see, not a crabby old woman, look closer see ME!

Greetings from the
Abramson Family

Wishing the Community a happy and healthy new year

- Madeleine & Richard Abramson

Heroic Hampstead Falls Short

Barnaby and Freddy Powell report on 2018's Cricket Match



For the Hampstead Synagogue Cricket Team, as for the Three Lions, 2018 was not to be.

The Team's bid to defend their local bragging rights was overcome by a powerful Shomrei side, without the assistance of extra time. Things started well on a sun-drenched Sunday afternoon. We made a tactical decision to colonise all of the shade, lather ourselves with sun cream, and drink water in sufficient volumes to keep a lid on the Jewish neuroses.

After losing a crucial toss and being put into field on a very dry wicket we started well, with Barnaby Powell bowling Shomrei's opener in his second over. A few edges later leading to flukey boundaries and it looked like Hampstead Synagogue were on top of Shomrei. However they fought back well, building a huge hundred partnership. Despite breaking the partnership, Shomrei still scored a significant 154 off their 20 overs. Theodore Powell's athletic fielding and a solid bowling spell from Jack Mendel not even being enough to put the brakes on their attack.

In reply, we began our innings in a safe, if ponderous, fashion. A smattering of singles, aided by the occasional boundary, helped build a solid platform. Freddy Powell started strongly and it was looking positive as Benedict Balcombe smashed some early boundaries. However, a handful of quick wickets just after 10 overs was enough to put the brakes on well and truly. Battling performances from Barnaby Powell and Rabbi Michael Harris were not enough to prevent us from being bowled out for 76. Leaving us well short of their large target. Shmorei should not be given too much credit, however, due to at least one bowler employing a questionable action (which Hampstead has since reported to the International Cricket Council's suspect bowling unit).

Thank you to all those who played and supported us (the travelling fans were in excellent voice throughout). We have already begun plotting our revenge for next year. Then cricket will be coming home (hopefully).



SHANA TOVA

Wishing you all a happy, peaceful and safe new year from CST

CST works to give British Jewry the ability to lead confident and safe lives, and we have never been better prepared to support Britain's vibrant Jewish community.

As we move into a fresh new year, we reflect on the work we have done over the last twelve months:

Since last Rosh Hashanah, CST has protected over 600 communal buildings and over 1,000 events, from the large AJEX Annual Remembrance Parade and public Chanukah candle lightings to small community events.

CST has managed a Home Office grant of £13.4 million, subsidising commercial security guards for over 400 schools, synagogues and Jewish communal buildings across the UK. We are pleased to have secured another year of funding for our work.

CST's Security Enhancement Project has funded security equipment, such as CCTV systems, fencing and alarms at hundreds of Jewish buildings across the country. This project has committed and spent over £12 million to strengthen our community's buildings against attack.

Since Rosh Hashanah last year, CST has monitored more than 4,400 cameras at over 280 synagogues, communal buildings and schools across the UK, ensuring immediate

responses to antisemitic attacks or suspicious behaviour.

CST's monitoring and analysis of antisemitism across the UK has been as vital as ever since last Rosh Hashanah, and we have strengthened Jewish communal bonds with the Police, government bodies, as well as other organisations such as Facebook, The FA and interfaith organisations, all of which impacts upon our lives and society.

Since last Rosh Hashanah, CST has committed hundreds of hours in developing its volunteers. CST volunteers are fitter, better informed and more skilled than ever before.

As we celebrate a new year, bringing both further challenges and a thriving community, we ask you to join us in helping to keep British Jewry safe and confident.

Please volunteer; CST needs volunteers to protect our Jewish community. **Please report** antisemitism or suspicious behaviour; if you experience antisemitism, such as verbal abuse, threats, graffiti or antisemitism on social media, please report it to CST. **Please consider giving a donation** to CST; all of our projects rely on communal fundraising.

CST wishes you a *Good Yom Tov* and a happy, peaceful and safe year ahead.

www.cst.org.uk

[Community Security Trust](#) [@CST_UK](#) [CSTmedia](#)

National Emergency Number (24-hour) **0800 032 3263**
London (Head Office) **020 8457 9999**
Manchester (Northern Regional Office) **0161 792 6666**



The Hampstead Review

HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE
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