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## From the Editor’s Desk

The Hampstead Review 2019/5780 has been produced by great teamwork and my thanks go to Adrienne Powell who has worked so hard collating all the articles and photographs from the contributors. Thanks are also due to Alison Grunwald and Jack Mendel who spent many hours proof reading and Emily Theodore who has designed the layout for this issue. Of course, there cannot be a magazine without those who have contributed articles and once again they have been varied and interesting. From the articles we can see that this year has been a full one both for shul activities and our members’ own experiences. The Hampstead team hope that you will enjoy reading this year’s Review.



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# Welcome

## From Our Co-Chairs

**MADELEINE ABRAMSON & GABRIEL HERMAN**

Whenever you join us for a service, you may well agree that our shul provides a spiritual calmness that is very rarely experienced elsewhere. In these troubled times, a weekly visit may just be the antidote to the latest Trumpism, the Brexit Debate or another General Election.

However, we should warn you that Hampstead Synagogue does seem to attract future and past Prime Ministers. A few years ago, Boris Johnson paid us a flying visit while Mayor of London. Recently, as you may have seen on BBC, ITV and Sky News (and can read fully on page 16) we had the distinct honour of hosting Gordon Brown who came to deliver the Isaiah Berlin Annual Lecture. We also welcomed a group of MPs who wanted to learn more about Judaism, see a report on that visit on page 18.

As co-chairs, we feel honoured to lead a very special community. Our challenge is not only to maintain the

standard of services currently provided to members but also to look to the future. That is why we have begun the process to rebuild our badly ageing Community Centre. We are not in the business of building buildings but are focussed on the need to rebuild our community and feel that this is the most creative way to do it. You can read more about this exciting project later in this magazine and learn about ways in which you can offer your support.

We have also spent a great deal of time building up our professional team and are looking to make more appointments soon. A number of introductions to those joining us can be found elsewhere in this year's magazine and our Review of the Year tries to mention and thank all our professionals and volunteers for their invaluable efforts over the last year. Sincere apologies if you feel we've missed your name.



We must thank the editor, his sub editors, editorial director, advertising manager and artwork designer - an enormous amount of work goes into putting this magazine together. We're sure you will enjoy this magazine because it features so many of our members' contributions. Our community as we've said before, and will say again, is very special.



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**“As co-chairs, we feel honoured to lead a very special community.”**



**OUR NEW RABBINIC INTERNS P. 33**

### NEWS ABOUT OUR CHAZZAN

The Hampstead Community has missed Shlomo and Joy Gerzi. Our services are not the same without Shlomo's wonderful chazzanut, and or Joy's presence and lunches. Unfortunately Shlomo has not been well since March. But he is now making an excellent recovery and will be back with us for some of the services over the Yamim Noraim. We will be delighted to have him back. Meanwhile we have had help from our own community and from various guest Chazzans. Over the Yamim Noraim we will have help from Zaki Cooper and Jonathan Garcia who will work with our usual choir, led as always by Lawrence Lederman. We welcome them to Hampstead and hope you will enjoy the services.

### A MESSAGE FROM SHLOMO

Dear Friends at Hampstead,

This year has been challenging for me and Joy, especially in June when I had a triple bypass operation. Joy and I would like to thank you for your care, concern and useful advice over the past few weeks. The congregation has been amazing by the number of phone calls received and the many visits to my home. This has been greatly appreciated and I will be forever grateful.

Joy and I have missed being with you at Hampstead as you are like family to us. They always say that: "God works in mysterious ways", but it is no mystery because the Hampstead congregation has always been kind and helpful. Looking forward to seeing you at Rosh Hashanah and wish you all Shana Tova. Thank you, my friends.

Shlomo.

# Looking Back, Looking Forward

## Reflections at Rosh Hashanah 5780

RABBI DR MICHAEL HARRIS



**My first Rosh Hashanah as the Rabbi of Hampstead was in September 1995.**

Glenn Hoddle was the manager of Chelsea, Ken Bates the Chairman. I had been in the job three weeks when the Yom Tovim began. I was nervous but looked forward to the Yamim Noraim with keen anticipation. The experience did not disappoint – the Shul was full, beautiful, and resplendent. It was somewhat quaintly formal, but it was after all last century...

**“Seeing the range of events advertised on our weekly Shul community email often makes me feel pride in our Shul.”**

This Yamim Noraim will please God be my twenty-fifth at Hampstead. Although perhaps a little less nervous in the lead-up than a quarter-century ago, my anticipation remains undimmed. Our Shul is in so many ways at its best on the Yamim Noraim – fuller than at any other time, with a sense of occasion as at few other times, and blessed with the unique soundtrack of the familiar and haunting Yamim Noraim melodies. This year we have a very special treat with which to begin the Yom Tov season as we welcome back for First Night Selichot Rabbi Lord Sacks and the Shabbaton Choir under Stephen Levey who have treated us to several magical selichot nights in the past.

We enter the Yamim Noraim period with some wonderful communal memories from the past year. Gordon Brown’s Isaiah Berlin Lecture, set up and organised by Zaki Cooper, Henry Grunwald and others was universally considered magnificent and attracted national news coverage. It is the first time I have watched the ITN News late on a Sunday night and seen coverage of what has taken place at our Shul earlier in the evening!

We enjoyed a very well-received Pre-Kiddush talk from HE Mark Regev, Ambassador of Israel to the Court of St. James.

Our Scholar in Residence Ma’ayan Raisel Freedman visited us several times during the year and presented excellent shiurim, and we look forward to hearing of the further progress of this most promising and talented Jewish educator. The position of Scholar in Residence that Hampstead created four 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 of which we can be very proud. As I write, we are moving towards securing our fifth Scholar for the coming Jewish year.

Seeing the range of events advertised on our weekly Shul community email often makes me feel pride in our Shul. To name but a few examples, on Purim we held our fourth successive annual women’s Megillah reading, organised by Shana Boltin, and Women’s Hallel services on Yom Tovim have successfully taken place on several occasions. The Seniors’ Lunches and Teas organised by Nina Geller and Madeleine Abramson have been most successful and are a lovely opportunity for senior members to spend time with each other at the Shul. Our Youth Worker Hannah Kaufmann led some imaginative and stimulating discussions for our older children and teens. And we continued to engage with the wider community as well with Tony Ostrin’s interfaith work with the Borough of Camden, a pre-Kiddush talk from two of our local Police officers, visits to local mosques by Tony and myself, school visits to our Shul, our Mitzvah Day project helping local homeless people masterminded by Sandra Conway and our ongoing relationship with FEAST.

At Adrienne Powell’s suggestion, I began a monthly Beginners’ Talmud Circle which I am frankly loving. “Rabbi” of course means “teacher”, and although a twenty-first century communal rabbi has a wide range of responsibilities, I – and I suspect many other rabbis – am never more

professionally satisfied than when fulfilling this most central aspect of my role.

In order to teach, one must never stop learning and studying. I was grateful this year therefore to have the opportunity to continue my dayanut studies under the auspices of the Montefiore Endowment and Eretz Hemdah. We are currently studying the laws of ketubot and witnesses, the third major topic out of the five we are covering. My main adult education course this past year was based in large part on what I have learned in the dayanut course.

I am incredibly blessed in Hampstead to have a community who are interested in academic and intellectual pursuits. Having run an adult education course at Shul on Nietzsche and Rabbi Soloveitchik a few years ago I was privileged to finally launch a book on the two thinkers with my co-author Professor Daniel Rynhold in New York in October, and to hold a book event at our local, wonderful JW3 in November.

As we try to develop our Shul still further, please God, in the new year 5780, I look forward to continuing to work with Chazan Shlomo, Madeleine, Gabriel, Michael, Henry, Sandra and the other members of our excellent lay and professional teams. I would like to warmly acknowledge once again our truly amazing volunteers who shun the limelight but who do so much to help our community in welfare work, in the Shul office, in security and much else, and who, in the words of the prayer we say every Shabbat, are *oskim betzorchei tzibbur be-emunah* – “they busy themselves with the needs of the community in faithfulness”.

Judith and the family join me in wishing all our members and their families *ketiva vachatima tova, shana tova umetuka*. May God grant us a good and sweet year, a year of blessing, spiritual growth and peace.

# Robert Max

## IN CONVERSATION WITH ADRIENNE POWELL

Hampstead Synagogue member **Robert Max** recently performed Bach's six suites for Cello at Hampstead Synagogue to a packed audience. Robert performed this concert for no fee and helped advertise the event to increase the size of the audience. The proceeds will go towards funding a youth leader for our teenagers. Many thanks to Robert! I thought I would ask him to answer a few burning questions.

**We would love to know what inspired you to perform Bach's Six Suites for cello all together in one concert.**

In 2015 I went to hear the world-famous Chinese/American cellist Yo Yo Ma play all the Suites at the BBC Proms in a late night concert. The hall was packed and it was the most amazing experience. I found the audience's silent, rapt attention astounding. In no sense is this music "easy-listening" but there were five thousand people hungry to hear every note. I've been playing one Suite each year at Frinton Festival which I organise each May on the Essex coast and I thought that before I get past my sell-by date I should have a go at playing all the music this way too.

**Have you played these Suites before in one concert?**

Having made the decision to play all six together in Frinton

I immediately knew that this couldn't be a one-off. For a start, it's just too much work to prepare and then I knew that I would have to grow into the experience of performing it. The Festival weekend is exciting, but as I perform in almost every concert there would be too much on my mind to be playing the Suites together for the first time.

So I called a friend in Cheltenham who organises concerts and asked if he was interested. The concert date was fixed within twenty minutes and I realised that yes, there would be broader interest in my little project. So I've also performed the Suites in Queen Mary, University of London alongside a scientist exploring cell biology, in an Arts Centre in Walton-on-Thames, in a beautiful concert hall in Oxford and in a cello shop in central London, where I played each Suite on a different cello. After a summer break I will be playing them again in a Festival up north, in Scotland, in Cambridge Summer

Music Festival and in Conway Hall in central London. Everyone's interest has genuinely exceeded my wildest dreams.

**Many people in the audience commented this seemed a significant marathon for a musician to play this all in one concert, not least memorising the music. How did you prepare to perform this music, how long did it take you to learn the music?**

When I was young I only learned a handful of the movements. While a student I studied a couple of the complete Suites and performed them a little. But since starting to teach the cello thirty years ago I have been working with my students almost every day on this music. Together we have explored every angle - how to approach it, how to study it, how to understand the music from a musical as well as technical standpoint, how to memorise it. I've shared with my students all



the "tricks", though if I'm honest I've learned much more from them than they learned from me! The only Suite that I really had to learn from scratch was the fifth Suite, and I decided to teach it to myself exactly as I would have taught it to one of my students. I discovered that I'm quite a task-master!

**It was fascinating to hear how the music changed from each Suite, can you tell us a bit more about the changes between the Suites and what you think Bach was trying to convey?**

I find it fascinating that as Bach writes more, he has more and more ideas, not less, like most mortals. He picks the smallest idea and then spins it outwards in spiralling, widening circles in ways that are so perfect that they sound inevitable. Which of course they aren't. If they had been, many other composers would have written as successfully for solo cello, and so few have managed to achieve this.

Always present is the tension between the idea of a dance being something perhaps a little superficial, and it being one of the fundamentals of the greatest western music. Bach explores this tension so beautifully. Some of the dances contain such a huge emotion, but it's equally remarkable that others are just very jolly.

**As someone who has never played a cello I did not realise there was a five stringed cello and so I wanted to know more about when this was originally made, why and how it changes the way you play. I just kept thinking it must be like playing a new instrument.**

In Bach's time instruments weren't as fixed as they tend to be these days. You could tune the strings differently, or play them in different ways, probably depending on where you lived or who had taught you. Bach sometimes wrote for instruments that have since gone out of

fashion and the 5-string cello is one of them. You can play the 6th Suite on a 4-string cello, but it's torturously hard (unless you are Yo Yo Ma). So to have a higher string at the top makes life easier and is what he intended. Instead of going up higher on your highest A string you turn left and play on the new highest E string. It takes a bit of getting used to, but it's not like learning a new instrument.

**I know you plan to perform these Suites in a few more concerts. Once you have completed these concerts what is your next big project?**

Good question. I'm not sure. All the small projects which make up my musical life take up so much time and imagination that I haven't quite sorted out the bigger picture. But there's all Beethoven's works for cello and piano looming somewhere in the distance and perhaps some concerts playing all of his astounding late String Quartets...

# Reaching For The Stars

RICHARD ABRAMSON

Mankind dreams of going beyond earth, freeing ourselves from the shackles of an endangered planet. Travel to the moon and to other planets in our solar system is possible, but they present an inhospitable environment. Can we go beyond, to planets of other stars? Astronomers are discovering vast numbers of such planets, and surely one or two of them might be a happy alternative home? Sadly not; the scale of interstellar distance will defeat us, as I explain below. The universe is incredibly vast, which for those of a faith-based background must raise the question of the purpose, if any, of this unreachable expanse.

Space travel has already produced the fastest man-made machines in history. Any rocket must go at great speed simply to escape earth's gravity, but some have gone well beyond that in order to travel in reasonable time to far-flung corners of the solar system. The fastest yet is the Juno probe which, with the help of Jupiter's enormous gravity, briefly reached a staggering 165,000 mph. At that speed it would take only one minute to go from Hampstead shul to a shul in New York. We are yet young in technological progress; suppose we can one day construct a craft – and not only a craft, but a manned one – that reaches a million mph; here to NY in 10 seconds! Now surely that would stand a chance of getting us to the stars. Well, just to reach the very nearest star it would take our superfast rocket... 2,800 years! Even with a frankly incredible 10 times that speed, it would still be 280 years; the practical problems of such a flight are simply insuperable. Oh, and that's before considering how such a craft could ever be slowed down at the other end. Most stars are at high multiples of the distance of the nearest star; to cross our entire galaxy would take our now double-super-fast craft 7 million years.

The barriers to interstellar travel are not simply technological; the laws of physics determine that at ordinary speeds we cannot reach the stars in any reasonable time, and at near-light speeds (which are frankly unimaginable to achieve anyway) any craft large enough to support people would be blown apart by interstellar dust. Never mind, we have a wonderful planet. One lesson from consideration of the stars is to reinforce the need to look after the earth.

So the next question; why are the stars so far away, or to put it another way, why is the universe so fearsomely huge? And huge it is; our entire galaxy is one of a hundred billion galaxies.

The answer has to start with an acceptance of the laws of physics. The physical creation is set to run according to those laws, and always was. Scientists are as certain as may be that this universe began with the so-called 'big bang'. There is uncertainty over what happened at the first instant of the universe, but from really, really early on science can track its progress using known physics. ('Early on' means less than a million billionth of a second.) To all effects and purposes, the universe is fully formed in a flash; and it does NOT start small and grow large – there is no 'outside' for it to grow into. From the word go the universe is infinite, without any boundaries. It only grows less dense and less hot as time goes on.

From the early pure energy of the universe there evolve particles, including protons and electrons; after a few hundred thousand years the heat reduces to level that allows their mutual attraction to settle them into atoms – hydrogen, mostly. Time goes on, and the tiniest

of variations in their distribution results in the eventual clumping together of hydrogen clouds, so vast that the pressure at the centre ignites a nuclear fusion reaction, and for the first time there are stars shining. Within the stars elements more complex than hydrogen start to form.

The stars have a life measured in billions of years. At their end, some explode in supernovae, and that produces still heavier elements than the normal life of a star can produce. Go forward around 8 billion years from the big bang, and

our galaxy has in it clouds of all the stable elements, although still mostly hydrogen, and one such cloud is drawn together to form our sun and its rings of planets. Earth forms around this time, soon colliding with a smaller planet to result in our very special earth-moon couplet. The earth has to cool down, and probably have showered upon it water from cool clumps of matter whirling around the sun. A billion years

on and life emerges; 4 billion years and complex life forms evolve; another billion years and at the end of it – mankind!

This is what the laws of creation have done; and it could not have been done much more quickly. It follows that in that vast expanse of time the universe has had time to grow to its present monumental scale (or more accurately to its present low density, leaving stars far apart). So, if we are to exist at all, we need the seemingly incredible scale of the stars to allow that existence. The possibility, then, and of course it cannot be proved, is that we – humanity – are the point, the purpose, of this amazing creation.





## Working With Interfaith

TONY OSTRIN

My main link with interfaith issues is being a member of the Camden Council Faith Leaders Forum. A variety of issues have been raised relating to mental health and pastoral care; the Jewish community is well organised in this respect although others are not. I have been able to put forward a number of suggestions to help other communities; I participated in an interfaith walk, bringing the group to our shul where Rabbi Michael gave an explanatory talk. I, with other members of the shul, attended two events arranged by our local Islamic communities in Cricklewood. Rabbi Michael has been a great support by attending both these events. In November I represented our community at an Interfaith Remembrance event held at the Hampstead Memorial.

There have also been meetings relating to the security at faith events – the Jewish community, again, is well organised in this respect with the help of the CST, and with our expertise we can offer advice and help to other groups.

Recently I attended a conference organised by Camden Council: “We Make Camden”. Presentations were given suggesting that involvement in theatre, sport and art can help social cohesion in the wider community. In all, the year has been a busy one and I am happy to continue in this role.

**“A variety of issues have been raised... I have been able to put forward a number of suggestions to help other communities.”**



## Welcoming Our New Synagogue Administrator

HAYLEY MARKS

Hayley has grown up in North West London living in Stanmore, Pinner and then in Borehamwood. She attended St Helens School in Northwood and then took a gap year in Israel with FZY before attending Leeds Metropolitan University to study Childhood Studies.

Hayley has been an active member of Stanmore and Canons Park Shul since she was a child and has taken part in and directed a number of community productions such as “Back to Shushan” and “Chaim Potter and the Megillah of Fire”. Hayley is a graduate of Tribe’s first cohort on their Learn2Lead programme and has continued to use and develop these skills by completing a leadership programme run by FZY during her gap year.

During University Hayley studied Childhood Development with a specialism in developmental disorders. With her passion for improving the lives of those with additional needs, she spent her university holidays working at Norwood Unity.

Upon graduating from Leeds Hayley worked within the community as a Nursery Assistant at Kisharon Tuffkid, volunteering at Kisharon School and Norwood in the afternoons as well as working on the board for FZY. Following this she worked at Treehouse School in Muswell Hill where she trained in ABA Therapy for Autism and worked 1:1 with children with low functioning Autism for two years. Taking a break from such a high intensity career, Hayley worked as an administrator and Customer Services Manager for her father’s business for 4 years. Hayley now joins us as she seeks to return to work within the community.

When Hayley is not at work you can usually find her engaging with one of her many hobbies, learning new skills such as the drums or British Sign Language, attending and performing in musical theatre shows, creating her handmade Jewish gifts sold for charity at coffee mornings, antique and bargain hunting or at home cooking and writing recipes.

# The Life of a Community Manager

## My Experiences at Hampstead Shul

CANDICE JANET



On Friday 17th May I turned off my computer screen for the final time in the Hampstead Shul office. I looked around and realised this small office, in which I had spent nearly five years, was not just a place of work; it had also been my second home with the staff and volunteers at Hampstead Shul like family.

Not without its challenges, with the phone and doorbell constantly ringing, emails coming in fast and furiously too, daily life in a shul office could be quite demanding. Especially on a Friday afternoon when the shul was about to close for Shabbat: the phone rings and a member calls to query their membership subscription, Npower turns up unexpectedly to read the electricity meters and the mail arrives late. If there was time for a tea and biscuit break at some point - it had been a good day.

There was always an event, kiddush or festival for the shul office to organise. Most importantly the catering needed to be arranged; no wonder

I spent most of my day thinking about food! From making sure the shul's finances were in order to writing the weekly newsletter to let members know more about our services, events and community news, there was never a dull moment.

I would not have been able to 'weather the storms' without the support of our wonderful team of volunteers. They work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that the Hampstead community is well looked after. I valued their dedication, commitment and of course friendship.

Reflecting back on my role as Community Manager for Hampstead Synagogue, I am extremely grateful to everyone for making my experience as part of the Hampstead Synagogue team such a positive one. I can honestly say that I felt privileged to have been part of such a warm, welcoming and dynamic community. I will always have lovely memories of working in the Shul office to take away with me.

**“I am extremely grateful to everyone for making my experience as part of the Hampstead Synagogue team such a positive one”**

# Building A Future

GABRIEL HERMAN

The firing shot has been fired and the race to rebuild the Community Centre has begun.

Three architects will soon be approached for their interpretation of what can be achieved within the footprint of our existing site. Their task — our task — is not to recreate what we have at present but to reimagine the concept of a Community Centre and make it relevant for the 21st century.

Of course, we have to have a few ideas to bring to the table. Some of our current thinking dates back to the late 19th century when Hampstead was the vanguard of radical liberalism. We were innovative, modern and welcoming to all. This will be our ambition for the new building.

By the Sixties, the optimism of the times led to the building we have today. It featured space for classrooms, a cinema, a theatre, a concert hall and of course, places to eat, drink and socialise. Having as many uses for the new building will be another guiding principle.

### What will our Community Centre look like?

From the outside it will look very much like it does now. This is because Camden planners have made it clear that they rather like the existing sight lines which don't detract from the synagogue. The real opportunity will come from looking again at the inside. We shall see what the architects come up with and you'll have an opportunity to share your opinion and ideas before the final design is chosen. What hasn't changed in 125 years is the need to fund our own projects and we believe that the costs for the new build will be around £6.5m. Naturally, we will fundraise within the community but we are also looking for partners who wish to invest in NW6.

There is no question that West Hampstead is once again attracting the attention of developers as the train stations are being upgraded and luxury blocks of flats are built on once empty land. Excellent transport links make the locale easily accessible to Jewish communities from across London such as the West End, St. John's Wood, Elstree & Borehamwood and Golders Green. We even have a direct link from Brighton!

If you know of a charity, social enterprise or business who would like to locate here and would be a good partner for us then please let me know. Perhaps an educational organisation whose programme would be of interest to our members; a media training company who could help us reach out to young people on social media or a nursery for young families in the area?

I'm also looking to form a task group to oversee the project once the architects have been appointed and until the works are completed. Again, please let me know if you feel you have something to offer.

The time is fast approaching when Hampstead will once again have one of the most beautiful synagogues in London and a state of the art Community Centre to accompany it. It will be an unbeatable combination and safeguard our community for many years to come.

That's something we should all support.

**Gabriel can be contacted via the office or at [gabriel@hampsteadshul.org.uk](mailto:gabriel@hampsteadshul.org.uk)**

# Two Greats at Isaiah Berlin Lectures: Gordon Brown and Professor Margaret MacMillan

ZAKI COOPER

**Switching on the Ten O' Clock News on Sunday 7 July, it was thrilling, if a little incongruous, to see our beautiful shul featured on the bulletin.**

The seventeenth Isaiah Berlin Lecture, delivered by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, made headlines all weekend. Brown's robust condemnation of anti-Semitism in the contemporary Labour Party, including his unequivocal statement that the Labour Party owed the Jewish community an apology, featured heavily on the news agenda.

The 500 people who attended Brown's lecture witnessed a masterclass in oratory from the former PM. Brown, who was Prime Minister from 2007 to 2010 and the longest-serving Chancellor in modern history, delivered a lecture entitled: "Challenges of a Fast-Changing Global Society."

Noticeably at home speaking in a place of worship, as befitting the son of a Church of Scotland Minister, Brown opened the lecture by saying: "It's a real privilege to be invited here this evening to be asked to give this very prestigious lecture in front of such a distinguished audience in such a sacred place (which is so much part of the history of the Jewish community) and the history of this country in honour of one of the great public intellectuals who was so close to this synagogue."

Addressing the Jewish community, he said: "The Labour Party owes you an unqualified apology. And that is only the starting point in repairing the trust that has been broken." The media coverage focused on one of his proposals to automatically expel party members where there is irrefutable evidence of anti-Semitism.

In the lecture, he spoke about three features of globalisation – economic discontent, anti-politics sentiment and cultural pessimism. He elaborated on these areas saying that they raised three key questions - who has what? who controls whom? and who are we?

Against the backdrop of the polarised debate over Brexit, Brown differentiated between generous patriotism and narrow nationalism. Drawing on Sir Isaiah Berlin's thinking, he referred to the great liberal value of empathy, and the importance of understanding the other person's point of view.

Showing the range and depth of his intellect, Brown quoted figures as diverse as Adam Smith, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud and George Orwell. He told some cracking anecdotes, including one about Einstein's driver (which I first heard him use at a CST dinner around 15 years ago) and a personal experience of Silvio Berlusconi's

vanity (the gist of which highlighted the importance the Italian leader placed on having a make-up artist for a pivotal press conference during the financial crisis).

Closing the lecture,

Brown made an impassioned plea: "Whatever the difficulties, the dangers, the risks and whatever problems we are going through, let's not forget that it is only because we have forgotten about the evils that brought the need for co-operation, that people have thought that co-operation is not the better way forward. I urge you all to think that we have got to put the case for co-operation through education, not just in dealing with anti-Semitism and not just in dealing with the problems we now

face in Britain but in dealing with these great global problems, to create a more empathetic community."

Prominent guests included MPs Keir Starmer, Louise Ellman and Ian Austin, the last of whom was honoured for his work combating anti-Semitism at a reception before the lecture. Others to attend included a former Solicitor General of India, Brown's Director of Communications from his time at No.10 and members of the former PM's family. He was accompanied by his wife, Sarah and son, Fraser. Afterwards, Sarah, who has over one million twitter followers, sent the following message on the social media platform: "Thank you @HampsteadShul for the warm welcome for our family as we joined your guests for the Isaiah Berlin Lecture. Co-operation and empathy are so important in this interdependent world – and we share your determination to tackle antisemitism in the strongest possible way."



This year's lecture was a riveting occasion but last year's lecture by the eminent historian and Reith lecturer, Professor Margaret MacMillan was no less engrossing in its content. Speaking a few days before the

centenary of the end of the First World War last November, MacMillan's lecture was entitled "A Century Later: Does the Great War Matter in the Present?" A full hall of 200 people were captivated by her intellect, charm and sense of optimism.

The last two years of Isaiah Berlin lectures have certainly given us a lot to live up to for future years.

# MPs Visit Hampstead Synagogue

AMANDA BOWMAN

**On 30th April 2019, a cross-party group of MPs and Peers including Shadow International Trade Secretary Barry Gardiner MP visited Hampstead Synagogue as part of a tour of Jewish community institutions in North West London and to learn about Jewish life in Britain.**

The tour was organised by the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Jews. The group – which also included Shadow Farming Minister Mary Glendon MP, Shadow Mental Health Minister Paula Sherriff MP, SNP Spokesperson for Mental Health Dr Lisa Cameron MP, Independent Liberal Democrat Stephen Lloyd MP, and Parliamentary staff – visited the Jewish Museum to learn about the history of the Jewish community before coming on to Hampstead Synagogue, which was for some

the first synagogue they had been into. The tour ended at the JW3 community centre and lunch at Zest kosher restaurant.

Gabriel Herman, Co-Chair of our shul did a great job in sharing some of the history of the synagogue and explaining our Shabbat services and minhag. SNP MP Dr Lisa Cameron said: "It was fascinating to learn more about the Jewish community, its history and customs. It is so important that we take time to educate ourselves about the community and its immense contribution to our society."

The Board of Deputies provides the secretariat to the APPG on British Jews and both Jerry Lewis and I were delighted to be invited to be part of the tour.



# CONNECTING PEOPLE



Kol Nidre has traditionally been a time when our community supports Israel and specifically the work of UJIA. This has made a significant difference to the lives of so many people over so many years.

This Kol Nidre, our appeal is to raise funds for projects in Israel that support those on the periphery through education and into employment.

UJIA depends on the support from our community as we look to expand our reach and impact on the lives of even more young people. Your continued generosity is vital as we build lifelong connections between people and communities in the UK and those in Israel.

# CHANGING LIVES

To support the work of UJIA today, you can donate online at [ujia.org/kn19](http://ujia.org/kn19) or contact Jonathan Roland on 020 7424 6447 or email [jonathan.roland@ujia.org](mailto:jonathan.roland@ujia.org)

[ujia.org](http://ujia.org)



United Jewish Israel Appeal is a registered charity No. 1060078 (England & Wales) and Sc 039181 (Scotland).



# Primary School Visits To Hampstead Synagogue

ADRIENNE POWELL & JACK MENDEL



**When local schools approach Hampstead Synagogue, bursting to find more out about our rituals and customs, it is a very easy decision to open our doors and let them in.**

We had a flurry of requests from local primary schools this year, who wanted to bring their young pupils to see our beautiful shul, and learn about what happens inside.

Nina Geller helped assemble a box of Jewish artefacts which enabled us to bring to life Jewish festivals and traditions, while Adrienne drew upon valuable training with the Board of Deputies to prepare for the opportunity to showcase our lovely synagogue and share more knowledge about Judaism.

We use a special questionnaire that is sent out to each school, asking them to tell us more about why they wanted to visit Hampstead, and what they would like us to include so that we can tailor their visit. We make sure the next generation really learns about the Jewish faith and can go into the wider world better informed.

Supported by Madeleine Abramson and Tony Ostrin – who were exceptional tour guides – we had great fun welcoming more than 140 children from Childs Hill Primary School and Mitchell Brook Primary School.

After welcoming the young students, we gave an introduction to the synagogue. Tony showed them around the main synagogue in his tallit

and kippah, opening the Ark, and taking out a Sefer Torah, before explaining how it is made and what it contains.

Gathering around the central bimah to discuss other artefacts linked to shabbat and services, the students were then introduced to items from other Jewish festivals.

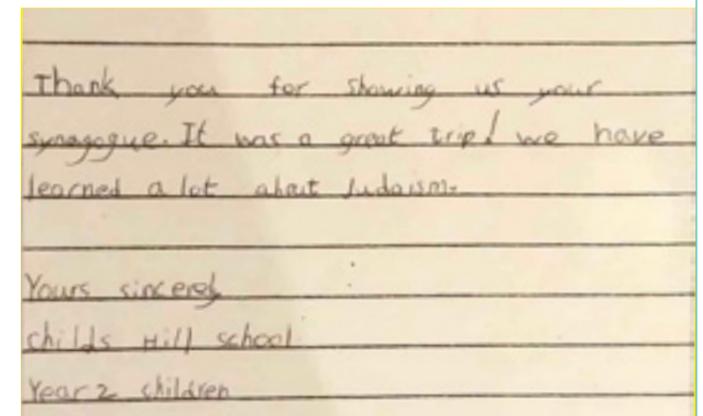
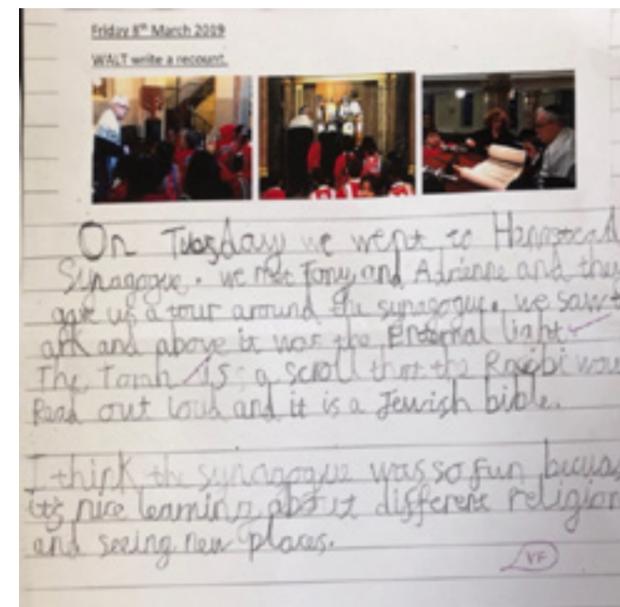
We majored on Pesach, as the visits happened just after the festival, and the children enjoyed hearing us sing the Ma Nishtana.

After an enlightening tour, we gathered in the entrance hall and gave the children an experience of Israeli dancing to Mayim Mayim music. The children seemed to pick up the steps incredibly quickly and loved racing into the middle with us!

Finally, we paused for questions and the teachers thanked us for such a lively experiential visit.

We'd love to welcome more pupils, and look forward to showing them around our wonderful synagogue.

**“We make sure the next generation really learns about the Jewish faith and can go into the wider world fully informed.”**



# Review of the Year

## Abridged version of Madeleine Abramson's report to the 2019 AGM



### We have had a wonderful variety of events over the past year.

Regular pre-Kiddush talks organised by Tony Ostrin have varied from cosmology (Richard Abramson), Mental Health Awareness (David Brodtman), Mike Richard's inspiring talk on his charity that helps kids after Chernobyl, the Mayor of Camden Cllr. Jenny Headlam-Wells and the Israeli Ambassador HE Mark Regev.

We had a wonderful musical concert in conjunction with Tikvah again organised by Tony, our annual Supper Quiz, a Summer Garden Party, theatre visits, and a very special workshop given by Micky Yudkin on Forgiveness, Reparation and Love. The Book Club met regularly under the aegis of Lilian Goldberg. And of course the annual Isaiah Berlin Lecture, a wonderfully clear, easy to understand and yet erudite lecture from Margaret MacMillan.

Our regular education evenings have now moved to people's homes. The rabbi's monthly series Lifecycle Events was very well received. We had an extra educational evening with David Conway on the Political Thought of John Locke.

Mitzvah Day, organised at Hampstead by Sandra Conway was very successful with our volunteers collecting food outside Tesco's and taking it to Conway House in support of FEAST. It became an inter-faith event as we were joined by volunteers from local churches and mosques.

We at Hampstead are lucky that Rabbi Harris and Rabbi Gerzi continue to provide such inspirational leadership. Rabbi Michael does valuable welfare work within the community together with the involvement of his wife Judith. He has completed his second year on the Dayanim Programme and the Shul extends its continued support. Joy and Shlomo organise regular Shabbat lunches and are a great asset to our community.

Both Rabbi Harris and Rabbi Gerzi help create the wonderful ruach at our services. Shlomo has not been too well recently and while we all wish him a speedy recovery, this is also an opportunity to thank Rabbi Harris for providing extra cover over this anxious time. As everyone appreciates, our rabbi is an excellent leiner but we should recognise our other leiners too, and all those who do haftarahs. We've also had a couple of excellent guest chazzanim and our choir join us over the Yamim Noraim – and we would like to thank them all.

The Scholar In Residence programme has also been very successful with thanks to Danielle Gedallia last year and recently Ma'ayan Raisel Freedman. This initiative strengthens the role of women in our community. Raisel has given excellent pre-kiddush shiurim and led a course for women on the subject of modesty.

The Executive decided to bring back the glass mechitzah which you now see in shul. We hope to replace this with a more open fret-worked perspex

version in the expectation that more ladies will give it a try. Ladies are continuing to increase their active participation in services. There is now a regular women's group saying Hallel, led by Shana Boltin and Adrienne Powell. The Purim Megillah reading continues to go from strength to strength and last December, Joy Gerzi, Meta Solomon and Sandra Conway had a Bat-Mitzvah having never had the opportunity earlier in life. In addition, mothers can now come to the Bimah for the blessing of their bar mitzvah son or bat mitzvah daughter.

We now have a Women's Officer. Sandra Conway joins the Executive and we want to thank her for taking on this new role and also for helping at our events.

Male members of the community haven't been left out. They can now say the Prayer for the Royal Family and the Prayer for the State of Israel on behalf of the community. There is a rota system with about 12 men participating and we are happy to include more volunteers.

Hannah Kaufman is our part-time youth officer but will sadly be leaving us in July.

Candice Janet, our Community Manager unfortunately left us for another post within the Jewish community and we would like to thank her for her hard work in keeping the office running smoothly. We would also like to thank Beverley Ostrin and Nina Geller who volunteer in the office especially at this time when we seek Candice's replacement.

The Welfare committee under Nina with the help of Marguerite Brodtman continues to support those in need in our community, and we have this year instituted regular lunches or teas for the older members. We thank Nina for organising and running these. We would also like to thank all those who support the kiddush rota – a very important duty!

Thanks go to David Simmons and Tony Tigner-Orchudesch who manage the Shul's security. A very big thank you to William Geller for looking after the buildings, both of which give constant issues. An obvious big thank you also for the valuable assistance our caretaker Gilberto and catering assistant Jenny give us.

The Board of Management is giving way to the new Synagogue Council. We lose Malcolm Ziff and Michael Helfgott on the newly formed 2019 Council, so a big 'thank you' to them. Amanda Bowman, Jerry Lewis and Rachel Harris represent us at the Board of Deputies. Amanda as a Board of Deputies 'Vice President has many responsibilities and we are lucky to still have her on our Council.

In this coming year, Gabriel Herman will be joining Madeleine Abramson as co-chair. Members of the Executive continue to work well together; Henry Solomon has fully taken up his position as FR; Michael Selby has been a superb warden and has instituted the concept of 'guest warden' which is working well. Thanks go to former Honorary Officers like Michael Haringman, William Geller and Tony Ostrin for their continued good counsel.

So, moving forward, the big questions are the redevelopment of the Community Centre and whether we can add to our professional staff team. Gabriel Herman is attempting to find partners who will help fund and support a rebuilt and revitalised Centre. Meanwhile, we would like to appoint an assistant rabbi to help the rabbinical team, and particularly to encourage new members to join us.

And last, but not least, thanks must go to the entire community for their continued support.

# Talmud Study

LAURA OSTROFF

With pens poised and with rapt attention, a group of us have been engaged in beginners Talmud study with Rabbi Michael. We are very fortunate to have a rabbi who is an outstanding scholar and who is enabling us to access some aspects of the Talmud. We are studying the laws of personal injury and it is fascinating to learn how forward-thinking and advanced the leading commentators were and how some of the subsequent commentators have progressed and advanced the issues of this area of law.

Learning to navigate the dense layout of a page of Talmud is a challenge in itself. As Rabbi Michael translates the Hebrew we gradually unpick the meaning through discussion which makes me realise how important it is to know Hebrew well in order to access our tradition. Our hour of study is both absorbing and engaging and soon passes.



# Serenade in Concert

TONY OSTRIN

Hampstead Synagogue, jointly with Tikva, presented SERENADE, an afternoon of music with the Tikva Ensemble - Sue Rothstein (harp), Ann Sheffield (cello) and Madeleine Whiteson (piano and violin) with guest artiste Robert Brody, tenor and chazan. They presented a varied programme from classical to light music from the shows. Robert Brody sang "Chazonim oif Probe" in Yiddish to the amusement of the audience. The programme finished with Adon Olom by Chitman.

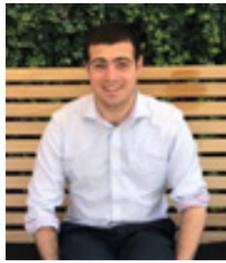
Proceeds from the afternoon were divided between the synagogue and Tikva, a charity providing funds for three Jewish children's homes in Odessa. Prior to the performance the audience was shown a video illustrating the poverty and plight of these children.

On display and for sale were a number of paintings by Jewish Artist David (Shushu) Black, with a contribution going to Tikva.



Best wishes from the Meller Family





## Our New Youth Co-Ordinator

TOBY WEINIGER

Toby grew up in Finchley (Kinloss) and graduated City of London School before studying at Yeshivat Har Etzion in Israel over the past two years. He has been a Madrich at summer camps including Tribe Camp in Belgium, King Solomon School and Bnei Akiva. He has also given private Jewish Studies/Torah teaching/Bar Mitzvah lessons, been involved in Youth Minyanim and has some skills leading services. Whilst running City J-Soc he particularly enjoyed outreach and growing the Jewish society

in both numbers and operations. He is passionate about Jewish learning and values and would love to share the knowledge and experiences which he has gained whilst studying in Israel. He describes himself as a warm and likeable personality and looks forward to the challenge of creating a friendly nucleus for Hampstead youth. Toby is really excited to get to know the Youth at Hampstead Synagogue and meet everyone at our upcoming youth events.

## Our Bat Mitzvah

SANDRA CONWAY

Ingredients Recipe

3 mature ladies	Each lady has a small piece to read
Beautiful Hampstead Synagogue	The Rabbi prayed
A Rabbi	The Chazan sang
A Chazan	Our knees were shaking
Relatives, friends and congregation	But we all had fun
	When all mixed together
	It was a lovely day
	Meta, Joy and Sandra
	Hip hip hooray
	A fabulous kiddush
	Enjoyed by one and all
	Then lunch together with loved ones and friends
	We thoroughly enjoyed it and recommend it to you
	So here's to the next one
	Good luck to you too.



# Meet Chava Wulwick

Scholar In Residence 2019/20

Chava is a qualified teacher who has been working at Hasmonean High School for over ten years. She is a regular speaker at adult learning programmes and shuls including Kehillas Toras Chaim, the Ner Yisrael Community and Belmont, Northwood, Central, Hendon and Finchley United Synagogues.

She has been involved in Jewish Education for many years, has taught in Cheder, co-ordinated a mother and daughter Batmitzvah programme and has taught a course at the Midrasha programme to university students. Chava is a qualified MEP tutor and has supported converts throughout their conversion process.

After completing her schooling at Hasmonean High School, Chava attended Michlala College for Women in Jerusalem and on her return to the UK, she studied at the London School of Economics, achieving an honours BSc Economics degree in Accounting and Finance.



**Chava's first time in Shul with us will be on Shabbat 28th September, immediately before Rosh Hashanah, when she will present a pre-Kiddush shiur on a theme relevant to the high holydays. Please do join us.**

After her first two children were born, Chava returned to university to complete a Masters degree in Property Valuation and Law at City University Business School. She was trained at the Susi Bradfield Educational Leadership Programme at LSJS and following a period of part-time teaching she completed a further Masters degree (with Merit) in Jewish Education from Birkbeck University.

Chava lives in Hendon with her husband Danny. They have seven daughters, two sons-in-law and three granddaughters. Chava is looking forward to getting to know members of the community at Hampstead Synagogue.

# Dear Women

## Of Hampstead Synagogue

SANDRA CONWAY

**Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis recently introduced the role of Women's Officer onto United Synagogue Executive Teams to improve the experience of women in Shul.**

It is with surprise and great pleasure that I have been elected to become Women's Officer for Hampstead Synagogue.

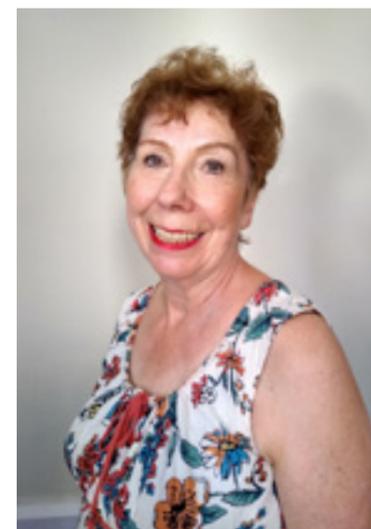
My name is Sandra Conway and my husband Ian and I have been members for many years. Our two sons and two daughters had their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs in our beautiful shul and now we are the proud grandparents of ten beautiful grandchildren.

There have been many positive changes over the years. Rabbi Harris has encouraged women to take a more active role in the life of our shul. We introduced female Scholars in Residence who have delivered enlightening discussions on many varied religious subjects. Women now say Kaddish along with the men and women have their own Megillah readings and Hallel services.

My role as your Women's Officer ensures that there will be a female voice present when decisions are made particularly about services and how to make them easier for women to take part. I will also work closely with the Scholar in Residence.



- If any women would like to present a **Sidrah summary** please let me know. It takes place at 10:15 am every Shabbat.
- I will liaise with wardens during the service to make sure they are aware if a woman wants to **Bensch Gomel** (recite the thanksgiving prayer after recovery from childbirth illness or danger).
- I can liaise with wardens during the service for a woman who wants to make a **mishaberach** and has not yet informed the Rabbi.
- If you wish to recite **Kaddish** both privately and in services, please let me know. If necessary, I can arrange with the Rabbi that Kaddish is recited more slowly and I can provide you with resource materials to help you prepare.
- I can help with the planning of **Bat Mitzvahs, 2nd Bat Mitzvahs and Simchat Bat** (The Blessing or Kiddush for a new born daughter).
- I can listen to your views on the current **Mechitzah** and tell you of our future plans.
- I can make sure that all events and services, timing and location and layout allow for **maximum engagement of women.**



This is an exciting role for me and I will do my very best to help the women of Hampstead Synagogue enjoy their time in our Shul. There are so many things that we can do; women-only-quiz nights and stand-up comic evenings to name a few. Please let me have your suggestions. Our future is in your hands.

PLEASE support us, we need you. I need you.

With love,

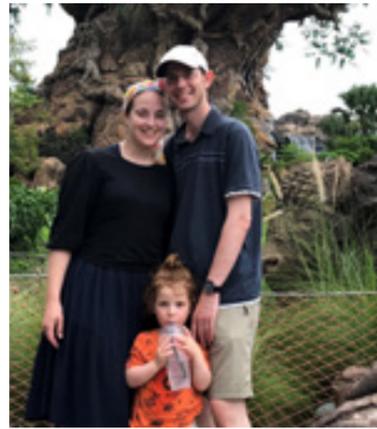
*Sandra*

PS Please get in touch with me if there is anything I can do, email the Shul office at [admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk](mailto:admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk)

# Thank You and Adieu

## From Last Year's Scholar In Residence

RAISEL FREEDMAN



My family and I have had the most wonderful year being attached to your lovely community. I also feel that you have given me the best possible beginning to my role as a Ma'ayan. In my first shiur during the week of Parshat Lech Lecha we discussed the concept of 'Tefillat Haderech', the 'Travellers Prayer' and its relevance for us in the modern age. Whilst I showed you some real life examples of wild animals disrupting journeys I was reflecting on this prayer last month. We flew across the ocean to visit my family in the USA and on an internal flight we were grounded on the tarmac for a number of hours due to winds. It is incredible that in this day and age, with all the machines and inventions that are smarter and more marvellous than anything in the past, wind still conquers all. It reminded me of a parable about a dissatisfied stonemason.

The stonemason sees a wealthy merchant and is envious of the riches he does not have. As a kindness, he is turned into the wealthy merchant and instead of enjoying this turn of events he notices how uncomfortable he is as a result of the heat of the sun. No sooner is he transformed into the sun then his light is obscured by dark clouds and he wishes to become a storm. However, as soon as he becomes the storm, the wind blows him away. He quickly turns into the

wind which is stopped by a huge mountain. Unsurprisingly he transforms into the mountain and upon realising that someone is chipping away at this mountain he returns to being himself.

This parable is usually used as a springboard for understanding how *our* circumstances are the best circumstances for *us*. The way to improve our circumstances is not by wishing them away or perpetually grumbling but it is through change, and if we examine ourselves, we should be able to pinpoint areas that may benefit from some improvement.

This is the message of this time of year – introspection, acknowledgement of the things we have done right and wrong and then planning a path to a better future. When people have gone through something significant – be it a tragic event, a health scare, a major academic achievement – we ask them about their 'journey'. But in the Torah, this term makes its most frequent appearance when the Torah relates the Jews' encampments whilst in the desert waiting to enter Israel. Each point on their journey towards the Promised Land (Numbers Chapter 33) is given the importance of being described as a micro journey. Not a bump along the route or minor detour as the

Jews head towards the destination that is Israel. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, a 19th Century scholar, focused on the specific words used in the Torah and emphasised that by describing these stops as journeys we are taught something more directly relevant to the various stops or challenges we have in our life. Understanding that our trajectory will never be straightforward presents us with ongoing opportunities to define or to redefine our journey overall, as long as we understand that each stop along the way can be its own journey.

Tefillat Haderech can therefore also be seen as a bracha that applies to all our journeys in life – our journey from birth to death with all the mini journeys in between. As we sat on the tarmac in America, waiting for G-d to move the wind away so we could continue on our journey, we were grateful for multiple ways in which it was easy for us. We had both food and drink,

**“This is the message of this time of year – introspection, acknowledgement of the things we have done right and wrong and then planning a path to a better future.”**

the seats were very comfortable, the plane had a fantastic entertainment system – the only thing we were lacking was forward propulsion. I realised that accepting this part of our journey meant that we had the peace mentioned in the bracha and when we set off, we truly directed our prayer to God in the understanding that it is only with His blessing that we can reach our destination when we want to. In the words of Tefillat Haderech, I wish us all a year in which we can see that God “guides and supports us in peace, bestows upon us abundant kindness and hearkens to the voice of our prayer.”

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# Hampstead Women's Megillah

## And More...

SHANA BOLTIN



For the fourth year, the women of Hampstead Shul have continued their tradition of reading Megillat Esther. Whilst this may not sound newsworthy, because in essence this has become standard practice at Hampstead, this year we had our own special reasons to celebrate. Not only did we have the most people participate (eighteen – a lucky number), but as women who had previously taken on large parts were not available, others within the community stepped up and agreed to read more. Once again, Megillat Esther was a resounding success, and we look forward to encouraging and welcoming more women to join the group.

**“Once again, Megillat Esther was a resounding success, and we look forward to encouraging and welcoming more women to join the group.”**

Our Scholar in Residence, Ma'ayan Raisel Freedman, supported the women of Hampstead with our first Women's Friday Night service. Sitting in the main synagogue, we filled the space with melodious prayers and niggunim, and heard explanations about the various prayers and customs for the Friday Night service.

Another highlight over the past year has been the women's Hallel group. On a Shabbat that coincides with Rosh Chodesh (new month) and on festivals, we have been coming together to learn new tunes and sing the Hallel service together. On one occasion we introduced some learning in chavruta (pairs), using some of the Limmud learning resources relating to the theme of pilgrimage and discussed our own relationship with the land of Israel.

### Next Women's Hallel

**Succot 2nd Day  
Tuesday 15 October  
10:15 Community Centre**

# Welcoming our Rabbinic Interns

This year, for the High Holy Days, Hannah and Yoni Abrams will be joining Hampstead Shul as Rabbinic Interns, participating in and leading the services, and supporting educational programmes. Hannah and Yoni are very excited to meet everyone in the Hampstead community – look out for their educational sessions over the High Holy Days, especially those for young professionals.



**Hannah Abrams** grew up in Highgate, went to City of London School for Girls and read History at Durham University. Before university she studied in Jerusalem at Midreshet Lindenbaum. Currently she is pursuing an MA in Talmud and Halacha at Stern College, which is part of Yeshiva University in New York. In her free time, Hannah has set up a women's Beit Midrash in Manhattan and writes for

the website Deracheha, a project based in Israel whose mission is to have women write about Jewish law for other women. In Highgate, Hannah set up the first regular women's Kabbalat Shabbat service. She has given many shiurim on a wide variety of topics in the UK and America. She also enjoys playing the violin (particularly Bach), and introducing Americans to the wonders of Evelyn Rose's recipes.

**Yoni Abrams** grew up across the pond in Silver Spring, Maryland. He is currently finishing his undergraduate degree in Maths at Yeshiva University and is concurrently learning to become a Rabbi on the semicha course there. Before university, Yoni studied at Mevaseret-Zion Yeshiva in Israel for two years. At Yeshiva University, he organises events for the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals and writes for the university newspaper. He is also researching ethical questions raised by Artificial Intelligence from a Jewish perspective, in his role as a fellow at the Jewish Digital Future. Around the house, Yoni can usually be found singing, drawing abstract geometric art, or reading anything he can get his hands on.

# Learning Forgiveness

## Mickey Yudkin Leads Our Workshop

JUDY COOPER

There is a wise saying that the indispensable basis for any long term relationship to survive successfully, is friendship and forgiveness. No one is perfect and invariably situations arise which are vexing (obviously more so in close relationships), causing rage, anger, frustration and disappointment.

In February, eighteen of us attended Mickey Yudkin's wonderfully enlightening workshop on Forgiveness. She skilfully led us through an experience of both an intellectual and emotional understanding of the ambivalence of life and of the importance of accepting the ambivalence in ourselves. This entails an acceptance of being both loving and hating as well as being able to acknowledge that we can be hurtful to others, so can be hated as well as being loved.

Mickey involved us through some moving poetry (Pablo Neruda's: "Tonight I can write the saddest lines"), literature (The Reader by Bernard Schlink, Enemies – A Love Story by I B Singer),

the psychoanalytic theories of Melanie Klein and Alice Miller, and some Gestalt exercises in pairs, exploring Forgiveness and Reparation. As participants we felt free to express our doubts and difficulties and we learnt that forgiveness, like reparation, is not linear or an all or nothing affair but can often be a long and painful process which goes forwards and backwards in fits and starts. We also discussed the fact that some situations arise where forgiveness is not possible and as one participant mentioned to me at the end of the morning, it was a relief for her to know that there were also others there who could not forgive.

In an entirely empathic and accepting way, Mickey made us aware of our limitations as human beings and we are grateful to her for a moving and inspiring morning. Everyone left wanting more from Mickey's fund of knowledge, wisdom and experience and walking out, one participant turned to me and asked, "Do you know if Mickey is conducting any more of these workshops in the Synagogue?"



*"These are the soldiers who give Israel 'Peace of Mind.' So friends, it is our duty to help them find their Peace of Mind"*

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

Last year 9 Hampstead families hosted a Peace of Mind group. Here is our opportunity to help another group – they will be with us from May 3rd-10th 2020.

**Why?** Every year, thousands of released Israeli combat soldiers face the difficult transition back into civilian life. Despite the well-known image of the resilient Israeli soldier, long-term effects of veterans' exposure to stress from combat are well documented. Veterans can suffer from a myriad of psychological problems ranging from difficulties in relationships, aggressiveness, sleep disturbances, substance abuse, and even PTSD.

**How can we help?** Metiv run the Peace of Mind programme. They take a group, consisting of about 15 veterans from a high-risk combat unit, within which there is a profound depth of trust. They work with two therapists to process their experiences. Participants are sorely in need of a place and time to process their combat experiences in a facilitated group setting. The intervention consists of four phases; a two-day opening workshop, a week-long intensive overseas seminar, a full day of follow-up activities and a concluding workshop. Throughout the nine-month intervention, team members receive approximately 65 hours of group counselling, with those who need it receiving additional one on one follow-up therapy.

## Peace of Mind 2020

MADELEINE ABRAMSON

**Hosting:** During the intensive week, the therapy sessions take place at Hampstead shul during the day, and the soldiers come back to sleep and occasionally eat with their host families. Hampstead will run a programme of events to support the daytime therapy – trips to London, to the theatre, maybe football, shul on Shabbat, and a community dinner.

**What our soldiers reported back:** It was much easier to process our combat experiences whilst abroad. The warmth and support we received from our hosts and all the Hampstead community made it so much easier to face our problems. Later, they talked of significant post-traumatic growth, better functioning in everyday life, emotional regulation, better communication with their families.

**And the benefit to us?** We demonstrate our active commitment to Israel and those who defend it, and we play an active role in shaping a healthier Israeli society. Talk to any of the hosts, we all found it an amazing and humbling experience. We are still in touch with our soldiers – they visit us in London and we visit them in Israel.

**SO PLEASE JOIN US – we will need hosts!** And we will need financial support – the programme described above costs over £40,000. Last time we both found the host families and raised this amount – I am sure we can do it again.

**For further information please contact me at the shul office and also see <https://metiv.org/peace-of-mind>**



## Paul Goldsmith

### Chatan Torah

Originally from Edgware, Paul has lived in West Hampstead since 2003 and got married to Julie at Hampstead Shul in 2005. That's when he joined the security rota and has been doing security shifts for the Shul ever since. His children Rosie Rae and Leo were born in 2008 and 2010. Both attend the joint cheder in St. John's Wood. Rosie Rae his eldest is due to be Bat Mitzvah at Hampstead in September 2020. They both attend local community schools.

Paul is a director at Event Merchandising Ltd – a live event retail and promotional merchandise company and through his work has been an integral part of

global charity events such as the Live Earth concerts, Live 8, Chime for Change, Teenage Cancer Trust and more recently he's been working with and supporting the Invictus Games Foundation globally.

Through his work and personal interest Paul has travelled globally to help give back to local projects including some in Brazil, Italy and Israel where his younger brother lives.

Family and community life is very important to Paul and he appreciates the West Hampstead community spirit.

## Marguerite Brodtman

### Eshet Chayil



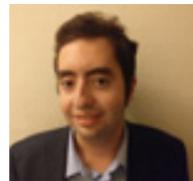
I'm very proud to be part of a family with links to Hampstead that go back nearly 120 years. My maternal grandmother moved into no 29 Dennington Park Road in 1903, and we have been members ever since! My father's family were relatively new members, not joining until around 1936. My parents met in the Succah here and were married in the Shul in 1956. Growing up, Hampstead Shul was an integral part of our family life, attending on Shabbat morning, and all the festivals. I attended classes, here, have fond memories of Brownies, my Batmitzvah and being a member of the Victoria Youth Club, which met in the Eli Chinn Hall.

Like my father and brother before me, I have served on the Board of Management, and currently assist with the welfare group, and help with kiddush and security.

My work includes organising activities for people who are elderly in various care homes, supporting people with learning disabilities into employment, and managing a gardening scheme. In my spare time I enjoy gardening, playing tennis and owning chickens, interspersed with lots of theatre trips.

## Simon Blomenberg

### Chatan Bereishit



I am honoured to have been asked to be one of this year's Chatanim. All my life I have lived next door to the Hampstead Synagogue and as soon as I could walk, I was taken to shul and I attended children services. I celebrated my Bar Mitzvah in our beautiful shul in May 2011. My parents got married in the Hampstead synagogue in 1997 and my sister, Ruth, celebrated her Bat Mitzvah in November 2014.

Following my Bar Mitzvah, I continued to attend the synagogue and support the weekday morning

minyanim as well as on Friday night. Recently I have led some synagogue services while Chazan Shlomo has been away. I have also, in the past, helped to lead some children services at Hampstead.

I attended North West London Jewish Day School and then JFS. More recently I have read Politics with Business Management at Queen Mary University of London and I graduated with a First-Class Honours Degree and I am looking forward to a career in Accountancy.



## Lilian Goldberg

### Eshet Chayil

I am delighted and honoured to have been chosen as Eshet Chayil this year. I have been coming to the shul since I was about nine with friends whose parents were members, and I would join them on Shabbat. A few years later, my parents became members, and I became a member in my own right in 1990.

My working life was as a Civil Engineer, working in Highways and Transport. After retiring I was able to play a greater part in synagogue life, joining the security rota, and being asked to give a couple of pre-kiddush talks. I have enjoyed researching for

the latter in the British Library which has led me to becoming more interested in Jewish history, becoming a member of the Jewish Historical Society of Great Britain.

I have been in the Hampstead Synagogue Reading Group since it started and have been co-ordinating it for the last couple of years, enjoying the breadth of our reading, and the ideas and enthusiasm of my fellow book-lovers. I am also a keen amateur musician, both singing, and playing the bassoon, the latter being yet another retirement project.

# Apple Cake



## What

- 225g butter/margarine
- 6 cooking apples (Bramleys) sliced
- 225g golden caster sugar
- 275g wholewheat SR flour
- 2 large eggs
- Demerara sugar
- Cinnamon

## How

Melt the butter in a saucepan, then add caster sugar and stir until sugar has dissolved. Take off the heat and add eggs, flour, and mix to a smooth batter. Batter should be fairly thick, slow dropping consistency. Add more flour if it feels very thin.

Spread quarter of the mixture on the base of a 9" cake tin, lined with baking parchment.

Lay apples on top of mixture. Sprinkle with little demerara sugar and cinnamon.

Spread the remaining mixture evenly on top. Bake at 180°C/350°F, Gas 4 for approx 55 - 65 minutes, depending on how many apples!

It's good with lots of apple, so go over what you think rather than under!

### How do you make an apple turnover?

Push it down hill.

### What's better than a good friend?

A good friend with chocolate.

### What's orange and sounds like a parrot?

A carrot.

### What do you call a fake noodle?

An impasta.

### A friend of mine has a vegetable patch.

It stops the cravings for carrots all day.

### Why did the butcher work extra hours at the shop?

To make ends meat.

### What happened after an explosion at a French cheese factory?

All that was left was de brie.




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**The Haringman Family  
wish The Hampstead Family  
a happy, sweet and successful  
New Year.**

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**Some  
Jokes to  
Make you  
Smile!**



**WISHING OUR DEAR RABBI AND CHAZAN AND ALL OUR DEAR FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY A VERY HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR AND WELL OVER THE FAST AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST PEACE IN THE WORLD**

Irene & Marcel Anisfeld

**BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

Adrienne, Robin, Freddy, Barnaby and Theodore Powell

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE AT HAMPSTEAD**

Laura and David Ostroff

**WISHING EVERYONE AT HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

Susan and John Burns

**WISHING EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR. BEST WISHES**

Lorraine, Sidney, Rosie and Sam Myers

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL AT HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE**

Nicki, Ian, Rachel and Robert Cohen

**WISHING OUR FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

Amanda, Anthony, Anna and Tilly Ruback

**WISHING THE COMMUNITY A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

Jenny and Malcolm Ziff

**WISHING THE COMMUNITY A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

Madeleine and Richard Abramson



# Happy New Year

# From Hampstead

**WISHING THE HAMPSTEAD COMMUNITY A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

Danielle, Maurice, Sam, Alex and Nicky Helfgott

**GREETINGS FROM THE SOLOMON FAMILY. WISHING OUR FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

Meta and Henry Solomon

**WISHING THE HAMPSTEAD FAMILY A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

The Grunwald Family

**LONDON KRAV MAGA WOULD LIKE TO WISH HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR**

London Krav Maga

**BEST WISHES**

Susan and John Reizenstein

**HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE AT DENNINGTON PARK ROAD. THANK YOU TO THE EXECUTIVE WHO WORKS SO HARD FOR US ALL**

Gilly, Tony, Samantha, Charles and Alfie, Daniella and Francesca

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

The Helfgott Family

**BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

Nina, William, Philip and Ben Geller

# Michael Richard Threw a Lifeline to Hundreds of Belarusian Children

**His reasons were deeply personal, as he explained to Alison Grunwald.**

Twenty years ago fourteen underprivileged Jewish children from the ravaged Chernobyl region of Belarus arrived for a month-long convalescent stay with families from Hampstead and Golders Green shuls.

Their trip, which I helped to organise, would not have happened were it not for the pioneering work done by a truly inspirational member of our synagogue, Mike Richard, whom I had read about.

A retired pharmacist Mike, 69, along with his wife of 31 years, Violet, joined Hampstead in 2007, but retain membership of New North London, where his pioneering work for sick Chernobyl children began years earlier.

By 2007 Mike and a friend, Hugh Sorrell, had overseen the arrival of 400 children, some of them suffering from rare and debilitating illnesses. The shul communities rose to the challenge.

The children's emergency medical and dental needs were met and the revitalised youngsters

left London armed with bags of vitamins alongside new clothes and gifts for their families. All funds were donated to the charity by well-wishers but, as with our own group, organisation was paramount.

I asked this modest Birmingham man to explain what had drawn him to get involved in what became profoundly healing work for these vulnerable children, some as young as seven.

His reply was a surprise: "There was a need that was not satisfied in me to become a parent. Though we tried, it looked very much as if we would not become parents so I looked around for a voluntary project involving Jewish children.

"Hugh and I discovered in late 1996 a whole Jewish community in Belarus of 70,000 souls. Belarus had vast swathes covered in various degrees of radio activity; the overall effect was a large increase in unusual and aggressive diseases."

Despite attempts to adopt a child of their own, Mike and Violet, a translator fluent in three languages, seemed to have hit a brick wall. Things changed unexpectedly, however,

shortly before the NNL committee were about to welcome their first group of children in September 1997.

Mike explained: "We were about to go out to supper with friends on 31st December, 1996 when the phone rang and we found ourselves talking to a birth mother in Houston, Texas. Our son John came to us aged six days in March, 1997."

Mike's enthusiasm remained undimmed, and it was an article about him in the Jewish News two years later that leapt out at me and made me want to get involved. Other Hampstead members felt the same and we recruited enough parents from Golders Green to enable our own group of youngsters to come over and enjoy a fun-packed itinerary - plus all the love we could lavish on them!



How did Mike cope with a new baby just at that critical moment for the first Jewish Chernobyl project? "It was an easy idea to sell and I enjoyed it. It was a thumping success and we continued it for ten years.

"For me it was the most satisfying work that I did in my whole career; we had no idea at the time the impact we had on the children's lives."

**"Hugh and I discovered in late 1996 a whole Jewish community in Belarus of 70,000 souls."**



## Rosh Hashanah comes every year, but mental health is far less predictable

Soon after Sharon's serious fall, she began to suffer from long term depression, anxiety and social isolation. Like many people, Sharon's struggle with her mental health came out of the blue.

Sharon's circumstances aren't unique - 25% of us experience a diagnosable mental health problem at any one time, affecting not only the individual but also family, friends and colleagues. Jami provides individuals and those that support them with services to manage the symptoms of ill health, build resilience and enable independence. With Jami's help, Sharon has begun rebuilding her confidence and self-esteem.

**This Rosh Hashanah, please enable us to keep helping Sharon and hundreds of others who need vital support by donating at [www.jamiuk.org](http://www.jamiuk.org)**

Visit [jamiuk.org](http://jamiuk.org) | Call 020 8458 2223 | Email [info@jamiuk.org](mailto:info@jamiuk.org)



The Mental Health Service for our Community  
Registered Charity 1003345. A Company Limited by Guarantee 2618170

# A Day To Forget?

ALISON GRUNWALD

With 30 minutes left before our minicab was due to whisk us to Willesden Green tube on the first leg of our long-anticipated holiday in France, Henry's query was a bit worrying.

"What's burning? There's a smell of burning."

"Er, I don't think there's anything burning," I replied. But now I could also smell it and was, initially, perplexed.

The realisation hit me like a blow to the solar plexus from a very fit boxer.

"Oh no. Oh lord, what have I done? No, no, NOOOOOO."

My nightmare was now unfolding, in it's full, tacky plastic glory. The microwave door lay open and Henry was gingerly holding up the metal dog's bowl that protected both sets of keys for my new Mercedes SLK sportscar.

I'd inadvertently cooked them on 900 degrees for a full minute along with the cup of coffee I'd been reheating from breakfast.

WHAT???

I knew you'd ask that. So it's like this...and no blame attached.

A crafty warning from the police on stopping thieves from driving away expensive vehicles - the keys in the microwave trick - had been a great success.

Now no-one would nick my wheels, not even me. Only ten minutes to go before the minicab so just time for a deeply humiliating and self-flagellating phone-call to Mercedes in Temple Fortune; my little lapse in common sanity would cost me over £300, and the coffee was undrinkable, with a cheeky tang of toxic waste.

Henry could barely suppress the snort of laughter that was still strangling his vocal chords. "Did I say anything? Well, DID I?" he grinned as we drove on our way to the station. I felt bad enough already.

"I'm such an idiot, such an idiot. How could I be SO stupid?"

Henry looked smug - all the way to St John's Wood station when he abruptly looked stricken, all the colour draining from his face.

Oh gosh, I thought, he's having a heart attack.

"Oh no," he whispered. "What is it?" This was going to be worse than the Merc, I felt certain.

"I've left the passports at home," he hissed.

"Oh no, you're joking!" It was my turn to smile. He was pulling my leg.

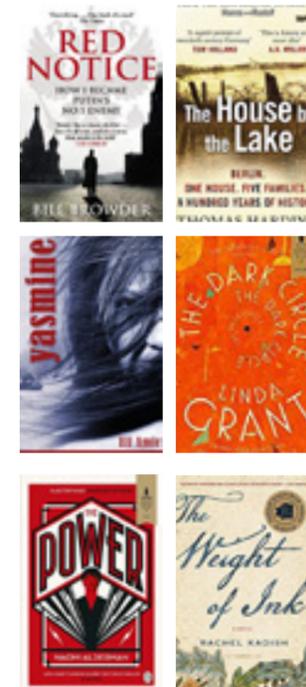
"You ARE joking.....aren't you?" "No I'm not."

And that was how I came to spend an anxious half hour sheltering from the rain on the concourse of St John's Wood tube station, as Henry leapt like a gazelle from taxi to house to taxi and back.

"So we're quits now," he said, grabbing one of the cases and hurrying off towards the trains. Well, no actually; Henry's senior moment only cost us £20. I'm still well in the lead.

# Book Group

LILIAN GOLDBERG



**The Hampstead Synagogue Book Group is now in its fifth year, and has grown to more than twenty participants, although attendance is usually about ten.**

In the past year we have mainly been reading fiction:

- The Power* by Naomi Alderman,
- Odessa Stories* by Isaac Babel,
- The Sisters Weiss* by Naomi Ragen,
- The Dark Circle* by Linda Grant,
- The Plot Against America* by Philip Roth
- The House by the Lake* by Thomas Harding

There has been a lot to think about in all of these, and discussions have been lively and participants enthusiastic. In the case of *The House By the Lake*, it has also been interesting to follow the continuing story of the Lake House during its restoration and subsequent development as a museum by the author's family aided by local villagers.

In the current year we have also read *No Place to Lay One's Head* by Francoise Frenkel, and *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris.

We meet six times a year, for a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon, in members' homes and discuss the current book; meetings are informal and guided by one of us. The book choices for the coming year are voted for by members. Forthcoming books include *The Weight of Ink* by Rachel Kadish, *Red Notice* by Bill Browder, *Yasmine* by Eli Amir and *The Cut-out Girl* by Bart van Es.

**For more information, or to join us, please contact the synagogue office.**

# Top Gardening

# Tips

We asked our talented resident synagogue gardener **Joan Horwitz** to share some of her top tips for making a lovely garden.



## January/February

- Start planning what you want to plant
- Prune roses to outward facing bud
- Feed the birds

## February

- Start sowing seeds indoors or in the greenhouse; I do mine on the bathroom windowsill
- Prune wisteria

## March

- Prune deciduous plants, like hydrangeas and buddleia
- Cut back winter shrubs.
- Spray and feed roses with rose food
- Keep on top of weeding
- Mow lawn and spring feed
- Support perennials
- "Chelsea chop" phlox so you get a later flowering
- Feed shrubs and hedges and all flowering plants.
- Top up soil with compost using ericaceous compost for rhododendrons and camellias
- Slug pellets
- Prune fig tree

## April/May

- Plant container pots
- Use nematodes for vine weevil
- Pick off lily beetles

## June/July

- Water and feed regularly
- Summer feed lawn
- Prune wisteria
- 'Dead head' all bedding plants to encourage second flowering
- Give roses a second feed after their first flowering to encourage a big difference to subsequent performance

## July

- Do not mow the lawn if it is dry
- Water and feed all bedding plants on a regular basis
- Do not let your pots dry out

## August

- Trim lavender down to the old wood. Go as low as possible and you will have re-growth. Do not cut into the old wood

## September

- Divide perennials such as crocosmias
- "Dead head" dahlias, roses and penstemons

## October

- Clear all falling leaves and keep for making your own compost
- Buy a compost bin online
- Plant bulbs except for tulips which should be planted in November
- Continue to compost leaves. Do not compost rose leaves or petals as they are usually diseased with blackspot and rust



## November

- Move tender plants under cover, like canna lily and dahlias
- Prune roses to prevent wind rock
- Plant tulips
- Plant trees
- Aerate lawn

## December

- Prune acers and vines to avoid bleeding



## Flower Power

Our resident synagogue florist **Sandra Conway** — previous owner of Wicked Flowers — shares her tips on making your cut flowers flourish!

- 1** When buying flowers choose bunches with lots of new and fresh buds as they will give a much longer vase life.
- 2** Make sure your vase is squeaky clean before you use it. Bacteria block the stems and thus prevent absorption of water and may cause your blooms to wilt.
- 3** Fill your vase with clean, fresh water and add flower food.
- 4** Remove any leaves from the stems as these will rot and add more bacteria to your vase. Avoid removing thorns from roses as they are very sensitive to bacteria and wounds left by the removal process will leak sugar, which attracts bacteria.
- 5** Cut the stems with a clean disinfected knife or scissors to minimise potential contact with bacteria. Finally place your flowers in the prepared vase.
- 6** Keep the flowers cool. Direct sunlight and high temperatures shorten the life of your blooms. Opt for a cool shady spot.
- 7** Keep your flowers away from the fruit bowl. Fruit gives off a ripening hormone called ethylene, which causes flowers and plants to age at a quicker pace.
- 8** We all love tulips but sometimes after a few days they start to droop. Remove them from the vase, recut the stems and roll them tightly up in paper. I often use newspaper. Then place them in a deep bucket or similar container for as long as possible. When you remove them from the paper, cut the stems again and place in vase with fresh, clean water and your tulips will be back to their glory.



## My Miracle During The War

**RITA BLOMENBERG**

I was born in January 1938 in Berlin's Jewish maternity home. My late parents and I lived in a flat in Grell Strasse. My late grandparents, aunt and uncle all lived in Berlin. When it became too dangerous for us to stay in Germany the family decided to leave the country. I was ten months old.

My father and uncle managed to get to Belgium and found a flat. Soon afterwards my mother was given a false passport by a professional people-smuggler; he made up a story that my mum was married to a coalminer who died following an accident, working in a mine in Charleroi. The reason for the trip was to attend his funeral.

During the journey, every time we went through a tunnel, my mother had to throw suitcases out of the window of the train. She did not travel light: she had clothes for me till the age of ten even though I was only ten months old. The smuggler insisted that she threw out her possessions because the luggage would have ruined the story that they were travelling to Belgium for one day. When we crossed into Belgium, the smuggler did not want to go

straight to Brussels as he thought we were being watched. He managed to get us into a nunnery in Liege.

The nuns treated us very well. After a few days we travelled to Brussels where we were reunited with my father and uncle. The reason we had to be smuggled out of Germany was because from 1938 Jews were not allowed to leave. To start with the whole family lived together. When the War started my father and uncle were deported to Drancy camp. Later they were taken to Auschwitz where they were murdered.

The Belgian people were very nice to us; the lady of the house where we lived promised my mother that if anything happened to her she would adopt me. Times were tough for my mother and grandparents; with limited income they had to rely on various charities.

My mother worked as a charlady to earn a bit extra and my grandfather worked for a Belgian Jew who owned a photographic store. We survived the best we could. In Berlin my father was an accountant and my grandfather, who studied at Heidelberg University — was a director

of the largest flour company in Germany. From riches to rags but we were still relatively free and healthy.

In 1942 the situation worsened. The Gestapo came to Brussels to round up the Jews. In Brussels there was a Jew known by the nickname of Jack who, together with the Gestapo, travelled around the city to arrest Jews. My Mother had a narrow escape. One day when she went shopping the owner of the shop told her to hide under the counter as Jack and the Gestapo were in the neighbourhood. She came home very late. My grandparents had become frantic. When she did come home she was as white as a sheet.

My aunt did not live with us and came every day to visit her parents. When it became very dangerous, my grandmother begged her not to come but my aunt insisted on visiting every day. One day on her way back to her flat she was picked up by the Gestapo. I remember the worry on my grandparents' and mother's faces when there was no reply from her flat. One day the door bell rang but it was the local policeman who needed some information. When he came into our flat and saw the fright on our faces he apologised and said the next time he would ring the door three times so we would know it was him.

The Belgian people did what they could for us. The back of the house where we lived belonged to a man who had a factory manufacturing whitewood cupboards. More than once they would hide my mother and me in a cupboard or put us on the floor and cover us in sawdust when the Gestapo were in the area.

**“In 1942 the situation worsened. The Gestapo came to Brussels to round up the Jews.”**

At night my mother and I slept in the loft. My grandfather would lock the door; in the morning he would let us out. When my mother took me out for some fresh air I knew that when she squeezed my hand I would have to shut up. Usually it was when she thought we

were being followed. The only toy I had was a doll called Monique which I was given on my first birthday. Wherever I went my doll went too. One day when there was an air raid we had to go downstairs to the basement. I would not go till I found Monique.

Six months before the end of the War, somebody reported to the Gestapo that my grandfather was working in the photographic shop. Two Gestapo officers came and took my grandfather to where we lived. While walking back he said to them, “Please I beg you, my wife and I lost our eldest son at the age of 18 during the First World War in France, fighting for Germany. Our daughter was picked up a year ago and our youngest son, the father of our only granddaughter was taken to France two years ago. I beg you, we only have our daughter in law and our only grandchild left.” They did not reply.

When they came into the room, my mother took her rucksack, which was packed with a few necessities for herself and me in case we were taken away. I was playing with some sand when I realised what was happening; I was by then six years old. I started to cry and spoke in German “Please Mummy take me with, do not leave me, I want to go with you!” The older Gestapo man took pity, looked at me and said “Gut sie können bleiben” translated as “Good, you can stay.”

When we overcame our shock we realised it could be dangerous to stay in the flat. My mother and I moved out as we were frightened in case the younger Gestapo man, trying to get a promotion, would come back to pick us up.

We moved into one room in a house in Brussels but one morning my mother said we would go back to my grandparents, who had stayed in the house where we were previously living. Later my mother told me the reason we returned was that during the night she heard German spoken and realised some of the rooms in the building were used to entertain German officers, which made it dangerous to stay.

Nobody from the Gestapo had called at my grandparents' during the few days we were away so we felt it would be safe to return. The Gestapo man kept his word and we were able to stay until the end of the War, six months later.

One morning when I woke up my mother had tears of joy in her eyes and was smiling, telling me the church bells were ringing. I did not know what she meant. During the War the bells were silenced and when my mother heard them she knew the War was over.

American soldiers had arrived and the joy was great for everybody; they gave us chocolates and sweets, something I had never had before. At the end of the street where we lived there was a road called Boulevard Haecht. I stood and watched the German soldiers leaving and the Belgian people threw tomatoes at them. The last thing the German authorities did before leaving was to set the domed roof of the Palais de Justice on fire; the sky turned red.

We had survived.



One last miraculous story. During the early years of the War when it was still safe to go out, my mother befriended a lady and her daughter, who was the same age as me. One day we decided to have a photograph taken of the four of us. The lady knew a smuggler who was able to get letters into the Drancy camp. She sent a letter to her husband and the photo that was taken of all of us, telling him that she had made friends with my mother and me.

By the greatest of coincidences her husband and my father had also become friends. When he received the letter with the photo he proudly showed it to my father, who told him to his surprise and delight that the other mother and daughter in the photo were his wife and daughter! My father gave a letter to the smuggler, telling us he had seen a photo of us. That would have been the last image he would have seen of me and my mother.

# Mitzvah Day 2018

SANDRA CONWAY



## When I volunteered to arrange Mitzvah Day I really didn't think too much about it.

It wasn't until Madeleine Abramson, our chairman, sent me a long list of what it entailed that I realised it would need a lot of arranging. As a florist I had survived Valentine's Day, which in the florist's calendar is the most stressful day of the year, so if I could manage that, bring on Mitzvah Day.

It was decided we would collect groceries for Conway House, a homeless shelter for men in Kilburn and for Emmanuel Church in West Hampstead. We would stand outside Tesco on West End Lane as on previous Mitzvah Days, and Waitrose which is next to the fire station. This meant going to speak to the manager of these stores. The manager at Waitrose was very helpful and agreed. Tesco proved to be more challenging; I must have

**“Mitzvah Day was so successful: we collected so much for our charities.”**

spoken to at least six different managers as they couldn't seem to make a decision. In fact it wasn't until a few days before Mitzvah Day that I eventually obtained permission.

I spoke to Father Jonathan Kester from Emmanuel Church, such a lovely man. He supplies hot meals and shelter every Tuesday night during the winter and I asked him for a list of things that they would like us to collect for them, and for volunteers to assist.

Tony Ostrin suggested that I get in touch with the Muslim community and gave me a contact number for Hassan Joudi, Vice President of the Muslim Council of Great Britain.

I spoke with him on several occasions and he very happily agreed to offer his help.

I had wonderful support from Candice, Nina and Beverley. They printed out posters which were

displayed in the supermarkets and lists of items needed to be collected which we would hand to the shoppers as they entered. Madeleine helped enormously, always answering my e-mails whenever I had a problem. Tony Ostrin was also on hand with advice whenever I needed it.

Each week Candice, via the Synagogue newsletter, asked for volunteers to help, and as Mitzvah Day approached only a few people had come forward. I must admit I began to panic. What would happen if we didn't have enough people?

But my prayers were answered! Suddenly everybody began offering to help. It was fantastic! So many wonderful people. I then worked out who was going to be at each supermarket and what time they should arrive, and sent each volunteer a timetable.

The morning of November the 18th was a cold but bright sunny day. I met Madeleine at the Community Centre and together with our wonderful caretaker Gilberto took tables to the supermarkets.

Soon we were all ready. Volunteers were in place outside Tesco and Waitrose and the generosity of the public of West Hampstead was fantastic. People would bring out bags of shopping for us – it was quite amazing.

All through the morning as each volunteer arrived to take over, so much was collected. In the Community Centre, a small band of helpers were waiting for the arrival of a trolley loaded with donated items, which were sorted into boxes for the charities.

Hassan Joudi arrived with his wife and a volunteer to join us outside Waitrose as did helpers from Emmanuel Church. Tony Ostrin had arranged for the Mayor of Camden, Jenny Headlam-Wells to visit and she was soon chatting to volunteers and shoppers. She wanted to visit the Synagogue so we took her back there and showed her around.

At the end of the day we delivered the groceries to the relevant charities. Mitzvah Day was so successful: we collected so much for them. It is such a special day because it gives each of us an opportunity to work together to help those less fortunate in our society. Many thanks to: Madeleine Abramson, Beverley Ostrin, Tony Ostrin, Nina Geller, Alison Grunwald, Diana Davis, David Brodtman, Adrienne, Theodore and Dougal Powell, Michael Richard, Sharon Swaden, Max Alter, John Reizenstein, Robert Brenner, Rabbi Michael Harris, Judith Harris, Joy Gerzi, Marguerite Brodtman, Ian Conway, John Stillitz, Eileen Hauptman, Trudi Silver, Joan Horwitz, Candice Janet and Hassan Joudi. If I have forgotten to mention anybody please forgive me.



# Eruv: The Green Light

It is almost “all systems go” for the eruv in Camden and St John’s Wood. Camden and particularly Hampstead have very sensitive conservation areas and there have been a number of technicalities and legalities to be considered. When fully operational, the idea is that the eruv will connect to both the new eruv in Brondesbury Park and the North-West London eruv in Golders Green and Hendon.

## So why do we need an Eruv?

The fourth of the Ten Commandments is the commandment to observe the Sabbath. ‘Six days shall you labour and accomplish all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work.... (Exodus 20:10,11).

The Oral Tradition of Judaism defined thirty nine separate forms of labour involved in the construction of the Sanctuary and these are the thirty nine main categories of forbidden work on the Sabbath. Their common denominator is that they are of a creative nature. The concept of the Sabbath is therefore that we refrain from the creative activities that define our weekday world – and hand it back, so to speak, to the Creator in recognition of His ownership of the universe.

One of the thirty nine forms of labour is carrying. Wooden boards that formed the walls of the Sanctuary were carried from wagons into the public space where the Sanctuary was to be erected. The labour of carrying is therefore defined as carrying an object from a private, enclosed space (wagons) into a public, open space. While it is not immediately apparent why carrying should constitute a ‘creative’ activity on the Sabbath, the underlying principle of the prohibition is to remind us as we move from a private to public space or vice-versa that the world is one single domain that belongs to God. In the Sabbath definition ‘private’ means any enclosed space under private ownership. Public means a place where a very large number of people congregate at any one time. However, early Jewish legal authorities ruled that intermediate spaces (such as roads) should be treated as public spaces – thereby prohibiting the carrying of articles from say a private home into the street outside.

This has developed into the modern concept of the eruv. Using natural boundaries and string (signifying a symbolic wall) one can enclose an area and designate it as a virtual private space. Sabbath-observant Jews can therefore carry and push wheelchairs or buggies between their private homes (and the area enclosed by the



**“The Council felt that on balance, the eruvin would be beneficial to communities in the area and the Council want to see resources enjoyed.”**

eruv as if it were a continuous private space. While permission must be sought from the owners of land to erect the poles bearing the string, no change of ownership, actual or virtual, is implied.

Clearly in a modern urban setting, Sabbath prohibitions can impact on social and religious interaction – especially when families no longer live in close proximity to each other or near the synagogue. They can be particularly acute for the elderly and families with young children. An eruv helps alleviate modern difficulties for the Sabbath observant and at the same time allows for a greater awareness of Shabbat and the prohibitions.

The laws of Eruv are detailed and complex. An entire tractate of the Talmud is devoted the subject and the laws are subsequently codified by Maimonides and Joseph Caro in their respective halachic compendia.

# The Kindertransport: 80 Years On

ALISON GRUNWALD

To mark the 80th anniversary of the Kindertransport, Henry Grunwald gave a fascinating pre-kiddush talk to a large and appreciative audience.

Following the awful events of Kristallnacht on 9th November, 1938, the British government was petitioned to allow Jewish children to travel to the UK.

The name Kristallnacht (Crystal Night) comes from the pieces of broken glass that littered the streets of many German cities after the windows of Jewish owned properties were smashed and 267 synagogues were destroyed.

The world stood by and did nothing.

Many Jewish organisations, led by the Central British Fund for German Jewry assisted by non-Jews such as the Quaker's, persuaded the British government to allow an unlimited number of unaccompanied Jewish children to enter the country. The government agreed, as long as they were not a drain on the country's finances.

The first transport left Berlin on 1st December, 1938, arriving at Liverpool Street Station on 2nd December.

By the outbreak of the War in September, 1939, nearly 10,000 children's lives were saved.

Although this was a fantastic effort on the part of this country, Henry was asked why the UK had not done more to rescue Jews from Germany. He said the truth was he could not answer that question. In July 1938, a conference attended by representatives of 32 countries was held at Evian, France. The purpose was to discuss the Jewish refugee problem. Much sympathy was expressed for the plight of Jews living under the

Nazis but, with the exception of the Dominican Republic, no country agreed to accept an increase in numbers.

Historians, Henry said, say that the failure of the Evian conference and the lack of any meaningful response to Kristallnacht allowed Hitler to claim that the world did not

care about the Jews.

"In my view, they are right, and although Britain can be proud of the kindertransport, there is no doubt that much more could and should have been done to save the Jews of Europe."



# The Jews of France

## A Talk from Steeve Sarfati

TONY OSTRIN

About two years ago Steeve (yes, that is the correct spelling!) Sarfati and his family arrived in London from Paris and have been regular attendees at our shul services.

In a pre-kiddush talk Steeve traced the history of the French Jewish community from the time of the Crusades, which resulted in the Jews' 1394 expulsion, to modern-day anti-Semitism. Persecution was fed by allegations that Jews brought diseases, performed black magic and other rituals.

Over time many Jews became doctors, wholesalers and money lenders which improved their conditions and place in society. From the time of the French Revolution Jews became citizens, with the creation of the Great Sanhedrin in 1807. In 1808 Napoleon I set up the Consistoire Central de France, which stated that every city with more than 2000 Jews should have a synagogue. Anti-Semitism in the 18th and 19th centuries was a major threat, including high-profile cases such as the Mortara Scandal and Dreyfus Affair.

Anti-Semitism seemed to die down during World War 1 with 6,500 French Jews paying the ultimate price. In the wake of the Holocaust 180,000 Jews remained in France - which tripled in 25 years as survivors from Eastern Europe and Russia arrived. Jewish migration occurred from African colonies in the 1950s-60s when France gave them independence; Jews either went to

France or Israel.

Steeve asked: "We can see that France's Jews had a history but do they have a future?" He was referring to current Jew-hatred from groups on the left, far right, migrant communities and movements like the 'Gilets Jaunes', stating that Jews control the politics, the media and the economy of the country. He cited a number of terror attacks – the Jewish school in Toulouse, the kosher deli in Vincennes as well as attacks on individuals.

Steeve referred to Jews who have now left France as a result of anti-Semitism. Many have gone to Israel, the USA, other parts of Europe and Britain. His concern is that the consequence of this migration will leave synagogues as museums rather than places of worship.

So what does the future hold?

Steeve concluded: "It is not all doom and gloom for French Jews. It is a country with a long Jewish history and even today there are about 600,000 Jews living in France."

He and his family recently left London to return to France – but will they stay or finally leave France? In his words "Time will tell".

# Kalisz

SANDRA CONWAY

In 1939 on the eve of the German Invasion the Kalisz Jews numbered over 20,000; among them were my family – and this is their story of escape from a place they called home.

Kalisz is not a town many have heard of, but it is hugely significant in Polish-Jewish history. The General Charter of Jewish Liberties – known as the Statute of Kalisz – was issued by the Duke of Greater Poland Boleslaus the Pious on September 8th 1264. Thanks to the unprecedented legal rights given in this document, Jews not just flourished but were independent and free in Poland for hundreds of years. Yet, with the rise of the Nazis and impending invasion of Poland by Germany many Jews in Kalisz began to consider whether they should stay or try to get out.

When war broke out, Eva Erlich, my father's cousin suggested fleeing to Russia. But the large extended Erlich family did not agree. They thought the Russians were worse than the Germans. Germans were a 'civilised' nation and once the fighting was over, things would return to normal, they thought. Nearly all of them decided to stay in Poland and many perished in the Holocaust.

Eva escaped to Russia with her brother Jacob, fiancé Shachna Elbaum, and uncle Schlomachiel's daughter Yiska. They managed to survive the German invasion.

Her brother Jacob was able to correspond with members of the large extended family who

stayed in Kalisz – and some of those letters and postcards they sent him, survived too.

When war broke out, Kalisz was among the cities that fell almost immediately. Nazi Germany annexed the western part of Poland and in December 1939 expelled all the Jews from the city. My family fled to Krakow in the south and found somewhere to live.

"We all live together, four families in one room, the room is large and sunny."

They found work, and got in touch with uncle Abraham in Switzerland; expressing worry about absent relatives, friends and neighbours. While Eva and Jacob toyed with idea of going back to their family, the relatives who remained in Poland considered going to Russia.

By July, the family were in Skierniewice in the east, near the Russian border, where they could find neither room nor work. They decided that there was only one thing left to try: join Eva and Jacob.

They tried to obtain documents to leave and wrote: "After we have got our visas we'll get a pass to go to Kalisz and get the sewing machine". The letters were no doubt subject to inspection as there was no mention of hostilities or complaints about conditions.

From September 1940, they were in Warsaw. A hell, which the family letters hinted at saying: "I had to sell everything, we have nothing left to sell."



Finally, there were a series of messages from family members. Esther the youngest sister, wrote with a clear understanding that things were not going to get back to normal.

All of them perished.

Eva, Shachna and Jacob stayed just over the border between Poland and Russia/Belarus, in the town of Brest, where they were safe. The two men were given the choice of working in the mines or joining the army. Jacob opted to become a miner so they moved to Kopeysk, 3,000 kilometres to the east in the Chelyabinsk province in the southern Urals where Eva married Shachna in 1941.

They were fortunate to leave Brest - because the Germans broke the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and invaded Russia in June of that year with Jews being deported in the process. Eva gave birth to a daughter in August 1942. Shachna joined the army and did not survive the war.

Somehow Eva survived. My father never tried to get her to talk about what really had happened but when questioned after the war she was

always reluctant to say anything. She said that she could sew, and always managed to find food for her daughter. You only had to look at her tiny frail body and haunted face to realise she had gone through hell.

My father Paul and uncle Henry found through the Red Cross what was left of our Polish family in Kalisz and managed to contact them. Henry organised the emigration of Jacob, who was Paul's cousin, to Israel. There he found the climate too hot after Russian winters and eventually came to live in England.

My father arranged for Eva and her daughter Rita to follow suit, obtaining necessary authorisation, by claiming Eva was coming to keep house. They arrived in Harpenden where we lived in 1948. While I don't remember much about their arriving to live with us, I do know that after only a short time, my brothers and I had a sister and we grew to love Rita and our aunty Eva as part of our family.

For me having a sister was the very best thing that could have happened.



## Arthur Brill OBITUARY

Appointed a magistrate he served several years as Chairman of the Bench at Westminster.

Forever an activist with a strong commitment to helping others, he volunteered his services and not inconsiderable time to become a Governor at Hampstead's Royal Free Hospital where he was seen so often, some even believed he was on its medical staff.

More recently, as a patient representative on NICE, he made a considerable contribution to their report on cataracts.

After meeting his wife Barbara at a social club, they shared 48 very happy years of marriage.

A regular attendee at Hampstead Synagogue, he served on its Board of Management and regularly helped with security duties. He also represented the Synagogue on the Board of Deputies.

But some of his happiest times were Shabbat mornings in his usual backbench seat alongside close friends – all since sadly departed - Bertram Silverstone, Raymond Brody and David Green.

The much liked Arthur Brill will be greatly missed by all who knew him in Hampstead.

**Arthur Brill** - a larger than life character and long time stalwart of Hampstead Synagogue – passed away early July after a short illness, aged 86.

Born in Vienna, he escaped to Britain with his mother just two weeks before the outbreak of World War Two. His father was murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz.

With his mother in domestic service south of London, Arthur attended Reigate Grammar School where he excelled, completing his matriculation when 14, two years before his classmates. He subsequently continued his education taking several night time courses.

Arthur spent most of his working life in production management. However he later switched professions to run the charity: 'Greater London Fund for the Blind'.

His main work involved numerous meetings, negotiating with union representatives amongst others. To resolve differences, he sometimes resorted to treating them to Blooms meals in Whitechapel.

## Lotte Newman OBITUARY



**Lotte Newman** represented Hampstead Synagogue at the Board of Deputies for many years and her family had been active contributors to Hampstead Synagogue. On the Board of Deputies she served on its Law, Parliamentary and General Purposes Committees with great distinction. She used her great experience of health and medical matters to ensure that the community's interests in those areas were properly protected.

Lotte was born to two Jewish GPs in Germany in 1929. In 1933 her father, George, came to Glasgow and requalified. Lotte, her mother, her brother and a cousin followed him to the UK in 1938. The family set up home in Edgware, North London. Lotte's mother could not get work as a GP in the UK and these experiences affected the young girl. She pushed herself to make the most of life and opportunities.

Lotte won a scholarship to North London Collegiate School two years later.

She read anatomy and physiology at Birmingham University, before studying medicine at Westminster Medical School in London. Lotte was a GP for 45 years. She started work in her father's practice in Edgware, before setting up her own practice in Cholmley Gardens, West Hampstead. In 1968 she set up a second practice - the Abbey Medical Centre. Lotte believed that GPs had a special role in society to care for everyone.

Lotte was also a campaigner. From speaking out against Victoria Gillick, who was campaigning in the 1980s not to give contraception to under-16s without parental consent to encouraging better maternity leave for women in her profession. Her son, David described her as: "a champion of women's roles and rights both as a doctor and patient."

During her long career she held many top positions and lectureships; including President of the Royal College of General Practitioners and President of both the Medical Women's Federation and the International Society of Medicine. She was advisor to the World Health Organisation and several Home Office tribunals in the 1990s; Chief Medical advisor to St John's Ambulance and a member of the parole Board. In 1987 she became President of the Medical Women's Federation.

In 1959 Lotte married Norman Aronsohn, who supported her assiduously for 60 years. She and Norman had four children: Simone, Simon, David and Alexander. Lotte liked to go to concerts, visit art galleries and take sailing holidays with her husband. She was honoured with an OBE in 1991, and then a CBE in 1998.

# Report from the Board of Deputies

AMANDA BOWMAN



**“My specific responsibilities as head of the Board’s Defence Division is defending our Jewish religious freedoms, rights and security.”**

Jerry Lewis and I are honoured to be the Hampstead Synagogue representatives at the Board of Deputies and since May 2018, we’ve been joined by Rachel Harris who is one of the Under 35 Observers on the Board. Having spent the last year as one of the Board’s Vice Presidents, this voluntary role has occupied much of my free time and certainly a majority of my ‘head space’. So what’s been going on since our last report and why does this matter?

My specific responsibilities as head of the Board’s Defence Division is defending our Jewish religious freedoms, rights and security. This includes combating anti-Jewish hatred, racism, anti-Israel extremism and bigotry in the UK. While a lot of the media attention has been on fighting antisemitism in the Labour Party, we have also been tackling Islamic extremism and antisemitism from the far right and I’ve become a bit of an expert on racism in football with a season sadly punctuated by racist and antisemitic incidents.

The Board offers a range of support for Jewish schools and for Jewish students at universities. In a year which has seen more antisemitism and anti-Israel hatred on campus, we’ve been speaking out and working with universities to ensure that all Jewish students feel safe and secure.

The Board is the representative body for all Jews in the UK and works with government to ensure that the voice of Jews from all denominations is taken into account as it brings in new policies. Take the recent example of new guidelines on LGBT where we were pleased that the DfE had taken on board the perspectives put forward by the Board and other community groups in ensuring all of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act are mentioned, including those on religious belief. We were also pleased that after years of campaigning against

the two-child benefit cap, the Government recently decided not to extend the policy further. Although only a step in the right direction, the two-child policy is by definition an attack on the family and it disproportionately affects religious communities and the poorest in our society.

We continue to campaign for religious freedoms around circumcision and shechita, medical issues including organ donation, end of life care, and support for bereaved families, for example to ensure that the ‘system’ is sensitive to our faith needs eg. on non-invasive autopsies and timely burials.

Board activities also extend to other high profile issues. Hampstead Synagogue has some highly engaged members within its community. Not least our Co-Chair Madeleine Abramson and Hilda Worth who are Co-Chair and Vice Chair respectively of Jewish Women’s Aid (JWA). The Board of Deputies has recently launched a new initiative with JWA and the Jewish Leadership Council which is the UK’s first faith-based scheme to combat sexual harassment in the workplace. This follows heightened awareness around unacceptable behaviour in society in general, including the #MeToo movement and a recent Government report on a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual harassment. Initially a year-long pilot, the initiative is designed specifically for Jewish charities and community organisations.

Do please tell us what matters to you – we’re your representatives at the Board of Deputies and aim to work hard to make sure that what matters to Hampstead Synagogue, matters to the Board of Deputies.

**“Do please tell us what matters to you – we’re your representatives at the Board of Deputies and aim to work hard to make sure that what matters to Hampstead Synagogue, matters to the Board of Deputies”**

# Visit to Shanghai

**BRUCE LEWIN**

As part of our recent trip to China we visited Shanghai, itself a fascinating and hugely expanding city. The highlight though was our visit to the Tilanqiao area. For the period from 1933 this was, in part, the 'Designated Area for Stateless Refugees'. It became a refuge for ever more desperate Jews especially from Germany and Austria. It is estimated that some 18,000 European Jews found sanctuary there. Essentially the attitude of the authorities in Shanghai was 'if you can get here you are welcome and no visa required'. This was in stark and bitter contrast to the rest of the world.



Earlier in the century Russian Jews had settled in the area and had built the Ohel Moshe Synagogue which remains and around which the community became established. We even spoke with locals who could remember when the area was mainly occupied by Jewish refugees.

Once war came the flow of refugees ceased but the community thrived and had excellent relations with their Chinese neighbours. However, invasion by the Japanese changed things and the area was in effect turned into

a Ghetto and life was tough. The Germans pressed their Japanese allies to exterminate the Jews imprisoned in the ghetto. The Japanese to their credit refused and the Jews were left to live out the war albeit in harsh conditions. After the war virtually all the Jews left for Israel US and so forth but all owed their very survival to the Shanghai authorities.

The wall of the living (pictured, left) shows the names of some 14,000 refugees who lived in the area. The Ohel Moshe Synagogue has been restored by the Chinese authorities and is part of a wonderful exhibition showing the history of the Jews in the area from 1933 to 1945. Yitchak Rabin visited the synagogue in 1993 and wrote in the guestbook 'To the people of Shanghai for the unique humanitarian act of saving thousands of Jews during the Second World War, thanks in the name of the government of Israel'.



We were greatly moved by this visit. The Miracle of Shanghai was one of the very few bright lights in an otherwise black period for the Jewish people and the story should we think be better known.

# Super Duper Aruba

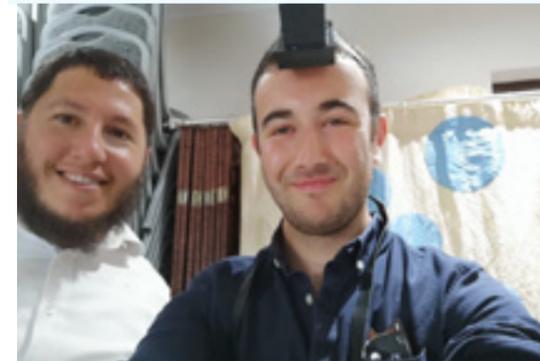
**JACK MENDEL**

I held on for dear life, while the Jeep jumped up and down on mud roads. Our driver shouts: "tell me if anyone falls off! I have a lot to show you!"

So much for the beach holiday I was planning!

This was "real Aruba, not the plastic stuff" he said, which after a jet-lagged night sleep and a nine hour flight, was unexpected.

I strapped myself into the soft-top tiger-painted Jeep for a drive around the arid desert, which took us from ornate church to lighthouse to epic coastline where the sea crashes into rocky beaches.



There's cacti everywhere, wild donkeys and goats roam free, and a national park sits at the centre of this rural part of the island - a world away from the lights and casinos of the southern coast.

Our island guide ferried us to our bus which had the number plate 'One Happy Island'. I assumed it was a tourism gimmick, but every vehicle has it, because Aruba is a happy place.

Approach the curb and cars stop to beckon you across. When walking the street, people smile and say hello; and when you're eating, waiters crowd around you.

It is so dependent upon visitors - with roughly a third of its GDP from tourism - that they've made it as easy as possible to be a tourist.

English is near-universally spoken alongside Dutch, Spanish and the local language, Papiamentu, while everywhere accepts the US dollar, as well as the local currency, Florin.

I stayed at Brickell Bay Hotel, a two-minute walk from the beautiful Palm Beach resort, which lies empty in the day and teems with life at night.

During the hot humid day, it's an island for water-related activities, including seeing stunning beach

flamingos, fishing, deep sea diving, snorkelling, sailing, submarine tours, windsurfing and kite surfing.

Most enjoyable for me, a non-swimmer, was going on a four-hour champagne breakfast catamaran trip, complete with three diving stops; including at the site of a sunken German warship.

Its not all sandy beaches and sipping cocktails though. Aruba has a long and at times dark colonial history.

While it is a part of Holland there are also influences from Spain, Venezuela, the Caribbean and Latin America; all of which appears in its wide variety of cuisines. There is lots of seafood, which was a challenge, as a Jewish vegetarian. For years, Aruba was also a place of refuge for European Jews fleeing hardship.

It has a profound if hidden Jewish history, with former Prime Minister, Mike Emen, a member of the tribe, and the Aloe factory, which produces soaps has a plaque at the entrance dedicated by director, Louis A. Posner, to his parents, Israel and Aida.

Its small but proud community is based at the Synagogue in the capital Oranjestad, but despite having a full-time rabbi, it has shrunk in recent years. The challenge for the community has become more acute since 2013, with the introduction of Chabad near the resorts.

Benjie Pick, a Jewish US-born Arubian told me about the community's fascinating history - made up of mainly European Jews, looking for a better life.

It was established in 1963, and Pick said the Jews who arrived worked hard, and it was "a safe haven".



Those founding members have now passed, and the community's future is, he says, reliant on "ten of us, picking money out of our pocket and donating and helping which is not going to take too much longer if it continues that way." While bearing in mind the struggles of the shul, I visited Chabad Aruba, meeting US-Israeli Rabbi Ahron Blasberg, his Leeds-born wife Chaya, and their four beautiful kids.

He said he "totally understands" the community's concerns, but added, that since Chabad's arrival "Judaism just grew."

"People became more active. Holidays became more celebrated", he said.

While for the first time ever during November they got a minyan, he says in 'high-season' it can now be up to 150 guests.

Being Jewish in Aruba isn't too difficult as a lot of food is imported from the US, and ships coming in can have kosher meat added.

Reflecting on the friendliness of islanders, he told me cars honked at him while he was walking on Shabbat with a talit on, but said: "People ask me if that is antisemitism? And I say no! These people are offering me a lift and I have to say thank you, but no!"

# Here Come The Rabbi, The Jewish Bradman and The Chocolate Cake

ZAKI COOPER & DANIEL LIGHTMAN

**Former member Zaki Cooper and local resident Daniel Lightman explore the multiple connections between Jews and cricket in this momentous summer for the sport.**

It's clear that our community has more than its fair share of cricket fans. Some turn out in their whites for the annual match against Shomrei. Others prefer spectating – visitors to Lord's for a Sunday match may well see several familiar faces from shul the previous day. Rabbi Harris has been known to include cricket references in his sermon, and his father Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, zichrono livracha, was a huge cricket fan, a most technically correct batsman and MCC member.

For cricket-lovers in our shul and beyond, this has been an unusually exciting summer. The World Cup was hosted here – and was won in dramatic fashion by England. Then there was the small matter of the Ashes series against Australia. This summer was the first time since 1975 that England had hosted both.

No Jewish players participated in this extraordinary summer of international cricket.

But whilst the comedian Mike Yarwood once quipped "I was doing the smallest books in the world. Famous Jewish cricketers, Australian etiquette, that kind of thing!", Jews have left their mark on this quintessentially English sport. More Jews have represented South Africa than any other Test-playing nation. Manfred Susskind was second in the batting averages in the 1924 Test series against England. However, he (an old boy of UCS) took steps to hide his Jewishness, unlike Norman Gordon, who, when he ran up to bowl the first ball on his Test debut, against England in 1938, heard a heckler in the crowd shout: "Here comes the rabbi!" "Fortunately I took five wickets," said Gordon, "and that shut him up for the rest of the tour."



At 21, Ali Bacher was the youngest to captain Transvaal, for whom he scored 235 to defeat the Australians. In 1969-70, he led probably the strongest-ever South African team to an unprecedented 4-0 whitewash over Australia. That team included another Jew, the bespectacled wicket-keeper Dennis Gamsy, who had made his debut for Natal aged 18. Dr Bacher subsequently organised the rebel tours in the 1980s, and

went on to run the South African Cricket Board for a decade after South Africa's readmission to international cricket in 1991 – and to plan the hosting of the World Cup 2003 in South Africa.

His nephew, Adam Bacher, an opening batsman in 19 Tests, unluckily never scored a Test century, twice in 1997 being dismissed for 96. Unfortunate, too, was Sid O'Linn (born Sidney Olinski), who in the Trent Bridge Test against England in 1960 tried to reach his century with a boundary, but Colin Cowdrey took a remarkable catch, and he was dismissed for 98 – which remained his highest Test score.

**“Remarkably, the only Jew to have scored a Test century was a Jamaican...”**

Talented Jewish South African cricketers whose bad fortune it was to reach the peak of their playing careers during South Africa's sporting isolation included Lawrence Seeff (who, uniquely, scored 188 in his only, unofficial, “Test” and 142 in his single, unofficial, one-day international (ODI), Mandy Yachad (who played one official ODI and Terence Lazard (who, with a highest score of 307 not out, is the only Jew to have scored a first-class triple century).

Two Jews have played Test cricket for Australia. The better known was Julien Weiner, the son of Holocaust survivors, who played six Tests, two against England. Dismissed for 93 in his last Test, against Pakistan, he, like Adam Bacher and Sid O'Linn, fell tantalisingly short of a Test century. The other Australian Test cricketer was Ruth Buckstein, who scored 83 in her first Test innings, against England, before being run out - and made two centuries in her 16 ODIs.

Two years ago Michael Klingler, whose prolific run-scoring, especially in one-day cricket, over

many years earned him the moniker “the Jewish Bradman”, was belatedly picked for a three-match T20 international series for Australia against Sri Lanka, in which he was the leading run-scorer. Klingler is returning to captain Gloucestershire in the T20 Blast this summer. Another Australian Jew who ought to have had a long international career was Leonard “Jock” Livingston, an attacking batsman who enjoyed great success for Northamptonshire in the 1950s. “If he had been born in England”, wrote JD Coldham, “Livingston... would have been certain of a place in the England Team...”

Remarkably, the only Jew to have scored a Test century was a Jamaican: Ivan Mordecai Barrow was a wicket-keeper, whose 105 against England at Old Trafford in 1933 was

the first overseas Test century by a West Indian. Centuries were also scored in the Ireland v Scotland contest by Dr Louis Jacobson for Ireland, and by the Sussex batsman Terry Raconzier for Scotland. Despite its small size, the Irish Jewish community has produced many fine cricketers, including two captains of the national team, Marc Cohen and Jason Molins. The latter captained Ireland in 45 matches, scoring 107 not out against Zimbabwe.

In 1993 the great Yorkshire and England fast bowler Fred Trueman claimed his mother was Jewish, saying she had been adopted at birth and that her natural mother was the daughter of a Jewish couple from Leeds named Bennett. He told the JC that he welcomed his new-found identity, but added: “Don't expect me to stop eating bacon sandwiches”!

However, Chris Walters' recent biography has cast doubt on Trueman's claim to Jewish roots.

A number of English Jews played county cricket, including Lord Dalmeny, John Raphael, the brothers Malcolm and Bev Lyon, Mike Barnard, Maurice Manasseh and Ashley Cowan. Sir Julien Cahn ensured that he played first-class cricket by setting up his own XI, prompting The Cricketer magazine to describe him as: “At once the most prolific patron of cricket between the wars and comfortably the worst ever first-class cricketer”.

But none of them were picked for England. The only Anglo-Jew to achieve that accolade was Netta Rheinberg, an alumna of South Hampstead High School, whose sole Test came in the 1948-49 tour of Australia. Alas, she was stumped for a duck in her first innings, and bowled first ball in the second!

Another North London Jewess instituted one of cricket's best-loved traditions: of sending chocolate cakes to the Test Match Special commentators. Brian Johnson's complaint that while the players had gone in for tea and a slice of cake there was no cake in the commentary box prompted Aileen Cohen of St John's Wood to bake the first Test Match Special cake.

So next time you are watching cricket at Lord's, or talking about it at the Shul kiddush, you can reflect on the contribution that Jews have made to the great game.

*Zaki Cooper and Daniel Lightman QC are the co-authors of “Cricket Grounds from the Air”.*

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**Happy new year from all of us at JW3.**

**We look forward to welcoming you soon.**

**שנה טובה**



# The Hampstead Hawks vs. The Shomrei Sharks

**BARNABY POWELL**

While England basked in the glory of a World Cup-winning Ashes summer, one of the most highly-anticipated cricketing contests took place on Hampstead Heath Extension in late July.

12 months after a painful defeat to Shomrei Hadath, a.k.a. the 'Shomrei Sharks' – two strong teams once again battled it out to be the kings of NW6 – with the Hampstead Hawks returning to winning ways at the end of the contest.

Under overcast skies, captain Barnaby Powell won the toss and decided to bat first, despite not having a full XI present. With conditions favouring bowlers it was always going to be a tough start and so it proved. After fireworks from Benedict Balcombe for a couple of overs, the Hawks found themselves two down within the first five overs, with Freddy Powell the victim of a brilliant catch at mid on.



However, their overseas player Hector Millar, who top scored with a sparkling 60, steadied the ship; ably supported by Barnaby Powell and with regular contributions through the middle overs. The innings finished with a flourish, as Matt Segal and Matt Reizenstein played a number of flashing strokes to bring Hampstead to a more-than-useful 147.

The Hawks were confident that on a slow pitch and seamer-friendly conditions, the total would take them to victory – but it wasn't going to be easy.

After 12 or so, the Shomrei Sharks made an impressive start, reaching about 80-1, and seemingly putting themselves in pole position. Nevertheless, the Hawks showed fight, and drinks at the half-way mark refreshed the team and brought wickets straight away.

Matt Reizenstein put in a wonderful spell of spin bowling to bamboozle the opposition's top order, taking two wickets in an over early in his spell.

Jonathan Roskin's took another two scalps with searing pace, leaving Shomrei languishing on 100-5. Reeling, they required the remaining runs off eight overs, which was a tall ask, especially as wickets kept falling with regularity.

With the game in the balance, tidy overs from Jack Mendel and Theodore Powell

restricted Shomrei's scoring, before captain Barnaby stepped up with a dominant spell of death bowling.

Fast, full and straight, he ripped the heart from the Shomrei team to seal an impressive victory. It was a convincing win for Hampstead Synagogue, that will live long in the memory of those who played.

Many thanks to all those who played and came to watch, including our official team mascot, Dougal the Westie! Until next year....

Look out for our new "What's On" guide!



# התקוה

כל עוד בלבב פנימז—  
נפש יהודי הומיז—  
ולפאתי מזרח קדימז—  
עין לציון צופיז—  
עוד לא אבדה תקוותז  
התקוה בת שנות אלפיז  
להיות עם חופשי בארצז  
ארץ ציון וירושלים

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