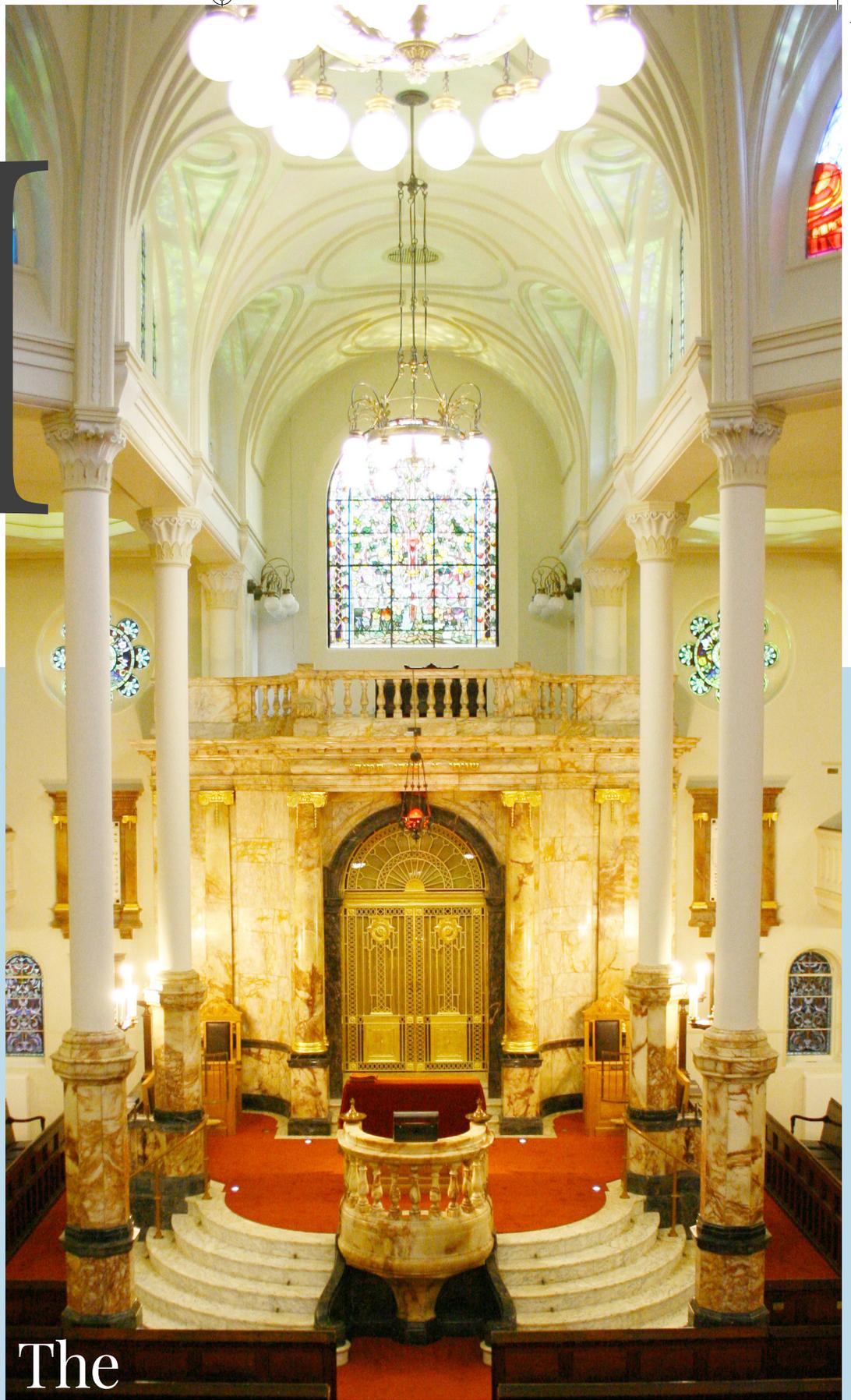


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A Year of
COVID - 19,
Down but
Not Out



The
**HAMPSTEAD
REVIEW**

2021/22 | 5782



Tony Ostrin

From the Editor's Desk

This has been a difficult year for all of us but nonetheless we at Hampstead Synagogue have provided a wide-ranging social programme of interest albeit on Zoom. The articles in this year's issue in our community review magazine show what has been achieved by our members and friends during the pandemic.

Hampstead Review editorial team have been working hard during the past two months and I would like to thank all those who have helped, especially Adrienne Powell, Alison Grunwald, Sandra Conway and Alyson Selby.

Finally, my thanks go to all our contributors and advertisers without whom there could be no review.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's review and wish all our members and friends a healthy, happy and successful 5782.

Editor: Tony Ostrin

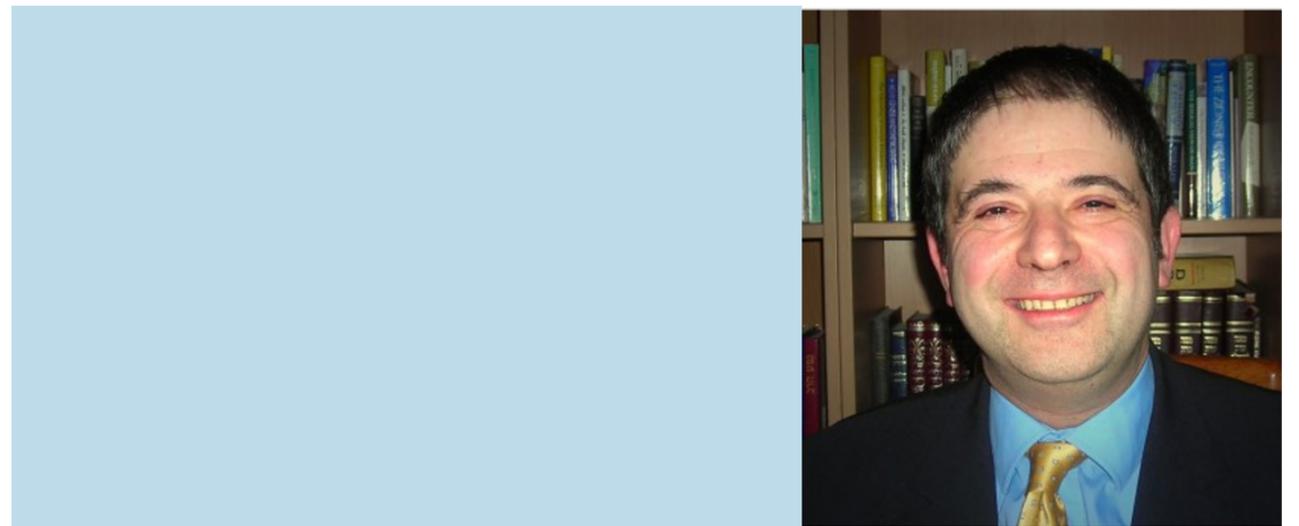
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Dr Rabbi Michael Harris

Reflections for Rosh Hashanah 5782

Another very challenging year draws to a close and we eagerly anticipate Rosh HaShanah, and with it, please God, the beginning of a much brighter and sweeter year.

But without minimizing in any way the many difficulties and anxieties faced by our members in the past year, I would like to focus briefly on just some of its positive aspects. In many ways we continued to be brought closer as a community by the adverse circumstances in which we found ourselves. Our wonderful welfare team continued to give practical assistance to members who needed it. Our volunteer team made many phone calls to let people know they were not forgotten. The Friday afternoon Zoom events in anticipation of Shabbat, led by Rabbi Shlomo or Rabbi Jack, were greatly appreciated by those who participated in them. And a rich series of online events and shiurim throughout the year often attracted a greater number of participants than do some of our in-person events in normal times.

At the time of writing, our beautiful Shul has been open once again for Shabbat services for several months, and it has been lovely to witness the gradual return of our 'regulars' along with several new faces. It is of course an important mitzva in Judaism to steer clear of unnecessary danger and to look carefully after one's health – the Torah tells us "u-shemartem me'od le-nafshoteichem" – "you shall guard yourselves very much". People are therefore absolutely right to return to Shul only when they feel safe to do so. It has been most heartening to see many of our members deciding that they do feel confident to come back to Shul. If you have

yet to return, please be assured that we will be delighted to see you when you are ready, and a warm welcome awaits you.

I would like to thank the community most sincerely for its participation in the outstanding online educational event last November marking my reaching 25 years at Hampstead, to Madeleine, Gabriel and all those who worked so hard to facilitate the event, and again to express my gratitude to our community for the surprise of unnecessary, most generous gifts, including a 9-volume set of Rabbi Sacks's superb Covenant and Conversation series.

The arrival of Rabbi Jack and Rivka Cohen to join our professional team has been a huge gain of the past year. They have already greatly enriched our community and we wish them every blessing and success going forward.

Finally, my deep thanks to our Executive team, headed by Madeleine, for all their hard work, dedication and skill, and to all the members of our professional and volunteer teams for all they have continued to do for us this past year.

"Tichleh shana vekileteha – tavo shana uvirchotehah" – may the old year and its sufferings fade, and a new year with its blessings begin.

Judith and the family join me in wishing you all a healthy, happy and peaceful 5782.

Wishing our dear Rabbi and Chazzan and all our dear friends in the community a very happy and healthy New Year and well over the fast but not least peace in the world.

Irene and Marcel Anisfeld

Wishing everyone a very happy and healthy New Year, best wishes

Lorraine, Sidney, Rosie and Sam Myers

Wishing the whole community a happy 5782.

Beverley & Tony Ostrin

Greetings from the Solomon family. Wishing our family and the community a happy and healthy new year.

Meta and Henry Solomon

Happy and healthy New Year to everyone at Dennington Park Road.

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

A REVIEW OF THE YEAR FROM THE CHAIR



Madeleine Abramson

When we wrote about the 2019-2020 year in last year's magazine, we really didn't think that the effects of Covid would go on for so long. At the time of writing this (pre July 19th) shul services are still subject to booking in, social distancing and to everyone present wearing masks. I do hope by the time you read this the new normal will be something like the old normal.

The Shul doors were again closed from December, when we closed voluntarily before the Chief Rabbi enforced it, until the second part of Pesach, when we finally reopened for services.

But the Shul Community is still strong. How would any of us have survived without Zoom?

Last summer, Gabriel Herman put together a virtual series "Wish You Were Here" of visits to other communities abroad – from Los Angeles to India. This led to a wonderful Sukkah Hop; a round the world tour. We had communities from London (I was in the shul, Rabbi Harris was taking cover in a very wet Sukkah outside) to Uganda and beyond, which was completely fascinating.

Our Chatanim could not be celebrated – so Gabriel Herman and Mike Richard will be our Chatanim again this year, and we do hope we can make a proper simcha this Simchat Torah. We did not have N'eshit Chayil and this year we have decided to celebrate our women at a separate occasion. We have chosen Purim as this is a time when people come to shul, and the ladies have a separate megillah reading.

In November we celebrated Rabbi Harris's 25 years at Hampstead. The 25 for 25, run in collaboration with JW3, was a fantastic set of talks which have been written up elsewhere in the magazine.



In December Rabbi Jack Cohen and his wife Rivka and son Yitzhak joined our professional staff team as our part-time Assistant Rabbi. This is a very important move for us. Jack splits his time between studying, working for us, and working for the United Synagogue, who have designated this area as a Community of Potential, meaning there are a lot of young unaffiliated people living near the shul. Jack has been tasked to 'go out and get them'. Rivka sadly started her days at Hampstead on furlough as her role is to help with hosting, and clearly there hasn't been any until very recently.

AJEX Shabbat was celebrated in the shul; as was Chanukah. But Chanukah was relayed to our homes while we all lit candles in our own windows. This pleased Rabbi Harris, who always says that this festival is best celebrated at home with the family.

Sadly, Rabbi Harris contracted Covid just before Purim. So our Youth Director Toby Weiniger stepped in at short notice and did a double virtual Megillah reading – one for the shul followed by another one for the young professionals under the aegis of Rabbi Jack. We are sorry to see Toby go and wish him Mazeltov on getting married and the best of luck in his new position working with the youth of St Johns Wood. The ladies also conducted a Zoom Megillah reading with a good number of ladies reading this year.

Rabbi Shlomo gave us an inspiring song workshop before Pesach, as last year, and meanwhile things outside were looking better. Although we didn't open our doors for Days 1 & 2, we did for Days 7 & 8. Shlomo has taken us through most of the Covid period, in lockdown and even now, with his delightful Zoom Kabbalat Shabbat sessions, which many attended who would not usually attend an actual Friday night service.

We have had lots of good Zoom events, but a highlight was Sophie Max talking about sexual abuse and harassment, after the Everyone's Invited website was very much in the news. We have since heard the horrific OFSTED report of this occurring regularly in schools, and we should just mention that the shul Safeguarding Officer is Alison Grunwald, and she should be contacted if there are any issues on safeguarding@hampsteadshul.org.uk. Shavuot saw the shul attempt a Kiddush in shifts – it had to be outside and brief and prepackaged – no double dipping or even single dipping allowed.

We went into the AGM without an elected Executive but came out of it with a co-opted strong team.

Chair - Madeleine Abramson

Co- Vice Chair - Alyson Selby

Co-Vice Chair - Sally Friend

Warden - Michael Selby

Financial Representative -Richard Abramson

Woman's Officer - Sandra Conway

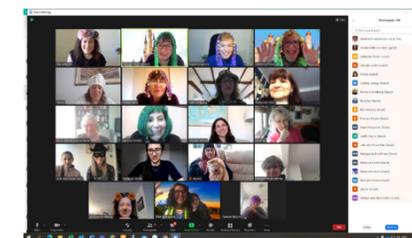
Covid Transition Officer - Gabriel Herman

We also took a new step – we have made Michael Haringman the Shul Life President. This is in recognition of his being Chair for 18 years, and he has taken us through the Covid period by acting as Warden most shabbats, and generally providing the glue that holds Hampstead together.

We plan to build a strong group of volunteers to share the load and to provide a succession plan for the following year. We already have many volunteers, and I want to thank those who help the Shul. Without your input, we would not be the Hampstead we are. From William Geller, who looks after our buildings so meticulously, Nina Geller who has continued to ensure that welfare is a priority during these difficult times, our Security teams who look after us every time we are in the building, through to Joan Horwitz who looks after our lovely front garden. I cannot name everyone – but you are all invaluable to the community. I would like to thank Gabriel Herman, my Co-Chair for the last year, who set up so many of the activities mentioned here and more, but has now stepped down from that role.

We would also like to thank our staff – Rabbis Michael, Shlomo and Jack who have provided us with spiritual uplift when we most needed it; Hayley who has managed to keep the shul office open throughout; Gilberto who is our mainstay for caring for our buildings; and we do miss Jenny our catering manager, and hope Kiddushim will be up and running by the time you read this.

I am excited to work with our new Executive – so from us all – best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year as we pray for a brighter 5782.



We are ready to welcome you to our homes.



Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, keeping our residents safe has been our priority. Our experienced and caring staff ensure our homes have the highest level of cleanliness, regular testing and ample amounts of PPE.

We also know how essential it is for you to stay in touch with your loved one. We have made sure that families stay connected through one on one visits, video calls, special visiting pods and garden visits when possible. Each of our homes is a very special community with daily activities promoting wellbeing and stimulating both body and mind. We proudly celebrate our Jewish life and enjoy Shabbat and festivals together as well as delicious Kosher food.

For more information please call our team on 020 8922 2222 or email lwjc@jcare.org



Charity Reg No. 802559

JEWISH CARE

Community Centre Update

Madeleine Abramson & Gabriel Herman

Last year we were looking to produce a Stage 1 proposal for either a new modern building or to refurbish the existing facility. We have the costings for a rebuild and are currently instructing our architects Levitt Bernstein to provide another report on the detailed costings required to renovate our dilapidated Community Centre to a good state of repair. First, we must consider the absolute essentials – the structural repairs, asbestos removal, and new utilities and facilities – electrics, water supply, heating, kitchen, toilets, and accessibility requirements. When we know how much that will come to – and that amount should be available before this goes to print – we will know how best to proceed.

We will be looking to you, the community, to help with fundraising. Next year Hampstead Synagogue will be 130 years old! That is an excellent opportunity to look to the next 130 years (well – maybe 20?) and get you, our members, involved.

We would love to have all sorts of new facilities but in the end, this will come down to cost. We need a good hall for kiddush, events and simchas, and a smaller space to have small services and meetings. We need to be able to hire out space to ensure

that the building is well utilized and to provide an income stream. All this will be built into the new internal design.

We will keep you informed. 2022 is our year of redevelopment – and we would love you to be involved. If you would like to be on the committee looking into the Community Centre and deciding the contents of the building, please let the office know.

“We will be looking to you to help”



Struggling to cope is more normal than you think.

Uncertainty and isolation can cause any of us to experience feelings of distress or anxiety. Whatever you are going through, you don't have to face it alone.



If you need support or are supporting someone who needs help, contact Jami.

jamiuk.org/get-support or call 020 8458 2223



If you're struggling to cope or need immediate help, contact Shout's 24/7 crisis text service.

Text Jami to 85258



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Jami

The Mental Health Service for our Community

Registered charity no. 1003345

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and safe New Year

Sandra & Ian Conway.



Zak Saurymper's Bar Mitzvah

A(nother) Rabbi comes to HAMPSTEAD

Rabbi Jack hits the ground running

Rabbi Jack Cohen



A lot has happened since I moved with Rivka and Itzik into the West Hampstead area. We have bought our first couch, our first set of garden furniture and even our first microwave! We started coming to the shul, then Zoom, then shul again. We have met many new people. Many are called Michael. Most have been hiding behind masks. We have hosted and been hosted, had the rain and the sun, the cold and the...well...almost hot.

Our task here is to create mutually beneficial bridges between young professionals and the shul. We have focused on both sides of those bridges, so much of my work has been directly with the shul. I have enjoyed the teaching and davening, especially the interactive Friday night sessions which incorporate both singing and study. Leading my first burial ceremony was an immensely humbling privilege.

The focus on young professionals kicked off with the well-attended virtual Megillah reading. We are indebted to Toby, our Youth Director who broke records for both speed and accuracy in his rendition of the Megillah and were privileged to host Rabbi Dweck alongside other engaging presentations.

What followed was many a 'walk-and-talk' as I began to reach out to both younger members of the shul, and anyone else I could get my hands on. (If I have not yet managed to reach out to you, I want to hear from you so please get in touch at: jack@hampsteadshul.org.uk).

Social media came next; ensuring that the infrastructure was in place to reach out on both Facebook and Instagram was an essential task. Although much of the foundations were already in place, we have tried to take things to the next level with engaging and eye-catching content. Of particular interest is the fledgling "CommuniTEA" series involving short interviews with community members over a cup of tea. These have been very well-received and have increased the virtual reach of the community substantially.

It is however the 'Inter-generational Garden Party' which has been the most significant achievement to date. Graciously hosted by Joan in her gorgeous garden, both young professionals and senior members of the community were in attendance and enjoyed each other's company. It was a perfect example of bridge-building and I hope that this is just the beginning!

All that remains is for me to thank the entire community for the overwhelmingly supportive and warm reception we have received since arriving. Special mention must go to the executive (past and present!) and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to guide and assist my work so far (you know who you are), as well as my colleagues on the Rabbinic team with whom collaboration has been an absolute pleasure. May Hashem give them their reward alongside all those who faithfully occupy themselves with the needs of the community.

Shlomo & Joy Gerzi

In conversation with Tony Ostrin

When I asked Shlomo and Joy for their thoughts about the past year they both told me how much they had missed the community during the time the shul was closed.

Shlomo had enjoyed leading Kabbalat Shabbat and explaining the parasha on a Friday on Zoom, whether it was from his home or, more recently, in shul. He emphasised how he appreciated the positive feedback, and when members ask for their special tunes, telling me: "I enjoyed the Zooms when Hampstead joined Kenton and I thank Rabbi Black for the invitation".

Now that the shul is open Shlomo says he enjoys singing on Shabbat morning, even in a mask! "I have missed the many people who attended regularly, and I look forward to the time we can welcome once again those congregants who are currently not attending due to the pandemic".



I asked Joy for her reflections on the past few months. She says she has missed meeting people on a regular basis, telling me that during the pandemic she had made numerous telephone calls to members who might have felt isolated, many of whom are now her personal friends.

"I have particularly missed organising the Shabbat lunches and seeing a new member or visitor in shul - asking whether they would like to join us for lunch. Even though the shul is now open we are unfortunately not able to speak to people without wearing a mask and we must always be aware of social distancing, with sadly no kiddush or lunches; this to me is incredibly sad. We are not living in a normal environment; but will it ever return to being normal?"

Both Shlomo and Joy hope that the coming year will see life becoming a little easier, telling me: "We wish everyone Shana Tova and good health".

Jenny & Gilberto

In conversation with Beverley Ostrin

Speaking to both Jenny and Gilberto three words summed up their feelings of the past months: family, friends and work.



Jenny, our Catering Manager

Jenny told me that as she lives on her own, she missed seeing family and friends during the lockdowns. "Then I began to meet my neighbours as we were able to talk over the fence. I missed my work, especially Hampstead, although I did find other jobs as a carer which kept me busy".

To my question "What would you like to keep when the restrictions are lifted?" Jenny answered: "I have been shopping for a couple of elderly people who contacted me each morning with their shopping list. I felt I was making their lives a little easier and hope to continue helping them. Also important to me is the new-found friendships with my neighbours. But most of all I just want life to return to normal".



Gilberto, our Buildings Caretaker

Gilberto found it hard not working as he liked to be kept busy and is pleased that the synagogue has now re-opened. To him, seeing the regular members on a Saturday morning is a sign that life is returning to normal.

Sitting chatting to Gilberto, he told me, "The past year has made me realise how important it is to keep in touch with family". Unfortunately, he lost his mother earlier this year and was unable to go back to Colombia to see his family. "Now each week I speak with my sister and hope in the near future to be able to visit her".

Gilberto said that he had appreciated how people had supported each other during the pandemic and hoped this community spirit would continue.



HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE YOUTH HAVE PLENTY TO CELEBRATE

Toby Weiniger

This year, the highlight of the Hampstead Youth calendar was our array of Purim celebrations in February. We packaged and delivered delicious (and healthy!) Mishloach Manot gifts to the younger members of our community. These were heartily appreciated as a gesture of community during lockdown. On top of that we held a Purim Quiz Night which was enjoyed by all, despite the lack of fancy dress! We took part in the zoom Megillah reading and it was wonderful to see everybody come together.

The year started with a fruitful discussion on Rosh Hashanah, about the universal themes of the day, and the annual Yom Kippur Tribe debate on Freedom of Speech. When restrictions permitted, the monthly Youth Discussion Groups took place in the Den. We enjoyed table football tournaments and having the space to chill with the community on a Shabbat morning. We did miss our Sushi!

A special mention must go to Tal Harris who won the Hampstead Youth Premier League football

prediction competition. For those who do not know, since December we have run an intense competition with participants scoring 3 points for a 'perfect score' and 1 point for the 'correct result' in predicting Premier League fixtures every week. We were delighted that Rabbi Jack took part in this competition too!

We have held online events. My favourite was the Chanukah 'Hampstead Olympics' where we tried to mirror olympic sports from our own homes. We joined with Tribe for the special Youth Q&A with Chief Rabbi Mirvis in which the Chief Rabbi shared reflections about Pesach, acts of kindness, Jewish leadership in the 21st century, and even football!

On a personal note, as I leave the Hampstead Community, I would like to thank everybody for their warmth and support over the past two years. Thanks to all those who supported our youth events in whatever capacity, and to the Rabbinic, lay and administrative leadership teams for their guidance. Wishing everybody a healthy New Year!

LET JOY & TOGETHERNESS BE OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Gabriel Herman



Having gone through a collective transformative experience, can we really return to happier times and act as if nothing happened? Nostalgic for the pre-Covid era, intrigued by opportunities opened up in lockdown and excited by the future, history suggests we will adopt a blended approach as we embark on our new path.

There are those who yearn for a speedy return to pre-Covid norms. A recent opinion poll conducted by the United Synagogue (US) suggested a high number of respondents want everything to go back to normal. However, some advise caution. US president Michael Goldstein told us at one of our "Where are we now?" events that many go to shul out of habit. Have shul closures broken the link irrevocably for some?

A number of shul leaders want to make the US more attractive by continuing popular experiences during the last year such as shorter services - some offered live online - and the adoption of modern melodies. (Traditional chazanut is still popular; Hampstead's Selichot Service achieved a huge global audience).

Two conversations still to be had are the way we serve younger members and, perhaps more importantly, how girls and women can have an enhanced role in shul life.

Once the 'new normal' is decided by the US, a cross-communal project led by the US will no doubt be launched; every organisation invested in shul attendance being encouraged to participate in a "Back to Shul" campaign. Think of Shabbat UK and double its ambition. Of course,

Hampstead will play its part.

Let joy and togetherness be our guiding principles. Let us find a way to mark all those occasions that should have been celebrated when we were in lockdown. A year of repeat Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, delayed weddings and special kiddushim for missed wedding anniversaries. How about dusting down all those exciting events to mark The US's 150th anniversary and calling it The US 150+2?

And what next for Hampstead?

I was Co-chair during 2020 stepping down last May. I was associated with Hampstead's larger online events. To organise, they required months of hard work - but were extremely rewarding. As the only UK synagogue to advertise its programme to the wider Jewish community, thousands of people around the world came into Hampstead's orbit. It peaked with the Global Succah Hop which I co-produced for Hampstead with two other organisations.

Hampstead should look for a blended approach for its future development. Replicate our traditional services by possibly making them shorter; updating some of the melodies and seeking ways for members (particularly girls and women) to engage. Maybe some services could be offered online to serve the most isolated.

Our online social programme attracted a huge audience and attracted many strategic partners and friends. Maybe we could monetise this to self-fund and develop a global brand. Our modern orthodoxy is more necessary than ever before.

L'Shana Tova to all - Barbara Froomberg

Happy New Year with best wishes -
Morven & Michael Heller

Wishing all our members everything good
for the coming year - Joan Horwitz

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy
New Year. Best Wishes - Anita Meller

Happy New Year to everyone - The Reizensteins

Happy Healthy and Safe New Year -
Anonymous

Wishing the community a happy and
healthy New Year - Madeleine & Richard
Abramson

Wishing the community a Shana Tova -
Julie, Max and Josh

Safe & Sound

Tony Tigner-Orchudesch

Security is at the top of our minds in these challenging times, but our community should be reassured by the fantastic team that work with me at Hampstead.

David Simmons, my co-head of security, tirelessly rallies the teams all year round and provides us with expert protection as a CST-trained officer.

We have five teams of volunteers who turn out all year to protect our community, including those early, rainy Shabbat mornings when I am sure they would rather be asleep in bed!

We all see that world events mean we need a secure place to pray and how important it is for all of us to play our part. Everyone can be a security officer in their own way by keeping a look out for suspicious people or cars near the shul. A sort of 'neighbourhood watch' which helps us enormously to keep the area safe.

The volunteers simply lead the way, by staying aware of the surroundings of the shul, wearing protective vests and keeping an eagle eye out with

the help of our CST-funded CCTV system.

This does not happen on its own. There is a huge network behind the scenes to watch over us, including the CST who provide training and round the clock surveillance, the Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorism Command who safeguard the area and, of course, our own shul executive who support us in all that we do. Also, let's not forget the tremendous work of Tony Ostrin who is our Interfaith Liaison, talking to Camden Council and the Greater London Authority who monitors and promotes all the training webinars that are on offer. The CST also offer many training programmes too.

Although we must always be watchful, we are lucky to be able to live our Jewish lives without fear and be proud that we live in a country whose leaders believe in our way of life.

If you would like volunteer please contact the synagogue office: admin@hampsteadshul.org.uk

Wishing everyone
a happy and
healthy new year.

Laura and David
Ostroff

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Hampstead Women



Sandra Conway takes pride in our community

I cannot believe this has been my second year as Women's Officer. A year so worrying and strange. When lockdowns became a way of life and going into a bank wearing a mask and asking for money did not get you arrested - if you had read that before the pandemic you would not have believed it!

We are so lucky that our community is such a caring community. Wherever possible, the women and men of Hampstead have stepped forward to help those who were unable to leave their homes. Making meals, shopping, making masks and keeping in touch with those who were vulnerable. All this helped us to face Covid and survive.

Before the first lockdown we were fortunate to hold our Women's Megillah at Purim, under the helpful eyes of Shana, Judith and Adrienne, we all enjoyed the wonderful experience.

I was also delighted to have been able to attend South Hampstead Synagogue for an evening dedicated to Neshama. Neshama is the soul or spirit in Jewish thought. It is the self, the I that



inhabits the body and acts through it. It was an amazing evening. Rebbetzins and teachers from the U.S.A. were holding lectures. Women's Officers and women from all over London attended. There was marvellous food too!

This year we had to hold our Purim Megillah on zoom and although it was not the same it was still very enjoyable, with all the ladies stepping forward to make it possible.

Even during the lockdown, we were able to attend women's Hallel by zoom. These were taken by Shana, Judith or Adrienne and it was so lovely to see so many ladies attending so early in the morning.

We even managed to go to shul in between the lockdowns. Sitting behind the mechitza, wearing masks and socially distancing did not deter us. It was wonderful to see so many women attending.

I think considering the hardships, Hampstead women have shown themselves to be so very caring and I am proud to be your Women's Officer.



Warehouse storage, ready for distribution



Fresh soups awaiting distribution



Fruit and vegetable bags being prepared



Deliveries being prepared for collection

Chesed

Caring for the Community

Nina Geller

The Chesed Department of the United Synagogue is a discreet organisation working quietly in the background to support US members. Chesed's aim has always been to reach out and make life easier for the vulnerable, lonely or in those need. Whether it is providing food parcels, phone calls or visits, helping with shopping, bereavement, befriending, organising meals, collecting donated food, clothes and toys to support the homeless or simply being a friend - Chesed helps people every single day of the year.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Chesed department has taken on a vital role as Jewish families found they were struggling to put food on their tables. In April, the Essential Food Parcel project was established. Requests went out for volunteers and soon there were offers of support from people keen to get actively involved. The scheme was intended as a temporary measure, but with uncertainty in people's lives and an ongoing need, the service has continued. By the start of 2021, the number of requests was increasing - on average between 120-150 households are supported with deliveries every week, and around 400 freshly cooked meals are delivered.

A fundraising drive at Pesach enabled the scheme to continue, but there is a need for on-going support for this project.

If you would like to support the vital work of Chesed, you can donate food items to help top up the weekly food parcels. Chesed will provide donation boxes and they will collect the boxes when they are full. If you have room to store a box outside your home or in your block, perhaps you can encourage friends and neighbours to support the project. If you are interested, please let me know and I will tell you who to contact.

If you know anyone who might need extra help, or if you need support at this time, please feel free to contact me in confidence. at welfare@hampsteadshul.org.uk or call 0207 435 1518.

MITZVAH DAY NOVEMBER 2020

Sandra Conway celebrates our community's success



Why is this Mitzvah Day different from all other Mitzvah days? That is the question. It is different because on all other Mitzvah days we stood outside Waitrose and Tesco on West End Lane and collected food from the wonderful people of West Hampstead. The stalls were manned by marvellous members of our congregation. But on this Mitzvah Day, we had a zoom tea party!

In the morning we phoned relatives and friends who had been isolating. Many had been living alone and we had to make sure that they were managing; Was there anything Hampstead could do to help?

We were able to take groceries to a food store, which is situated on Harman Drive. Luckily it is there all the time, so if you have a few minutes to spare and some groceries you don't want, a visit to the food store would be greatly appreciated.

We were so lucky to have our guest speaker, Barbara Goldberg, who is a Public Health Nutritionist, with a special interest in childhood obesity prevention and food insecurity.

She has a Master's degree and, since 2017, has been working on a research development programme in Southend, developing projects aimed at families living in a deprived area, with children aged 0-3 years old. Her talk was very instructive, informing us how important food banks were, especially now that we had a pandemic. For many families this was their only source of food. She spoke about the North London Food bank which has distributed £2 million worth of food to food banks across North London.

From the generosity of our community, we raised £600 which we split between the North London food bank and Feast.

Although quite different from past years, I think this year's Mitzvah Day was still interesting and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.



Board of Deputies Report

Amanda Bowman

Jerry Lewis and I are your representatives on the Board of Deputies and we are delighted to bring our Hampstead Synagogue perspective to the Board's work. In May I was re-elected as a Trustee and Vice President where I remain responsible for the Defence agenda – protecting religious freedoms and tackling antisemitism and extremism. I'm also now responsible for the Board's work on interfaith and inter-ethnic relations – which I know is of interest to many synagogue members.

Throughout the pandemic we have worked with the Government to ensure that our communities have the latest guidance to make decisions about how to keep themselves safe. We have also continued to campaign against the painful and unnecessary delays to release of bodies for burial by the Coroner in London. We have raised awareness of the issues at the highest levels and are working with the Government towards a possible solution, as well as providing input into the guidelines for, and training of, new Medical Examiners in England.

On interfaith, as a result of the recent conflict, we are seeking Government support to help rebuild relations between our community and the Muslim community, and we will continue to stand up and speak up on issues like the Uyghurs when required.



From Anguish to Action –

Conference supporting the Muslim Uyghurs



Gabriel Herman

Hampstead Synagogue supported a conference on the plight of Uyghurs hosted by the United Synagogue in July. The Chief Rabbi was a keynote speaker; the Muslim and Christian communities were represented, and Rahima Mahmut of the World Uyghur Congress joined us. Rabbi Harris spoke most eloquently as did our member Henry Grunwald who represented World Jewish Relief.

Hampstead Synagogue was established by a community that numbered many refugees. We welcomed German and Austrian refugees before the outbreak of WWII (even allowing sermons in German for their benefit) and after 1945 our membership included refugees who were Holocaust survivors.

It is deeply troubling to hear reports that the Uyghurs are suffering a similar pain to that experienced by Jews under Nazi rule such as: demonisation; segregation; mandatory sterilisation; forced labour and the destruction of spiritual spaces such as places of worship and cemeteries.

If China is to take its rightful place as a leading country of the world, it needs to be reminded that it comes from a long and honourable civilisation. It is not forgotten that the Chinese protected their refugee Jewish community when it was occupied during World War II. Moving against their natural moral path now will only diminish China and the world. We have asked our local MP, Tulip Siddiq, (a great friend of our shul) to ask the Government to apply all its diplomatic influence to change Chinese behaviour before it is too late.

We remember that in 1936, the Nazis had a propaganda coup by hosting the Olympics but this global acceptance did nothing to deter its tragic path towards attempting genocide. It would be unconscionable for a world that says: "never again" to allow the Beijing Winter Olympics to go ahead next year without first a UN Human Rights Probe.

Wishing everyone all the very best for a healthy and peaceful New Year.

The Helfgotts

We'll meet again, hopefully in shul.

Sally Friend

Best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Adrienne, Robin, Freddy, Rachel, Barnaby & Theodore Powell



Tony Ostrin

Interfaith & Camden Council Liason

The past twelve months have been a difficult period because of the Covid Pandemic. Nonetheless, both Camden Council and the Greater London Authority have organised virtual meetings which I have attended. My main responsibility has been as the community's representative on Camden Council's Faith Leaders' Forum; this has led to being invited to meetings with Prevent Advisory Group, GLA's Public Health Community Briefings, London Jewish Forum, CST, Hate Crime UK and Small Steps.

The main message has related to the health of our community and the importance of complying rigidly with the Government's rules relating to the pandemic. There has been emphasis on being vaccinated.

Some of the issues dealt with include, bereavement support, hate crime, cybercrime, social media and security. Other issues have included whether places of worship should remain open or not. Camden Council are clearly keen to maintain a strong relationship with the Jewish community.

My detailed reports can be read on the Interfaith link on the website and the weekly email.

Langdon

A Letter from Shelley Shieff

To the members of Hampstead Synagogue.

I would like to put in a small thank you to all the people who donated second-hand books. I took them along to Langdon today, and they filled the car!

I would like to thank all who gave and for them to know that their donations are very much appreciated. They go towards supporting young Jewish people with disabilities, to live more independent lives.

Finally, if other people still have books, we are still interested in them! Please bring them to the Synagogue but first you must speak to Hayley our administrator.

Langdon is a charity which offers a supported living community to Jewish young people and adults with disabilities both here in London and Manchester. They operate a social enterprise called New Chapters, where they offer second-hand books for sale on the internet and send them all over the world.

This charity has been supported by our members who have given books.





LIMMUD FESTIVAL IS BACK FROM 27-30 DECEMBER 2021

Join us as our community comes
back together.

Choose from one of our in-person day events,
or two days of online programming.

Limmud Festival provides a welcoming environment
that fosters dialogue, encourages diversity, and
celebrates everything Jewish.

**TAKE THE NEXT STEPS ON YOUR JEWISH JOURNEY
AND BOOK [LIMMUD.ORG/FESTIVAL](https://limmud.org/festival)**

The Haringman
family wish the
Hampstead family a
Happy, Healthy and
Sweet New Year

Happy New Year with
health and good wishes
to everybody -
Gina & Alan Sanders

Chag Sameach with
best wishes -
Michael & Thea
Helfgott and Family

THE DIARY OF A NEW HAMPSTEAD CO-VICE CHAIR



The first few days in office May 2021

Alyson Selby

It started as a simple idea...in conversation over dinner.... with my husband... late one evening.

I needed something else to do. Having left my hectic and rewarding life as a headteacher, where I was constantly juggling lots of balls at once and keeping myself busy, I found myself a Masters student, stuck at home due to Covid putting a hold on all the wonderful plans I had to go with my newfound freedom. Travel, concerts, theatre, more of what I loved but with less workload to hold me back.

So, there I was... one wet May evening. I had already done what most people had done over Covid. Found new hobbies and interests. Gardening, reading research papers and books about dyslexia (my Masters course), reading for enjoyment, walking, cooking, baking and volunteering. I became a whizz at making challah, doughnuts and cinnamon buns, sharing them far and wide as I perfected my skills. So, in addition to my course and supporting students with dyslexia, I looked at volunteering opportunities. NHS responder, supporting foodbanks, making and delivering food, becoming a teacher mentor for a charity and a school governor... I wanted to try lots of different things.

And then that conversation happened.... "I don't think many people are going to stand for the executive this year..." said my lovely husband.

There was a long pause.... "There must be lots of people who would like to help..." I replied whilst busying myself with my new Ottolenghi cookbook, avoiding eye contact. The silence continued.

"I think you would be good at that..... I'll support you and be warden." That really was the end of the conversation as far as I recall. Daisy, our puppy, barked and somehow distracted Michael.

And here I am today, two and a half days into my new adventure. One of Hampstead shul's new Co - Vice Chairs. I am not yet sure what this job entails. I have however been allocated a shul email, an invitation to a US meeting, joined three WhatsApp groups, proofread the shul newsletter, read the Chair's Handbook (yes there really is one), discussed shul security with our fabulous security officers and been signed up to the security rota! Oh yes... and had a phone call from Tony asking me to write an article for the shul magazine! I think I will avoid looking at my emails and phone tonight....

I think that this volunteering job is going to keep me busy....and I cannot wait!

Please join me in supporting the shul. There are so many opportunities to use your skills and expertise to make a difference. You may only have a few hours to give as a one off, or more. There is something for everyone. It is so rewarding to volunteer. Come and join us and try to help make a difference. Please contact me on alyson@hampsteadshul.org.uk.

Best Wishes from The Meller Family

25 For 25

International Day of Jewish Learning

Henry Grunwald OBE QC

In 2020, Covid 19 affected every aspect of our lives; personal, professional and communal. Nothing could be as it was – nothing could be as we wanted it to be. As a community, Hampstead has always felt it important in its 129 years of existence to mark special milestones, and to mark them in meaningful ways. Therefore, when we realised that, in 2020, Rabbi Michael Harris would be celebrating 25 years as our rabbi, the decision was taken that this anniversary required a special celebration. In modern times, rabbis move from community to community more often than used to be the case. Therefore, it was even more necessary to mark Rabbi Michael's quarter century with us.

None of the usual ways of celebrating was open to us; no special Shabbat service, no lunch, no dinner, no kiddush. And, in any case, none of them would have been the right thing for Rabbi Michael. He has been much more than “just” a communal rabbi. He has developed into one of British Jewry's most respected teachers and thinkers and we, at Hampstead, are proud that we have enabled him to pursue a successful academic career alongside his rabbinic duties.

And so, Hampstead teamed up with its neighbour, JW3, to mark this anniversary in the most fitting way by organising on Sunday 29th November 2020, an International Day of Jewish Learning, 25 for 25. Twenty-five outstanding Jewish scholars and teachers from all over the Jewish world, came together to present a unique day of Jewish learning.



The day began with a fulsome and deserved tribute from the Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, who by reference to three midrashim, stressed Rabbi Michael's personal qualities and his contribution not just to Hampstead but to the wider Jewish community. The full programme was recorded and is available to view.

Common themes of the day were Rabbi Michael's continued promotion of modern orthodoxy and his commitment to ensuring that, within halacha, the role of women within the community can be properly recognised. The Hampstead community have always been pleased to support Rabbi Michael in both those endeavours, and have been fortunate to have as Scholars in Residence some outstanding female educators, two of whom contributed to the



programme, Dr Lindsay Simmonds and Chava Wolwick.

The last session was with two of Rabbi Michael's mentors, Rabbi Dr Geoffrey Cohen and Rabbi Dr Abraham Levy and would have ended with a conversation between Rabbi Michael and Rabbi Lord Sacks, z'l. Unhappily, Rabbi Lord Sacks had died three weeks earlier, but Rabbi Michael spoke movingly about their relationship and the effect that Rabbi Lord Sacks had had on him and indeed on each of the speakers of the day.

The day ended with a tribute and presentation to Rabbi Michael from our synagogue which we hope he will cherish and treasure for at least the next 25 years!

25 - 25 Rabbi Michael *Bruce Lewin*

“Hampstead has always been more than simply a local house of worship established for Jewish residents in a particular district of London”. This is a quote from Rabbi Raymond Apple's history of our synagogue from 1892 to 1967 published in 1967. The matters over which the founding fathers—and they were all fathers—wrestled in the late Victorian era may have been different from those that trouble us in the twenty first century but throughout our history our Community has proudly maintained independence of thought.



This was brought home so clearly by the 25 for 25 Day of Online Learning in November last year to celebrate our Rabbi Michael's 25 years as Rabbi of our Community. The speakers were among the leading philosophers and thinkers in the Modern Orthodox world and what came across



so clearly was the very high regard in which Rabbi Michael is held. The modern orthodox path is a difficult one and fraught with problematic issues but the combining of Halachic observance with serious secular learning is fundamental to it. Our Hampstead congregation under the leadership of Rabbi Michael has a unique role in developing this type of orthodoxy. If you have any doubt about that then listen to Dr. Lindsay Simmons who told us in

the session in which she participated, and speaking as a previous Scholar in Residence with us, that the Hampstead practice of appointing female scholars in residence had not been followed up by even one other US shul.

The day brought home the challenge which faces us Hampstead people which is to develop a way of life and thought which combines high levels of observance and critical intellectual thought. We will not all get there but, led by our Rabbi Michael, we can develop the community in that direction and act as a beacon to others. We can demonstrate that this is an achievable goal in the way that those founding fathers achieved theirs nearly one hundred and thirty years ago.

Happy New Year
– Anon

Wishing the
community
a happy and
healthy New
Year –
Alyson and
Michael Selby.



Orthodox Women Rabbis: Time for a Public Forum Led By The Chief Rabbi - Adrienne Powell believes it is overdue.

Many of you will have read about the original decision to revoke Dr Lindsey Taylor-Guthartz's fellowship from LSJS and subsequent change of heart, following her graduation from the Yeshiva Maharat (New York) with orthodox semikhah (rabbinic ordination). Lindsey had been studying on a part time Advanced Kollel executive track programme typically aimed at academics requiring at least five years' teaching experience.

Rabba Lindsey is a wonderful educator – she has taught at the London School of Jewish Studies (LSJS) for 16 years, is a university lecturer, a published author, and a founder of cross-denominational learning programmes in the UK. She has publicly stated that her intentions in studying for semicha were: “to enhance [her] Torah knowledge and develop [her] learning further, so that [she] would develop higher skills and knowledge, to teach at a higher level and provide needed leadership within the orthodox Torah world in London, and in the Jewish community in general”.

As I attended the graduation ceremony for Lindsey and her six colleagues, I was proud to hear an English voice giving a dvar torah. At the same time, it felt sad that the opportunities seemed to be so different in the UK compared to America. On Woman's Hour on Radio 4, Lindsey spoke with

quiet confidence suggesting that it was time for the orthodox community to start embracing women rabbis to enable women to talk to a woman who knows Jewish law, who can advise them, who can help them.

I had expected that the programme would feature the Chief Rabbi or the CEO of LSJS so I was surprised to hear Rachie Binstock be introduced and share her thoughts including the enjoyment of praying in her garden and that the synagogue was built as a house for male prayer. As a professional woman I found myself frustrated that when asked by Emma Barnett whether it was ok for a woman to study to be a doctor but not have the title Doctor; Rachie seemed to suggest that equality does not need to be sameness.

Listening to the Chief Rabbi's position being advocated by Rebbetzin Rachie Binstock, seemed like a repeat of conversations regarding our appointment of Dina Brawer as Scholar in Residence at Hampstead. At that time, all I really wanted was for the Chief Rabbi to meet us and explain the halachic reasons why he could not support orthodox women becoming rabbis. I am delighted that Lindsey can continue to teach at LSJS but I hope you will join me in calling for a community debate led by the Chief Rabbi.

Sigmund Freud:

A Man Wrestling With His Jewish Identity?

Mickey Yudkin analyses the pre-eminent Jewish psychoanalyst

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, was born in Freiberg (Pribor) on 6th May 1856, and lived most of his adult life in Vienna.

At birth he was named Sigismund Shlomo, his father dedicating the Philippsohn bilingual Hebrew German Bible to him on his eighth day and rededicating it to Sigmund at 35, with a Hebrew inscription and a mandate to study the bible and his heritage.

Freud enacted his father's instruction in 1934 on publishing 'Moses and Monotheism', amid much criticism from the Jewish community. For Freud, Moses was an Egyptian, and monotheism was not of Jewish origin, but the discovery of the Pharaoh Amenhotep, who later called himself Ikhnaton.

Freud's attitude to his Jewishness is complex, though he always affirmed it privately and publicly. He called himself a 'Godless Jew'.

The signifiers of Freud's Jewish identity include his lifelong fight against anti-Semitism, beginning at university where he was happy not to be part of the compact majority, but part of a minority which was free of prejudice and could use their intellect.

In 1930 Freud denied that he knew Hebrew or Yiddish, yet his father had taught him stories from the Hebrew bible and later acquired a Jewish Studies tutor for him.

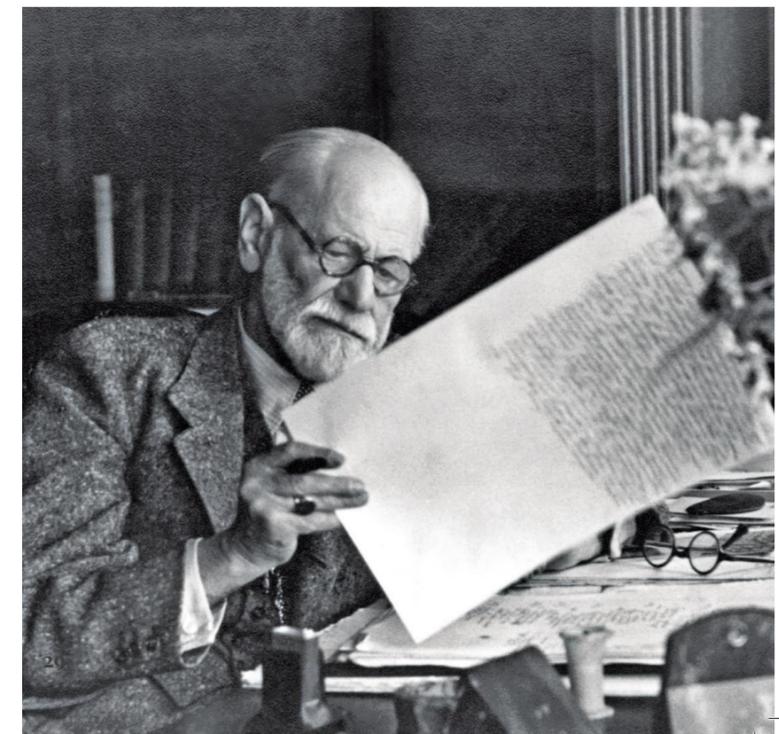
His mother, Amalie, born in Galicia, spoke broken German and Yiddish. Freud used at least 13 Yiddish words in his daily correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess, the physician.

Freud was a great admirer of Theodor Herzl and sent him a copy of 'The Interpretation of Dreams' as a token of his esteem for being “The fighter for the human rights of our people”.

But Freud's attitude to Zionism and Jewish nationalism oscillated. In 1930, following the Arab riots in Palestine, Freud responded that “The Jewish homeland should be on a less historically burdened land.” Yet, in 1935 he wrote to Keren Hayesod praising their efforts to establish a new homeland of our fathers.

So, what kind of Jew was Freud? Philip Rieff, cultural historian, calls him a 'Psychological Jew', characterised by intellectuality, independence of mind and the highest ethical standards. These Jews had great courage in the face of persecution and a sensitivity to anti-Semitism.

Yet this 'Godless, Psychological Jew' married a Jewish woman, Martha Bernays, whose grandfather, Rabbi Isaac Bernays, was the Chacham of Hamburg. Moreover, Freud throughout his life was preoccupied with what the essence of being Jewish was about.





UNCOVERING THE FAMILY SHUL

John Reizenstein makes a voyage of discovery

My father was brought up in Nuremberg and came to England as a student in 1933, later staying as a refugee and eventually succeeding in bringing his widowed mother and his sister over. His father, Albert, a doctor who had served in the German Army in WW1, had died in 1925.

Albert was one of seven children of Max Reizenstein and Minna (nee Offenbacher). The family lived in a small rural village called Muehlhausen, about 50km from Nuremberg.

Jewish life in a Franconian village in the 17th to early 20th century is hard for us to imagine. At its height in 1824, out of 830 inhabitants, around 25% were Jewish. Max was a hop trader, as we believe his father and grandfather were, this being an activity Jews had traditionally been allowed to undertake. We think they were well-integrated into the general community, and over time less and less from - although intermarriage seems to have been rare. Max's children seem to have received a good education.

The wider Reizenstein family started to disperse in the late 19th Century to towns and cities in Germany, to Sweden and to the US. In 1933 there were forty-three Jews in the village and by the start of WW2 only a handful. The last person to be buried in the cemetery, my grandfather's first cousin Karl, died in 1938. His widow was among the final group of four Jews deported in 1942.

The cemetery is peaceful, surrounded by fields. But the shadow of Kristallnacht hangs over it. One tries to imagine why the early gravestones at the back of the cemetery, in Hebrew, were untouched, whilst the later ones at the front, with recognisable names in German, were randomly defaced.

My son Matthew and I visited in 2018. To my knowledge no member of the family had been there since 1942.

In the quiet little square where the local bus turns around is a plaque listing the ten local sights. These include the Jewish cemetery, the plaque on the wall of the children's home commemorating the donation of the funds to build it in 1928 (from Reizenstein cousins who had moved to Chicago), and the synagogue, built in 1755-6. At the time of our visit the synagogue appeared to be a private house.



It was identifiable as a synagogue as this part of the outside wall had been preserved.

Shortly after our visit, and coincidentally, something amazing happened. A group of local people, some with Jewish backgrounds, some not, came together to turn the synagogue into a cultural centre.

As they started to investigate, this is what they found:

Main hall with cloistered walls and rococo ceiling.



It turns out that my family's village, a sort of German Ambridge, contains a baroque pearl of a shul. I wonder whether my father ever davened there with his father and grandfather.

Can Traditional

Newspapers Survive?



Jack Mendel on the challenges facing journalists & the industry



The pandemic's impact has infiltrated every part of society; while journalism has not escaped, it has probably adapted better than other industries.

When Coronavirus hit, synagogues, schools, offices, and newsrooms closed. In papers' boardrooms across the country, distribution altered as readers' habits changed, and the news being reported was of course dominated by this virus.

The immediate impact was editorial teams moving their daily meetings on to Zoom, proofing pages online, and archives moving from dusty server rooms onto a cloud.

For some outlets, while the pandemic forced necessary change, it also exacerbated a trend of the declining print industry, which some unfortunately simply cannot survive.

Coronavirus has led to terrible job losses, not just in the newsroom, or the closing of entire departments due to a lack of funding. But with businesses forced to close, advertising opportunities dried up too.

It has put pressure on individual journalists too - including freelancers - who were left in limbo by the furlough scheme.

This new financial pressure coincides with an awful but wider trend in the industry. In February, 2020 it was reported that UK national newspaper sales fell by nearly two-thirds over the last two decades, from 21.2m in 2000, to 7.4m last year.

People are buying fewer papers and using the internet more, and in some ways this pandemic supercharged that process; it forced newspapers to focus more online, where their audience is.

As people sit on their devices at home, the pandemic made people value journalism more. The industry has a more captive audience than ever, even if it is facing difficulties and pressures from the pandemic.

On a day-to-day basis, Covid changed how journalists find and report news. All my interviews in the past 18 months have been done digitally, which takes getting used to. Asking a high-profile public figure a question, only to realise you are muted is quite embarrassing!

At the same time, one certainly does not get the same feel for how the interviewee reacts to your question, especially with their body language.

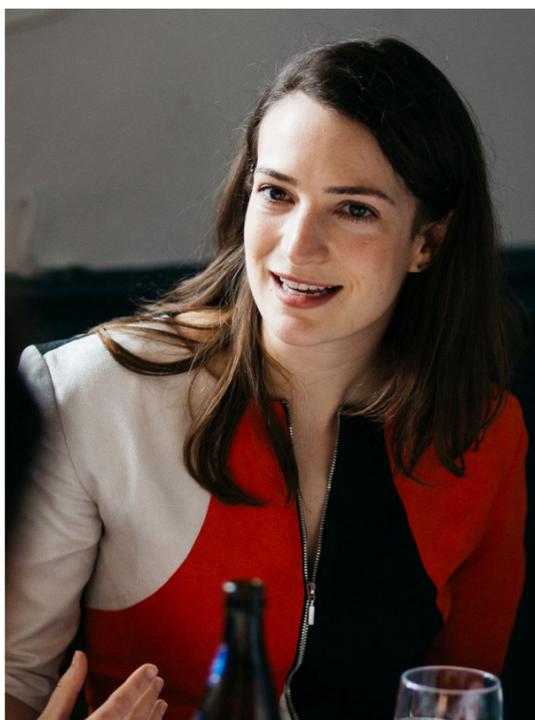
Face-to-face interaction is something I miss, and one element of journalism which needs to return, even if there is not a full-time return to the newsroom.

The key questions on the lips of many in the industry, is how much of this change is to stay?

When the pandemic subsides will people continue to work from home, or will it be back to commuting, and sitting in an office? Will Zoom interviews continue, or will a more traditional approach once again be adopted? Will people start buying papers again, or is online the way forward?

The answers are probably somewhere in the middle. Journalists will likely continue to work remotely, with occasional forays into temporary working spaces.

Many in the industry will not survive the pandemic unscathed in the short term, but as time goes on, the new-found focus on digital and working with more flexibility may be the bitter pill it needs to survive.



THINGS I HAVE LEARNT FROM WORKING IN ISRAELI HIGH-TECH

Naomi Beckett (new member of the shul Council) shares her top three.

Some years ago, during my first trip to Israel, I received a very fortuitous invitation to a pool party. As a direct result, I've been working at an Israeli software company for the best part of the last five years.

I've spent most of this time working as a data science project manager for our UK-based European branch, enjoying extensive travel across the continent as I worked with various clients. That all changed in the year of Covid. I was offered the opportunity to join an exciting new team. An interesting twist: I was to be the only non-Israeli. However, I was told not to worry because I "suffer from the truth" and thus would fit in well!

I am loving my new role. And of course, there have been "cultural learnings" almost every day from my wonderful all-Israeli team. Here are my top three: -

1 NO TOPIC IS OFF-LIMITS

Love, money, politics...everything seems to be fair game once you have had even the most perfunctory introduction to someone! I strongly suspect some colleagues might be on my mother-in-law's payroll, given the number of times I have been asked why I do not have children yet.

2 WE'RE ONE EXTENDED FAMILY

My colleagues seem to take genuine pleasure from the life events of those around them. It is commonplace in Israel to invite the whole office to your wedding. However, one unfortunate team member found that, having postponed their big day several times during the pandemic, their wedding was to take place during the recent embargos. Only 25% of invited guests felt comfortable attending.

For my part, I showed my wedding photos (from Hampstead in 2018 when I married Jonny Grunwald) to my colleagues recently. I was informed that it could not have been an orthodox wedding because Rabbi Harris did not have a beard.

3 YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO DIRECT

As mentioned above, I like to be direct. So does my team. They have developed some lovely ways to get to the point in their unique Israeli style. While presenting an idea which the team felt could use some work; I was told to "put some Tahina on it!"

Another time, while taking a long time to get to the point, I was told that there was "no need to tell the story of Pesach".

It's fortunate I really enjoy my job. I am not sure how British colleagues would react to some of the habits I'm bound to pick up. Upper lips can only remain so stiff.

HONOUR CRIME

Is the Law enough to stop an age-old cultural practice?

By Lynne Toanley, Barrister and Lecturer in Law at City, University of London



I was recently invited to give a (zoom) talk to members on aspects of 'Honour Crime' and the existence of a 'Code of Honour' that pervades and underpins many of the social cultures and norms in certain societies.

Honour and Honour Crimes

The Metropolitan Police Violent Crime Directorate has estimated that there are 12 honour killings in the UK annually, but those working in the area think that this figure is an under-estimation. There is no statutory crime of honour (crimes involving honour are prosecuted under existing legislation or the common law). The policy definition, followed by all the statutory agencies, is 'a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community'.

Familial honour, a common phenomenon within collective societies, is attributable to the individual and to the whole group but can be raised or lowered only by the actions of the females of the group. Once lost (usually through actual or suspected sexual transgressions, such as adultery), this model of

honour is difficult to regain. As noted in my talk, the penalties for violations of honour codes can be severe, disproportionate, and might even include death (hence the term 'honour killing').

While the practice of honour killing is ancient, it was first documented in academic texts by anthropological scholars studying nomadic Bedouin Arab communities in Palestine during the Ottoman Empire. Later field studies of honour killings in Israel were carried out by scholars at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

How I became Involved

I became involved in the issue when I was a prosecutor at the Crown Prosecution Service, where one of my posts was as National Policy Advisor on Honour Crime. I soon realised that crimes related to honour were not only difficult to prosecute, but were also something that had to be handled with extreme sensitivity given that the honour code was sacrosanct and had positive connotations in many cultures. The small minority, who committed crimes motivated by misconceived views of honour, were not representative of the societies to which they belonged or of the religions which they practised.

The Future

An international campaign against honour crime has been active since 2000. Laws and policies are not enough in themselves, systemic change at a cultural level is needed. I am very grateful to have been given the opportunity to raise awareness of this issue with your members and I was also very fortunate to have such an engaged and well-informed audience present at my talk.

- In a Room with Zoom

Patricia Abram

This year can best be described for me by the words of Elie Wiesel in his book 'La Nuit'. **'L'étoile éternel brille dès qu'il fait suffisamment sombre'** - 'The eternal light shines as soon as it is dark enough'.

As I logged on to Zoom at 8:30am on a winter morning to meet my Class of 50 Master's in Finance students, I could hear the disappointment in their voices. They were all meant to be in London as part of the Business School International Study program.

Working from desks in bedrooms, dining rooms, kitchenettes, gardens in Paris, Lyon, Monaco, Geneva, Moscow, Rome, Milan, Berlin, Santo Domingo, Port-au-Prince, I had the opportunity to meet some amazing students. For the first 10 minutes I just wanted to know about the individual students and asked randomly from my list some questions such as:

Me - How are you today Laurent?

Laurent - Same as last week, we have a curfew.

Me - How are you finding the course so far?

Laurent - I would have preferred to be in London!

Me - What's the main topic in the news this week?

Without hesitation, Laurent gave me a concise report of the main financial news, the effect of the pandemic on the economy and what he had come across in the press. The students would then present in groups a topic that they had researched.

There is always the 'please unmute yourself' reminder as we all struggled to lip read!

I managed to establish an excellent connection with the students and felt some sadness on the last lecture when they were off on the next journey in their career.

With so much sadness around, the students looked into the positives, determined that as soon they were able, they would find an opportunity in London. The optimistic outlook that many displayed reminded me of Elie Wiesel's 'eternal light which shines.'

Another uplifting experience was when I visited a 94-year-old elderly man at the height of the pandemic. I was delivering some shepherds' pies, made by my daughters, Deborah and Katie, and was very nervous as I pressed the 6th floor of a high-rise building, protected with masks and gloves.

In my mind the thought 'was it worth risking this virus for a pie, a cookie and a mini challah!' As the gentleman opened the door, he was so grateful and said: **'It will be fine, we have seen worse, we will get through this'** and we had a long chat. This comforting message caught me by surprise; the fear of catching anything in the lift was replaced by a warm feeling of hope!

'The eternal light shines as soon as it is dark enough' - I couldn't wait to return and visit my new friend on the next pie delivery! **Through darkness I had found a beautiful light!**

A huge thank you to Rabbi Michael Harris for his support to the whole community throughout the pandemic.

Continued...



Courage, Determination, & Luck

Sandra Miller



My late mother, Sabina Miller, was a member of Hampstead synagogue for more than 50 years. I promised her that I would continue her efforts to educate people about the Holocaust and to promote her message of tolerance and acceptance. Lockdown became my opportunity, so I contacted Generation 2 Generation (G2G), who helped me get started. G2G helps the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors tell their family stories. The first time I heard a G2G speaker tell their parent's story I realised I had to do the same.

Mum's story describes how she survived the war through courage, determination and - above all - luck. She was born in Warsaw as Sabina Najfeld in 1922. Her family were orthodox and she had a happy childhood, integrating well into Polish life.

When the War began, she spent two years in the Warsaw Ghetto where her parents died of typhus but from which she escaped to live with an aunt. She worked on a farm with other Jewish girls, hid in a trench in the forest during the winter of 1942, but was captured. The Gestapo interrogated her, and she was imprisoned in the Pawiak - a notorious Polish prison from which, by a miracle, she was released. She eventually took on the identity of a non-Jewish Polish girl and was sent to Germany to work on farms as a slave labourer living out the rest of the War.

It felt like a daunting task to do this story justice but G2G advised me to watch all of the testimony that mum had given to the Shoah Foundation. Then

I absorbed mum's story from various newspaper articles and her talks. G2G assigns you a brilliant mentor, offers training in research, presentation and reflective practice skills.

With the help of the G2G's historian I researched information to ensure my facts were correct. I put together PowerPoint slides, again with the help of a G2G technical expert, which consisted of extracts of mum's testimony, the few photographs mum had from the war and some photos from the internet.

Then I rehearsed my delivery and felt ready to go!

I felt very privileged to present mum's story to Hampstead Synagogue in January 2021 and then to several schools and universities to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

Every time I tell my mother's story I feel I am honouring her memory and the memory of the rest of her family - none of whom survived the Holocaust. It feels like the least I can do, and I am so grateful to G2G who helped make this happen.

G2G have created the virtual Wall of Memories

to pay tribute to victims of Nazi persecution and contribute towards their educational resources. They also hold monthly online events, where you can hear other G2G speakers tell their family stories

If you want to get involved or learn more about the Wall of Memories and G2G's monthly talks, see www.generation2generation.org.uk



A Year in the

World of Music

Robert Max describes the highs and lows...and some remarkable achievements

Robert Max

The past sixteen months have presented opportunities as well as frustrations. In March 2020, my Oxford Symphony Orchestra made the bold decision to go ahead with its Oxford Town Hall concert. The audience seemed to hang on to every note, aware that this might be the last opportunity for some months to hear music performed live. My students' end of term concert went ahead in March, the next time we were able to do this live was December, thanks to the availability of the Eli Chinn Hall.

Other live musical events were cancelled or postponed, including the Frinton Festival which I organise each May, London Chamber Orchestra (LCO) concerts at St. John's Smith Square, chamber music courses for talented young musicians, performances of Bach's Six Cello Suites and the LCO's Music Junction project's workshops were all crossed off my diary.

In their place appeared the regular weekly structure of my cello teaching, which I discovered worked much better than expected online, once the quality of streamed audio was sorted out. While different schools pieced together their online education programmes, cello provided a lifeline to my students, offering them meaningful personal interaction, clearly defined goals, structure in their day-to-day lives and an emotional connection with their pre-COVID existence.

Sensing that a live summer concert for my students would not be possible, we explored music for unaccompanied cello that was mostly new to me, meaning that an online concert would work well, which it did!

Musicians' lives involve a lot of rushing from rehearsal to concert to conservatoire to recording studio. When all this disappeared, I was happy that the gap was filled by attending fascinating shul 'Lunch and Learn' sessions, studying Talmud for the first time with Rabbi Michael, 'meeting' members of our community via the shul's phone-round, delivering challot before Shabbat, Seder boxes, mishloach manot; I salute the team for masterminding this.

I studied Beethoven's profound op.131 string quartet online with colleagues at leisure over eight two-hour sessions. I have enjoyed having the time to read each week's Haftorah, whether or not there was a live Shabbat service to attend.

For several months last year, we dined exceptionally well as I delved into our collection of recipe books. Several long-delayed projects have come to fruition, including the publication of a work by composer Elisabeth Lutyens and poet Esmé Hooton, who was the sister of one of my cello teachers.

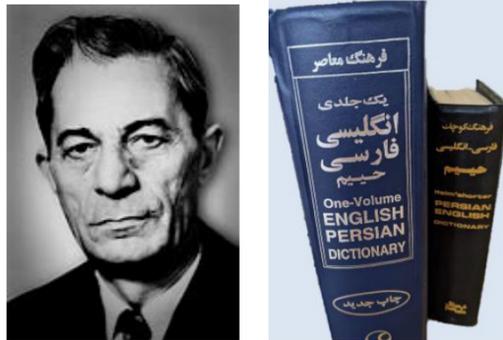
As regulations have vacillated, performing opportunities have come and gone. LCO engaged me for live-streamed concerts with my wonderful colleagues; our son Noah wrote music for Zoë, my wife, and me to perform online and later record a CD, and the Frinton Festival presented a reduced but excitingly live weekend of music in October.

Our daughter Sophie's play was premiered in New York and live-streamed, and Hugo has made the best of his first year studying Fine Art at Oxford. Let us hope the coming months offer us all such richly varied and meaningful opportunities.



SOLOMON HAIM of IRAN

Janet Mahgerefteh explores the life and legacy of the “Master of Words”.



Watching children playing in the park near to my home, my thoughts went back to my school days. In my primary school there were about 300 pupils, both girls and boys. The school comprised four floors. On the first floor was a beautiful synagogue with exquisite Persian carpets and a magnificent chandelier. During the Yamim Noraim there were so many worshippers that prayers would be held in the school courtyard. The students' classrooms were on the top floor, which was named in honour of the Jewish academic, Solomon Haim.

Solomon Haim was born in Tehran in 1887, to a family from Shiraz. He studied at the famous Alliance (Ethedad) school and went on to study English and French at the American University in Tehran. After graduating his first work was creating bi-lingual dictionaries in English-Farsi and then Farsi-French. Later, leaving his wife and six children at home, he went to live in Jerusalem where he spent four years translating Farsi into Modern Hebrew.

Solomon's prowess with languages led him to be appointed a senior advisor and translator with Iran's Ministry of Finance and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. He was placed in charge of, and translated the negotiations for, oil exploration to take place between the Iranian and English governments during the 1950s.

Under the guidance of Hakham Haim Moreh, he became knowledgeable in Jewish studies. Judaism had a profound effect on Solomon's intellectual and creative pursuits. In retirement he wrote plays on biblical events which were performed to large audiences at Tehran's Grand Hotel.

A humble and pious man, Solomon opposed the concept of a woman's family giving a dowry before marriage. He actually sent back the dowry he received to his father-in-law. He was also one of the first Jews in Iran to divide his wealth equally between his daughters and sons.

It is customary in the Persian-Jewish tradition to hold a seudah on the 3rd and 7th yahrzeits but in Solomon's will it stated that the monies should be given to the poor as a tzedekah offering instead.

Solomon was a respected figure among not only the Jewish community of Iran but general Iranian society. He was awarded the title 'Master of Words' by the Ministry of Education during the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi.

Six years ago, as a sign of respect to this Jewish personality, Solomon Haim was placed in the Iranian Literary Hall of Fame. Among the many Iranian politicians who commemorated him was Hadad Adel formerly chairman of the Iranian Parliament and father-in-law to Ayatollah Khomeini's son.

In 1970, at the age of 84, Solomon became ill. Waiting to be taken to hospital he asked his son to get his favourite collection of poetry books. Before his son could give them to him Solomon had died.

Solomon Haim's memory lives on across the Iranian-Jewish Diaspora where his bilingual dictionaries are a staple of every household.

“EAST AND WEST, TO THE RATLINE, AND BEYOND: ON MEMORY AND IDENTITY.”



Philippe Sands

Henry Grunwald QC

The family of the late Sir Isaiah Berlin joined our synagogue in 1927. He remained a member all his life. A devout atheist, even after he moved to Oxford, he came to Hampstead each year on Yom Kippur to sit and think, if not pray. When he died, his Memorial Service was held at Hampstead and his family agreed that we should hold an annual lecture in his memory. The first, in 2003, was delivered by the late Rabbi Lord Sacks, zt'l, and he has been followed by a very distinguished list of lecturers. The 19th lecture, given this year by Professor Philippe Sands QC on 6th December 2020, had to be online. It was entitled “East and West, to the Ratline, and Beyond: On Memory and Identity”.

Philippe Sands is a remarkable man; barrister, academic and author, he regularly appears in international criminal courts and tribunals. His best-known book, “East West Street”, is subtitled “On the Origins of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity” and there is no one like him who can define and explain those laws in ways that mere mortals can understand. Apart from telling the stories of two Nuremberg Prosecutors, Hersch Lauterpacht and Rafael Lemkin, who both studied law at Lviv University – as did Philippe's own grandfather – it also tells the story of one of the Nuremberg defendants, Hans Frank, Governor-General of Nazi-occupied Poland, responsible for the murder of Lauterpacht's and Lemkin's families in and around Lviv.

In The Ratline, Philippe tells the story of Otto Wachter, the Governor of Galicia, who was indicted by the end of the war as a mass murderer but who went on the run to avoid arrest but died before he could escape to Argentina on the Ratline, the method by which many Nazis escaped from Europe.

In his lecture, Philippe compared the different

approaches to their respective fathers by the son of Hans Frank, Niklas Frank, and the youngest son of Otto Wachter, Horst, in their identities and in their memories. Niklas had confronted the reality of what his father had done.



Horst had convinced himself that his father was really a good man. Both born in 1939, they had similar upbringings, their fathers both being senior Nazi officials. Their memories, however, were quite different, as were their identities in later life. Philippe had spent a great deal of time with them both, but his relationship with Horst was vastly different from that he had with Niklas, mainly because Horst maintained that his father either was not aware of what was done in his name in Galicia and/or that his father disapproved of it.

Philippe captivated his audience, not only in the lecture itself but also in answering the many questions that came in from the viewers.

There is no doubt that he earned a place as one of the best Isaiah Berlin lecturers.

Next Isaiah Berlin Lecture:

Sunday 24th October, 8.00pm

Baroness Hale of Richmond: President of the Supreme Court 2017-2020: “Is there anything wrong with rights?”

Booking link via Eventbrite. Search Isaiah Berlin

The lecture will take place over Zoom (if we are able to invite a limited number in person, we will be in touch nearer the time).

World Jewish Relief Today: Sir Ben and the CBF

Maurice Helfgott



As a lifelong supporter of World Jewish Relief (WJR), I admire how the organisation empowers people to reach their full potential. From assisting individuals to find employment, to improving resilience so communities can better respond to disasters, and helping older people become more comfortable and independent in their own homes: dignity is at the heart of its work.

Earlier this year I was appointed Chair of World Jewish Relief. Our work resonates even more keenly as we negotiate a pandemic and one of the worst job recessions of our lifetime.

Over the past decade, WJR has supported almost 13,000 people into employment, from Jews in Eastern Europe who face challenges such as displacement and disability, to individuals in East Africa who, through agriculture, are breaking out of the cycle of poverty. Since 2016, we have provided specialist support to resettled refugees in the UK on their journeys into employment, in partnership with local and national government.

This approach - helping someone to help themselves and become independent - I advocate. My father, Ben Helfgott was brought to Britain in 1945 along with 731 other survivors of the Holocaust by WJR, then called the Central British Fund for German Jewry (CBF). Having survived the atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps, and aged only 16, the CBF ensured that he and the other "Boys" went through a process of rehabilitation, including learning English, playing sport, and building camaraderie.

MAURICE & BEN

With the benefit of the early care and continued mentorship my father received, he and the other "Boys" built successful careers and family lives. The CBF helped create the foundations, with which my father achieved great things on his own merit. He knew the CBF would be there if he ever needed support; in the end he became its Honorary Treasurer and remains a loyal supporter.

SAIF & ALI

SAIF mentors refugees on our Specialist Training and Employment Programme who are setting up their own businesses. He said of this work, "One of the greatest honours of this role is to hold up a mirror so people can see what skills and potential they have, and what difference they can make to their lives and to the community around them".

JEWISH VALUES

This is not simply a WJR approach but it is a deeply Jewish one, inspired by our texts and traditions. Maimonides taught that the highest level of charity is supporting someone through a business partnership, or a loan, to get them back on to their feet. This value underpinned the CBF's approach in the 1940s, and it underpins WJR's work today.

As we support some of the most vulnerable members of the international Jewish community through a period that has put unprecedented strain on employment and livelihoods, I am proud of the work WJR continues to do.



Best wishes from our family to the Hampstead Synagogue Community for a happy and healthy new year.

The Rubacks

Wishing the Hampstead family a happy and healthy new year.

The Grunwald Family

Wishing the community a happy and healthy new year.

Jenny & Malcolm Ziff

Wishing everyone at Hampstead Synagogue a happy and healthy new year.

Susan & John Burns

Zoom Talmud: Our monthly shiur experience

By David and Laura Ostroff

After a year of studying sections of the Talmud at Rabbi Michael's home, we have now entered the virtual era. So with no need to travel, our monthly sessions have continued online, helped by Rabbi Michael's skilful use of the curser! Now there is no excuse for not following, or drifting off.

With the benefit of Rabbi Michael's scholarship, challenging texts such as those relating to the law of damages become accessible. He unpicks knotty issues and arguments, and we are encouraged to ask questions and contribute from our own experience.

We have made good progress though the day is short and there is still much work to be done.

FATE UNCONFIRMED



Maurice Smith

One of the most distressing features of the Nazi Holocaust is that it is estimated that at least one and a half million victims are not registered officially at the registry in Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

I started to think about this some years ago on a visit to Berlin when I chanced upon an exhibition housed in the former Berlin Opera Building pertaining to the fate of all the Jewish employees of that institution who had worked there up to the commencement of World War Two. Approximately one third had fled to other countries, one third had been exterminated, but extraordinarily, one third were utterly untraceable despite all efforts to the contrary.

Shortly before my barmitzvah my sister and I became aware that our mother had had a younger sister, Gita Esther Nussbaum, who had disappeared during the war, but most efforts to find out more about this from our mother and grandparents produced only distress and emotional outbursts which it was best to avoid if possible.

Over the years the issue rarely surfaced, but snippets slowly emerged from which we pieced together a vague outline. The younger sister had been entrusted to a childless aunt and uncle in Libau, Latvia, in the mid 1930's but for many complex reasons, beyond the scope of this monograph, she remained in their care, hopefully quite happily.

In late June 1941 the Nazis entered Libau and many of the town's male Jewish population were rounded up and shot. The aunt and Gita probably survived until mid-December of that year, when the majority of the remaining Jews were shot on the beach and a few deported to concentration camps elsewhere.

Using many sources available to us in the modern world of IT, my sister and I began a long, ultimately fruitless search to see if their demise could be confirmed, but to no avail. However once we found

out Gita's exact birthday, by an extraordinary piece of luck, or divine intervention, we renewed the search through the wonderful offices of the Wiener Library, who have brilliant researchers and full access to the International Tracing Service.



Sadly, but not surprisingly, no trace of Gita was found and she was categorised like so many other as "N.F." - not found. However, she did feature in a special exhibition, lectures (some on the web), and a brochure at the Wiener Library and it was very poignant to see her last known photograph and story shared so long after she and many others like her had disappeared without trace.

Judaism teaches us that a person can die twice - once physically, and again, when they are forgotten forever. Perhaps we can all occasionally take a short moment out of our busy lives to think about all those victims of the Holocaust who are not even registered, remembered or thought about at all.

HERTZ TOUR OF THE COMMONWEALTH Zaki Cooper looks back on a special centenary

Joseph Hertz, who became Chief Rabbi in 1913, had the idea of a global tour after seeing the Prince of Wales' visit to Canada following the First World War. He wanted to do something similar by visiting Jewish communities overseas.

He set off on 8th October 1920 by boat, arriving in South Africa three weeks later. Hertz was away for almost 11 months, leaving behind his wife and six children. The principal destinations were the Jewish communities in the dominions, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The tour covered forty-two communities and 40,000 miles.

South Africa had a Jewish population of 66,000 at the time. Hertz travelled throughout the country, covering 5,000 miles by railway. He was particularly struck by the Great Synagogue in Cape Town, describing it as "the largest and most impressive Jewish house of worship in the Empire." After visiting Johannesburg and Pretoria, he went to Bulawayo in Rhodesia where he found "Jewish hearts throbbing with enthusiasm for all forms of Jewish endeavour."

In Australia, Hertz found a warm welcome from its Jewish population of 20,000. President of the visiting committee, Sir John Monash, a war hero, said: "We rejoice that you have found it possible to visit us in our Antipodean home." Pesach 1921 was spent in Sydney, and it was there that he gave more sermons than in any other city. A huge crowd of 3,500 people packed the town hall.



Hertz also travelled to New Zealand, with its Jewish population of 2,500. In Auckland, he created an impression, leaving one community leader gushing about "the inspiring effect" of the visit and recommended that it should be repeated at least every seven years.

A century ago, Canada had a Jewish population of 125,000 making it the largest of the dominions' population. He was given a warm welcome by the Jewish community in Toronto, Montreal and other cities. Mayors and civic leaders held welcoming receptions and the Governor General made time to meet him.

After this trip Hertz returned to England on 30th August 1921.

The "Imperial tour" is one the things Hertz remains most famous for, along with his commentary on the Chumash. It solidified the bonds between the UK and her dominions giving him and his office profile on the world stage. Today the pull of historic ties remains strong. The Chief Rabbi has in his job title, 'Head of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth', and periodically visits some of these communities.

A modern-day tour may well include a diversity of communities, and not just the "white Commonwealth." The sun may have set on the British empire but, one hundred years after Hertz's landmark tour, the ties between Jewish communities across the Commonwealth remain strong.

Pensive Moments

Calligraphy: Jack Abraham is inspired by 'Black Lives Matter'

Looking at Jack Abraham's beautiful calligraphy, why has he chosen the first chapter of Song of Songs and especially these seven verses?

"The only reason I chose this piece was I found it intriguing. A conversation between Israel and G-d which is read each year at Pesach. It is difficult to understand yet interesting - particularly verses 5 and 6 which refer to colour. I felt, as I was writing, this connects with 'Black Lives Matter'."

שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים אֲשֶׁר לְשִׁלְמֹה יִשְׁכַּנִּי מִצְשִׁיקוֹת
 פִּיהוּ כִּי טוֹבִים דְּדִיךְ מִיִּיךְ לְרִיחֹךְ שֶׁמִּצֶּיךְ טוֹבִים
 שֶׁמִּן תּוֹרֶךְ שֶׁמֶךְ עַל כֵּן עָלְמוֹת אֶהְבֹּךְ מִשְׁכַּנִּי
 אֲחֻרֶיךָ צְרוּצָה הִבִּיאֵנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ חֲדָרֶיךָ צְגִילָה וְשִׁמְחָה
 בְּךָ נִזְכַּרְתָּ דָּדִיךְ מִיִּיךְ מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהְבֹּךְ שֶׁחֲזוֹרָה
 אֲנִי וְצֹאֵה בְּצוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם כִּאֲהֲלִי קָדָר כִּידִיעוֹת
 שְׁלֹמֹה אֵל תְּרֹאנֵנִי שֶׁאֲנִי שֶׁחֲזוֹרְתָּ שֶׁשֶׁפְּדַתְנִי
 הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בָּנִי אֲמִי צְחָרוּ בִּי שֶׁמִּנִּי צְטָרָה אֵת הַכּוֹמֵס
 כּוֹמֵי שְׁלִי לֹא נִטְרָתִי אֲגִידָה לִי שֶׁאֲהַבְּרָה צִפְשִׁי
 אֵיכָה תִרְעָה אֵיכָה תִרְבִּיץ בְּשִׂחָרִים שְׁלֹמֹה
 אֲהִיָּה כַּעֲטִיף עַל עֲלָרֵי חֲבָרֶיךָ אִם לֹא תִדְעֵנִי
 לֶךְ הִיפֹת בְּצִשִׁים צֵאִי לֶךְ בְּעַקְבֵי הַצֵּאָן וְרַעֲלֵי

Song of Songs

1. *The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.*
2. *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for your love is better than wine.*
3. *Your good ointments have a good fragrance; your name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the maidens love you.*
4. *Draw me after you, we will run; the king has brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in you, we will remember your love more than wine: the upright love you.*
5. *I am black, but comely, O you daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*
6. *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun has charred me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but my own vineyard I have not kept.*
7. *Tell me, O you whom my soul loves, where you pasture, where you make your flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one who veils oneself by the flocks of your companions?*

POLITICS: 20th Century Jewish History

John Cooper

How are we to understand twentieth century Jewish history? We could use the concepts of identity politics, such as race, sex or gender and this would illuminate vast tracts of twentieth century terrain. Lethal racism would in part explain the rise of Nazis and Hitler; gender, the second wave feminist movement, Women's Liberation, in which American Jewish women played a prominent role. Gender would also throw light on the effectiveness of the international movement to save Soviet Jewry in the years 1970-1990 in which Jewish women entered Anglo-Jewish politics.

Jews were always regarded as the 'other' in European societies and only really accepted as 'white' in the years after the Second World War, when they were slowly admitted into the ranks of elite law firms and appointed to prestigious posts in hospitals in the United States and Britain. It has been argued that Jews fought in the liberal ranks for Civil Rights in the United States to affirm that they were 'white' and wanted to differentiate themselves from people of colour they were supporting.



Another way to explore modern Jewish history is to utilise economic and social history. I would need to focus on a longer time span from the 1880s until

the present. Within this period, there were three major economic and social depressions: the Long Depression of the 1880s, Great Depression 1929 and the Great Recession starting in 2008.

Exploring the current economic malaise and its repercussions on the Jewish community, I concluded that it was different from its two predecessors at least in Britain and the United States. I forgot that economic difficulties take time to influence politics, hence Trump's populist election and the anti-Semitic hailstorm in Britain, when Jews were blamed for this country's woes. Hitler's mentor, Karl Lueger the anti-Semitic Mayor of Vienna, Hitler, Mussolini and General Franco in Spain, who was of Sephardi descent, emerged as populist leaders from the chaos of the 1929 Depression.

Then there were two World Wars and their aftermath: in Poland and the Ukraine there were large scale pogroms against Jews. Violence in the Ukraine lasted from 1918 until 1920, when 100,000-120,000 Jews perished foreshadowing the later Holocaust; this was carried out with full Ukrainian participation.

In Eretz Yisrael in the Yishuv, then under British rule, five Jews died in riots unleashed by Arabs in Jerusalem in April 1920 and in May 1921 forty Jews were killed; but as Ben-Gurion later said, 'It is better to have a pogrom in one's own country', meaning we can deal with it more firmly.

After the Shoah and World War 2, 1948 seemed a time of hope with the foundation of Israel, the UN Convention against Genocide, the Human Rights Declaration and the later UN Declaration on Race. All in part were the work of Jews influenced by the Shoah - Weizmann, Lemkin, Lauterpacht, and Ashley Montagu (born Israel Ehrenberg in the East end). Now the former world order and its carefully constructed rules are under challenge.

SCHMOOZE with Hayley

Alyson Selby



Hayley Marks, our office administrator, like other excited brides, faced disappointment over the COVID-19 period: cancelling and rescheduling her wedding. “I have had five different dates” she explained. “It has not been an easy time”.

We had great fun in June, chatting about her dress, food tasting, and her excitement as her wedding day finally approached. Hayley was hoping to marry Daniel on 31st of August. “I am so excited finally to celebrate with my family and friends; to be able to forget about all the rules and dance on the dance floor!”

I asked if the rules had caused an issue with numbers she was inviting to the wedding. “Sadly, I have had to ‘uninvite’ a table of people and I think a few people will not come as they are still nervous of crowds, but we are hoping to celebrate with 300 people”. I gasped at the number.

“To begin with I have 60 members of close family, and after a year of not being able to be in groups, the more the merrier for such a long overdue celebration!” she told me.

Hayley admits it has been difficult at times seeing the positive, but was upbeat when I asked her to name her top five survival tips when planning a wedding during COVID.

“First is to work as a team,” she explained. “Daniel and I are working as a couple to ensure we are able to achieve what we want for our ideal day.”

“Number two: don’t overthink things. Worry about the big things and ignore the small stuff. People won’t know what is missing!”

“Three: use the time wisely.” Hayley found that having the extra time helped her and Daniel to practise dancing together, hoping to perfect their first dance when they finally get on the dance floor later in the summer.

Learning a new skill over lockdown - to play the electric saxophone - has helped to keep her busy and focused. Daniel is in a band which will be playing throughout the day. “I will be playing a piece with the band. It is a secret only Daniel and my sister know. (Now all of Hampstead Shul magazine readers, too! Shhh, don’t say a word!)”

Her fourth tip is in line with her newsletter wellbeing section: “Find time to pamper yourself. Book beauty treatments in advance and help yourself to be prepared. It is so nice that the beauty salons and hairdressers are now open, I don’t want to go down the aisle with grey hair!”

Her final tip was one she felt very strongly about: “It is not just a party. Remember the meaning and the Jewish values. Allow yourself more time to reflect and ensure the rituals and things you plan are more meaningful.”

On behalf of all the community we wish Hayley and Daniel, and all couples getting married, mazal tov - and a life filled with happiness and good health.

GARDEN QUIZ

Joan Horowitz is in the celebratory mood



What a year. We are all down but not out! The recent party held in my garden was a great success. We were blessed with wonderful sunshine and it was a treat to see so many young people socialising with us ‘oldies.’

Everyone had a great time and it was a chance to catch up with some members who have been isolating for over a year. The garden did not succumb to Covid, and nature is always with us. The shul garden has thrived through a hard winter, and so have we.

I hope you will enjoy this short quiz. Do not look up the answers too quickly!

My fondest wishes to you all.

Answers on Page 54

- 1) A vegetable that does not need sugar?
- 2) A pretty girl who has been jilted?
- 3) Handy for chilly vixens?
- 4) A flower between hills?
- 5) What shepherds watch?
- 6) Old king’s signature?
- 7) The rising sun?
- 8) A dairy product and a dish?
- 9) Which garden plant in the 17th Century was exchanged as a form of currency?
- 10) The spice saffron comes from which flower?
- 11) What vitamin is most prevalent in lime?
- 12) Where is the biggest tree in the world, the giant sequoia, found?
- 13) Which king created the Hanging Gardens of Babylon?
- 14) Which flowers name comes from the ancient Greek word for star?
- 15) How can you tell the age of a tree?
- 16) Which garden in the Cotswolds is notable for its miles of hedges?
- 17) Which plant takes its name from the Italian phrase for a beautiful woman?
- 18) The love apple is the original name for what?
- 19) Which television presenter and gardener owns a garden in Hertfordshire called Longmeadow?
- 20) In his dream it reached to heaven?

Being Newly Weds During Covid

Alyson & Michael Selby



Photography by: Jeux D'images

In September 2019 we celebrated our wedding with friends and family, dancing, sitting together and embracing each other in joy. That was before COVID 19.

It seems almost unimaginable that this was the last wedding we, and many of our guests, attended. Who would have dreamt the last eighteen months...social distancing and lockdowns sadly putting an end to celebrating in crowds the Jewish way?

Our wedding day was the last time we saw Michael's sister and niece from Israel, Alyson's niece living in New Zealand and most of our family and friends living nationally and locally.

We watched our wedding video during the first lockdown with anticipation - like watching a movie; something we did not remember anymore. No face masks or antibacterial hand gel stations, no social distancing and - shock horror- there was singing and dancing.

We feel blessed and lucky. We are aware that there are so many people who have not been able to share their life events with their families and friends and of how upsetting and distressing this has been for them.

The next step was moving in together. There are not many newly-weds who have spent 24/7 at home with each other for the first year and a half of their marriage. We have enjoyed Alyson's experimenting in the kitchen with a range of different pescatarian dishes - our house is meat-free, and Michael is coping!

We have spent time walking, talking and gardening, supporting each other and participating in many Jewish-based Zoom activities, services and talks. Michael has never had a pet but now we have Daisy the dog - a star of Hampstead zooms! We did get her pre-Covid, and we have certainly enjoyed learning how to adapt to living with a 'Daisy'!



When the lockdowns eased, Michael started to work once or twice a week at the office - but not often. We were together a lot. Luckily, we both have space for an office although Alyson seems to like using the entire dining table for her work. We are now familiar with the Amazon delivery man, and we have probably seen him more than we have seen all our family and friends combined!

We have missed shul and seeing everyone. Despite thinking Michael was going to stand down from being a warden, he somehow managed to persuade Alyson to join the Exec, and our 'married'/joint journey with the shul continues.

How has it been? How often have we heard, 'if you can survive lockdown together you can survive anything!' PG that is the case but, truthfully, we have enjoyed spending time together and have been in no rush to 're-emerge' into life post-Covid. The only concession we have made is getting a second tv!

Marriages Made In Heaven (& Online)

Daniella Tigner-Orchudesch just 'clicked' with David Cynamon

Matching with your soulmate on a dating app. Chances are slim? For David and me, we just happened to meet at the right time.

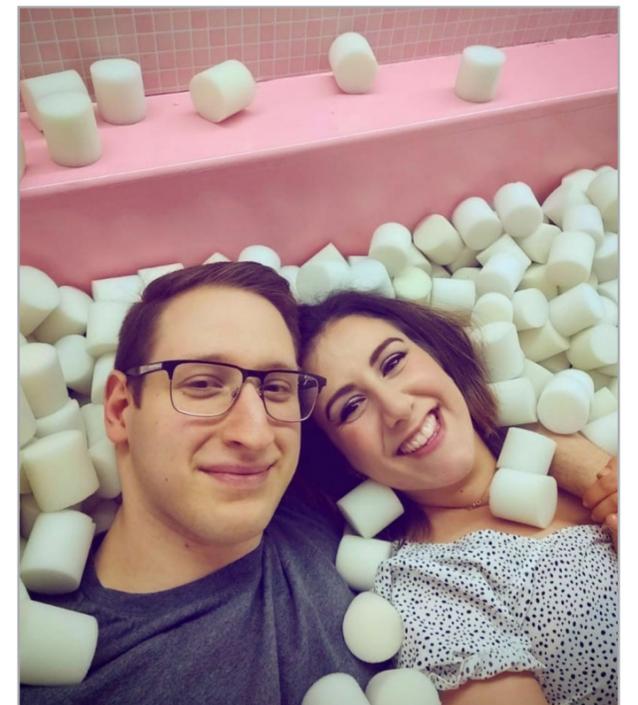
He said that I was the first person he matched with on 'Hinge' and I remember thinking, from the day we started speaking, that he was a kind, funny and down-to-earth guy.

We clicked easily, like I had not with anyone else and after just over a year of going on fun dates, walks around parks (during lockdown) and just being together, we decided we would love to get married.

Some people might have thought that a lockdown relationship was not much fun, but I would not have spent the past few months with anyone else. It sounds like a cliché, but we are each other's best friend and have so much fun together, even if it is just goofing around quoting our favourite tv shows in silly accents!

We are hoping (lockdown restrictions permitting) to get married in September, and my mother Gillian has been an absolute saviour in helping us organise everything and making our wedding dreams come true.

We are so excited to continue our adventures together!



Wishing the community a happy and healthy New Year,
all the best from
Bruce and Josephine Lewin

Wishing Rabbi Michael and Judith Harris and the Hampstead community a very happy and healthy New Year! Patricia & Tony Abram and family xxx

Recent Israeli Stamp Issues

Michael Richard puts us in the picture

KKL-JNF 120th Anniversary

Revival of the Zion Stamp: On December 29, 1901 the Fifth Zionist Congress decided to establish the Keren Kayemeth LeYisrael - Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF). The question was, how to spread the news to Jewish people, who were scattered throughout the world. Johann Kremenetzky, the first Chairman of KKL-JNF, had an idea. He printed a stamp at a print shop in Vienna, with the intention of distributing it among Jews around the world. The stamp features a Star of David with the word "Zion" in the centre. Branches adorn the sides of the stamp and sunrays. The stamp was designed by Ephraim Lilien a gifted artist and enthusiastic Zionist.

In total, thirty million of these stamps, known as the "Zion Stamp", were printed in 18 different countries. Jews would place them next to official postal stamps of their countries.

The KKL-JNF today, serves as a bridge between the Jewish world and Israel. Through its branches it strengthens alliances between Jews around the world and Israel, and helps new olim to settle in Israel.

Agricultural Research Organisation, Volcani Centre Centennial

The Agricultural Research Organisation, Volcani Centre, was established in 1921 and its main campus is located in Rishon Le Zion. The Volcani Centre consists of six institutes and two research centres that are located in Northern and Southern Israel, for developments that have been integrated into



daily agricultural routines of farmers in Israel and around the world.

Israel is a natural laboratory for agricultural research. Although small in area, it comprises diverse climatic regions, different types of soil and water, and ecological diversity, making the results of agricultural studies relevant for many countries. This is the primary reason why the centre is visited by so many heads of state, researchers, academics, industrialists and entrepreneurs from both developed and developing countries. These visits contribute hugely to Israel's diplomacy and foreign relations.

The Orri mandarin featured on the stamp was developed by the centre. It provides wonderful taste, is easy to peel, seedless, resistant to disease and can be grown in semi-desert conditions. The Orri is a key Israeli export.

Remote Sensing Satellites in Israel

Remote Sensing is a broad term for a variety of methods collecting data from a given area of the planet through mechanical, electronic and optical means that requires no direct contact with earth. The aim is to detect, identify and track certain types of targets for the purpose of preservation, research, science and optimal utilisation of resources (such as agriculture, air pollution and even discovering oil deposits) as well as for military objectives.

Over the years, Israel has become a leader in developing its capabilities in a wide range of remote sensing payloads and satellites. The Israeli Space Program relies on contributions from leading Israeli companies in collaboration with the Israeli Defence Ministry and Space Agency.



PRINCE PHILLIP was my Dinner Date

Alison Grunwald shares a treasured memory of the late Duke, and a confession.

The evening started off so well: the guest of honour at the Board of Deputies' fundraiser was in sparkling form. A familiar face to all, he cracked jokes and asked awkward questions.

Henry was President of the Board then, and as we all settled down to our delicious meal, I found myself seated next to our charming and very famous main speaker.

It dawned on me then, with skin-prickling horror... how was I meant to talk intelligently to the husband of the Monarch, and keep the entertainment going, respectfully for at least an hour - without deviation, hesitation or repetition?

I smiled serenely as befits the wife of the President and perspired heavily in secret places. Prince Philip began lamenting the disappearance of British garden birds. A great environmentalist, this was clearly one of his passions.

Yes, I know about this, I thought. I should have kept my trap shut.

"It's all the fault of ruddy cats," complained HRH, looking petulant.

"I wouldn't say that" I said.

"Why not?" The Prince was staring me out.

"Well, I breed them and there ARE ways to prevent them getting at birds."

"Rubbish."

My gander was up. "Well, people can always put bells on their collars."

"What ruddy good would that do?"

"The birds can hear them coming" (Duh).

Prince Philip abruptly turned away to speak to the person sitting on his other side. I reckoned it was a wise move; how could I be so dumb?

Seconds later an excellent additional argument occurred to me. This should set things right.



Waiting respectfully for the Prince to finish what he was saying, I made the biggest gaff it is possible to make with royalty.

I tapped him on the arm to attract his attention.

I knew this was a big mistake when he jerked his arm away, giving me the sort of glare that would have sent my cats under the kitchen dresser for a week.

Oh blimey, I was mortified. What's the protocol for arguing with the husband of the Queen and then making a grab for him? The amnesia of utter humiliation reclaimed me.

I can't ever tell anyone else about this, I swore to myself.

The episode remained a blessed blank in my memory until April 9. Hearing the news of the Prince's death that morning, I felt deeply sad. My shocking behaviour, all those years ago, probably would have amused him. He read people very well and had a long string of priceless gaffs to his name; it was probably the thing that most endeared him to people.

Perhaps he said to the Queen that night: "Met a great chap this evening...Henry Grunwald. Very bright; excellent speaker. Married to an idiot who goes around sticking bells on cats or something. Pretty face, just nothing up top."

"Oh Philip," the Queen would have smiled.

"Well, we do prefer dogs."

Meeting the Lovely Lily

Deborah & Katie Abram

During the pandemic, we started delivering many packages of hot meals, sweet treats and notes to read which really cheered people up. They knew that they were being thought about, and it was a great feeling for us to meet and hear some amazing life stories.

Although, thankfully, things are a lot better, we decided to continue delivering packages when we can.

I feel so lucky that during that time we were introduced to the lovely Lily Ebert, a 97-year-old Holocaust survivor, who has now become our friend and inspiration!

We visit Lily every few weeks and we feel so uplifted every time we see her! The happiness and energy that Lily spreads is incredible. Lily is so special.

A key message that Lily tells us is make the most of what you have and enjoy those moments. She says: "Always do the best with what you have and never give up."

This has been one of the best parts of the 'Something Special' initiative.

Lily's great-grandson, Dov Foreman, has interviewed Lily and co-authored her account. The great news is that the book, 'Lily's Promise' will be published this September, 2021.

We wish Lily and all her family shana tova umetukah, and mazal tov on reaching one million followers on TikTok!



What did you do in the (Covid) War Daddy?

Stephen J Mendel takes a humorous look back – and it's not all bad!

I lead a sheltered existence and as an only child (of 71) I have always been used to my own company; some of you might decide that to be understandable for one who is basically anti-social. I have noticed that many people and families have struggled to keep themselves occupied due to an absence of visitors or dropping in on friends or dining out. I have to admit that my experience has been quite the contrary and I have enjoyed the extended moment to have next to no commitments, save the pleasant scope to babysit Naomi's and my new grandson, Noah. That is, of course, a pleasure as distinct from a date to be ticked-off the list.

Once the paraphernalia of Covid restriction compliance had been assembled – a mask in every pocket and spares for the car – and a safe shopping plan established: me at the wheel and Naomi darting in for a brief raid on the supermarket, it was a matter of finding something(s) to do.

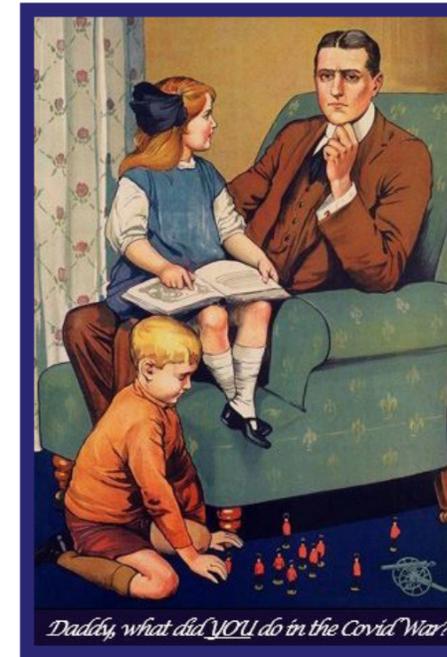
As usual, The Devil found work for idle hands and the result was a cleared garden (again overgrown as enthusiasm for physical work waned) and three dead trees lopped and sawn into manageable pieces for transport to the public amenities collection point. The latter is now an event in itself with an appointment system in operation; the penalty for late arrival is to be left with a car load of rotting foliage.

Conveniently, for the plumber at least, our entire heating and hot water system decided to leave this mortal world in October, leaving us crowded around a couple of small oil filled radiators while boiling kettles for washing. A mere £ 8,500 plus mega upheaval later we became the proud owners of a 'Megaflo' installation. This had the additional 'benefit' of affording us two weeks of clearing-up. Now the winter break was approaching and talk of relaxation of Covid restrictions was in the air.

By the beginning of the year we had become anaesthetised to inconvenience and nuisance, so I was anxious to fill any void and find a new set of problems to occupy my time. What could be more suited to create more aggro than trying to change a car for one only to be found in a garage 50 miles away? Only a nine weeks' battle with DVLA to get them to issue a new registration

document.....For anyone thinking of doing the same the message is: forget it; try something simpler, say a landing on the moon.

Keep safe and keep the masks on folks, and remember to come back to shul. Finally, on a more serious note: self-isolation periods are a wonderful time and window for you chaps out there to practise your Haftorah skills so air the lungs and get singing!



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TALL TIGER TALES

and other animal anecdotes

Clive Cohen meets an Israeli zoo maverick

I first met the late Professor Shulov, Director and Founder in the late 1930s of the Jerusalem Biblical Zoo, when I attended the opening of The Jersey Zoo founded by Gerald Durrell. He was not listed as a delegate but after presenting his credentials, he advised the many eminent zoologists present on where they were going wrong in their failure to breed Serval cats which he had been doing successfully for some time.

I introduced myself to him and we soon became firm friends. His son Micha, who had previously spent a year working at Whipsnade Zoo, joined him on a subsequent visit to attend a zoological conference in London.

At their request we visited several zoos and wildlife establishments. At Whipsnade they wanted to gather information on what they fed their big cats.

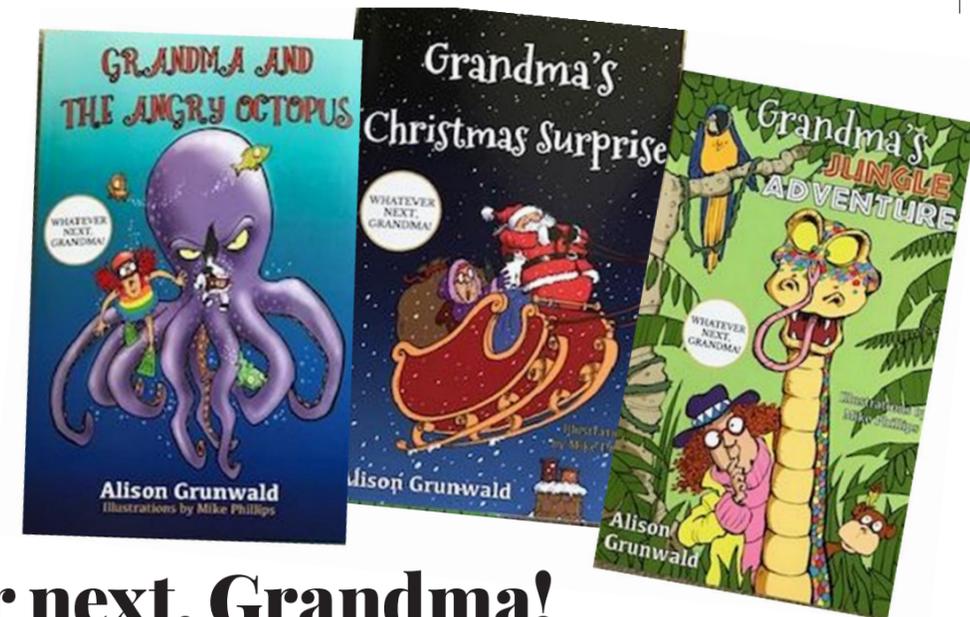
After an interesting discussion in his office, the director, Dr. Manton, drove us all (Shulov, Zena my wife and I) around the zoo. On reaching a large enclosure with double fencing and undergrowth, Shulov said he would like to stop to see this cat. Manton told him to be careful as even her keeper

was unable to approach her; she was very bad-tempered and extremely big.

Shulov made various noises in Hebrew, with his arms through the bars and eventually a large head emerged. Constantly speaking to her in Ivrit, Shulov proceeded to scratch her behind the ears. Dr. Manton watched in sheer amazement and disbelief. Shulov explained that in the year television had been introduced in Israel, he had bottle fed baby "Rivka" on his lap while watching, so why should she not remember him (even after spending some years at a zoo in Spain before being sold to Whipsnade)?

We bade our farewells and carried on our journey to Woburn Safari Park. It was a hot day and Zena decided to open a window in the back of the car, by which time we were driving through their tiger enclosure. A very large animal some considerable distance away in the next paddock suddenly stood up and appeared to be heading straight for our car.

Professor Shulov turned his head and said "Zena, I think you close the window now; this tiger does not speak Ivrit."



Whatever next, Grandma!

Alison Grunwald in conversation with Beverley Ostrin

Sitting in the garden with Alison Grunwald looking at her 'Whatever Next, Grandma!' books I asked how she had decided to write these delightful stories.

"Well, my grandson, Ben, challenged me to write some magic adventure stories, on the basis (presumably) that he enjoys my eccentricities. But then, who had the time to write? Certainly not me, working as a postnatal doula and spending hours away from the house."

"Fate, as we all know, had other plans. The 'Whatever Next, Grandma!' stories had been gestating in that part of my brain labelled 'Nutcase Tendencies!' At last, I had time to do something creative that I could embark on in safety."

Looking through the books with their colourful illustrations I asked if it had been difficult to find an illustrator who could bring Grandma and Gertrude, her world-weary cat, to life. Alison laughed: "I found several illustrators, but none quite 'got' Grandma. Even as far afield as India, but shortages of electricity affected the artist's ability to complete the work samples. Finally, I found Mike Phillips, a brilliant illustrator, and Claire Wingfield my literary consultant."

Alison continued: "The first story, 'Grandma and the Angry Octopus' hit the bookshelves in July 2020. This was followed by 'Grandma's Christmas Surprise' in November, and 'Grandma's Jungle Adventure' in April this year." 'Grandma Rides a Pony' was being planned for this summer, 2021.

I found 'Grandma' to be great fun and asked Alison how she had come up with such a colourful character. Looking a little furtive she said: "Please don't spread this around – Grandma is not perfect. In fact, she's barking; she gets the wrong end of every stick and thinks she knows it all. She barely survives with her life most of the time and relies heavily on long-suffering Gertrude. Oddly, I don't have to look too far for Grandma!"

Alison added: "Gertrude, by contrast is wise, a tad cynical, given to occasional escape bids, but as loyal a friend as Grandma could possibly want."

Alison has given several readings over zoom to young school children who ask lots of questions about writing. She hopes that these joke and magic-filled adventure stories, which feature quizzes at the end of each book, will help make reading fun, whilst stretching the vocabulary of primary readers. Alison answered my question about the ages the books were aimed by saying: "Ages five to eight or older, depending on reading fluency. Children too young to read will naturally enjoy being read to."

It was a very enjoyable afternoon listening to Alison talking enthusiastically about her 'new baby'. Going on-line when I got home, I Googled 'Grandma and the Angry Octopus' and was delighted to see that all the books are available to buy on Amazon. I think Alison will also like the favourable reviews on the 'Goodreads' and 'Amazon' sites.

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Answers to JH Garden Quiz 2021:

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Sweetcorn | 11 | Vitamin c |
| 2 | Wallflower | 12 | California |
| 3 | Foxglove | 13 | Nebuchadnezzar 11 |
| 4 | Lily of the valley | 14 | Aster |
| 5 | Phlox | 15 | Number of rings |
| 6 | Solomons seal | 16 | Hidcote |
| 7 | Morning glory | 17 | Belladonna |
| 8 | Buttercup | 18 | Tomato |
| 9 | Tulips | 19 | Monty Don |
| 10 | Crocus | 20 | Jacob's Ladder |

Hampstead Shul Film Club

Shelly Shieff

Members meet on Zoom every eight weeks to socialise and have a lively debate on the latest selected film. We will watch any film with a Jewish element or connection, however tenuous it may be.

Opinions always vary which only leads to a greater range of views being offered, which usually makes things more interesting.

Film lovers are asked to nominate films that they would like to be included in the voting and, ultimately, the members choose the next film. All platforms can be viewed, including Netflix, Amazon Prime and YouTube. The platforms vary, so everyone can have an opportunity to view most of the films.

Here is how it can look on a Sunday afternoon:



This gives a flavour of the films we have watched and discussed:

- Three identical strangers - a documentary following the lives of Jewish triplets, born in the USA and who find each other in the most unlikely ways. The film uncovers little-known social experiments, with often unbearable consequences, and of no benefit to their subjects.
- The Life Ahead - the latest film with Sofia Loren, directed by her son. It tells the tale of an ageing

Holocaust survivor, who lived as a prostitute in post Second World War Europe, who befriends a young immigrant from Senegal who recently robbed her.

- Remember - the last film with Christopher Plummer, who plays an elderly man suffering Alzheimer's and who embarks on a journey of revenge with a Nazi, or so we are led to believe.
- The Oslo Diaries - a documentary covering the secret talks between the Israelis and the PLO in the 1990s, which took place in Norway. The film uses a combination of diary entries, TV footage and interviews with the main players, to piece together a time when Israel came the closest to peace.

So, a varied mix of what is on offer for us to enjoy.

"Opinions always vary".



READING GROUP'S 'BUMPER YEAR'

Lillian Goldberg

Until this year the reading group met in members' homes on a Sunday afternoon, where we would discuss our current book. We discuss in some detail, looking at the style and structure as well as plot and characters. It can make for fascinating discussions as everyone brings personal experience and ideas to the argument, so that even a simple question like "Did you like the book?" can get quite lively; there are few books that all of us like or enjoy in the same way.

The books are chosen by an annual vote from a selection put forward by members of the group, six in all during a normal year. But this year was a bit different - it was a bumper year as we have read and discussed eight rather than our usual six books. We shortened the interval between meetings to six weeks during the first lockdown, and then discovered that we didn't really have more time to read, so we went back to our two-monthly cycle.

We moved on to Zoom immediately lockdown happened; I and a couple of others had already been using it for work and social events, so with a 'How To guide' and phone calls to some of the less-experienced Zoomers in the group we held our first meeting in April. Other than not meeting in person, our meetings are much the same, and we are pleased to have welcomed a couple of new members.

It was also a bumper year because we had such a wide variety of books on a broad range of subjects. There were three non-fiction books: Red Sea Spies (Raffi Berg); House of Glass (Hadley Freeman), and The Orientalist (Tom Reiss).

And six fiction: The Convert (Stefan Hertmans); The Glass Room (Simon Mawer); The Improbability of Love (Hannah Rothschild); The Dove Flyer (Eli Amir); Apeirogon (Colum McCann), and The Flight of the Veil (Bruce Berger).

What has been most interesting this year has been our geographical journey. This has taken to

Geniza, Sudan and the journey of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, the Jews of Baghdad, of Azerbaijan, of Czechoslovakia, and of Greece. At a time when so much Jewish literature in English focuses on Germany, Poland, the UK, USA and Israel, this has been a fascinating journey for all of us.

Our books have also covered multiple genres, with historical literature, satire, literary fiction and fictionalised biography... many with breathtakingly detailed research in both fiction and non-fiction alike.

I do not know who to thank more, the writers of these books or my colleagues in the reading group, who have participated thoughtfully and interestingly in this journey, and been such friends during a difficult period for all of us.



THE ORIENTALIST

Reviewed by Heidi Goldsmith



This book, part history of the early 20th Century, detective story, cultural biography, travelogue, and exile, is brought to life by the flair of Tom Reiss's storytelling.

Whilst in Baku Azerbaijan Reiss came across the novel 'Ali and Nino', by Kurban Said. Reiss spent five years travelling across ten countries interviewing characters in odd and weird locations. Reiss discovers that Kurban Said also wrote as Essad Bey, but identified him as Lev Nussimbaum, a writer of best-selling books on history, politics and biographies.

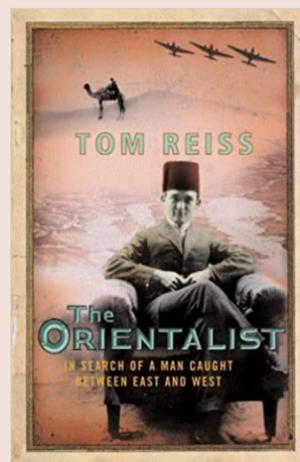
Lev Nussimbaum was born in 1905, the son of a Jewish oil millionaire and government minister. His mother was Berta Slutsky from the Pale, a revolutionary who worked with Stalin. She committed suicide when Lev was 5. He would often dress in oriental fashion and explore old Muslim Baku, dreaming of being Essad Bey, a Muslim prince.

Baku, Azerbaijan, was a modern cosmopolitan city supplying fifty percent of the world's oil. In 1920 Baku was occupied by the Bolsheviks. The Nussimbaums, having missed the opportunity of leaving, were stateless and their properties confiscated. They journeyed from Baku by boat and camel caravan to Bukhara. They returned to Baku but had to flee first to Georgia, then Constantinople, Rome and Paris.

Lev schooled at home until he was eight. At sixteen he was sent to be educated in Germany. He became a student at the Russian School, enrolling also at the University for Oriental Languages. Later Lev converted to Islam changing his name to Essad Bey Nussimbaum.

At 26, Lev married Erika Loewendahl; in 1933 he left with his wife and her family for America. The marriage was not successful and they

separated. Whilst in America, Lev wrote several books but he was unhappy and returned to Berlin. In 1935 after being expelled from the German Writers Union, he left Berlin, travelling to Vienna. In 1938 Lev moved to Italy where he became ill with a debilitating disease and died in 1942 at the age of 36.



The death of Lev and the loss of his love seem tragic because in spite of being hugely talented, the blind spots in his character caused him to miss opportunities for a better life. Lev was buried as Mohammed Essad Bey high on a cliff overlooking the sea with a turban on his gravestone.

Although Tom Reiss's descriptions of his research sometimes become tedious, his background histories are fascinating. He has successfully unravelled the identity and aliases of the author of 'Ali and Nino', revealing a complex character shaped by the attachment to his homeland and the political events of the early 20th Century. It is a story of love and loss, of riches and rags, of forced exile through countless countries ending in a tragic early, painful death.

The complex man who was known as Lev Nussimbaum, Essad Bey and Kurban Said used his literary talent until the end, leaving us works that are as relevant now as then.

Feast With Us: Essential Community Needs Increase

Hannah Style

The past year has seen FEAST with Us grow like it has not previously done. The pandemic caused a huge increase in numbers of people facing food insecurity and requesting our meals, especially for those forced to shield and self-isolate. In response to COVID-19, we had to pause our community dining and transitioned to door-to-door delivery, increasing to a seven-day meal service at some sites. FEAST was declared an essential service in Camden, Islington and Haringey, allowing us to support an increasing number of people, expand into new London boroughs and open at new venues. More staff and volunteers were recruited, including over 70 delivery drivers. In 2020 alone, FEAST services grew ten-fold! We produced 25,000 meals, in comparison with 2,500 in 2019, and diverted 11,500 kilos of surplus food from landfill.

We now operate seven days a week across ten venues in Camden, Barnet, Islington and Haringey, with about 100 different volunteers a week. We cook and deliver meals for around 500 people a week, supporting those experiencing homelessness, unemployment, mental health and substance misuse issues; elderly groups; refugees and children on Free School Meals.

We have also been partnering with local schools in the area, to raise awareness of food and plastic waste. In order to reuse as much plastic as possible for our meal deliveries, they have organised plastic container donation drives. UCS in Hampstead collected over 400 tupperware's for FEAST in March, and South Hampstead High School donated over 1,000! We also engaged students to reduce their own food waste through a school canteen challenge and home cooking competition.

During the Easter holidays, we partnered with the government's Holiday Activity Fund (HAF), Camden Council and Public Health Camden to support children who are eligible for free school meals. Over two weeks, our staff and volunteers

cooked more than 1,600 meals to be delivered to nine different holiday activities venues across Camden. Alongside this, FEAST staff also ran our first nutritional education workshops at Talacre Sports Centre with over 50 children aged 8-14. The sessions focused on the benefits of fruit and vegetables and messages around sugar intake, making smoothies using pedal-powered blenders.

With COVID-19 restrictions easing and furlough coming to an end, the demand for our service remains yet we are losing the essential volunteers needed to make it run. We need volunteers, both locally at Conway House and JW3, as well as our other venues across North London! Anyone over 16 can help us cook, collect and deliver food, so if you or anyone else is interested, please email volunteer@feastwithus.org.uk, or visit our website at <https://www.feastwithus.org.uk/volunteer>.

THANK YOU, HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE, FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



CHATANIM

CHATAN TORAH 5782: MICHAEL RICHARD

Michael is a regular attender at our Synagogue services and is a stalwart on our security rota.

He was born in Cardiff but grew up and was educated in Birmingham. He went to Manchester University to study Pharmacy. After qualifying he worked in Central London until 1989 when he opened his own pharmacy. He retired in 2015 after 44 years but in 2020 he went back on the Register because of the Covid pandemic and has worked for a friend and ex-colleague.

His main interest is stamp collecting which began as a child. His serious collecting started when he was 40 years old. He collects British and Israeli stamps and now has a collection of over a hundred stamp albums.

Michael is married to Violet, and they have a son John.



Michael Richard

CHATAN BERESHIT 5782: GABRIEL HERMAN

Gabriel was co-chair of our community when the pandemic took hold; he devised, produced and presented an online social programme that included two major series and a one-off special. Together, they brought thousands of people from around the world into Hampstead's orbit.

Motivated by his early move into self-isolation and his fear that our synagogue would have to be closed, he planned and worked closely with Madeleine to ensure the whole congregation was cared for in the state of emergency.

He helped determine the many logistical arrangements required for the first Yomim Noraim under Covid restrictions.

He represents us on The US Council and sits on our executive and Hampstead Council.

He is currently leading a social enterprise that seeks to get high-functioning and aspirational autistic people into meaningful employment. Of all the disabled communities in the UK, the autistic community is the least likely to be employed.

Gabriel has a Masters in Jewish History and is interested in analysing patterns of the past that can help fashion the future. He is keen to discover how our experiences of the pandemic will shape the post-Corona world and is excited by the possibilities.

He is also excited to be Chatan with Michael Richard again.



Gabriel Herman

Recipes

Meatballs in Tomato Sauce

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 300g minced chicken
- 200g minced beef
- 1 egg
- 1 cup ground cornflakes or matzo meal
- 1/2 chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon mixed sweet spice
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 pinch cumin & nutmeg
- salt to taste
- 1 can chopped tomatoes (400g)
- 1 pinch sugar and mixed herbs

Method

Mix the chicken, beef, egg and the next six ingredients in a bowl. With wet hands, make walnut-sized meatballs. Tip the meatballs into a large pan of boiling water, lower the heat and simmer until cooked. Drain the water, add the tomatoes, sugar and mixed herbs and cook on medium heat for another 15 minutes.

Variation

Add any combinations of garlic, parsley, oregano and paprika to the meatballs and pitted green olives, chopped onions and nutmeg to the sauce.

Patricia Abrams



Grilled Aubergine Salad

Ingredients

- 1 medium aubergine
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 washed sprigs of fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon sweet paprika
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 squeezed lemon

- salt to taste

Method

Make a small slit in each side of the aubergine and insert 1 garlic clove into each slit.

Place under a heated grill until soft for about 15 mins on each side. When cooled down, take the skin off and cut in small pieces with roasted garlic.

Add the 3rd clove of garlic, chopped or crushed, and season with salt, cumin, paprika, lemon juice, chopped parsley and olive oil.

Mimi Elbaz

Gateau a L'Orange

Ingredients

- 6 eggs separated
- 3 cups self-raising flour
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup sunflower oil
- 1 glass orange juice (freshly squeezed preferably)
- zest of 1 orange
- 2 tsp baking powder

(The cup is a 20cl size)

Method

Preheat oven to 180°C

Coat a 28cm round tin with margarine, dust with flour. Beat the egg whites until stiff.

In another bowl mix well the egg yolks, oil, zest and orange juice.

Slowly add the sugar and keep beating. Sift the flour and mix gradually the content of 1 cup at a time, making sure each addition is well incorporated.

The baking powder is mixed in the 3rd cup of flour. With a spatula fold the egg whites gently into the mixture and pour into the tin.

After 25 minutes reduce the temperature to 165 deg and leave the cake to bake for another 15/20mins.

Once baked leave it to cool for about 20 mins before removing it from the tin. Dust with icing sugar ready to serve.

Mimi Elbaz



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