

# The New Ealing Review

## Pesach 2012/5772



# חג פסח שמח

# Ealing Synagogue

15 Grange Road, Ealing W5 5QN

Tel: 020 8579 4894; Fax: 020 8576 2348; Email: ealingsynagogue@spitfireuk.net

Registered Charity No. 242552; Administrator: Mrs Michèle Gilford

Office Hours: Tuesdays—10.00 a.m.—2.00 p.m.; Thursdays—9.30 a.m.—12.30 p.m.

## MINISTER

Rabbi H Vogel BA

4 Tring Avenue, Ealing, W5 3QA

Tel/Fax: 020 8840 7749; Email: hvoge@aol.com

## CHAIRMAN

Stephen Hirst—020 8567 1091

## VICE CHAIRMAN

Leslie Sommer—020 8993 7574

## FINANCIAL REPRESENTATIVE

Ray Temple—020 8933 5645

## WARDENS

Brian Robinson—020 8567 6558

Neil Shestopal—020 8579 5099

**ELDER**—Neil Shestopal

**HONORARY SHAMAS**—Alan Sierota

## MEMBERS OF THE BOARD and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Edward Cohen	020 8997 9193	Board of Deputies Representative
Rodney Coleman	020 8579 1004	Health and Safety
Michael Jacobs	020 8998 7932	House and Library
Basil Mann	020 8568 3778	Security
Ella Marks	020 8998 5776	
Michael Mars	020 8993 0290	Co-Chair New Shul Steering Committee
Joan Michaels	020 8579 4261	Co-Chair Guild
Aviva Preston	020 8997 7083	US Council
Dawn Shestopal	020 8579 5099	Co-Chair New Shul Steering Committee
Marianne Temple	020 8933 5645	Social

## SUB-COMMITTEES

Joyce Frankal	020 8998 1947	Co-Chair Guild
Kate Hirst	020 8567 1091	Combined Charities
Alison Shindler	020 8992 8143	Welfare

## Editorial

This has been a very eventful year for Ealing Synagogue with a change of premises and a change of Chairmanship. So far, so good. Our new shul/hall has brought new life into communal activities, such as social events and the Ealing Cares Committee, hosting lunches for older members of the community, who otherwise would not have an opportunity to interact with other people, monthly AJR meetings, school visits and the like. Everyone who visits the shul/hall is suitably

impressed and the Steering Committee has much to be proud of in its achievements. As with any move, there is always the ongoing maintenance, sorting out snags, everything being a first and a "test" for future events and functions. The shul is more importantly the core religious centre which brings us together, our common denominator. The more mature members, many of whom are the stalwarts of the community and have been involved with almost every decision,

whether it be religious, social or practical for many, many years maintain their passion and enthusiasm to make sure Ealing Synagogue continues to operate smoothly. It is up to everyone to help make the most of our shul. Please don't wait to be asked to get involved by attending services and supporting events whenever possible. It's all hands to the grindstone to keep Ealing Synagogue going and to become the main attraction in west London (after Westfield of course).

### WELCOME ABOARD EALING UNITED

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This is your Gabai speaking. To those of you who have just joined us at Musaf, welcome to this service. I'd like to introduce your cantor, Chazan Oberdoesit, and your minister Reverend Exegesis, who together with the Honorary Officers will be doing all they can to make your service a pleasant one. We will be praying at an average speed of 500 words per minute which should take us to Kaddish and Adon Olam by about 12.05, followed by Kiddush in the hall, where the temperature is a pleasant 68 degrees.

May I have your attention for the next few minutes while, especially for those of you who may be unfamiliar with this type of shul, I run through some of our safety procedures.

You will find a Siddur and Chumash in the box in front of you. Please take them out and put them on the rest and ignore them for the rest of the morning.

In the event of an emergency, the Ark will open and tefillin will drop down overhead. Please put these on around your arm and over your head. Your tzitsis, which you should have been wearing as you came in, must be tied as shown at the waist. There is a weekly sermon sheet for topping up with hot air and an ostentatious hat for attracting attention. Most importantly, all congregants should try to stay calm and continue talking normally.

In the event of a sermon the emergency exits are situated at the front and the rear of the synagogue.

I would ask you to observe the no-smoking signs, especially in the toilets.

Thank you ladies and gentlemen for your attention. Please sit back and relax and on behalf of the Rabbi, Chazan and Honorary Officers we thank you for davening United.

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## DON'T PUT THE FIRE OUT

### Lag B'Omer and its Deeper Significance

*By Rabbi Hershi Vogel*

On Lag B'Omer we remember the great *Tanna* (Mishnaic sage) Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who passed away on this day (18<sup>th</sup> Iyar).

Rabbi Shimon revealed the Zohar, the ancient book of mysticism, when he emerged with his son from the cave they had been hiding in for thirteen years. This was also on Lag B'Omer.

Lag B'Omer is a joyous festival because after Lag B'Omer the students of Rabbi Akiva, who died throughout the days following Pesach, did not die.

The 49-day period between Pesach and Shavuot is called "the counting of the Omer." The Omer refers to the barley sacrifice that was offered in the Temple on the second day of Passover, the day we start counting the 49 days. The literal meaning of Omer refers to the amount of barley that was offered. Traditionally people light bonfires on Lag B'Omer. What is their significance?

The fires of Lag B'Omer represent the light of the inner dimensions of the Torah. Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai is called the Holy Candle, for through him the secrets of the Torah were revealed and "Torah is light." (*Mishlei* 6:23)

The Hebrew word Lag, lamed and gimmel, equals 33. The two letters of "Lag," when inverted, spell "Gal," which means to reveal or open, as in the verse "Open my eyes that I may see wonders in Your Torah" (*Tehillim* 119:18). Lag B'Omer represents the fire of Torah that gives us the inner vision to grasp the wonders of the Torah. Going beyond the superficial learning and observance of Torah, and revealing deeper and more spiritual levels brings light to the world and ourselves.

According to the Midrash, God concealed this light in the Torah. This explains why Hashem commanded us to count 49 days (32+17) in order to be worthy to receive the Torah.

This is the secret of "*the light that is good*" – the hidden light buried in the Torah. Just as the word "*tov*" in the sentence "*the light that is tov/good*" is the thirty-third word in the Torah, so was Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai's holy light revealed on the thirty-third day of counting the Omer.

Interestingly, Lag B'Omer is "*tov*" (17) days from Shavuot. On that day Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai rose to the upper heaven. This explains the *minhag* to light candles and fires on this day, in honour of "*the light that is good*" which begins to sparkle on that special day of Lag B'Omer.

Fire is a unique phenomenon. It has the power to transform anything that comes into contact with it and turn it into fire itself. The release of the latent energy in the object cast into the flames gives rise to a more powerful fire. Fire reveals that within everything, in addition to the practical function of a *davar*, a thing, there lies hidden energy that, when tapped, gives off light that was not apparent to one looking only at the practical function of the object.

It is no wonder that we commemorate Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai with fire. Rabbi Shimon lived in both realms at the same time; in the world of the physical as we know it, and in the realm where the spirituality in everything physical, (the *dibur* in everything,) was apparent. To Rabbi Shimon, the world was ablaze with spiritual energy, abounding with tongues of fire whispering messages about the Creator.

The practical challenge of Lag B'Omer is to see the potential energy in every object and every person, instead of being fooled by the facade of the external.

Spirituality and providence are everywhere, even for those of us who are not Rabbi Shimon. However, we can easily smother the flames of inner meaning by covering over any sparks of life and attributing everything to chance.

The flames of Lag B'Omer teach that there is more to a person or object than meets the eye. Look beyond the superficial and acknowledge deeper realms of existence; embrace worlds that we cannot see or touch, but which are every bit as real as the one in which we live. Tapping into the fiery spiritual energy that is embedded in every iota of creation.

## THE CHALLENGES OF CHAIRMANSHIP

*By Stephen Hirst*



**T**o paraphrase an old quotation, there are two things in answer to the question what makes someone a Jew?: "membership of the Jewish community, and loyal fulfilment of the obligations which that membership imposes".

If anything has impressed me in coming up to a year as Chairman, it is the dedication with which so many of our members have "fulfilled their obligations" to our community. I am struck by the energy and enthusiasm brought to all the various tasks necessary to make the Synagogue work, in spite a small membership of mature age. Whether the function is religious or social, members make things happen, seeming to overcome difficulties and crises. Indeed I see the 'mature' bit as an asset, as wisdom and experience are brought to bear on problems. Ealing Synagogue members are experts on the work-around.

It has been an interesting year for this Chairman, not without some challenges. They have ranged from the delicate to the legal. Even on one "down to the wire" occasion, keeping the synagogue building open on a particular Shabbat. With each problem I have been able to call on the wisdom and experience of the Executive, and also of course the Board. I am grateful. They are also forgiving. I have not yet kept my promise for Board meetings to end at 9.30pm. However from a high (or low depending on your view) of 11.30 pm I got the last one to end just before 10.00 pm.

The core function of any Synagogue remains the holding of services. It has proved difficult for some of our regular stalwarts, because of infirmity, to continue their support of some Minyanim. It is to the great credit of our Wardens, Brian and

Neil, that we continue to run Rosh Chodesh Shacharit services (6.50 am to the uninitiated) and on Sunday morning. It is good to see former members and friends still attend. Nevertheless, we face a dilemma over Shabbat Mincha.

The new Synagogue continues to prove its worth. It simply works. Whether it is a Sunday morning minyan or a Melava Malka, it has atmosphere. We were very proud to have the US Executive hold a meeting in the Shul, joining us for a Sunday Shacharit and breakfast, eager to hear and learn from our House and Building Committee leaders. By Pesach we will have held our first Supper Quiz in the new Shul and similarly look forward to the Civic Service.

In addition to the work of the House Committee, I must make mention of the hard work of the other Synagogue committees and of individuals. There has been real effort and thought put into all the various roles. For example the clearing of the Old Synagogue, the comfort brought to frail and more vulnerable members, the library, health and safety, security and of course the great social occasions organised for us. To all those involved I offer our thanks.

Pesach marks the time when a small group of our forebears who went to Egypt later came out as a nation or if you like a community. They went onto receive the Torah and build the Tabernacle. In the same way we Jews around the world went on to build Synagogues and their communities. It seems right to reflect on our place in that ancient tradition and perhaps even allow ourselves some congratulation.

With all good wishes for a Chag Sameach.

Stephen Hirst

office of the  
**CHIEF RABBI**

**CHIEF RABBI'S PESACH MESSAGE 5772**

The story of Pesach, of the Exodus from Egypt, is one of the oldest and greatest in the world. It tells of how one people, long ago, experienced oppression and were led to liberty through a long and arduous journey across the desert. It is the most dramatic story of slavery to freedom ever told, one that has become the West's most influential source-book of liberty. "Since the Exodus," said Heinrich Heine, the 19<sup>th</sup> century German poet, "Freedom has always spoken with a Hebrew accent".

We read in the *maggid* section of the *Haggadah* of Rabbi Gamliel who said that one who did not discuss the Pesach lamb, the *maztah* and the bitter herbs had not fulfilled their obligation of the *Seder*. Why these three things are clear: The Pesach lamb, a food of luxury, symbolises freedom. The bitter herbs represent slavery due to their sharp taste. The *matzah* combines both. It was the bread the Israelites ate in Egypt as slaves. It was also the bread they left when leaving Egypt as free people.

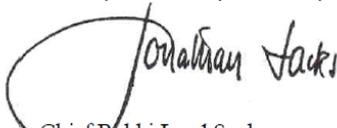
It is not just the symbolism, but also the order these items are spoken about in the *Haggadah* that is interesting. First we speak of the Pesach lamb, then the *matzah* and finally the bitter herbs. But this seems strange. Why do the symbols of freedom precede those of slavery? Surely slavery preceded freedom so it would be more logical to talk of the bitter herbs first? The answer, according to the Chassidic teachers, is that only to a free human people does slavery taste bitter. Had the Israelites forgotten freedom they would have grown used to slavery. The worst exile is to forget that you are in exile.

To truly be free, we must understand what it means to not be free. Yet 'freedom' itself has different dimensions, a point reflected in the two Hebrew words used to describe it, *chofesh* and *cherut*. *Chofesh* is 'freedom from', *cherut* is 'freedom to'. *Chofesh* is what a slave acquires when released from slavery. He or she is free from being subject to someone else's will. But this kind of liberty is not enough to create a free society. A world in which everyone is free to do what they like begins in anarchy and ends in tyranny. That is why *chofesh* is only the beginning of freedom, not its ultimate destination.

*Cherut* is collective freedom, a society in which my freedom respects yours. A free society is always a moral achievement. It rests on self-restraint and regard for others. The ultimate aim of Torah is to fashion a society on the foundations of justice and compassion, both of which depend on recognising the sovereignty of God and the integrity of creation. Thus we say, 'Next year may we all be *bnei chorin*,' invoking *cherut* not *chofesh*. It means, 'May we be free in a way that honours the freedom of all'.

The Pesach story, more than any other, remains the inexhaustible source of inspiration to all those who long for freedom. It taught that right was sovereign over might; that freedom and justice must belong to all, not some; that, under God, all human beings are equal; and that over all earthly power, the King of Kings, who hears the cry of the oppressed and who intervenes in history to liberate slaves. It took many centuries for this vision to become the shared property of liberal democracies of the West and beyond; and there is no guarantee that it will remain so. Freedom is a moral achievement, and without a constant effort of education it atrophies and must be fought for again. Nowhere more than on Pesach, though, do we see how the story of one people can become the inspiration of many; how, loyal to its faith across the centuries, the Jewish people became the guardians of a vision through which, ultimately, 'all the peoples of the earth will be blessed'.

I wish you and all your family a Chag Kasher v'Sameach.

  
Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks

לא עליך  
המלאכה  
לגמור  
ולא אתה  
בן חורין  
להבטל  
ממנה

## AN INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN PACK PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE



**Stephen Pack** was elected US President in July 2011, taking over from his predecessor Simon Hochhauser. Since then, Stephen has been working with the new trustees, staff at the US Centre and various communities to improve and increase the programmes and services available to the US membership. At the same time, he is overseeing the Selection process for the next Chief Rabbi and working on advancing the US message of authentic, inclusive and modern Orthodox Judaism to Anglo Jewry. Below is an update of an interview with Stephen Pack which originally appeared on the You&US edition of 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012. To read that interview visit: <http://youandus.theus.org.uk/leaders-and-opinions/stephenpackinterview/>.

**You&US: Hi Stephen, How have things been progressing since you were elected as President of the US?**

**SP:** It has been an intense and enjoyable few months. The US is an impressive and unique organisation and I hope to improve and build on its strengths significantly during my tenure.

**You&US: Can you give us an update on some of the goals you wanted the US to focus on?**

**The Younger Generation:** You have said that attracting young people to the US and giving them active roles are key to "securing the future of the US". What is the latest?

**SP:** We launched a new initiative called the Young Leaders Group which I am immensely excited about. The first meeting generated some great suggestions ranging from events in the City to programmes for US singles. This is a fantastic opportunity to get input from the younger generation which is crucial because they are the key to the future of the US and British Jewry.

One of the main objectives which we have achieved was to create a number of steering groups run by the young leaders which will empower them to help us drive the US forward. I am delighted to announce that we now have three committees which will focus on increasing the younger membership of the US, improving the image and brand as it appears to them, and programmes and events that are provided for young professionals.

The most recent meeting included a progress report and a discussion on the best approach to making the US more attractive to our younger members. We will also be looking at the best ways to attract younger, unaffiliated Jews to the US.

**Increased Autonomy for shuls:** How are you going about doing this?

**SP:** I am a big believer in allowing Synagogue Rabbis and lay leaders to decide what works best for their individual communities. No two shuls are the same which means that we can't expect them to run the same sets of programmes and services for its membership. My opinion is that as long as they conform to accepted halacha, are not running at a loss and uphold US values, there is no reason to interfere with the way the Shul is run. The Centre is here to support, not dictate to communities.

**Trustees to adopt communities and obtain regular feedback:** Have any trustees been appointed shuls yet? If so, what has the response been like from both the Trustees and their appointed communities.

**SP:** This was implemented soon after I was elected and the response from both Trustees and shuls has been overwhelmingly positive.

The idea is to increase the lines of communication between the Centre and the communities. It is not only shuls that are being adopted by the Trustees, they have also been assigned a department from within the US Centre, such as Marketing, Finance or US Chesed. This is especially useful for Trustee meetings, as they have a greater level of knowledge about the different communities and the way they are being run which means they can communicate whether support is needed and where there are issues to be resolved.

It also helps the communities as they have a 'champion' Trustee, who understands their issues, can support their needs and make sure new initiatives are offered to shuls.

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**Merge and build closer relationships with other communities:** We have recently seen St Albans and Enfield become full members of the US and there have been Tribe youth workers appointed in Manchester. Is this what you envisage when you talk about closer relations with other communities? What about others such as the Spanish & Portuguese and Federation?

**SP:** The US welcomes the addition of Affiliates taking full membership status and we believe we have the necessary infrastructure to assist them. But it is a choice that they have to make for themselves. There is no pressure of any sort by the US. Where we can help, we can and we will, if asked.

We have a good and close working relationship with other Jewish communities across the UK and have co-operated with them on matters which are of mutual interest to Anglo Jewry such as Shechita and Brit Milah. We invited leaders of the S&P community and the Federation to act as observers to the process in the selection of the Chief Rabbi and they attended the first meeting.

We have visited a number of communities in the provinces and there has been a lot of interest shown in the programmes run by Tribe. If we are asked for assistance or a community wishes to implement one of our programmes, then the US is more than happy to assist where we can. The appointment of the Tribe Youth workers at Prestwich Shul in Manchester came after we were approached to help run programmes in the provinces and it is encouraging to see how successful it is.

**Secure appointment of the next Chief Rabbi:** What do you want to say about it?

**SP:** The process has started and is running exactly as planned. We had the first meeting of the Representative Group on December 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 with delegates coming from across London and the provinces. We explained the process in detail and the next step was the meeting of the Consulting group on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

What I would like to stress is that I believe this to be the most transparent process for the selection of the Chief Rabbi. All the latest

documents are available on the website and I encourage people to look at this if they want to gain a better understanding of the process.

**Relationship with Board of Deputies (BOD) and the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC):** What is your opinion of the relationship between the US and these groups?

**SP:** The majority of deputies to the Board are US members, which of course reflects the relative size of our community. If we want the Board of Deputies to do the right things for us, then we need to ensure that we get the right deputies appointed. It is a very important job and we have to give it to deputies who really care and take their responsibilities seriously.

I am in the process of meeting and familiarising myself with the JLC and its working functions and I intend to work closely with them in a way to best advance the interests of the United Synagogue and British Jewry in a positive way.

**Better Key Performance Indicators: How will you go about assessing what is happening across the US and where we can improve?**

**SP:** At our last Trustee meeting we had a presentation from our Consultant Marketing Director, outlining the key performance indicators proposed for the organisation. We are starting to measure a number of areas which

will help us to assess what is going on across the US. We are going to do this properly and will place a special focus on trends in membership.

**You&US: Is there anything within your manifesto that you have changed your stance on or maybe not made as much progress as you would have liked?**

**SP:** I am impatient to move more quickly, but overall I am pleased with what has been accomplished so far. Many of our initiatives are still at a relatively early stage, but I think we are on track to make some important changes. I am also conscious that our professional staff are doing excellent work and it is important to let them run the organisation rather than get in their way. The Trustees input is primarily concerned with strategy and governance.

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*“The US is more than happy to assist where we can”*

(Continued from page 9)

**You&US: 2011 was a big year for the United Synagogue with a whole range of new programmes and initiatives launched. Which ones are you most proud of?**

**SP:** Across the whole of the US there have been some really amazing initiatives. The launch of the first ever Tribe Israel Tour was an amazing success and it was supported by the incredible US Chesed department who offered bursaries to those US families who otherwise could not afford to send their children to Israel. US Chesed have made a tremendous impact on thousands of people both within and outside the Jewish community, be it through organising blood donor sessions at Hendon US or preparing and delivering thousands of Pesach and Rosh Hashanah parcels to assist people. Also the US Living & Learning department under the stewardship of Rabbis Andrew Shaw and Michael Laitner have introduced some fantastic initiatives including the newlyweds' course, educational trips to Poland and a range of learning programmes at various US shuls.

**You&US: What about the media image of the US? You mentioned before your election that people view the US as an older organisation with a brand seen as 'unattractive' to the Facebook and Twitter generation. Do you think the US has started to address these problems?**

**SP:** As I mentioned earlier on we are addressing this issue head on and it has been discussed at the Young Leaders Group. There is a danger that we believe our own publicity and assume everyone knows about the great initiatives that exist. But in reality there are thousands of members who still see the US as that old, tired organisation and we need to show them that the US is changing for the better with a fresher and more exciting image. To that effect, we have the recently launched You&US website which is eye catching and entertaining to read and we have our team working on Facebook to better engage with the 'online' generation. We are aware that there is a lot to do and this is just the beginning.

**You&US: You have attended some major events since you became President. Which ones stand out and why?**

**SP:** There are lots. I have visited many communities both small and large and had two interesting visits to Downing Street and to the

Israeli Embassy. I have been to several openings such as the new Mikvah in Cockfosters, the refurbished LSJS and the new Jewish Care centre in Golders Green.

**You&US: What are your hopes for the future of British Jewry when you take on board the issues that we have had such as brit milah, shechitah and support (or the lack of it) for Israel?**

**SP:** We are facing some really major challenges and unfortunately not just from outside the Jewish community. I ought to mention that I played a part in getting the Big Tent for Israel event back on track after threats to boycott it. It took a number of calls to sensible people and arranging some compromises and I am proud that I was able to help out and it turned into a successful event. I think we are going to have more problems with Shechita and Brit Milah but we are determined to fight for our right to continue our traditional practices.

**You&US: Do you think your job is harder and more complicated than the other US President?**

**SP:** Well of course when you are working with our chevra everyone has an opinion. But in all honesty, no. I have a great professional team and I don't know whether his team is as strong as ours, which I am grateful for.

**You&US: What is the best advice you have ever been given?**

**SP:** Consult. At my last job at PWC I used to say to my colleagues that the biggest mistake you can make is to make a mistake alone. So it is very important to get advice, to consult and generally not to be a loner. Our people have extremely good ideas and I want to encourage them to share them.

**You&US: What do you do in your spare time?**

**SP:** That's easy - my priority is to spend time with my wife, my children and especially my grandchildren.

'I would be delighted to hear directly from members who have comments or suggestions on any matter affecting the US. My email address is [president@theus.org.uk](mailto:president@theus.org.uk). My colleagues join me in wishing you and all of your family a Kosher L'Pesach'

## HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

If Yom Kippur is often seen and taken as a chance to return to religion, Pesach is a time to return to family. Families whose connection with Judaism may have become weaker over time, seem able to hold on to Pesach as a family gathering. And the Haggadah requires that before we start our own Seder, we make a serious attempt to ensure that everyone has an adopted "family" to be with on Seder night.

Religions have laws; families have customs. Every Seder table is an opportunity for reminiscence about who used to do what, and when, and how. Whose Haggadah says we pour which cup of wine when; which Haggadah says we stand for this bit, and which one says we sit down. For once, different customs and forms of observance become a unifying focus for exciting discussion, instead of a cause for dissension and competition.

Above all, we know that children will remember the food of the Seder table throughout their lives. The shape, or colour, or smell or taste of a particular dish, seen through a restaurant window, takes us instantly back to our family roots and our place around the Seder table. There is no religious requirement to follow a particular recipe, but a family's adherence to it provides a strong bond instantly recalling lost generations.

The Midrash records that the Jews deserved to be redeemed from Egyptian slavery because of their adherence to language, names and clothing: but none of these things involve any mitzvot or religious law - they are all matters of cultural custom. The Midrash is teaching us that culture may be value-neutral in itself; but it encapsulates and reflects values, and binds us to them over the centuries. The clothes we wear, the food we eat, the songs we sing, do not make us what we are, but they can remind us of where we came from and of the cultural heritage that we have to live up to.

Joseph was recognised throughout Egypt as being an unusually honest person. When Potiphar wanted to know the secret of Joseph's success, Joseph denied any special

merit or talent, and explained that everything depends on God. When Pharaoh himself quizzed Joseph in the same way, the answer was the same. Joseph was trusted throughout Egypt because the value for which he stood above anything else was honesty, with oneself and with others.

Our ancestors who came to England were notable in the same way: amongst the diamond-dealers, and silver merchants, of the City of London, honesty was a proud watchword for which the Jewish community was well-known. Jewish workers in all trades were valued for their values of honesty and hard work. Values of this kind can be taught in schools or learned from books; but they are most effectively and powerfully taught by transmission from generation to generation, through families and friends sitting around the Seder table and recognising the core values that underpin our culture and our customs.

The Jewish family that sits around all its different Seder tables can reflect that our culture and customs bind us to a proud heritage of upholding strong moral and ethical values at home and at work. The question that we have to ask ourselves each year is, are we doing our best to ensure that past values are fully reflected in present behaviour?



## **REDEDICATION OF EALING SYNAGOGUE**

### **SUNDAY 16 OCTOBER 2011**

### **IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CHIEF RABBI LORD SACKS**

It is nearly the first anniversary of our move into our new synagogue when we celebrated with an inaugural Shabbat on 21 May 2011. On Sunday 16 October 2011, the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks officially rededicated Ealing Synagogue. Below is a reminder of the day in the speech given by Michael Mars, Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, welcoming the Chief Rabbi.

**I**t is my pleasant duty to welcome you to the new Ealing Synagogue and thank you for coming for our Rededication ceremony. You are no stranger to us having recently joined our 90th birthday celebrations and made many other visits during your tenure.

I will briefly outline the process by which we moved from our old cherished building which we had occupied for almost 90 years and arrived in this newly converted communal hall.

Before I do so, I would like, on behalf of the Board of Management and Rabbi Vogel, to welcome everyone here today—present members, former members and many special guests.

First, some links to our past. We are pleased to see Evelyn Shindler, who has recently celebrated her 95th birthday, and is the daughter of one of our founders Max Kanal. Secondly David Assersohn, grandson of David Assersohn, another prominent founding member. We are as ever, delighted to welcome our former minister Dr Norman Gale who is participating in this celebration.

The President of the United Synagogue, Stephen Pack, and the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Ealing — we are delighted that you are here to share this ceremony.

Chief Rabbi, you will recognise the natural tendency to want to hold on to that with which we have become familiar. Change, though necessary, is not easy and it takes time. Moving from our grand shul, which fitted us like an old cardigan, comfortable, familiar and well worn with patched elbows, was difficult both physically and emotionally. Though the process itself took less than a year, many of the plans were in place over four years ago.

Once the community recognised the need for the move they swung into action. We were supported by an ever helpful and sympathetic duo of architects, Leon Silverton and Cheryl Farrow. They are here today and attended all our steering committee meetings, held late into the night. You are both honorary Ealing shul members. That committee met every 3-4 weeks and, as might be expected for a Jewish committee, there was much debate, discussion and dissent, the real components of proper argument. We found this constructive. We remain friends and although, if we were doing it again, we might do some things differently, we are pleased with the outcome which serves the needs of our smaller community. Of special note was the fact that members of 70 and 80 years standing were enthusiastic committee members.

We have tried to retain the old and welcome the new. The Ark is a 70% replica of that in the old shul. Four of the original stained glass windows enhance the building in custom-made light boxes. The original library has been effectively moved to the back of the hall. The Ner Tamid, the eternal light, is also here. The two balustrades replicate the original frontage to the ladies' gallery. They break up what would otherwise have been a square barren hall-like space. The original chandelier, reduced in size, fits comfortably.

So what's new? The Bimah, all the seating, a massive kitchen. A new Succah. The Office. The Ten Commandments tablets. Men and women are on the same level separated by new mechitza screens. This has resulted in an unforeseen outcome. The exceptional skill of lip reading, learned and practised over generations between the ladies' gallery and the menfolk below, is already obsolescent. We

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office of the  
**CHIEF RABBI**

Dr Michael Mars  
 34 Birch Grove  
 Acton  
 London  
 W3 9SS

25<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Dear Dr Mars,

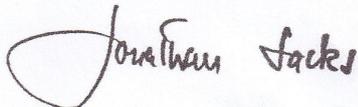
Thank you so much for the beautiful gift of two ceramic tablets of the Ten Commandments which were presented to me at the Rededication Ceremony of the new building for Ealing Synagogue.

It is a truly beautiful gift which I will cherish for years to come.

I can't think of a more fitting tribute to your synagogue than a rededication ceremony to celebrate the synagogue's 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday.

May the Ealing Community go from strength to strength under the esteemed guidance of Rabbi Vogel and with the support of your wonderful community.

Yours with every good wish,



Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks



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have facilities for the disabled including a gentle ramp which improves access to the synagogue on foot or by wheelchair.

I have studiously not named any of the many benefactors and committee members for fear of leaving anyone out and causing offence. Suffice it to say that this small community has pulled together and worked hard in the hope for its future survival in a new environment, appropriate for changing circumstances.

Ealing is proud of its adaptability and its achievements. We don't have all the answers but we feel we have much to offer any other community faced with similar issues of continuity.

Chief Rabbi and honoured guests – we hope you can taste Ealing's sense of joy and pride. We are moving from one chapter to another and as congregants exclaim on completing one of the books of the Torah before starting the next, let us exclaim, Chazak, Chazak v'nitzchazek. A message for all. Be strong. Be strong. And let us strengthen one another."

## A US WE CAN BE PROUD OF

By Jeremy Jacobs, Chief Executive



The sheer number of different areas the United Synagogue work with never fails to surprise me, nor does the impact that we can have on people's lives. We have had an amazing

year.

The US is all about communities and our ability to inspire our members, enrich their lives and ensure our heritage is passed onto future generations. To do this we need the best people, modern and vibrant programmes and properties that are both adaptable but also warm and welcoming.

The top priority is to ensure we have the right people who can realise the goals of the US. We have had some tremendous successes this year, appointing a number of new Rabbis, Assistant Rabbis, Youth Rabbis and Youth Workers to many of our shuls, not least due to the Rabbinic Intern Programme. For the past few years we have brought over a number of young Rabbis to various communities at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They lead services, run programmes and generally take part in community life. This programme not only provides much needed assistance to our own hard working Rabbis but also gives these young Rabbinic hopefuls the experience, not only of Rabbinic life, but also in the Anglo-Jewish community.

We also continue to invest in ongoing Rabbinic Training and Development through the P'eir programme run by Rabbi Ginsbury of Hendon US. There are induction programmes for new Rabbis and Rebbetzins plus training programmes for our existing Rabbinate. A mentoring process is also provided to ensure that our Rabbis are able to network with their colleagues and discuss any issues they face in a confidential and positive manner.

Adding to this is our participation in a high level management training programme run by the Kellogg School of Management in Chicago. Every year we enrol four of our Rabbis onto this course and the results have been incredibly successful.

Indeed the working relationship between the Centre and the Rabbinate has been

flourishing. The Rabbinical Council has engaged wholeheartedly with the strategic work of the Centre, helping to develop additional programmes and opportunities which have a direct impact on our membership. Over the past year we have developed amongst other things:-

- ◆ The Challenge Programme for pre-bar and bat mitzvah students
- ◆ The weekly SPARK and MiBereshit resources for children's service leaders
- ◆ The Learn 2 Lead programme being implemented across more US communities
- ◆ The enormous growth in Tribe programmes including After School Clubs, Summer Camps and Schemes and of course the launch of the first ever Tribe Israel Tour
- ◆ The beautiful Pesach Guide sent to all our members following on from last year's Tishrei Guide.
- ◆ The increasing use of our You&US Website with its incredibly useful resources such as the Jewish Online Guides (JOG) that offer 'Ask The Rabbi' videos and 'How To' guides which demonstrate basic Jewish practices; the various Living and Learning sections full of fascinating articles on a huge number of Jewish topics and my personal favourite, the 'mishigas of the week', a hilarious anecdote of those seemingly minor annoyances in life which are found in the features and fun section.
- ◆ Additional resources for our Chedarim, Jewish schools and nurseries. One great example of this is the new magnetic "Tribe Tots Table" which has been distributed free to the US Chedarim, primary schools and nurseries.
- ◆ The increasing number of heritage tours that are being run by local communities using Central resources and in particular the tour run across US communities for 38-58 year olds.

The various Chesed programmes make a tremendous impact on both US and local communities. A wonderful example is the Pesach Food Parcels Project, which provides hundreds of US families with packages to help them through Pesach and the Chametz for the Homeless programme where US communities

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donate their remaining Chametz items to their local homeless shelters.

Then there are the myriad programmes developed by local shuls which, together with the Central programmes, are helping our communities serve our members and engage them with mainstream Orthodox Jewish Living, Learning and Caring.

This year has also seen a number of property developments, especially the re-development programme at Mill Hill United Synagogue which is now underway. Many other shuls are in the process of preparing new development plans, and this can only add value to our members.

Centrally we have the development at Bushey Cemetery of the burial grounds on the other side of Sandy Lane at the planning stage including some very interesting plans for the development of modern but sympathetic prayer halls to partially replace the existing facilities. The care and attention to detail that

our planning consultants are showing for this major project is something that we are delighted with and I am sure the whole community will be immensely proud of the end result.

So you will see that it has been a tremendously busy year for the United Synagogue and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues, both lay and professional, at the Centre and in the communities, for all their efforts to make the United Synagogue the vibrant organisation that it is.

Finally may I take this opportunity of wishing all our members a Kosher Pesach and I look forward to helping the community move from strength to strength for many years to come.



**Association of Jewish Refugees**  
SERVING HOLOCAUST REFUGEES  
AND SURVIVORS NATIONWIDE  
[www.ajr.org.uk](http://www.ajr.org.uk)

## EALING AJR TU B'SHVAT SEDER

*By Myrna Glass*



Members of the Ealing AJR (Association of Jewish Refugees) Group, recently participated in a Seder with a difference. It was a Tu B'Shevat Seder to celebrate the New Year for Trees (Rosh Hashanah L'ilanot). Started by the Kabbalists in the 16th Century, this custom was reintroduced when Israel was established.

Tu B'Shevat comes from the Hebrew letters U(Tet = 9) and I(Vav = 6), which together make 15 for this date in the Hebrew month of Shevat. It signifies the end of winter and the beginning of spring, when the sap begins to rise and nature begins to renew itself.

In this Seder four cups of grape juice are drunk, representing the four seasons. Starting with white for winter, a little red is added each time until only red is drunk for autumn (time of the harvest). Also, there are four Seder plates of different kinds of fruit. (The aim is to eat at least 15 different fruits.)

Plate 1 has those fruits with an inedible skin, but a tasty inside e.g. citrus, banana.

Plate 2 consists of fruit with seeds or pips in the centre e.g. apple, pear, plum, date, apricot.

With the fruit on Plate 3, one can eat neither the skin, nor the pip e.g. mango, lychee, avocado while one can eat the whole fruit on Plate 4, e.g. figs, berries and grapes.

In between enjoying the colourful and tasty array of fruits, members were asked questions relating to the holiday and the Seder. The answers given took the form of quotations from the Torah, explanations and anecdotes. These were read out by members, leading to the active participation and involvement of everyone.

## KEEPING THE COMMUNITY SAFE

By Leslie Sommer



About ten members of our shul (fewer than hoped) joined members of The Ealing Liberal Synagogue for a two hour training session, given by the Community Security Trust (CST) on 25<sup>th</sup>

September 2011 at the Liberal Synagogue. Prior to the training we had refreshments and the chance to get to know one another.

The training was given by CST trainers. They drew attention to the ongoing risks of attack, particularly in relation to the political situation in the Middle East. They made the following points:-

1. There is real deterrent value in the visible presence of people on security duty.
2. People on security must challenge anyone they do not recognise and, when necessary, ask for some ID. If no-one in the community knows the person and if their explanation is not convincing, entry should be refused.
3. If a difficult situation arises, the gates and doors should be closed and the Security Officer should be told.
4. People chosen for security duty should have knowledge of members of the community.

5. People on security duty should familiarise themselves with the site and actively look for anything suspicious or out of place.

6. If possible security should be done by people working in pairs.

After the theory training, participants took part in two practical exercises. The first involved some participants acting as Security Officers to handle the arrival of members of the community, two of whom carried mock offensive weapons.

The second exercise involved a simulated bomb attack. The trainers commented on how participants responded both in terms of their personal safety and the safety of others, with particular reference to elderly and disabled congregants.



We had a very good feedback session, which only served to emphasise how much we needed to learn.

All in all it was an excellent morning, enhanced by a good rapport between us and members of the Liberal Shul. Thanks were given to the excellent trainers and to Basil Mann for organising the training.



## CORPSE REPORT

*“COMmittee to Review the Policy for SEats”*

*By Robin Preston*

Following the services during the High Holy days last year, a number of members questioned the Board of Management’s (“BoM”) current policy of not allocating seats to members. This, of course, was a radical change from the policy in the old shul building, where there were so many seats that there could have been at least two each. The accusation that the BoM instituted this new policy in order to encourage people to come on time is completely without foundation – although it could be a useful side effect.

The BoM decided to take swift action in the matter and set up **CORPSE** (**COMmittee to Review the Policy for SEats**). CORPSE recognises that the current policy can have the unfortunate effect, at busy times, of members having to use a different seat from the one they used previously and, worse still, sit next to someone new.



After careful consideration CORPSE proposes to modify the seat allocation policy. The shul will be divided up into a number of special interest areas and members will be able to choose which area they would like to be in. In this way members will be seated near like-minded colleagues. In order to decide how big each area should be, CORPSE is asking for your feedback on the new policy and for your preferred area.

The current proposed areas are as follows:

### MEN

- Technology** – It is too hot/too cold/too draughty in here. How I would sort it out if I were in charge of the House Committee?
- Sport. Winter** – What are the chances of QPR surviving in the Premiership this year? (Not very good). **Summer** –

What is wrong with England’s batting and how I would sort it out if I were in charge. Will QPR be able to bounce back after being relegated?

- The Rabbi’s Sermon.** Analysis and deconstruction. What I would say if I were the Rabbi?
- The NHS.** What’s wrong with it and how I would fix it if I were in charge. (Given the preponderance of medics in our congregation, this is expected to be very popular. Medical consultations must be arranged before Shabbos.)
- Politics.** (a) Did you see what that meshuggener (insert name of politician, BBC or Guardian journalist) said/wrote? I would soon sort things out if I were Prime Minister/President/Editor. (b) Who do you think should be the next Chief Rabbi? What I would do if I were Chief Rabbi.
- No Talking Area.** For those anti-social types who just want to pray.
- Sleeping Area.** This will be contiguous with the No Talking Area. For space reasons there will be no sleeper seats. Anyone snoring will be asked to move.

### LADIES

- Mishpocha.** The latest outstanding achievements of my children/grandchildren/great-grandchildren. The latest embarrassing faux pas perpetrated by my husband.
- Haute Couture.** Where did she get that hat/dress/cardigan? When does the M&S sale start? Is it cool to wear Primark?
- Haute Cuisine.** What’s wrong with the kitchen and how I would sort it out if I were in charge.

There will not, of course, be any No Talking Area in the Ladies section.

Suggestions for other special interest areas will be welcomed.

Robin Preston

Chairman CORPSE

(A dead end job if ever there was one)

## HEATHROW AIRPORT - MULTI-FAITH CHAPLAINCY

By Dawn Shestopal



**F**or many years a Chaplaincy team has served passengers and staff of Heathrow Airport. It is composed of lay and professional religious leaders of many faiths and denominations. Its aim is to provide opportunities for worship and prayer for staff, passengers and all those who use the airport, as well as providing pastoral care. Its tenet is to meet human need wherever it is found, irrespective of the faith background of the individual Chaplain and of the person in need of help.

**A**s you pass through the terminal buildings, both land and airside, you will see the chaplains patrolling in their high visibility jackets.

**S**ome faiths need prayer halls for the conduct of services and multi-faith prayer halls are available, courtesy of BAA, in each Terminal. Mass is regularly recited and Islamic prayers are held on Fridays in each. But whatever your faith, these are gentle serene rooms with no material which could be deemed unacceptable to any faith and so can be used by anyone who feels in need of some quiet contemplation.

**F**or Jewish passengers and staff, there is no need for a prayer hall as such. We have all been involved in or witness to a quick Minyan being made up to daven Shachrit, Mincha or Maariv. And there are very few who would turn down an earnest request by someone wanting to say Kaddish. But Rabbi Vogel, the Jewish Chaplain can always be found at the appropriate time reading the Megillah, lighting a Menorah or doling out doughnuts or hamentaschen.

**B**ut pastoral issues there are in plenty. Tragically, there are more deaths on board than you would expect and the relevant faith chaplain is the first port of call to deal both with logistics and comforting the bereaved. For Jewish passengers there are complex Halachic issues to resolve.

**M**issed flights and connections leaving passengers who are stranded over Shabbat or Yom Tov need to be accommodated.

**D**ifficulties relating to immigration issues occur, when young people arrive without the requisite documentation, and should you ever need it, I can tell you that Rabbi Vogel has an excellent relationship with Border Officers.



**L**ost relatives, luggage and tempers can all be helped by a member of the Chaplaincy team of whatever faith.

**O**ne of the most impressive features of the chaplaincy, and one which epitomises its multi-faith ethos, is the annual Holocaust Memorial Day service organised by the Christian chaplains and in which the chaplain of each faith plays a part. As well as an individual reading by each chaplain and the showing of a film of a survivor narrating his or her experiences, Rabbi Vogel lights a Memorial candle and all present, of every faith and none, representatives of the management of BAA, staff members, passengers awaiting flights, file past in solemn silence to take a light from that candle to light one of their own.

**T**hree years ago a Board of Directors for the Chaplaincy was set up to formalise it. I was invited to represent the Office of the Chief Rabbi. As with the chaplaincy there is a representative of every faith.

**T**he Board and the individual chaplains are among the most decent, caring and sincere people I have ever had the privilege of working with and I hope the Office of the Chief Rabbi allows me to continue to do so for many years to come.

## THE OTHER WOMAN

By Brian Moss

“Mellifluous” will give you a hint of her voice. *Sweet as honey* is an Oxford Dictionary definition and I wouldn't argue with that. I fell for her instantly and nothing has subsequently changed those feelings. She has given me the confidence to do things which previously were beyond my abilities. She has made me independent.

Jill quickly became aware of how I felt. True to character, she adopted a very pragmatic view: “I'll name her in the divorce proceedings.” After some fifty plus years, no nonsense, no tears, no recriminations.



It didn't help when I compared the two of them. “She doesn't shout at me when I make a mistake”. “She gives me advice before I go wrong”. She knows her left from her right.”

That last comment hit home. “Maybe, but she has a ridiculous way about her and I don't lead you a merry dance like she does and I bet she can't cook kneidlech.” And that's how we left it. She of the mellifluous voice tells me how to find where I am when driving and Jill tells me what to do the rest of the time.

One morning, the newspapers reported that a committee was being set up to see that changes to road lay-outs are quickly incorporated into GPS navigation systems. It appears that there are drivers who feel badly about being directed into cul-de-sacs and the sea. Which just goes to show how an unreasonable, but vociferous, minority can manipulate the authorities into doing things which are quite unnecessary. Personally I find the odd navigation hiccup a minor, and sometimes amusing, inconvenience if it enables me to find my way home. Mind you, Miss Mellifluous has never guided my car into anything deeper than a flooded ford which, I have to admit, was exciting enough at the time.

I am totally incapable of finding my way anywhere; I turn left or right as the fancy takes me which means that I'm on the right track fifty per cent of the time. My friends know they have to issue a stream of directions when I drive them but, on the whole, they're sympathetic about the fact that I can't remember roads, or for that matter: names, dates, appointments and, increasingly, where my spectacles are.

On our recent trip to Israel, I didn't book a satnav with the hire car. The GPS girls aren't the same in Israel; more bossy than Miss Mellifluous and I think more prone to butt into private conversations. Anyway, we were driving to Jerusalem on Route 1 (or is it Route 20?) when I accidentally branched off one of them on to the other. My passengers must have been half awake at the time believing I couldn't go wrong because it was the third time I'd driven

this way in the same week. When I found myself reading road signs to Gaza I thought I was in trouble. When Jill read road signs to Gaza, I was in trouble. That diversion took close on an hour to correct and all I could think of was how I missed Miss Mellifluous; she wouldn't have allowed me to make such a mistake. She wouldn't have let me lose my way home either.

Jill and I got into some odd scrapes when we used to drive around Europe; and I'm now talking about the days before GPS (and mobile phones) had been thought of, let alone invented. I don't believe either of us will forget the time we were driving from the south of France towards the outskirts of Paris where we were booked into a small motel. There it was on the other side of the auto route but how to get across? We drove back and forth trying to find a slip road which led to food, pool and beds, but without success. The children, fighting in the back of the car were becoming fretful. When we passed Robinson's Garage for, I believe the fourth time, hysteria broke out. Fortunately we accidentally came across our motel, just as the petrol gauge was bouncing on empty. The cry: *Robinson's garage* still produces cries of horror in our family.

But I suppose the most embarrassing episode played itself out in Sienna. We had selected a small hotel '*nestling in the Tuscan countryside,*' as the brochure advertised it. We should have realised that *nestling* is brochure-speak for *hidden* because nowhere matched our maps and nowhere seemed to be inhabited as we drove in ever increasing circles around the city. When we eventually did find the hotel we poured out our pent-up frustration to the receptionist who patiently pointed out that the hotel was more than adequately signposted and that we were the first to have had this problem.



Not altogether believing him we settled in and later went down to dinner. Part-way through the meal I was informed that there was a telephone call for me which I could take in an adjacent booth, so off I went, knowing that it was most probably Jill's father who always checked our arrival in a new venue. I couldn't find the booth or the light switch and blundered around in the dark until, stumbling on the ringing telephone, I knocked it off its shelf. Sitting on the floor in the darkness I was speaking to Jill's father when the bizarre scene was illuminated by the receptionist switching on the light. He stared at me with a mixture of sympathy and horror before leaving. From then on he spoke to us in pidgin English.

And he was right about the road signs. They were everywhere; Miss Mellifluous wouldn't have missed them.

## PESACH PROFILE

### Hats off to Basil Mann as he talks to Ben Kosky

Cricket, Israel and hats have all featured prominently in Basil Mann's life – but it wasn't until the 2009 Maccabiah Games that all three finally came together.

With more than 20 years' experience as an umpire and many more as a keen Zionist, the opportunity to officiate in cricket matches at the 'Jewish Olympics' would take some beating.



Basil showing them how it's done. It appeared Basil might be denied that chance when Maccabiah organisers raised an objection, but eventually he was permitted to don his panama hat and take charge at the tournament after all.

"I phoned Maccabi to ask about the possibility of umpiring and they got references from the London Schools' Cricket Association and a midweek team called the 1987, where I'd umpired for some years," Basil recalled.

"But then they came back to me and said in effect 'it's too hot and you're too old' when we'd already booked the flights.

"My wife Penny wrote back, pointing out that I'd just been coaching in Uganda – where it was a lot hotter – and thankfully they relented.

"It was a great, great trip. There was a wonderful atmosphere in the hotel and we had a lovely Friday night."

Basil's association with hats began when he followed his father, Edward, and his uncles into the family business, but his love for cricket and Israel date back much further.

Growing up in Palmers Green, Basil passed the exam for City of London Boys' School, but

left after just one term and moved to Whittingehame College, a Jewish boarding school based in Brighton.

Founded and run by the passionate Zionist Jacob Halevy, the school took a liberal approach towards religious observance, although lessons always ended early on a Friday afternoon and Shabbat services were held.

Halevy was a vice-president of the Zionist Federation and the 'houses' at Whittingehame were named Weizmann, Herzl and Balfour – so the aim of imbuing students with a love of Israel was self-evident.

In Basil's case, it was clearly successful – he became a regional officer in FZY, visited the country for the first time at the age of 18, and has since returned with his family on numerous occasions.

"My doctor was very unhappy about me going to City of London because the air in London was very dirty at that time and I was travelling on the tube every day, which was bad for my asthma," Basil explained. "I think



if I'd stayed at home I might have worked harder at school. We had to put on tefillin every morning, but they weren't too bothered about what we did the rest of the time.

"I remember being at school for Yom Kippur one year and my father had sent me down a tuck parcel, so when the fast was over three of us set about it. Needless to say, I was ill afterwards and I've hardly eaten a Mars Bar since.

"Jacob Halevy was a great influence on me. He taught us Hebrew and, when I go to Israel now, I find I can pick up enough of what's being said."

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Although Basil represented the school at cricket as 'a very slow' opening batsman, his passion for the sport is lifelong and he has fond memories of playing in the garden or on the beach with his father and brother Stanley.

Like his idol, Middlesex and England batsman Denis Compton, Basil was a right-handed batsman and left-arm bowler and used to travel as often as possible to either Lord's, where he could watch Compton in action, or the Oval. "I used to go to Lord's on the bus and I remember being very excited when I managed to get the great Jack Robertson's autograph one day," said Basil.

"Leslie Mead, who was a part-time master at Whittingehame College, used to send us 'Rover' passes for Lord's and my father would get him Test tickets for the Oval in return.

"My father was a keen Surrey supporter and many years later, he saw a letter in the JC from a London solicitor who wanted to get Israel on the world cricket map.

"So he phoned me up and we went to this meeting in St John's Wood where the Israel Cricket Supporters' Association was set up, and I went on to become vice-chairman. "We organised tours, we had fundraising functions attended by great players like Denis Compton and Ken Barrington, and if anyone was going to Israel we would get them to take bats and balls in their luggage."

In 1963, Basil joined the coveted ranks of MCC membership – the same year that he married Judith and the couple went on to have two daughters, Tanya and Charis.

Meanwhile, he served on the Board of Deputies and continued to work in the family firm, Edward Mann Ltd, as well as becoming chairman of the Millinery Tradesmen Benevolent Association.

But the 1980s brought about significant changes in Basil's life – with the industry declining as hats were now worn by fewer and fewer people, he was obliged to seek a change of career. Advised to take up accountancy and book-keeping, he eventually found a new job with Oscar Friedheim, a firm of furriers based in the East End of London.

In the meantime, his first marriage had ended and in 1983 he met Penny, who had been teaching in Uganda and Kenya for a number of years, 'at a party neither of us wanted to go to'.

The couple married the following summer – on the same day that West Indian legend Viv Richards played the England bowling attack for a match-winning 189 not out – and then settled in Hounslow, where Basil joined the local shul and eventually its board of management.

And when their son Daniel was born, it was no surprise that his father should try to pass on his love of cricket to the next generation. "A guy next door to us played for Teddington Town and he said 'why don't you come and umpire? So I did a few Sunday matches there," Basil recalled.

"Then I took Daniel to Wycombe House, the cricket club at the top of our road, and met the chairman, Ken Johnson. Daniel did play and could have been a good bowler, but he didn't want to carry it on. However, I ended up staying there and umpiring for the next 22 years and I enjoyed it immensely."

Basil still wears several other 'hats' – he is a trustee of the Hounslow Citizens' Advice Bureau, a member of Hounslow Friends of Faith, and an independent lay visitor at the police stations in Hounslow and Chiswick.

In recent years, though, he has been able to indulge his passion for cricket in tandem with Penny's fundraising and support work for the Kabalega School in Uganda.



Penny at work.

With the help of Ealing Cricket Club stalwart Peter Wellings, a coaching role was arranged for Basil, and he and Penny have just completed their latest visit to Uganda, working

hard to promote the causes dear to their hearts.

Too hot? Too old? Not a bit of it...

## TOURO SYNAGOGUE—NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

The oldest surviving and active synagogue in the USA

By Gail Sackloff

Last September I went on one of my many adventures by sea on the Queen Mary II liner from Southampton, this time across the Atlantic Ocean along the eastern seaboard, to see the fall colours. We stopped at Newport, Bar Harbor, Boston, Halifax and Quebec City, finally going home across the Atlantic once again.

It was a wonderful adventure but I have to tell you one of the highlights of this voyage was the day in Newport, Rhode Island. In the morning I did a tour of the famous mansions that you associate with the Vanderbilts, Doris Duke and so on. On the way back to the port, the guide pointed out the Newport synagogue, a most amazing building. I went back to the street in which the synagogue was located and met a very nice lady, Elizabeth Cohen, a resident of Newport and member of this shul. Elizabeth gave me a tour and most informative talk on its history, which I would like to share with you.



Touro Synagogue was designed by noted British colonial era architect and Rhode Island resident, Peter Harrison and this synagogue is considered his most notable work. It was built between 1759 and 1763 for the Jeshuat Israel congregation in Newport, under the leadership of chazzan Isaac Touro. The Jeshuat Israel congregation dates back to 1658, when sixteen Spanish and Portuguese families arrived in Newport, possibly from the West Indies. People had worshipped in private homes for almost a century, until they could afford to build this synagogue. The congregation in Newport, never large, was composed of Jews with roots in the Sephardic diaspora, with some Ashkenazim coming later in the 18th century.

In 1790, the synagogue's warden, Moses Seixas, sent a letter to George Washington, expressing his support for the Washington administration and sent good wishes to him. In response, Washington sent a letter back, which read in part, "the government of the United States ... gives to bigotry no sanction,

to persecution no assistance ... May the children of the stock of Abraham, who shall dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the goodwill of the other inhabitants; while everyone shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all, in our several vocations, useful here in his own due time and everlastingly happy."



Every year to this day there is a recitation of the Washington-Seixas letter on religious pluralism.

Another interesting fact is that when the city of Newport faded in significance, shortly after American independence and after the capital of Rhode Island moved to Providence, the Jewish community, too small to maintain a synagogue, removed the Torah scrolls and sent them for safe keeping, with the deeds of the building to New York, to the Searith Israel congregation. By the way, they still formally own the Touro synagogue. The keys left the Jewish community and were passed to the Goulds, the Newport Quaker family, that took care of the building until the synagogue was reopened.

In 1946, the Touro synagogue was designated a national historic site. Today, it continues to serve a small congregation, supplemented by travellers who spend Shabbat in Newport. It also serves Jewish families from the large US Naval Base nearby.

So if you ever visit Newport, please do make a stop at this beautiful synagogue.



## ABRAHAM

*By Leslie Sommer*

The three sidrot Lech Lecha, Vayeira and Chaya Sarah, have Abraham as the central character. He was the bedrock on which the Jewish, and other, faiths were founded. Much has been written about Abraham but I have constructed a snapshot of his immense legacy.

The first we learn of Abraham is how he broke away from the idol worship of Ur to devote his life to the worship of one God. In doing so he gave up his home, family and friends to travel to an unknown, inhospitable country with the dangers that involved. Indeed, his first experience of the Holy Land was famine. This forced him to go to Egypt to find food for his family, with the problems this caused. He repeatedly faced trials but was unwavering in his trust in God. He was able to transmit this belief in one God and the need to do right by others, to his wife Sarah, who herself exhibited great qualities. Once he was settled in the Holy Land, many other features of treatment of his fellow man emerged.

Abraham's loyalty and generosity were shown in the treatment of his nephew Lot, to whom he gave the choice where to settle. Lot chose the most promising option. Subsequently, Abraham showed courage by rescuing his nephew when the latter was captured by the four kings. When Abraham helped defeat the kings in battle, he showed magnanimity by refusing to accept any spoils of war. As he said, referring to his enemies, in Genesis "I have lifted up my hand to the Lord and will not take a thread or a shoe latch nor anything that is theirs."

Abraham was an industrious and highly effective livestock farmer, as evidenced by the size of his herds and the large number of servants that he had. He had also developed into a man of some standing, who was respected and trusted by kings and other local community leaders. His dealings with them were a model of sensitivity and propriety. This was shown, for example, by the way he purchased wells from Abimelech for his family.

Abraham offered seven ewe lambs for the wells and concluded the deal in front of witnesses. This example was later followed by Isaac when he too purchased wells. Abraham's warmth and hospitality are well illustrated by his attitude towards the three angels who arrived at his tent as he was recovering from his circumcision. Not only did Abraham welcome these guests but he ran to meet them, hurried to tell Sarah to prepare a meal and then ran to his livestock to select a calf to eat. He stood by the angels while they ate, in case they wanted anything else.

Abraham's concern and compassion for others is well

illustrated by his pleading with God to save the people of Sodom and Gomorra. Abraham made repeated pleas, only stopping when God showed that there were not even ten worthy people left in the two cities. God praises Abraham for seeking justice and righteousness for all and charges future generations to follow this example. These three chapters describe or allude to Abraham's care of and affection for Sarah, his family and his servants. That he inspired great loyalty in his servants is illustrated at length by the extraordinary way Eliezer carries out Abraham's request to find a suitable wife for Isaac. In the event, the qualities Eliezer sought in Rebecca, of kindness and commitment, were those he knew his master would have sought.

Throughout his life Abraham faced many trials, perhaps the most severe being the "binding" of Isaac. Not only did Abraham carry out God's wishes, but the manner in which he did this was very noteworthy. He left very early in the morning, travelled for three days to an unknown destination and never wavered in his task. This illustrates his absolute faith and confidence in God. The incident is also characterised by the complete trust Isaac showed in his father's judgement, never complaining or questioning what was happening. Abraham's sense of doing what is right and proper is illustrated towards the end of his life when he went to great lengths to provide an appropriate burial place for his wife, Sarah. Again, he insisted on paying the full price for the land concerned even though it had been offered to him without charge. Once again he bought it in front of witnesses, avoiding any possible future disputes. At the same time, he demonstrated total respect for the departed. The influence of Abraham was even evident after death, as in honour of their father, Isaac and Ishmael effected reconciliation, in the interests of ensuring a proper burial for Abraham, in accordance with his wishes.

To conclude, Abraham, while not without fault, was unshakeable in his belief in God, in the face of tremendous upheavals and obstacles. This was all the more remarkable as he had no role models. He was a successful businessman who provided a model for business ethics. His attitude and behaviour to his fellow man are as relevant today as they were then. His courage, beliefs and good qualities were carried on through his son, Isaac, grandson, Jacob, and great-grandson, Joseph, and have been inspirational to Jews and others ever since.

Against this background I feel Abraham is well worth his three sidrot.

## Matza Muesli

Preparation Time: 10 minutes; Cooking time: 20 minutes

Makes 15-20 servings

Breakfasts at Pesach can be a challenge to satisfy the family; this nutritious matza cereal certainly helps to stall hunger pains at least to 11 a.m. It is delicious with milk or use as a topping for crumble or fruit pies.

It is also super-portable for when you're rushing out the door to visit family or doing activities with your kids. Just bag it up and go.

For those with nut allergies substitute the nuts for more dried fruit for example dried apricots, sultanas and apples.

### Ingredients

1 large (Rakusens) box matza (300g ), broken up into small pieces  
 400g pecan pieces  
 200g slivered almonds  
 150ml honey  
 100ml vegetable oil  
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 200g sweetened flaked coconut, toasted  
 100g raisins



### Method

1. Heat oven to 180°C/350°F/ Gas mark 4.
2. Line two baking trays with non-stick baking parchment paper.
3. Combine matza pieces, pecans, coconut and almonds in large bowl.
4. Stir honey, oil, cinnamon and salt in a medium sized saucepan. Heat over medium-high heat until boiling.
5. Pour over the matza mixture; toss until evenly coated.
6. Spread mixture evenly onto prepared baking trays.
7. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, tossing occasionally, so that the mixture browns evenly.
8. Toss matza mixture with raisins; let cool completely.

Store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the refrigerator. It will keep for several weeks.

# BAKING FOR PESACH

## Recipes by Denise Phillips

## Coconut and Cranberry Chocolate Slices

Preparation Time: 10 minutes; Cooking time: 30 minutes

Makes 16 slices

If you are looking for a quick, family favourite cake for Passover, this has to be the one. It is ideal for the matza ramble, packed lunch or mid-morning treat with a cup of coffee. In addition it contains no nuts. Just mix all the ingredients together in one bowl and transfer to a baking tray...what could be easier. I have used dried cranberries but if you prefer chopped apricots or raisins can be substituted.

NB: For a short cut with the chocolate, use plain chocolate drops which makes it parev too.

Desiccated coconut is the coconut meat that has been shredded or flaked and dried to remove as much moisture as possible. Dried coconut can be coarse or fine and should be stored in a cool dry dark place out of the sunlight whereas fresh coconut needs to be kept in the fridge or freezer to keep it fresh.

### Ingredients

300g desiccated coconut  
75g caster sugar  
2 tablespoons fine matza meal  
200g white or dark chocolate – roughly chopped or chocolate drops  
75g dried cranberries  
6 eggs

### Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to: 180°C/350°F/Gas mark 4.
2. Line a 20 cm x 30 cm baking tray with baking parchment.
3. In a large bowl, mix the coconut, sugar, matza meal, chocolate, cranberries and eggs until well combined.
4. Bake for 20 minutes until golden brown and set.
5. Cool in the tin before slicing.



*Denise Phillips*

**Denise Phillips - Professional Chef and Cookery Writer**

T : 01923 836 456

E : [denise@jewishcookery.com](mailto:denise@jewishcookery.com)

W : [www.jewishcookery.com](http://www.jewishcookery.com)

Get my Jewish Cookery Recipe Collection Smartphone App for access to hundreds of recipes. [Click Here](#).

THE IDEAL GIFT FOR PESACH – give the gift of cooking : Gift Vouchers now available, valid for any Cookery class until Dec 2012.

Our resident intrepid adventurers, Aviva and Robin Preston, led a group of like minded travellers to the Galapagos Islands last November. Aviva shares some amazing photos and describes their experiences.

# THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

**N**ow given that this is 'my' tour I'm unlikely to tell you any bad things - the behind the scenes problems, the unexpected glitches, the strange requests. Or maybe that's just the thing you'd like to hear? OK, here goes. But do remember at the end of the day I received 90% 'wonderful tour' letters and even the couple who should never have come grudgingly said 'good memories'.

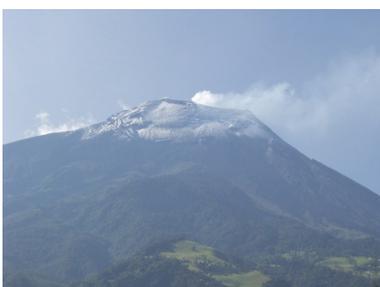
Why shouldn't they have come? Well, a tour to Ecuador and the Galapagos designed to explore the high Andes, the Amazonian jungle and the Islands of the Galapagos includes staying in interesting accommodation and a lot of quite difficult treks to see things like waterfalls and wild animals, nesting birds and colonies of iguana inaccessible by luxury coach. This can come as a shock to the system if you are seriously reliant on the creature comforts afforded by electricity and central heating - and it can get very cold even on the equator when you are

9,000ft up in the Andes. So ecological jungle lodges lit by oil lamps and 300 year old Spanish Haciendas heated by wood burning stoves are not quite your average 5\* city hotel accommodation.

The realisation that there is nowhere to plug in a hairdryer in a room without electricity, the fact that wood burning fires have an ambience different to central heating and that cobblestone courtyards are part of the charm of the place were not always fully appreciated by everyone. Of course, between times I took everyone to beautiful spas, the best 5\* hotel in the city of Quito and a wonderful spa hotel, which had previously been a convent, on the lower slopes of an active volcano.

An active volcano? Why do people live on an active volcano? The ethnic people worship the volcanoes and the land there is very fertile.

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But everyone survived and achieved 'personal bests' in endurance, like the lady who had never walked further than round Brent Cross and my 85-year-old lady, who negotiated island landings from the rubber dinghies which transport passengers from ship to island in the Galapagos.

Behind the scenes was the work of making sure that this was a 100% kosher tour. In June, Robin and I went to Ecuador and saw all the hotels and kitchens and the man who was going to organise everything for us. I brought Rita, a mashgiach/cook, to supervise throughout the tour and meat, chicken and pots and pans, crockery and cutlery were all delivered ahead of us to hotels and to the ship, or came with us on the bus. The food became a highlight of the tour. No picnic lunches on this one. Except one on a beach in the Amazon.

On Friday travelling back to Quito for Shabbat, we stopped at a hacienda for lunch, where Robin was the kitchen mashgiach while Rita went on ahead to the hotel to prepare Shabbat. His Spanish improved by leaps and bounds and he made some new friends too, while in the restaurant area, we were entertained by a local pop group.

Here were a few of the hiccups – like the afternoon the highways department decided to dig up the road and closed it for a few hours - but nothing disastrous. The volcano erupted 48 hours after we left the area covering our beautiful hotel in layers of dust, but we just saw it quietly steaming.

And was there a Jewish angle to the tour? Well that's another story - the history of the Jews in Ecuador. We managed to incorporate a visit to the amazing Jewish Community Centre, meet the Israeli ambassador and Robin and I spent the Shabbat before the tour with one of the very few Shomrei Shabbat families in Quito.

What, you want photos of animals?? Birds?? The Galapagos islands?? OK, a few:

Yes, that's Lonesome George, and we can get up close and personal with iguanas too. Then there are the red crabs, the baby albatross not yet ready to leave the nest and of course the blue footed boobies, frigate birds and, best of all, were the mating albatross. We got so used to the sea lions that it was difficult not to accidentally step on them and who can go to the Galapagos without encountering some Darwin finches?



# VOLUNTEERS TO THE FRONT

## The practice of “shockeling”

By Michael Lawton

Here I stand, poor in good deeds, worried and anxious as I consider the Presence which lives in the prayers of Israel. I have come to plead for your people Israel, because thy have sent me, although I am neither fit nor adequate. . . Do not let my community come to grief through my failings. Do not let them come to harm because of my weakness and sin. . . . Accept my prayer as if it were wise, eager, as if it came from one with a profound understanding and a pleasant voice, a person whose good nature is known to all."

That's an extract from the prayer *Hin'ni*, which is said by the person leading the service before *Musaf* on *Yom Kippur*, as the congregation is about to relive the ancient temple ceremony which, back then, was the way to forgiveness of sin for the people of Israel.

According to that prayer, the leader has a heavy responsibility: "my failings" can cause the community to come to grief. I ought to be "wise and eager," and if I'm not, my community is running a risk.

Well, that's a mediaeval poem, and maybe they believed that back then – but I'm sure that forgiveness of sins does not depend on my sweet voice. But I do think the leader of the service, the *Shali'ach Tsibur*, has an important role to play in the service, and can help the members of the community to find their own link to God.

The Hebrew term *Shali'ach Tsibur* (or *Shatz*) means "the one who is sent on behalf of the congregation" – and that's what the person leading the service is: he stands "out front" (even if he's in the middle), trying to form the prayers of the people into a satisfying whole so that they may be better accepted.

The Jews are traditionally a community which sings, and I know that one thing which many traditional Jews find strange about Reform or Liberal services is that some of the prayers are spoken. But the Chief Rabbi summarised perfectly the traditional approach when he wrote only a few weeks ago in an essay on the Torah portion of *B'shalach*, which includes the song the Israelites sang at the Red Sea, "When we pray, we do not read: we sing. When we engage with sacred texts, we do not recite: we

chant. Every text and every time has, in Judaism, its own specific melody."

As you well know, you could be knocked on the head and not know what day of the year it was, but if you came into shul, you wouldn't even have to recognise the words: if you heard the tunes, you would immediately know whether it was *Shabbat* or weekday, *Pesach* or *Purim*. I don't quite agree with the Chief Rabbi when he goes on to say "Words without music are like a body without a soul," but, certainly, the music makes the soul of the words audible.

And that's the job of the *Shatz*. I'm not a *chazzan* – for that you need proper training. I'm someone who has learnt by listening to others, by reading books, by asking questions of those who know more than I do. I'm one of that army of lay people who help the community concentrate their minds better on the prayers, who help them sing together when they want to sing together, and who tries to make the soul in the words audible.

It's actually quite a risky business, because there aren't any notes to follow. Of course, if you're leading the congregation in *Adon Olam*, you sing the tune that's written down. In fact, *Eli Schleifer*, Professor of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College, told me that the *Shatz* or the *chazzan* should not even sing harmonies for the congregational melodies, since there's always the risk that the congregation will begin to think that's the real tune. And I have to admit: there's a place in the Grace after Meals where my congregation in Cologne now sings my harmony instead of the original, so the danger is real. I'm more careful now. But, for the *Shatz*, the challenge is in those sections in which he's on his own, in something like the repetition of the *Amidah*, or the *berachot* around the *Shema*, in which all you've got is a traditional musical scale, a traditional musical framework for beginning paragraphs, and a traditional framework for ending them. Aside from that, it's up to you to improvise, so that every service is like a jazz performance. Within the framework, you try to use the music to express the soul which is in the words, and to capture the attention and the imagination of the congregation, so that they too will be helped to lift themselves "on wings

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## INTER-FAITH

### Ealing Synagogue welcomes the Ahmadiyya Muslims

By Marianne Izen

The Ahmadiyya Muslims number only about five million world-wide. Their underlying precept is "love all and hate no-one" and this is part of the motivation of the women's interfaith group that meets under their auspices, several times a year, in Southall.

Joyce Frankal and Daphne Gerlis represented our community at these meetings for many years, and now, Diane Lukeman and I do so. We take part in discussions, give talks and socialise with the representatives of many religious groups in an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere.

We have taken part in an educational programme that the group is developing, to introduce to their children the beliefs and practices of other religions. This takes the form of a series of television programmes in which their children come to a place of worship and interview members of the community.

Thus, one Friday morning in the middle of February, six children between the ages of three and thirteen came to Ealing shul. The three-year-old was happy to drink juice and colour in her colouring book. The thirteen year old chose merely to observe but the two six-year-olds and the two twelve-year-olds interviewed Diane, asking pertinent

questions about Judaism, its history, beliefs and rituals. In addition, Brian Robinson showed the children items that we use in our religious practice.

Care was taken to draw parallels with stories with which the children would be familiar from their own religious education and they were interested to compare Hebrew and Arabic writing and the pronunciation of names of people important in both our histories.

Post-production work now ensues and we will be sent a DVD as soon as the programme is ready. It will be broadcast on their own Sky channel, MTA, and it will also be uploaded on to YouTube. As soon as the broadcast date is decided, I will make sure the community is given all the information.

We were pleased to contribute to this initiative and we were glad to welcome this group to our shul. They, in their turn, were most grateful to us and we felt a mutual sense of honour and gratitude in that they performed their Friday prayers in the hall.

This project has strengthened the ties we have with the Ahmadiyya Muslim group and, most importantly, has the potential to teach about Judaism to people that may otherwise learn very little about us.



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of song" closer to that soul. We go to shul for two things: we want to have our position confirmed (our faith, our belonging, our tradition, whatever it might be), but at the same time, we need to have all those things challenged (what do they mean? are they worth anything to us really?). And the leader of the service must be the musical mediator

between these two tendencies. He has to find the right balance between familiarity and innovation, between comfort and confrontation. A service which has no tunes you know would be deeply dissatisfying (we may put up with that when we travel, but we wouldn't like it at home), but a service that just goes through the same old tunes every week begins to feel dead.

So, even if the congregation's prayers do not depend on us, it's the job of the Shatz to help the members of the congregation find the right note for their prayers. Praying is very difficult (one rabbi defended shockeling as the way in which congregants physically struggle with all the forces that are trying to distract them from their prayers), and we all need every bit of help we can get.

# ONE HAGGADAH MYSTERY AND ITS HISTORY

*D'var Torah by Dr Menashe Tahan*

**T**he Haggadah is such a precious national treasure that our scholars like to research, expound and comment on it. As a result there exist hundreds of commentaries about almost every line or word it contains. But in spite of this not everything has been fully explained and a few matters remain a mystery. The reason for this stems most probably from the fact that different passages of the Haggadah were written during or relate to different ages of our vast history. It therefore seems logical that historical research could be of some help in solving these intriguing riddles. I would like to examine this assumption by suggesting an historical interpretation for one of the Haggadah's mysteries: this being the mystery of "Laban the Aramean" or rather "Laban the Syrian".

In this case the Haggadah is quoting a Midrashic commentary on a verse from Deuteronomy Chapter 26. The commentary urges every one of us to *"go forth and learn what Laban the Syrian sought to do to Jacob our father. For Pharaoh only wanted to kill the young boys but Laban wanted to uproot us all. As it is said (Deuteronomy 26: 5): "a Syrian would have destroyed our father, but he went down to Egypt and lived there as a stranger, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and numerous"*. Here we find a startling praise of Pharaoh on Seder night.

This commentary is a mystery. It raises so many questions.

1. Laban is our grandfather. He was the father of Leah and Rachel, the revered mothers of the nation. Why is he now called, with disdain "a Syrian", as if he were a stranger?

We are, in fact, all Arameans, i.e. Syrians, in origin. Abraham our father was an Aramean wanderer. He was born in Aram Neharaim i.e. Mesopotamia: "The Land between the Two Rivers". He first lived in Ur, by the Euphrates, then later moved to Haran in the north. In the book of Genesis (24: 4), Abraham called the place *"my country and my homeland"*. He sent his servant there to find a wife for his son Isaac (an Aramean wife). He took Rivka, the

sister of Laban. In turn, Isaac asked his son, Jacob, to do the same and take a wife from Aram. He took four. Apart from Benjamin, all the forefathers of the tribes of Israel were born there. They were all Arameans. Furthermore, and this truly is amazing, archaeologists have discovered that "Nahor", which is the name of Abraham's brother and grandfather, was in fact an ancient town near Haran - the town where Abraham's father lived and died. They also discovered other ancient settlements around Haran by the names of "Terah", Abraham's father; "Serug, his great grandfather; "Reo", the grandfather of his grandfather and "Peleg" who was his three times great grandfather. The fact that all the ancestors of the Patriarch Abraham were called after places in northern Mesopotamia constitutes astonishing evidence that we are all of Aramean decent. So why would the Midrash distance us from Laban in such an abstruse fashion?



2. The Midrash is accusing Laban of harbouring evil intentions to annihilate all of Israel by destroying Jacob. Was this truly the case? Most probably not. It is true though, that Laban chased Jacob for seven days, from Haran to the Gilad. This was not, however, for the purpose of killing him, but in order to recover the Terafim that his daughter, Rachel, without the knowledge of Jacob, stole from her father. What were these Terafim and why should Rachel steal them? And why were they so important to Laban?

*The importance of the Terafim lay in the fact that they were gods. They were private household gods. In ancient Mesopotamia every family had their own private gods. They were believed to be the guardians and protectors of the family. Without them the Arameans felt extremely threatened. This is why the theft of the Terafim was considered to be of grievous consequence, prompting Laban to chase Jacob and angrily question him: "why did you steal my gods"? (Gen 31: 30). Indeed, why should Rachel steal them? And how did she manage this? This was possible because those gods were but small portable figurines like big dolls. She was, therefore, able to quickly conceal them in the camel's cushion.*

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The reason for stealing them did not stem from their religious significance as she scornfully and wilfully defiled them by sitting on them. She stole them because she feared that they could be activated against her family. It was the general belief in antiquity that these private gods would attack the enemies at night, breaking them in body and spirit. The ancient Accadians called them "il idu". And indeed Laban threatened Jacob with them when he confronted him on the Gilad saying in Hebrew: "Yesh Le El Yadi laa'sot immachem Ra' ", which is wrongly translated everywhere to mean "It is in my power to harm you". It actually means: "It is in the power of my "il Idu" (i.e. my Terafim) to harm you" as El Yadi is nothing but the Hebrew pronunciation of "il Idu, which most of the translators had, possibly, never heard of. It is now obvious why Rachel stole her father's Terafim. She did it in order to protect her family from the hurt that they might otherwise cause. Their disappearance terrified her father and provoked him to immediately pursue Jacob, not so as to kill him, but in order to retrieve from him his protective gods. This conclusion is also compatible with Laban's behaviour later on. After conducting a thorough search, and determining that Jacob was innocent, he concluded with him a pact of mutual non-aggression and peaceful coexistence before Laban returned to Haran never to see his daughters (and his Terafim) again.

There now remains the question: why did the Midrash deliberately change the meaning of Deuteronomy in order to condemn Laban? The Bible stresses *a fact* that reads "Arami ovaid Avee", which exactly means "My father was an Aramean wanderer". This was true for all our forefathers: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They were all Aramean wanderers. But the Midrash wilfully turned the meaning of the Biblical verse upside down. It translated it to mean "A Syrian would have destroyed my father", which is not only factually wrong but also grammatically incorrect. It is certain that the Midrash had a compelling reason to do this. What was the reason? This remains a puzzle.

The third Midrashic mystery is: "why the praise of Pharaoh at all?" Why of all nights is it that on Passover night, when we are supposed to recount Pharaoh's atrocities, we instead stress that our Syrian grandfather was, in fact, much worse? Why this

magnanimous exoneration of Pharaoh on Seder night? This also remained a mystery.

To solve these riddles one needs to conduct what might be described as historical detective work. One should enquire: 1) whether there existed during our vast history a Pharaoh who merited praise and was worthy of exoneration? 2) if there lived, in parallel, a Syrian ruler who deserved condemnation? and 3) whether conditions at the time were so dire that our sages were compelled to publicly denounce such a neighbour in spite of a possible retaliation? Investigative historical probing provides an alternative answer: YES to all three questions.

How? Well, the story goes like this:

It happened that some time after the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE), the State of Judea found itself trapped between two Greek superpowers, one to the north called Syria and the other, which was Egypt, to the south. They constantly and bitterly fought each other for control of the strategic land of Israel. The Seleucid Dynasty ruled Syria, whilst Egypt was ruled by the Ptolemaic Dynasty. These rulers were completely different. The Seleucid rulers valued their Greek culture and religion and often tried to impose them upon the many nations of their empire, while the Ptolemaic Dynasty abandoned their tradition, accepted the Egyptian culture and became Pharaohs. During the 3rd century BCE, the Greek Pharaohs ruled the Jewish state of Judea and maintained a friendly attitude towards their Jewish subjects both in the Holy Land and in Egypt itself. Ptolemy I Soter allowed the Jewish state to be self-ruling. The High Priest continued to be the head of the state and the Sanhedrin was in full charge of all important matters of state, law and religion, as before. In Egypt itself Ptolemy I had complete confidence in the loyalty of his Jewish subjects. He enlisted them to his army and entrusted them with the guarding of the strongholds of Egypt. He also gave the Jews the right to settle in and become legal citizens of Alexandria. There they grew and prospered, both commercially and culturally, so as to establish one of the greatest and most productive centres of Jewish life in the ancient world.

The successor to the throne of Egypt, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, was also favourably inclined towards the Jews and treated them well. He was a scholar and wanted to read and

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# ONE HAGGADAH MYSTERY AND ITS HISTORY

*D'var Torah by Dr Menashe Tahan*

*(Continued from page 31)*

understand the Bible. He, consequently, ordered a Greek translation of the Bible. The High Priest, Aleazar, sent him 70 Jewish sages, the greatest scholars of the state, to fulfil his wish. They did an exalted job. Their Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible was called the Septuagint, which means 'seventy' in Latin. It has become one of the most important documents of Jewish and world literature. The reason for this stems not only from the sublime quality of the translation, but also from the fact that, in addition to the books of the Bible, it also contains the 'Apocrypha', which are other important Hebrew writings, such as the books of Judith, Ben-Sirah, Tobias and others, which otherwise would be lost to the world.

It is now evident, that the Greek Pharaohs were good to the Jewish State and to their Jewish subjects and were, therefore, worthy of praise and exoneration. Yet this situation was not to last for long. Grave danger suddenly loomed during the reign of Ptolemy II Euergetes (246 - 221 BCE). At the beginning of his rule, the Syrians tried to tear the important land of Israel away from him. War was about to rage at any time. The Pharaoh badly needed money to conduct his campaign. He asked the High Priest Honio II to hand over the customary taxes, but Honio refused. His refusal enraged the Pharaoh who suspected the High Priest of conspiring with the enemy. As a result he threatened to abolish the Jewish State and divide the land between his soldiers. This threat sent a tremor through the people of Judea. It was, most probably, under these conditions that the Midrash regarding Laban was written. In their desperation, and in order to save the State and the Jews of Egypt, our sages entirely changed the meaning of the verse of Deuteronomy (26: 5) so as to send a message to Pharaoh to tell him that 'we the Jews everywhere are loyal to you as you are the goody; the Syrians are the baddies. They have always been bad. We have had bitter experiences with them since ancient times, when they wanted to annihilate us completely

by destroying our father Jacob. But he had a lucky escape. He left Syria and went to Egypt. There he really prospered and became a nation, great, mighty and numerous like the Jews nowadays in Alexandria. Desperate circumstances call for desperate measures. This was a brilliant piece of Midrashic diplomacy greatly required during this perilous period.

The problem was finally solved in the spirit of the Midrash. One of the leaders, Joseph ben-Tuvia, a nephew of the High Priest, went to his uncle to rebuke him and urge him to rush to Alexandria to apologize and prove his loyalty to the Pharaoh. Honio refused again, saying that he would prefer to resign his post than to do this. So Ben-Tuvia requested his permission to go and see the King himself. Permission was granted and Ben-Tuvia called the people of Jerusalem to a general assembly in the Temple, where he promised them to eradicate the looming calamity by going to the king, denouncing the Syrians, paying the taxes and assuring the king of the unwavering loyalty of the Jewish people to the Pharaonic throne. This wise man did just that and rescued the country from impending catastrophe.

In conclusion, the study of Jewish history can greatly assist in understanding the mysteries of the Haggadah. It can reveal the political, social, and theological conditions under which these mysteries evolved. In the case of Laban the Syrian, it offers us valuable insight into the way our sages reacted to the trials and tribulations of their time, and into the ways they tried to overcome them. We can now pinpoint the time of this baffling Midrash, the circumstances that compelled our sages to write it, the purpose of writing it and above all the message that they wanted to convey to us. We can almost hear the echo of their voices coming to us across the centuries, telling us "listen O Israel, though the Scriptures are holy, they become even more sacred when they are creatively used to salvage the Jewish State and the People of Israel".

That is exactly what they did.

## **“BOB THE BUILDER” - PART 3 (FINAL?)**

*By Dawn Shestopal, Co-Chair New Shul Steering Committee*



© HIT Entertainment Limited and Keith Chapman 2006.

Oy veh. Since the completion of the building, there have been highs and lows. This job is definitely not all it is cracked up to be and I am going to hang up my hard hat just as soon as all the “snagging” as we in the trade call it, has been completed.

First of all, as soon as the weather changed, it rained in. Not where everyone expected it to but in the kitchen. That was resolved by ensuring the guttering is cleared of leaves regularly.

Then as soon as the pedestrian gate with its digipad entry system, of which we were so proud, was installed, cracks which had always been present in the wall on the left of the building as you look at it from the street, suddenly looked worse. We feared the wall would collapse, possibly on to a passing pedestrian. Not good for inter-faith relations.

Although everything is in place for an entry system, the builders found that the vehicular gates which they were committed to restore, since they had removed them, were not now compliant with new, yes, you`ve guessed it, Health and Safety Rules where there is remote entry facility. A conundrum therefore arises. They are only committed to restore what was there. Gate installers say they will not install illegal gates. Result - impasse.

Next up, just as it got really cold and just in time for the long planned Chanukah party, the heating packed up. The ever resourceful community rallied round and produced heaters but the builders managed to restore the heating in time. The jubilation was not to last. Off it went again and again. By taking up a lot of the flooring in the hall, the plumbers found a leak, which was causing the boiler to lose water pressure and malfunction. (Now I am just showing off my technical expertise.)

A smart letter box was installed (ok - so it does not take big letters but it looks nice) but in order to access it, a path had to be created. The foliage which had provided a measure of security on the right hand wall

had to be removed, leaving a low and inviting wall.

The financial cupboard is bare so we have fixed up some temporary solutions and in due course all will be well.

The Shul is still widely admired but the long awaited Wardens’ Bench is still to be delivered. It will come, promised for Pesach. If not, I will go and collect it and bring it back in my hand luggage.

I said there were highs each of which made it all worthwhile. Regular meetings of AJR take place in the hall as well as the welfare lunches and Mitzvah Day tea.

The Ceremony of Rededication by the Chief Rabbi was an occasion of great excitement for current and former members, as was the reception following it in the new Succah, lovingly built by Mike Mars, Robin Preston and Brian Robinson.

The outgoing President of the United Synagogue visited during a welfare committee lunch and pronounced himself thrilled by what had been created and then in November, all the Trustees of the United Synagogue and the newly installed President, Stephen Pack, chose our Hall in which to hold their annual away day strategy meeting. It is usually held in one of the “prestigious” shul halls, such as St Johns Wood. They attended the Sunday Shacharit service which was followed by breakfast (which they provided) to which the Executive and Steering Committee were invited. They had asked for a presentation on the whole process of the development including how the Community had come to accept it and how they felt about it now, so your little Bob performed the task he is more accustomed to, public speaking.

As this is the final instalment (I hope) of my reflections, I can say that I am grateful for the opportunity of carrying out the most challenging, but ultimately rewarding, communal job I have done.

## GAZA AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

By Aviva Preston

Everyone is aware of why many consider all of the 'West Bank' a part of the historic inheritance of Eretz Yisrael. Many think that this inheritance is confined to the area west of the River Jordan and excludes the area known as the Gaza Strip.

In fact, the atlas and the inheritance as given to the Jewish people after the Exodus and fought for and conquered under Joshua's leadership, are not just the land between the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea.



Because I saw a suggestion that some people were not as upset as they might have been when Israel pulled out of Gaza "as it was not part of ancient Israel" my hackles rose. Hence the following brief history of the Jews in Gaza.

Gaza was given to the tribe of Judah after the Exodus (Joshua 15:47; Judges 1:18) although it has had many foreign occupations. At the time of Joshua, Gaza was inhabited by the Philistines, who were a Mediterranean seafaring nation that is completely unknown today. They are not the same people as today's Arabs or



people calling themselves "Palestinians". These Arabs are said to be the descendants of Ishmael.

The name Palestine was given to the area in 135CE, when Hadrian named it as an insult to the Jews (named after the tribe of Judah). His motivation was to try to negate the connection between the Jews and their Promised Land. Since then, the whole region has been called Palestine, even though Philistia was originally just a small corner of it. Gaza was part of the Philistine Pentapolis, the southernmost city in that league of five cities (Josh. 13:3; 1 Sam. 6:17; Jer. 25:20) and played an important role in the story of Samson (Judges 13-16).

In 145 BCE the Hasmonean king Yochanan, brother of Judah HaMaccabee, liberated Gaza from the Greeks and Simon, their brother, sent Jews to repopulate Gaza city and surrounding lands. "Not a strange land have we conquered, and not over the possessions of strangers have we ruled, but of the inheritance of our Fathers that was in the hands of the enemy and

*(Continued on page 35)*

(Continued from page 34)

conquered by them unlawfully. And as for us, when we had the chance, we returned to ourselves the inheritance of our Fathers." (Maccabees 1.15)

But Hadrian destroyed the Jewish state and, from the Roman slave markets of Gaza, thousands were sent into slavery and exile. By the 4th Century CE, Gaza's Jewish community was once again flourishing, in what was the main port of commerce for the Jews of the Holy Land. A beautiful mosaic floor in a 6th Century synagogue suggests how important the Jews were in the area at that time.

Gaza became a great centre of study for Jews, ranking with Rafah and Yavneh as centres of Talmudic discourse. There is evidence of a considerable Jewish presence in Gaza during the Talmudic period, such as a relief, shown right, of a menorah, shofar, lulav and etrog on a pillar of the Great Mosque of Gaza, which also shows Hebrew and Greek inscriptions. This is believed to be on the site of a Philistine temple. It was used by the Byzantines for a church in the 5th century, but after the Muslim conquest in the 7th century, it was transformed into a mosque. During the 15th century, Jews fled the Spanish Inquisition and joined Gaza's Jewish community and by the 17th century, it was again home to a thriving Jewish community.

Over the millennia Jews have been expelled from Gaza by many different conquerors but have always returned. The Crusaders left few survivors. Ottoman Turks ruled a vast empire from 1517 to 1917, including the geographical backwater known as Palestine. Although Jewish residents were expelled, they were allowed to return. This pattern has continued for centuries. Napoleon, marching through Gaza from Egypt in 1799, failed to restrain many of his French soldiers, who were joined by local Arabs in abusing Jewish residents. The ancient Jewish presence in Gaza and the nearby villages died out in the first years of the 19th century only to return yet again in the 1870s. During the First World War, Gaza was a Turkish stronghold, taken eventually by the British in 1917. But under British Mandatory occupation and rule, Gaza developed very slowly if at all. In August 1929, when Arab rioters threatened to slaughter Gaza's Jews, as they had just done in Hebron, the British army, under the Palestine Mandate, forced the community to evacuate their homes. In October 1946, on the

night following Yom Kippur, the Gaza Jewish community of Kfar Darom was established on land corresponding to the biblical Jewish village of Darom, land which had been bought by the JNF in 1930 for a fruit orchard. It lasted just a year and a half until the outbreak of Israel's War of Independence in 1948 when Egypt overran the Gaza Strip and occupied it.

The newly created Gaza Strip was put under Egyptian administration by the armistice agreement of 1949 and the influx of Arab refugees, who were told by the Arab aggressors and attackers they could soon return after the Jews "were driven into the



sea" later swelled the city's population at least fourfold.

In 1946, Gaza's population was estimated at 19,500, all Muslim except for 720 Christians. The 1967 census showed that 87,793 Arab inhabitants and settlers lived in Gaza City, while 30,479 lived in a refugee camp within the municipal boundaries. Of this number 1,649 were Christians and the rest were Muslims.

To quote Rabbi Yaakov Emden, who wrote *Mor U'ketziyah*, "Gaza and its environs are absolutely considered part of the Land of Israel." He adds "there is no doubt that it is a mitzvah to live there just as in any other part of the Land of Israel."

Much of the above is taken from the article by Victor Sharpe: '**Gaza's Rich Jewish History**' published in the American Thinker. [http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/02/gazas\\_rich\\_jewish\\_history.html](http://www.americanthinker.com/2009/02/gazas_rich_jewish_history.html). He discusses the period from 1967 to present day. A more detailed time line history is at <http://www.ahavat-israel.com/eretz/gaza.php>.

# EALING UJIA—THE NEXT PROJECT

## Tel Hai Academic College

### The Hamburger Building: New Social Sciences Faculty

Now that Ealing UJIA has completed its obligations to Shlomi, it is embarking on a new, exciting project which we hope you will support.



#### Overview

Today, as Israel enters its seventh decade, the regeneration of its peripheral regions has taken on unprecedented importance. In the Galil, the educational gap between Israel's centre and periphery is pronounced. Geographically isolated, the majority of residents come from low socio-economic backgrounds: high unemployment, poor government support and inadequate infrastructure reduce the chances of equal opportunity.

A short drive from the border town of Kiryat Shmona, [Tel Hai Academic College](#) has established itself as both a centre of academic excellence and the largest employer in the Upper Galil. It significantly contributes to the quality of life for northern Israel's citizens, attracting and retaining new residents to the area – and serving as a powerful catalyst for economic and community development.

#### Building 5: New Social Sciences Faculty

Demand for courses at [Tel Hai Academic College](#) is growing by 10% annually and the existing campus is facing serious overcrowding. UJIA is supporting the development of its new campus, including the construction of the third and final multi-purpose [Social Sciences and Humanities Faculty: The Hamburger Building](#). When the entire new campus is completed in 2016 it will deliver the following benefits:

- **Increased enrolment** of social science students to a total of 2,300-2,600 for the 2011-12 academic year
- Enhancement of students' education through **improved facilities and services**
- Higher student numbers will create **more job opportunities and promote economic development** in the Galil
- **Increased access to learning for students with disabilities and special needs**
- **Encouraging migration to the Galil.**



### The need for a new campus

With student numbers currently topping 3,500, Tel Hai Academic College is facing serious overcrowding on its existing campus. To accommodate this increase in the number of students and the expansion of academic programmes and community services, UJIA, together with the college, the government and other strategic partners, have embarked on the construction of a new campus – a multi-phased £55 million project. The new campus will help the college to reach its goal of accommodating 5,500 students by 2016 – and contribute to the long-term transformation of the Galil.

The new campus' third and final multi-purpose faculty – The Hamburger Building – is a three-storey structure. **The 100,000 square metre faculty will include:**

- A full range of lecture theatres and seminar rooms
- Computer laboratories
- Suite of faculty offices
- Building 5 will house the following departments: Social Work, Psychology, Education, Interdisciplinary Studies, Economics and Management.

### Prosperity for all the Galil's citizens

The college has a diverse student population, drawing from Jewish and non-Jewish communities across Israel. The Tel Hai learning experience builds respect for diversity, both on and off-campus, encouraging cross-community dialogue and cooperation in the Galil – and Israel as a whole. With 80% of students originating outside the Galil, young people's experiences at Tel Hai Academic College expose them to life in the region and encourage skilled professionals to make their home in Israel's north.

### Invest in Israel's northern border

For decades, Tel Hai Academic College has trained thousands of young Israelis and strengthened northern Israel's economy and communities. The college is now entering into a new, exciting phase: the new Social Sciences Faculty will empower young adults and promote the Galil as a compelling place to live and work. You can join us to be part of this unique venture and invest in the future of northern Israel.

**UJIA has committed to funding £1,950,000\* towards the cost of The Hamburger Building, the new Social Sciences Faculty.**

\* Includes planning, construction, consultation and contingencies.

\*\* Your donation will include 15% UJIA core programme allocation and management.



# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

*Shabbat 12 May 2012*

*Civic Shabbat*

It is almost one year since we moved into our new shul and this will be the first Civic Shabbat in our new building. Please join us this Shabbat when we will be hosting the Mayor of Ealing and other local dignitaries.

*Thursday 17 May 2012*

*Ealing Synagogue AGM*

*Sunday 20 May 2012*

*Ealing WJA Dinner*

*Shabbat 9 June 2012*

*Queen's Jubilee Kiddush*

*Shabbat 11 August 2012*

*Olympics Final Kiddush*

*Sunday 9 September 2012*

*Ealing and Richmond Synagogues Joint Fashion Show  
at Richmond Synagogue.*

**Please make a note of these dates.  
More details will be announced nearer the time.**

## **SIMCHAS AT EALING SYNAGOGUE**

Following the recent success of our first Simcha in our new hall, Ealing Synagogue is delighted to offer kosher banqueting facilities for your Special Occasion.

We can cater for up to 120 guests comfortably seated with a Reception area.

Our brand new kitchen has been endorsed by a leading kosher caterer.

Please call Ealing Synagogue for more information and details of our reasonable hire rates.

Facilities for the disabled are available.

Contact: Michèle Gilford  
15 Grange Road, Ealing W5 5QN  
Tel: 020 8579 4894; Fax: 020 8576 2348  
Email: [ealingsynagogue@spitfireuk.net](mailto:ealingsynagogue@spitfireuk.net)

## EALING SYNAGOGUE CARES COMMITTEE—UPDATE

By Alison Shindler, Coordinator



As part of the United Synagogue Community Care network our committee has been endeavouring to bring together members of the shul and local community over the

past 8 months. We held community lunches in May, June, September and November last year and February this year and assisted with organising the Mitzvah Day tea and a Chanukah tea party in December.

As well as delicious food, we have been able to provide transport to the events so that those members unable to attend events at shul unassisted have been able to take part. The lunches have grown from a select group of ten guests and the committee at our first get together in May, to over thirty people in November. We have been delighted to bring together those who were very involved with the shul over the years and others who have not been a part of shul life at all, or for a number of years. We have also been able to include others who are not members of our shul but who live locally and would like to be part of a Jewish community.

We have celebrated birthdays together – ranging from 80 to 107 years – with cakes, cards and song.

In addition to providing lunch and an opportunity for people to chat and get familiar with one another, in November Dorothy Kochan spoke about her experiences on coming to the UK from Argentina and her life here;

this sparked contributions from a number of people present who shared their fascinating stories.



In December we came together with the wider community at the Chanukah party where we were entertained by the musical talents of Maya Robinson and Lia Joffe (granddaughters of Judith and Brian), who both sang beautifully, and Jess and Ben Shindler-Glass on the flute and trombone respectively.

As we get to know one another better, we hope our members are feeling more comfortable attending and requesting transport to the other shul activities and becoming more involved with the community.

It has been heartening to receive positive feedback from those involved with these activities.

We continue to offer phone calls and visits, as well as occasional help with shopping and attending medical appointments. We try to keep abreast of how some of our more vulnerable members are getting on.

We have also, thanks to the United Synagogue, provided Pesach parcels and honey cakes at Rosh Hashana which we hope have been enjoyed, along with the visit to deliver them.

Please remember we are always pleased to have offers of and requests for help – we will do what we can to assist.

Alison Shindler  
Ealing Cares Coordinator  
Contact: [alisonshindler@aol.com](mailto:alisonshindler@aol.com) or leave a message with Michèle Gilford in the shul office on 020 8579 4894.

**Committee:** Ros Eger, Joyce and Ron Frankal, Ella Marks, Joan Michaels, Judith Robinson, Neil Shestopal, Alison Shindler, Leslie Sommer







**SUNDAY 23 OCTOBER 2011**  
**"SUPPER AND SWING" ON THE THAMES**  
 From Richmond to Canary Wharf

**A**fter the success of last year's boat trip from Richmond to Hampton Court, by popular demand another boat trip was organised for this year. And what great support we had! Seventy people joined us — from Bushey, Borehamwood, Northwood and even Westcliff. Once again, we were fortunate with the weather—dry, bright and clear. Coral Cooke and her band, who entertained us at our Jazz Evening last year, were outstanding—some people even took to the floor—although I don't think some of us are quite ready for Strictly Come Dancing. Everyone was enthralled with the views of London at night—Westminster, the Globe Theatre, the London Eye—all the way to Canary Wharf. Our thanks to everyone for coming and helping to make this such a successful event.



# מלוה מלכה

## Saturday 3 December 2011



The first Melava Malka in the new shul hall attracted eighty people. The evening began with a musical Havdalah by our guest, Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld of Western Marble Arch Synagogue. This was followed by a D'var Torah by our own Rabbi Hershi Vogel. During supper everyone had the chance to chat and catch up with friends. Rabbi Rosenfeld, accompanied by Jason Silver on keyboards, began with a medley of Adon Olam tunes and encouraged some audience participation. He related some anecdotes interspersed with humour and touched on more serious subjects such as release of Gilad Shalit. His wedding medley was very moving. All in all, a very good evening.



# Musical Matinée

## Sunday 15 January 2012

The Ealing community was beautifully entertained by singers Laura Burns and Shoshana Burns. Their repertoire included songs by Gershwin, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Dusty Springfield and Adele. Our own Neil Shestopal also rendered his versions of Some Enchanted Evening, La Mer and an aria from the Marriage of Figaro. Our thanks to accompanist Geraint Williams who stepped in at the 11th hour and saved the day. Entertainment was followed by tea and a lovely afternoon was had by all.



The Performers: L-R Gareth Williams, Laura Burns, Shoshana Burns, Neil Shestopal



# SUPPER QUIZ

## SUNDAY 25 MARCH 2012

Ealing Synagogue held its first supper quiz in the new hall. Attended by 118 people, there was a very relaxed and happy atmosphere with everyone looking forward to a fun evening ahead. Our thanks to FRS who ran the quiz for us in a very professional way. We held a raffle and a "silent auction", both of which were very successful, helping us to make a respectable profit which will go towards synagogue funds.





## SORRY TO SAY GOODBYE

*By Jeffrey Goodman*

I have always belonged to orthodox Jewry, although I am probably the worst and most unobservant of its followers.

In March 1944, we moved to Ealing and joined the Synagogue community when I was six. Thus childhood and infant nurture was born, bred and exercised at the Ealing Synagogue and the communal hall behind it.

I went to Cheder, Saturday morning services and really knew very little outside Grange Road.

At 14, I formed the Ealing Youth Club. It was the most successful in West London and young Jewish boys and girls came from all over to attend on Sunday afternoons.

In those days I worked closely and reported to Hans Stern z"l and to the Jack Shestopal z"l, father of Neil Shestopal, our current elder. As a result I was invited to attend the Annual General Meeting every May to give my report on the Club's activities. I remember the surprise of the many members present that greeted the appearance of a fourteen-year-old.

I was Bar Mitzvah in the Synagogue and, for what was even then a small community, we had the difficulty or embarrassment of two Bar Mitzvahs falling on the same day. The Watermans' and my family had to divide and share the occasion in so many ways. I think we recited the Maftir twice.

Alas, when I got married, for the convenience of guests I could not do so at Ealing, and was very unhappy at having to go elsewhere. With marriage, I ended up in the Kenton area, but rather than join their very large community, I opted to go with the small developing community known as Belmont. In fact, I ended up as the Financial Representative and from a

three day Jew became amazingly observant. Friday nights, Saturday mornings, every festival I was there, and with my family and, boy, did I learn my way around the services as well as the Synagogue. It was a wonderful experience for someone such as I, that on the afternoon of Yom Kippur, I stood on the Bimah with the reader of Haftorah Jonah.

We then moved out near to Brookman's Park and I started to lose contact with those at Belmont and had of course, drifted away from Ealing, other than the fact that my cousin, Edward Cohen, and his family remained, and other lifelong friends.

So I decided that living so far away, if I had to belong to any Synagogue at all, it might as well be Ealing, of which I had so many wonderful memories. The tragedy, which I still cannot explain to myself, is that my wife and three children, despite being exposed so thoroughly to the orthodoxy at Belmont, totally lost their interest in the Synagogue, and indeed the religion. That is why for many years I have attended Ealing on my own and have been unable to join more regularly in social activities. I have a close bond with my cousin Edward, and am delighted at the New Year, to still see one of those with whom I grew up, namely Arthur Meyer.

But it all has to end. I am in my mid-seventies, and I cannot cope with the travel, parking and the other privations of living far away. I have never been attracted by Reform or Liberal Judaism. It may be a view lacking in intellect, but I feel I would rather be a poorly observant Orthodox Jew, than join in the Reform or Liberal movements.

My nearest Synagogue is Woodside Park, to which I will be able to walk, all being well. (I still feel embarrassed at having to drive and park to come to Ealing). Sixty seven years is a long time and I shall never feel comfortable anywhere else.

**N**EW BORN**S**

**Estelle and Michael Jacobs** on the birth of a new granddaughter Sophia Rose to parents Richard and Debbie Jacobs  
**Muriel Jacobs** on the birth of a new great granddaughter, Sophia Rose  
**Ruth and Ivor Gertler** on the birth of a new grandson Archer Mietek to Luey and Jonathan Gertler in Australia  
**Hilde Stern** on the birth of a new great grandson, Gilbert  
**Jacky and Brian Glicksman** on the birth of a new granddaughter Hannah Louise  
**Lilli Lerner** on the birth of a new great granddaughter Paige Zoey to parents Rachel and Brandon Salotitai in California  
**Janice and Peter Sinclair** on the birth of a new granddaughter Miriam Tihilla

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**B**AT MITZVA**H**

**Joyce and Ron Frankal** on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter Daniella  
**Dorothy Kochan** on the Bat Mitzvah of her granddaughter Odelia in New York

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**B**IRTHDAYS

**Penny Harris** on her 50th birthday  
**Estelle Jacobs** on her 65th birthday  
**Jacqueline Simons** on her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday  
**Ray Temple** on his 65th birthday  
**Doris Binstock** on her 80th birthday  
**Joan Hitman** on her 80th birthday  
**Ronald Zack** on his 80th birthday  
**Manny Felberg** on his 83rd birthday  
**Daphne Gerlis** on her 83rd birthday  
**Lilli Lerner** on her 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday  
**Arnold Livingstone** on his 83rd birthday  
**Joy Crystal** on her 85th birthday  
**Margo Linczyc** on her 85th birthday  
**Arnold Greenwood** on his 90th birthday

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**E**NGAGEMENT**S**

**Simeon Arnold** on the engagement of his granddaughter Lauren to Ricky Stoltzman  
**Janice and Peter Sinclair** on the engagement of their daughter Layla to Mayan Orgel in America  
**Hilde Stern** on the engagement of her grandson David Drapkin

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**W**EDDINGS

**Lilli Lerner** on the marriage of her grandson Ashley to Sasha Mond.  
**Joan Michaels** on the marriage of her granddaughter Daisy Goschalk to Baruch Coutts

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**C**ONDOLENCES

**Rosemary Grainger** on the death of her mother Jacqueline Levy  
**Janice Sinclair** on the death of her mother Sarah Shields  
**Angela Brooke** on the death of her mother Fay Bernstein

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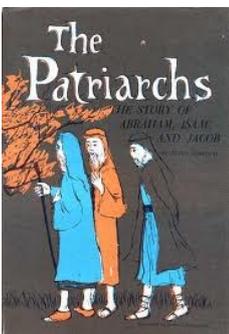
## P<sub>arents</sub>

Parents are pretty important people not only in the sociological sense but also in a religious context. This is shown by the fact that they and they alone have the whole of one of the Ten Commandments exclusively devoted to them.



## P<sub>atriarchs</sub>

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were the founding fathers of the Jewish people and of the Jewish religion. They are the genetic ancestors of all ethnic Jews and the adopted spiritual ancestors of those who have converted to Judaism. It should be pointed out that it is a biological fact that a Patriarch cannot be an ancestor without the cooperation of a corresponding Matriarch.



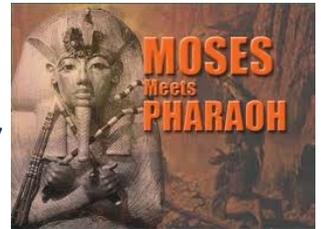
There were four Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel (*note*- Jacob had *two*!)

However, these ladies get very scanty mention in the Orthodox liturgy.

## P<sub>haraoh</sub>

This was the Royal title of many of the rulers of ancient Egypt in biblical times. With regard to their relationship with the early Hebrews, and no doubt in regard to other activities as well, some were good and

some were bad. Abraham had a brief encounter with a good and gentlemanly Pharaoh who wanted to marry Sarah who was posing as Abraham's sister, but all ended well. Joseph, after being sold into slavery in Egypt following an assault by his brothers, eventually attained a very high position in the Court of the Pharaoh of his time but over the next 400 or so years the "baddies" came into power and the Hebrews were subjected to Persecution and slavery.



But along came Moses to the rescue. "Let my people go" was his Plea but Persuasion failed until it was reinforced by a series of Plagues which culminated in Passover (*cf Exodus for details*).

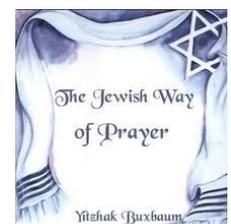
## P<sub>olygamy</sub>

This was permitted by religious law in ancient - times, (*cf "Jacob", above*), but is now forbidden by secular law. As far as we are aware very few, if any, members of our synagogue are polygamists or even bigamists.



## P<sub>ayer</sub>

It has been said that your prayers are always answered; the snag is that the answer is almost invariably **NO**. But keep on trying,



# THE NEW EALING JEWISH ENCYCLOPAEDIA

## THE LETTER "P"

# P

*ope*

Not a suitable job for a Jewish boy.

Or girl.

# P

*ermitted*

Peanuts,  
Potatoes, Parsnips,  
Porridge. (*bon appétit*)



# P

*rohibited*

Pigs, Pork, Prawns, Profanity,  
Prostitution, Poison etc.



# P

*uzzle Competition*

Palestine, Politics,  
Public opinion, Peace. Send  
your solution to "*The United  
Nations Organisation*". You  
may win a **Nobel Prize!**



## Rosh Hashanna 2012/5773

Nearing the end of this Pesach edition of the New Ealing Review, we are thinking about the Rosh Hashanna edition. We are always in need of articles, photographs, anecdotes, etc. In fact anything that would fill the pages. And it's never too early to start submitting them. All contributions will be gratefully accepted. Please help to make this your magazine.

## Pesach 2012/5772

### Times of Services

#### Sunday 1 April

Shacharit

8.15 a.m.

Rabbi Vogel will be in the Synagogue to purchase Chametz.

9.00 a.m.—  
10.00 a.m.

#### Friday 6 April—Fast of the First Born

Shacharit followed by Siyyum

**Latest time for eating Chametz**

**Latest time for burning Chametz**

Mincha/Maariv

**First Seder commences after**



6.50 a.m.

10.14 a.m.

11.38 a.m.

7.00 p.m.

7.28 p.m.

#### Shabbat 7 April —1st Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

**Second Seder commences after**



9.30 a.m.

7.30 p.m.

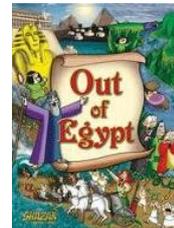
8.37 p.m.

#### Sunday 8 April —2nd Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

Yom Tov ends



9.30 a.m.

7.45 p.m.

8.39 p.m.

#### Thursday 12 April—Erev Yom Tov

Mincha/Maariv

7th Day Yom Tov begins



7.15 p.m.

7.38 p.m.

#### Friday 13 April —7th Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

8th Day Yom Tov begins

9.30 a.m.

7.30 p.m.

7.39 p.m.

#### Shabbat 14 April —Last Day Pesach

Shacharit—**includes Yizkor**

Mincha/Maariv

Pesach ends



9.30 a.m.

7.45 p.m.

8.50 p.m.



