

The New Ealing Review

Pesach 2011/5771



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Editorial

This is the first Pesach issue to be produced without any assistance, input and inspiration from its previous editor, the sadly missed Jack Lukeman z"l. As you are aware, Jack had his own style and set a very high professional standard. In attempting to continue his legacy, the Magazine Committee has tried not so much to emulate him but, instead, to try to maintain the precedents he set, a feat easier said than done.

We have tried to produce varied articles on different topics, local, religious and communal, which we hope you will find of interest.

We hope that we have produced a magazine which, with your help, will be improved over coming editions.

Your articles, points of view, travel documentaries and photographs are what make the magazine! Although we have barely started with our matzot, we are already thinking about the Rosh Hashannah edition. Your contributions would be most welcome.

Wishing you and your families Chag Pesach Kasher v'Sameach.

The Magazine Committee
Marianne Izen, Ben Kosky, Ella Marks, Helen Mars, Marianne Temple



IMPORTANT WARNING

[May contain NUTS]
Professor Leon Gerlis

Readers should be aware that this magazine may contain **NUTS**. These may not be noticeable, unless a previous nut-consuming reader had careless eating habits, but may be in the form of invisible traces due to the incorporation of minute fragments of recycled nut-bags and contaminated wrappings during the manufacture of the paper. We can reassure our readers that that there is absolutely no risk to health in just reading these pages but you are very strongly advised against eating them.

If you experience an irresistible compulsion to consume any part of this publication you should take the following steps before doing so:-

1. Consult your doctor.
2. Consult your dietician.
3. Consult your psychiatrist. (If you don't have one you should get one, quickly).
4. Consult your wife, husband, mother etc., as appropriate.
5. Consult your Rabbi as the paper might also possibly be contaminated by minute traces from recycled wrappings which had contained non-kosher food.
6. Consult the Editor as if there is sufficient demand, it might be possible to produce special edible editions of the magazine. Please specify your dietary requirements e.g. Kosher, glatt-kosher, meat or dairy, vegetarian, low fat, low salt, organic, diabetic etc., and also any special flavourings such as salt-'n'-vinegar, curry, pickled cucumber etc.

Bon appétit.



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Acknowledgements

Cover page— "Ma Nishtana"

Outside back cover—“The Big Debate”

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A PESACH MESSAGE

From Rabbi Hershi Vogel

Time is a tormenter. It yanks us away from our past and impedes our future behind a wall of ignorance.

We may overpower political dictators, cure diseases, overcome poverty; but if we want to be free, we must conquer time. For, of what use would it all be, if we remain captive within a sliver of present.

This is why Pesach, the festival of freedom, is based on the power of remembering. Memory is our answer to the domination of time. Reclining at the Seder, eating the matzah and the maror and drinking the four cups of wine, we ingest history into our very flesh and blood, tasting - and becoming - the bitterness of our slavery, the triumph of our Exodus, the faith that carried us from Egypt, and the commitment we entered into at Sinai. The bounds of time fall away that night, the past becomes current, history becomes now.

Presently Ealing is witnessing a major transformation. Warm-hearted memories are fondly recalled and sentimental values attach us to the past. Mixed emotions circulate about our beloved Shul as the new development takes shape. There are two perspectives; we either resign ourselves to the fact that we have little choice since numbers are down and this is the only way forward or we could focus on our accomplishments and build on that, to make it current, fresh and vibrant.

There is a saying from Chazal relating to the first and Second Temple, "Godol Yiheya Habayit Hazeh Mibayit Haacharon", meaning that the second Temple was far greater than the first.

What is this supposed to mean? How could one compare the holiness of the two Temples?

Chazal were not saying that the first Temple did not possess the same level of holiness as

the second. On the contrary, both Temples were very holy, but the second Temple was greater because they were building on from the first, moving forward and upwards.

Early spring is the time of new birth; the new-born lambs stand shakily. Pesach is the time of rebirth. When G-d took the Jews out of Egypt, we became a nation for the first time. Pesach is the holiday of our nation's birth, and year after year, we celebrate the opportunity for rebirth. The apples blossoming are not bothered if fruit rotted on the tree the year before. They push themselves into the brisk spring air with a youthful freshness all their own.

Ealing is going through a rebirth. There will inevitably be change but this should bring a freshness and youthfulness of its own. Our new Synagogue is being built on the success and principles of the original, using the first as a springboard to move us forward and upward, fusing the two in the process.

It is my hope that we merit the ultimate edifice that awaits us with the coming of Moshiach, which we hope will be very soon.

Zelda and I would like to wish you a very happy and kosher Pesach. The message of Pesach should be internalised by making the past current. Thus history will come alive and we will enjoy true freedom. Our transition from the first 'temple' building to the second 'temple' building should bring us lots of blessings.

Let us remember the past, live the present and trust the future.

Chag Sameach.

A PESACH MESSAGE FROM CST

Above all, the purpose of CST, the Community Security Trust, is to ensure that any member of our community is able to lead the Jewish life that they choose. CST is part of our community, so it can only succeed if our community takes its share of responsibility. Sharing responsibility means a whole range of things. It means contacting your local CST and asking what role you can play with our local security teams. It means understanding why we do security and co-operating with our local teams.

Sharing responsibility also means keeping a sense of perspective about where things stand. Antisemitism should not define our lives as British Jews, not now and not ever. Today, our community is largely able to express its Jewishness in whatever way it wishes. That can be religious, cultural, political, charitable, sporting or whatever sort of Jewish life you do, or do not, wish to have. Our community is, on the whole, successful and well integrated into the rest of society. We have come a very long way indeed since the newly arrived immigrant generations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

However, we often see rises in antisemitic incident levels when Jews or Israel are in the news. These are mainly directed against the most vulnerable and visible parts of our community, whether it is people, property or community groups. In recent years, the threat of terrorism is something that all of our society has come to understand and find a way of living with. The fact that these terrorists have also targeted Jews is what underpins all of CST's work. We sincerely hope that CST's efforts help our community to feel confident that someone is standing up in defence of its rights. We take responsibility for the physical security of the community; and provide a professional and confidential

reporting service for the minority of people who are unfortunate to suffer antisemitic hatred.

It is not CST's wish to tell individuals how they should feel about the situation. How you react to all of this is up to you. Some people regard it as unimportant, but others feel real fear and are deeply concerned for their own, or for their children's, wellbeing. Because of our work with the victims of antisemitic crime, CST regards its work as being about people's physical and emotional well-being, not about statistics. It is the human aspect that makes us all the more determined to work against

antisemitism; and against the fear that antisemitism causes.



We want to deter those who wish to harm our community, and we work with politicians, police and others in ensuring that our community's concerns are understood, heard and acted upon.

Each year, CST secures over 1,000 events across the whole community. We have recently installed security upgrades and shatter-proofing for windows at hundreds of communal buildings. CST does not charge the community for our services and relies upon charitable donations for our running costs.

CST, however, can only be as strong as the community that we serve. We rely upon the community for our volunteer personnel and for co-operation with our work: whether that is at schools, synagogues, community events or wherever.

All of this relies upon partnership between CST and our Jewish community. We really do need your support and for you to take your share of the responsibility.

PESACH—KEEPING IT REAL

By Maureen Kendler—Head of Educational Programming, LSJS

The story of Pesach is all about substitutes: *Matzo* for bread, a lamb's blood instead of a firstborn child. Inevitably, our history is also replete with stories of those who were unable to be home for Pesach, unable to celebrate the Seder night of their childhood. And they, too, had to substitute. One home for another, an unexpected ritual, tune, new food. The absence of the all-important person who had led the Seder of the past.

So many of us can tell a story of a "different" night, where the routine of Pesach was disrupted, where we had to be resourceful and creative to make a Seder, to adapt both our raw materials, and our raw emotions. Sometimes these stories are joyful, at other times their overtones are tragic. In World War I, Vilna Rabbis permitted the use of four cups of sweet tea for those too poor to buy wine. A unique Seder in 1946 saw 15 key leaders of the soon-to-be Jewish State (including Golda Meir) eat only the tiniest crumb of Matzah on the fourth day of a self-imposed hunger strike in protest against the detention of 1, 200 Palestine-bound refugees held in Italy. In the presence of the Chief Rabbis of Palestine, this Seder was conducted from the only extant copy of the first printed Haggadah from Spain, published in 1482, 10 years before the expulsion of the Jews. The declaration: "*Ieshana hab'ah benai chorin.....next year we are free men*" must have reached out to those Seder participants with piercing clarity. One story that verges on the gloriously absurd is Joseph Joel's 1862 account of Pesach in a West Virginia Union Camp during the American Civil War. There were 20 Jews in the regiment proposing to conduct a Seder in this wild and remote place. They had been sent matzot and Haggadot from a fellow soldier in Cincinnati. A foraging expedition yielded cider, eggs and chickens, and even a lamb. They built a log hut in which to conduct the feast. But the Seder ingredients needed improvisation. As for bitter herbs, Joel reports, "... in lieu we found a weed, whose bitterness I apprehend, exceeded anything our forefathers "enjoyed.""

These soldiers, unfamiliar with animals, were not sure which part of the lamb was the shank bone, so they solved that by cooking the lamb and placing it whole on the table. An ingenious *Charoset* substitute was a brick. Although they could not eat it, they could look at it to remind them of the process of building. All went well until the eating of the strange *maror*. Such was its fiery qualities and such a thirst ensued, that all the cider was consumed at once. As Joel said, "Those that drank were freely excited, one thought he was Moses, another Aaron and one had the audacity to call himself Pharaoh..... the consequence was a skirmish."

One can only hope the *charoset* brick was not put to practical use. Joel recalls the pride of reciting the Seder, with their guns by their side: "faithful to our G-d and our cause."

Wladyslaw Pawlak wrote a fictionalised account of the last Pesach in the underground bunker of the Warsaw Ghetto, in April 1943. Under the shadow of certain death, he describes distributing the final rations for those gathered there – dried bread, a bag of sugar and some water. One young man held up his piece of bread and recited a version of *Ho Lachma Anya*: "This is the bread of affliction such as our forefathers *never* knew in the Land of Egypt." Someone asked how they could possibly have a Seder in these circumstances. The reply was powerful: "We need no bitter herbs. Sufficient bitterness and humiliation have been our lot. Are we not slaves? We need no wine, let us drink water."

They proceeded with the Seder, ever-mindful of the irony of declaring the familiar Haggadah text: "*kol diphchin yasai veyachol...let all who are hungry come and eat...*" As they asked the four questions, told the story of past slavery, recited the plagues, their voices became angry, vengeful. At the close of this, their final Seder, their commander's voice rang out: "... today we celebrate a holiday. Passover is a holiday of freedom. Don't you see that we are free? No longer do we listen to orders. Today is the day of our freedom and that freedom is within us." The emotional pull of Seder is captured perfectly in I.L. Peretz's story: "It is Good" set in the early years of the 20th century. A young Jew is kidnapped into the Russian army and finds himself far from home on Pesach, on sentry duty in a blinding snowstorm. He says: "... A longing came over me, a sort of heartache that is impossible to describe. I wanted to recite the Haggadah but I couldn't recall a word of it."

He begs G-d for help. Suddenly the phrase "*Avadim Hayinu- we were slaves*" came to him. The rest of the Haggadah flooded back and with great joy he paced up and down, his musket on his shoulder, reciting: "... the Haggadah to the snowy world around. It poured out of me, word after word, like the links of a golden chain, like a string of pearls."

Substituting some sort of meaningful Pesach experience in sudden, unknown circumstances has itself become part of our history. These stories with their heartfelt adaptations of text and as near-as-possible rituals are entirely in the spirit of hope and faith expressed by our ancestors on their very first steps out of Egypt. May they also serve as inspiration as we create our own.

AND YOU SHOULD “TELL” YOUR CHILDREN ON PESACH

From JABE (Jewish Association of Business Ethics)

Years of conditioning have brought us to think of ‘Mah Nishtana’ as a song for little children, but the Talmud actually teaches us otherwise:

‘If the child is able, the child recites MahNishtana. If there is no child present, a woman can recite the Mah Nishtana to her husband. A person having Seder alone should recite the Mah Nishtana. If two scholars who are expert in all the laws and practices of Pesach eat their Seder together the one should recite the Mah Nishtana to the other.’ (Talmud, Pesachim 116a)

Whilst the message of the Seder is equally relevant for mature adults, the Talmud teaches us here that the ideal expression of Mah Nishtana is when it is recited by children. More than just a ‘*nachas* fest’, reciting these Four Questions helps the young to internalise the messages of Pesach. Without looking further into the deeper meaning of the actual words, we can already see a message here that can be incorporated into our everyday lives.

There is a profound rationale behind the hands-on, interactive learning style of the Haggadah, which takes nothing for granted. It assumes that there is no one at the table who cannot benefit from discussing, visualising and re-enacting the Exodus. It is not enough for children to learn about Pesach in school, nor is it enough for intelligent adults to have plumbed the depths of the narrative in lectures or study sessions. The Haggadah makes an abstract story about an ancient people into the heartbeat of our modern Jewish lives. You are never too old to live the Exodus; never too wise to learn more; never too grown up for interactive Jewish learning. Moreover, we are expressly commanded to remember the Exodus daily in the recitation of the Shema.

The idea here is that if the messages of miracles and liberation penetrate the consciousness of our children, they will also shape the way they view the world and live their lives as they mature into adulthood.

The same principle holds true with regard to ethical behaviour, where the assumption is often made that morals are innate. Doesn’t everybody know right from wrong? Isn’t it patently obvious

what the moral course of action should be? Here we can take our lead from the Hagaddah, and remember that without ongoing positive reinforcement, even on a daily basis, the things that are most obvious are the ones that are most easily forgotten. If we consider the issue of money and morals too obvious or too simple to debate and discuss, we risk it slipping away into oblivion. Talking about honesty and integrity, and contemplating real life dilemmas, though, will bring moral issues firmly back on the agenda.

We are commanded to **tell** our children because it is our duty to educate them in the right way and constantly review the messages. The business stories of the last year certainly reinforce the need for ethical thinking to be front and centre of our daily lives in every stratum of the business world and the workplace. No one is too senior to up their game or too experienced to be reflective. It also hammers home the need for money and morals to be transmitted to the next generation.

The Jewish Association for Business Ethics (JABE) has taught money and morals in almost 700 schools nationwide, and 2011 sees the development and launch of our new Money & Morals website. With over 100 practical case studies, full lessons for teachers and individual logins for students, the Money & Morals website is an opportunity to take ethical thinking to a new generation of students.

Just like the themes of the Seder night, the concept of money and morals is for people of every age and stage. But as with Mah Nishtana, we should give priority to the young and help them form a world view built on ethical thinking and moral practice.

The JABE Team

The Jewish Association for Business Ethics (JABE) is a registered educational charity that aims to raise standards of honesty, integrity and social responsibility by teaching the Jewish approach to business ethics through:

- Educational programmes for schools
- Seminars and events for business people and professionals
- Publications and materials on key moral issues.



TOLEDOT— ISAAC

By Leslie Sommer

I understand the rabbis so arranged the weekly sidrot that one whole Sidra i.e. Toledot is devoted to the life of Isaac. Against this background I thought it might be of interest to have a closer look at the character of Isaac and his contribution to Jewish thought. There is in fact surprisingly little information about Isaac in the Torah and even then most of the events relating to him involve him playing a secondary role to his illustrious father Abraham and son Jacob. There are however some brief points about him.

We first come across Isaac when we hear that Sarah was over 90 when she gave birth to him and that his name means "Laughter" to reflect the incredulity and joy Sarah felt in having a son so late. The first actual event involving Isaac is G-d's command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac on Mount Moriah. While G-d prevents this happening at the last minute, the episode does suggest show that Isaac exhibited great bravery and strength of character in not protesting against Abraham's actions, even to the extent of allowing his father to bind him and place him on the alter.

The next series of events relates to the selection of a wife for Isaac by Abraham's servant, Eliezer, who went to Moab and later returned with Rebecca. When Isaac first saw Rebecca he was praying in the fields in the afternoon suggesting a devout pious person. He then accepted without question Rebecca as his wife, trusting completely the choice of his father through Eliezer. It was only after he married Rebecca that according to the bible, he came to love her. There is every suggestion that the marriage was a happy one and that Isaac was a good and caring husband.

In Toledot we learn about how Isaac was compelled to leave home because of famine and settle in the Philistine part of Palestine known as Gerar. It was here that he exhibited the same character flaw as Abraham by pretending to the Philistine King Abimelech that Rebecca was his sister. Abimelech however discovered the deceit and Isaac learned a salutary lesson. In his new home, Isaac proved a hardworking effective farmer and entrepreneur and soon amassed considerable wealth, incurring the envy and enmity of his Philistine neighbours. Isaac was a peaceful person and to avoid confrontation came to an agreement with Abimelech to leave Gerar

and settle instead in Beersheva, the former base of Abraham, in return for Abimelech's continued support.

Once in Beersheba Isaac continued his success as a farmer and showed loyalty to his father's memory by not only redigging wells built by Abraham for the populace but by giving them, with due ceremony, the same names as Abraham had. This was again a courageous act as out of spite these wells had been filled in by the Philistines after Abraham's death. It has been suggested that this illustrates how Isaac kept alive the values he had inherited from his father.

Isaac's old age was clearly not without its troubles. He was almost blind and had to cope with the enmity between his sons culminating in the deception practiced by Jacob to receive the blessing due to the firstborn from his father. Even here Isaac showed his quality by accepting that this was the will of G-d, even though he

favoured Esau to Jacob. Isaac suffered further when Jacob then left home for 14 years, during which time Rebecca died.



Isaac met up with Jacob after the latter's return from Laban but died shortly after in Hebron, at the age of 180. Isaac achieved something even in death, as a temporary

reconciliation was effected between Esau and Jacob, who buried their father alongside Abraham and Sarah in the cave of Machpellah. Clearly the love and respect of both sons for Isaac overrode their bitterness towards each other.

So what do we make overall of Isaac? Clearly he was a person of courage and principle, a skilled farmer and entrepreneur, and a person of great faith and integrity who gained the love of his family and respect from his enemies.

Although Isaac is not so distinguished a character as his father and son, he is nevertheless vitally important as the link between the two. Without Isaac, the great thoughts about G-d that came to Abraham would not have been handed down to Jacob and subsequently to future generations. This virtue of continuity is relevant to us in Ealing today as we begin the process of change, taking forward our noble traditions of warmth and lovely services in the current building and transferring them into the new Shul.

Passover Apricot Cheese Cake

Preparation: 20 minutes; Cooking Time: 35 minutes;
Serves: 6 people

Finding a dessert that is nut free can be challenging over the Passover holidays. This cheesecake is served in a ramekin with a compote base. It is cooked in a bain marie (a roasting tin filled with boiling water). Any left over fruit compote is delicious for breakfast. Prunes, dried peaches or figs can be substituted if preferred. This dessert is very easy to make and will certainly satisfy all cheese cake fans over the Pesach week!

Ingredients

For the cheese cake
600g cream cheese
225g caster sugar
2 eggs separated
vegetable oil – for greasing

For the Apricot Compote
250g dried apricots
50g caster sugar

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 150 C/300 F/
Gas mark 2.

Lightly oil 6-10 cm/ 4 inch wide by 3.5 cm/ 1 ½ inch deep ramekins and line with circle templates of baking parchment paper. For the apricot compote, place the apricots, sugar and 100ml water in a pan. Bring to the boil, lower the heat and simmer until the apricots start to break down. Add a little more water if it gets too dry. This will take about 10 minutes.

Whisk the cream cheese, 225g caster sugar and egg yolks together. Whisk the egg whites until they are soft peaks. Take one tablespoon of egg white mixture and add to the cheese mixture, then fold in the rest. Put 1 tablespoon of compote in the base of each ramekin and then fill with the cheese mixture to within 1 cm/ ½ inch of the top. Place in a deep ovenware dish. Fill the dish with hot water to half way up the ramekins.

Bake for 25 minutes or until set. To serve the stylish way: Invert on to a plate and dust with icing sugar before serving either hot or cold.



Passover Chocolate Pavlova with Lemon Mousse

Preparation Time: 25 minutes; Cooking Time: 1 hour plus cooling;

Serves: 8–10 people

Chocolate desserts of any description never fail to impress or please family and friends. The slight tartness of the lemon mousse blends well with the crunchy sweetness of the chocolate Pavlova. Both can be made in advance and then assembled just before serving. The addition of salt helps to stabilise the egg whites and helps to balance the flavours. For a stylish look, pipe the meringues into little individual baskets.

Ingredients

4 large egg whites, room temperature
 55g dark brown soft sugar
 170g caster sugar
 Pinch of salt
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
 Lemon Mousse/ Lemon Sorbet for Parve
 Option
 284ml double cream – whipped to soft
 peaks
 1 lemon, juice and zest
 2 egg whites
 60g caster sugar
 Garnish: Dark Chocolate Curls/ Coarsely
 grated chocolate



Method

Pre-heat the oven to 300C/ 150 F.
 Line a large tray with non-stick baking parchment paper. Draw a 22 cm / 8" circle on the paper and then turn it over. Whisk the egg whites with a pinch of salt. Gradually add the sugars, a tablespoon at a time. Add vanilla extract and continue to whisk until the mixture is very stiff.

Sift cocoa powder over the meringue and fold until in to the mixture. Spread the meringue with a large spoon or use a piping bag over the circle template. Form a shallow well in the centre.

Bake for 1 hour or until dry. Leave to cool in the oven ~ preferably overnight. For the lemon mousse, whisk the cream and lemon zest together until the mixture starts to thicken.

Add the lemon juice and whisk briefly again ~ don't let the mixture get too stiff as it will be difficult to fold in the egg whites. Whisk the egg whites until they form soft peaks. Add the sugar a tablespoon at a time. Fold into the lemon mixture. Chill for 20 minutes. Spoon the mousse evenly into the centre of the meringue. To serve the stylish way: Garnish with chocolate curls or grated chocolate.

“TO GO OR NOT TO GO”

By Robin Preston, Chairman Awards Committee

An Halachic Problem in Japan

One of the impressive features of Japan is the prevalence of high-tech loos. These have heated seats (bliss), built in bidets, sprays (strangely erotic) and drying. Some go further, allowing you to smother unwanted noises with music or the sound of running water.

These loos are not just in hotels but also in public places such as airports, railway stations (but not on the trains themselves), parks, museums and motorway service areas. Imagine what would happen to such facilities in the UK – they would be vandalised in no time.



“Mission Control”

However these loos posed a problem on Shabbat. When one sits down, there is a pre-activity flush of water and a standby light comes on. How can the observant use one of these on Shabbat? There were no low-tech loos in the hotel at all.

There was an emergency discussion within our group (ALP Tours 2010 tour of Japan – look out for the 2011 programme).

Examination of the mechanism revealed that the offending flush and light were turned on by a micro-switch underneath one end of the seat hinge.

Three solutions were proposed:

1. Lift the seat and sit on the bowl – uncomfortable, undignified and foregoes the pleasure of a heated seat.
2. Sit with all one’s weight on the side of seat without the micro-switch – this requires a degree of gymnastic control and concentration which is difficult to sustain.
3. Jam a folded towel underneath the seat near the hinge with the micro-switch.

This latter suggestion proved to be the most practical solution, provided one didn’t sit down too abruptly. This suggestion was made by Ed Stark from New York and in recognition of his contribution to the comfort and relief of the group, and flushed with success, he was presented with the ALP Tours Technology Award 2010 – a be-ribboned and decorated toilet roll.



Ed Stark receives his award

FRENCH HILL JERUSALEM and THE ROYAL ENGINEERS

By Tony Hitman FRICS

As a member of the Chartered Surveyor's/Sappers Club I recently attended our summer meeting at the Royal School of Military Survey. Following several briefings and a conducted tour of the school we were entertained to lunch. During conversations with my table companions I related a story which they found very interesting.

My second posting was to the Canal Zone during which I attended an administration course at the Middle East College in Gaza, Palestine and, being Jewish, was very pleased to visit the Holy Land for the first time, travelling like my forebears from Egypt to the Promised Land via the Sinai Desert.



One of my ambitions when I retired from practice as a Chartered Surveyor was to return to Israel as

it then became. I spent many holidays there and eventually purchased a flat. It is there that my story begins.

On one of my many visits to Jerusalem I attended a remembrance ceremony of the British Association of Jewish Ex Servicemen and Women at the British Military Cemetery on Mount Scopus. It occupies a beautiful location on a slope of the Mount with breath-taking views of the Old City. Dominating the cemetery at its highest level there is a result chapel. The rose gardens between the rows of memorials are tended by a faithful Arab head gardener. Following a short service which was honoured by the presence of the British Military Attaché, we placed stones on the graves of the fallen Jewish servicemen who had fought with General Allenby in December 1917 in the liberation of Jerusalem from the Turks. I paid my private respects at the graves of fellow Royal Engineers including Sapper A.R. Gale and Pioneer H.M. Gale.

On other visits to Jerusalem I learned that many of the



neighbourhoods are named after religions and nationalities. For example, the Old City is divided into four quarters, Christian, Jewish, Greek and Armenian. Outside the walls of the Old City there is the German Colony and French Hill. It is known that prior to the First World War the German Colony was settled by well to do Germans both Jewish and Christian. They built lovely large houses, many of which are now converted into expensive apartments. It is commonly believed by Jerusalemites that French Hill, which connects West Jerusalem with Mount Scopus has a similar history, but nothing is further from the truth. During my study of Hebrew I was asked to translate a short article about French Hill. It recounted the British victory at Jerusalem, referred to above, and added that General Allenby ordered a new map of the City to be drawn. The portion of the city adjacent to Mount Scopus was allocated to Lieutenant French of the Royal Engineers and hence the neighbourhood got its name. The name is sometimes attributed to General French but the records show that he never visited Jerusalem.

As a postscript, during my professional career I was appointed Surveyor to the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, a City Livery Company, and I was responsible for the maintenance of their Hall. The Clerk at the time recommended me to advise the Order of St John of Jerusalem on the condition of their church in St John's Square also in the City of London. Knowing that I had an interest in Israel the Clerk of the Order invited me to their museum. He opened a cupboard and to my surprise and delight he took out and unrolled the original map of Jerusalem signed by General Allenby.

TURNING ISRAEL GREEN in the 21st CENTURY

By David Goodman, Acting Chief Executive, JNF UK

Since JNF's founding in 1901, its aim has been to settle and develop the land of Israel. Raising funds using the iconic Blue Box, by 1948 JNF owned 13% of the land in the State of Israel. Since then, we have beautified Israel's landscape by planting 240 million trees, helped lay the foundations of modern cities such as Tel Aviv, Netanya and Haifa, and addressed the shortage of water by building of a series of reservoirs.

Today, JNF's focus remains as true as ever to our environmental roots.

For example, we are working alongside the Israeli Government to regenerate the 10,000 acres of woodland and the 5 million trees destroyed following the Carmel fires in December 2010. But now we are also taking on the Negev Challenge.

The Negev represents 60% of the State of Israel, yet contains only 7% of the population (½ million people). By 2040 the Israeli Government wants 3 million people living in the Negev. Today, JNF is building the framework and infrastructures to make this possible and greening the desert using pioneering agricultural techniques.



JNF's ability to undertake its work is solely reliant on the donations and legacies we receive. Your support for Israel and JNF is as vital today as it has always been. By supporting us you have

a chance to do something special, to play a part in pioneering the historic Zionist dream of the 21st century and helping secure the future of the State of Israel and its people.

Israel and its people cannot do it alone. They need and deserve our support. This is a chance for us to be involved in something truly special. If, together, we succeed in this Negev Challenge and greening the land, we

will all have played our part in helping to secure and grow our beloved State of Israel. This is *the* defining Zionist mission in the 21st century. It will not be easy. Nothing great ever is. But it is surely a challenge and an opportunity too great for any of us to turn down.



To contribute towards JNF's work, please call 020 8732 6146, email info@jnf.co.uk or visit www.jnf.co.uk.

TRAVELS WITH ALP TOURS

With Aviva Preston

Back from our fact finding tour of New Zealand I feel confident to advise anyone who is thinking of going; indeed if sufficient people wished it I would organize a tour.



However, my aim at the moment is to do a fact finding sortie to Ecuador and aim for a tour in late November or early December.

Meanwhile even though sterling is as weak now as it was in 2009 and the extra costs imposed on flights from the UK by way of taxes and fuel surcharges are a high proportion of the cost of short flights, I would like to re-instate the tour to Florence and Tuscany this July.

This is Jewish History/Heritage Tour (my wonderful guide Giovanna Bossi Rosenfeld assures me that the temperature in Florence in July is better than in May and June). This year there are more flight options with Easyjet flying from Luton and Sky Jet from City airport as well as BA from Gatwick and Ryanair from Stanstead. BA and Sky Jet also have flight/hotel packages which I will be looking into.



The programme this year will be from **Friday 22nd July to Tuesday 26th July**. Obviously, you can arrive earlier and stay later (and I have noticed that flights are cheaper on Tuesdays and Wednesdays). As far as I can see the flights and 4 nights in a good hotel will cost around £400 and the food/touring etc. etc. will come to between 800 -900 Euro (£690 - £775) depending on

numbers of participants, (that's all food, guides, coaches, entry fees, and all gratuities for 4 days). Not cheap but definitely wonderful. Shabbat and Sunday will be in Florence visiting parts of Florence only Giovanna can show us, meeting members of the community and learning about architectural connections that are Giovanna's special field. On Monday we spend the morning in Sienna travelling to Pitigliano in the afternoon and ending up at a kosher winery before returning to Florence. On Tuesday we will be in Livorno and finally in Pisa.



Now I am loathe to be writing to you about tours to Japan at this time. The situation there in the North is so terrible at the moment.

All I can say from the selfish point of view is that our tour does not go anywhere near the area and that we sincerely hope and pray that normality will have returned not just to Japan but to the world long before 2012 when I have scheduled the next Japan tour (1st May 2012 for just over 2 weeks).



The tour to Spain will probably be in September.

For more information about these tours and others, please contact Aviva Preston:

Email: avivapreston@hotmail.com
Tel: 0208 997 7083



THE HIDDEN AIMS OF

D'Var Torah by D.

In many instances the aims of the calamities wrought on Egypt i.e. the plagues, were not fully understood and the inflictions had been exaggerated beyond belief. In some cases they were presented as a catalogue of death and destruction, aimed mainly at destroying the Egyptian people. In this respect one old Haggadah, 'Midrash Be Chidush', reached a fanatical level of exaggeration. It indeed makes very disturbing reading. Here are but a few examples:

In case of the **Blood Plague**, this Haggadah claims that many Egyptians died of starvation, because they couldn't eat fish, and they could not drink water unless they "bought" it from a "Jewish" person. This "provided the Jewish people with an excellent source of income", which means that while the Egyptians were dying from thirst and hunger we, the Israelites, were making a good profit out of their misery.

In the case of **the Frogs**, it claims that "the frogs would enter the Egyptians bathrooms by cracking the stone and marble floors and bite the Egyptians thereby *castrating them*". (They must have been truly bionic frogs, bless them, so strong and so clever. They surged from underneath the floor with a noble purpose in mind and they fulfilled their task admirably, with surgical precision).

In the case of **the Lice calamity**, this Haggadah claims that they "covered the entire land of Egypt, up to one Amah (i.e. 20cm height)", and that "in total there were 14 different types of lice, the largest being the size of an ostrich egg (i.e. 25cm across)". The result for the Egyptians, says the Haggadah, was: "internal bleeding, death and blindness".

In case of the **Wild Animals**, this Haggadah claims that "octopuses would stretch their long arms through the skylights and unbolt the doors of the Egyptians allowing other dangerous animals to enter and attack them"; (by this stage the Egyptians had become bitten, eaten, blind castratos. They would not be fit enough to chase the Israelites anywhere).

In case of **The Boils**, this Haggadah claims that the boils "remained with the entire population as long as they lived"; (the question is whether any one could have really survived after all that? I have my doubts. If some did then there were more calamities to descend on them like):

The Hailstones. These, the Haggadah claims,

were gigantic, each "contained sufficient water of 40 Seah (the size of a Kosher Mikvah)"; (accordingly each hailstone should have certainly been several tons in weight, enough to annihilate all life in Egypt).

As to **The Locusts**, it is said that after devastating the fields, "they began consuming the flesh of the Egyptians"; (i.e. suddenly mutating into carnivores).

And finally the calamity of **The Darkness** where it is said that "the Egyptians could hear the Jewish people walking through their homes, opening cupboards and drawers searching for their valuables. They were afraid that all their valuables had been stolen".

This kind of interpretation could be quite hilarious if it were not that sad. It is sad because it afflicts the Israelites as well, turning them into heartless profiteering thieves.

As to the Egyptians, no one of them could have survived all these horrendous blows. All would have perished. The course of history would have changed. The Israelites would have remained alone in Egypt. They would have become Egyptians. No more atrocities, no Exodus, no giving of the Torah, no building of the Temple and no Judaism. This kind of interpretation cannot be acceptable. It fundamentally contradicts the principles of the Torah and the teachings of our sages. Time and time again the Torah teaches us that G-d does not wish the demise of the wicked but wants him to repent and live. This is the message of the book of Jonah and this is exactly what we pray for on the Day of Atonement. The Torah also commands: "You shall not abhor an Egyptian, for you were a stranger in his land" (Deut 23; 18). The book of Proverbs (24; 17) and the Ethics of



EGYPT'S INFLICTIONS

r Menashe Tahan

the Fathers (4; 24), both recommend: "Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles". The Talmud (in Megillah 10b) also stresses these same principles. It tells us that when Pharaoh's army sunk in the sea, the angels wished to chant with the Israelites a song of jubilation but G-d reproachfully silenced them saying: "The work of My hands are drowning in the sea, yet you wish to sing songs before me!".



Strictly in the same spirit Rabbi Yehudah bar Ammi, one of the great sages of the 4th century, preached to completely avoid uttering the names of the plagues. For that purpose he abbreviated them to one sentence: "DeZaKh ADaSh BeAChaB" which means: "The scorpion stung the ankle". That and no more. And in order to emphasize the importance of his teaching he claimed that this sentence was actually inscribed on the wonder-working rod of Moses when he played the miracles before Pharaoh.

These are just some examples which demonstrate how thoroughly the teachings of the Torah and of our sages are saturated with a universal sense of compassion and humanism.

It is true that in the biblical view, society as a corporate entity, can not evade responsibility for the follies and evils committed in its name and, therefore, can not escape the consequences. But this principle is marginal compared with the sublime purpose of salvaging Israel, and humanity at large, from the causes of that evil. Those causes did not stem from the simple people of Egypt, but from their spiritual and political leaders who promoted beliefs which could support and consolidate their brutal rule over other nations. Those leaders adopted and promoted a pantheon of gods which suited their interests; gods who were neither moral nor just; gods who hated, envied, killed and murdered each other; gods who permitted

the creation of hell on earth for the Israelites and other enslaved people. The source of that evil was none but paganism and its horde of weird gods which included their main representative on earth i.e. the Pharaoh himself. I submit, therefore, that it would be more adequate or more accurate, to view the plagues as a battle against paganism for the purpose of punishing the gods of Egypt, humiliating and discrediting them. Support for this assumption is evident in the fact that during the Exodus the religion of Israel itself went through a significant transformation: it became more combative and staunchly antagonistic to paganism. It is a matter of fact that before the Exodus there was no tension between the religion of our Patriarchs and that of the nations with whom they came in to contact. But during the Exodus our religion showed active resistance to polytheism. It was a turning point led and announced by G-d himself when he declared: "I will execute judgements against all the gods of Egypt, I am the Lord" (Ex 12; 12).

Moreover, G-d also demanded from the people of Israel, in the Ten Commandments and as an eternal law, "you shall have no other gods beside me" (Ex 20; 3-4). Furthermore, G-d commanded the people of Israel to carry on the struggle further, from Egypt to Canaan. Israel was commanded that when coming in to contact with the many different people of Canaan: "You shall not bow down to their gods or worship them and not imitate their practice. You shall utterly overthrow and completely break down their images" (Ex 23; 24). The religion of Israel had thus changed from a passive faith of one family to an active faith of a nation pioneering a struggle of great universal significance against polytheism and the gods which represented it. From then on the war on polytheism became one of the major aims of the faith of Israel. Every thing said and done in Egypt during the Exodus certainly had the purpose of humiliating the Egyptian deities and undermining faith in their divinity. Only in this spirit should one interpret the ten calamities inflicted during the Exodus. They were, in essence, the judgement that G-d promised to execute on the gods of Egypt. In support of this claim there are some good examples:

One is the calamity of Blood which was inflicted on the Nile. Why should it be considered to be directed against the gods of Egypt? This because

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

the Nile was personified in ancient Egypt as a god called Hapi, the Nile god. Its annual inundation was regarded as the manifestation of another god called Osiris. Turning the water of the Nile into a stream of blood is an insult to those two gods and a diminution of their power. It is in fact judgement on gods of Egypt.

Another example is the three days of Darkness. Why was this considered such a big calamity? The reason for that stems from the fact that the Egyptians considered the *sun* to be a very important god--- , Re, the main deity of the land and the father of all Egypt's kings. According to Egyptian mythology, the sun's journey across the sky involved a mighty struggle between Re, the god of the sun, and a monstrous serpent, called Apophis, which represented darkness and the embodiment of everything horrible. Each morning sunrise was believed to be the defeat of the forces of darkness. The calamity of 3 days of darkness meant for the Egyptians the vanquishing of their main god by the demonic forces of evil. It was a terrible humiliation both to the god Re and to his mighty descendant- the king of Egypt himself.

Another example is the affliction of the *frogs*. Why was it so significant? What harm could come of the frogs emerging from the water and playing on the banks of the Nile? But its impact lies in its mocking of some of the prominent gods of Egypt. The frog was believed to be a goddess, called Heqt who assisted the Egyptian women during labour. How a frog could have done that? Well, her husband, god Khnum, was the god who sat by the potter's wheel and fashioned Egyptians out of clay. He was constantly assisted by Heqt who sprayed water on the clay. The visitation of frogs and their rotting waste was a terrible insult to these important gods.

One extremely important goddess for Egypt was Sekhmet, who was supposed to act against plagues and pestilence? She bore the image of a lioness which was erected everywhere in the land. The mere fact that she could not prevent any of the plagues was a severe blow to her prestige and diminution of her powers.

Even the plague of lice could be seen as a mockery of some of the Egyptians beliefs. The ancient Egyptians believed that their gods were present in things that are enormous. But the plague of lice showed them the presence of the G-d of Israel in something so small as to be almost

invisible (not 25cm across), scorning the monumental scale of the Egyptian architecture.

In particular, the plagues meant to deal a humiliating blow to Pharaoh himself, who was recognized as a god by his people and by the religious and the political institutions of the Egyptian state. Pharaoh thought to defy the will of G-d, arrogantly dismissing Moses, saying:

"Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go" (Ex 5; 2).

The two plagues of blood and frogs together could, therefore, be seen as a scorn, especially directed against Pharaoh, who decreed killing babies, first at birth and later by drowning. Humiliating the frog goddess, Heqt, who assisted the birth of Egyptians, was a punishment for the first atrocity of murdering babies at birth, while turning the Nile into blood was a punishment for throwing the Israelite children into that river.

Pharaoh who believed in nature realized that nature had turned against him, proving to him and to his people that there is a force above nature, above him and above his gods, a moral force that no one could defy. This awesome force later demonstrated his might again, not in natural phenomena as before, but in a super natural plague: the plague of the *First*

Born. So devastating was this calamity that it finally forced Pharaoh to bow to the inevitable and disgracefully acknowledge defeat, telling Moses:

"Rise you up and get out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel, and go serve the Lord as you have said". (Ex 12; 31).

This ignominious surrender of the god-king of Egypt to the will of the G-d of Israel constituted a grave contempt for the Egyptian paganism as a whole.

In conclusion: the calamities wrought upon Egypt were, therefore, part of a campaign aimed to discredit paganism for the sublime purpose of promoting the ethical monotheism of Israel. This combat which was joined during the Exodus bore fruits not only in Egypt but it had also wide universal repercussions. It was a spiritual revolution, a tremor which shook the ancient world. It exerted upon a large segment of humanity an influence so decisive that it changed human thinking, human behaviour and human institutions. Since then the ancient world was never the same. It started transforming. It started to disappear. This was precisely the main aim of the plagues.



TRAVELS IN INDIA

By Diane Lukeman

I took part, recently, in a visit to India with Jewish Renaissance. The theme of the trip was to explore the Jewish history of India in Mumbai (Bombay), Pune (Poona) and around Kochi (Cochin) in Kerala. En route, we saw something of the startling contrasts in the way people live. I could not attempt to write about the whole trip but have chosen to describe a place and story about which I had never heard. It was also one visit where I took some reasonable photos.



Site of the Hoof Mark of the Prophet Elijah

The contrasts we experienced in many aspects of our trip were noticeable on our first morning when we sailed from the Gateway of India to Alibaug - part of the curving peninsula round the Bay of Bombay. The town and its surrounding villages are the historic hinterland of the Bene Israel Jews. Our guide Ralphy Jhirad, from that community, spoke about that history as we were driven in a modern Toyota minibus through the countryside on bumpy roads with unfamiliar vegetation on each side. Motorbikes overtook us on both sides; cyclists wobbled in front of us – usually with more than one person on each bike. Amongst the trees by the roadside were adverts for Vodafone! We drove through yet another village, past people working in the fields, women carrying baskets on their heads and washing being done in ponds. Suddenly, we were at the Radisson Alibaug – a most luxurious hotel in beautiful surroundings where we spent two nights.

The highlight of these two days was a stop we made on our second morning - the site of the hoof mark of the Prophet Elijah. The Bene Israel community has a strong belief in Elijah the Prophet. The usually accepted story is that Elijah rose to heaven in his chariot from a site near present day Haifa. However, the Bene Israel claim that his chariot left from a village called Khandalla near Alibaug. There is an outcrop of hard rock on which there are marks identified as the hoof marks of Elijah's horse and wheel marks of his chariot. It is considered a holy site and we were asked to remove our shoes. A ceremony takes place on Tu B'Shevat and Bene Israel Jews return from Israel and other places.



Elijah was here



Hoof marks of Elijah's horse

Interestingly, we were told that the site is holy, also, for Hindus and, I read on my return, for Muslims.

Hindus paint the wheel marks with a pinkish dye and decorate it with lotus flowers.

This visit illustrated some of the main themes of our trip – the background story of the Jews of India and the mingling of the narratives of the different religious communities. In checking some details for this write up, I discovered why the Radisson Alibaug is so positioned. The area is a favourite wedding and party destination for the wealthy of Mumbai. There are beautiful beaches, too, but we did not visit them.



Mitzvah Day at Ealing Synagogue

By Daphne Gerlis

The United Synagogue official Mitzvah Day was Sunday 21 November 2010, but due to work starting on the Ealing Synagogue's Communal Hall, we had special dispensation to hold our Mitzvah Day on the earlier date of Wednesday 27 October 2010.

The Ealing congregation hosted a tea for 20 disabled ex-servicemen and women, most of them wheelchair bound, from the local St. David's Nursing home.

Community singing led by Neil Shestopal helped to break the ice. Accustomed as we are to Neil's many versions of Adon Olam, it came as a delightful surprise to be serenaded with an Italian love song. One resident, unable to remember where he lived as a boy, or indeed what he did the previous day, was delighted to be able to join in the war time songs, word perfect.



After Rabbi Vogel's words of welcome, our visitors tucked into the generous spread prepared by members of the Guild. The Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Rajinder Mann, who was accompanied by his wife Gurmit, spoke of the warm relations between people of the many different communities of the Borough.

The highlight of this greatly



enjoyable afternoon was the personal message from Dame Vera Lynn applauding our initiative and apologising for not being able to be present.



Naturally this was followed by everyone joining Neil in singing "We'll meet again", a sentiment which we hope will bear fruit next year.



Kim, the main manager of St. David's Home, sent the following message of thanks: *"Thank you very much for the wonderful tea and entertainment that you and the team organised for St David's residents yesterday. Everyone had a lovely time. We thank you for the kindness, the thoughts and the hard work behind the success from everyone. The personal touch warmed our hearts. Please thank Ray and Neil for helping us with the wheelchairs, Ella, Mollie, Judith, Marianne, Joyce, Ruth, Daphne and many more whose name we did not manage to get. They made us feel very welcome. We thank Rabbi Vogel for officiate the day and Neil for entertaining us. Thank you again for your wonderful work and broad shoulders. Kimxx"*.



The community is grateful to Gail Sackloff, Ella Marks, Leslie Sommer, Judith Robinson and Joan Michaels for organising this event and to everyone who helped on the day.





Jazz Evening Sunday 31 October 2010 Communal Hall "Finale"

By Marianne Temple

With the renovations of the Communal Hall upon us, it was deemed fitting to hold a "finale" event before the builders started work. The Social Committee organised a Jazz Evening presenting Jazz singer Coral Cooke. Coral appeared with pianist Dave Frankel, drummer Dan Allsopp and a bass guitarist. Her support was singer Conrad Simpson and saxophonist Maureen Hardman. The music was more ballads than swing, with songs such as "It Might as well be Spring", "The Touch of Your Lips", "The Nearness of You, and "Please Don't Talk about me when I'm Gone". The music was pitched exactly right for the audience who seemed to know all of the words to most of the songs. Supper was hot dogs and salads, washed down with wine, followed by fruit and danish pastries. A raffle was held and a sealed auction of an exclusive tour and tea at Highgrove House, the home of Prince Charles. The evening ended with a rousing rendition of "When You're Smiling". The event raised over £1,100 for the shul. Our special thanks to Gail Sackloff for all her help, to Ivor Gertler for compering the evening and to everyone on and off the Social Committee who helped make this such a successful event. We look forward to seeing you all again at the next function in the new Ealing Synagogue!



THE STORY OF “BOB THE BUILDER”

By Dawn Shestopal, Co-Chair New Shul Steering Committee

It was while I was standing in the pouring rain waiting to go into the site office for a site meeting on a Friday morning when I am more usually at the hairdresser, when I



questioned what had I got myself into. My mood was not lightened when I noticed that everyone except me was wearing a hard hat and Terry, the

contract manager, tapped my umbrella on the head and said “That’s not gonna ‘elp if a bricks falls on yer ‘ead”.

There have been other occasions of self doubt such as the fact finding mission to Croydon with Rabbi Vogel. Trying to follow Mike Mars, I failed to notice a protruding curb, got a puncture and Mike and the Rabbi collaborated in a wheel change – to be fair, the Rabbi’s role was to pass the tools, mine was to observe.

None of this has, however, curbed my enthusiasm.

Most of our fact finding missions have been less traumatic such as Edgware Adath which our builders, T&B, had converted from a church before we awarded them the contract, and Yavneh College where we fell



in love with the design of the pews and the mechitsa screens even though the photo Mike took of me behind one entitled “Judge behind bars”

seems to have circulated on the internet accessed by the warden of Southend and Westcliff shul who observed “I always thought it was the defendant who went behind bars.”

The fun part has been choosing colour schemes, upholstery, kitchen units and general design, great spending other people’s money.

More difficult was prioritising our needs to keep within the budget allocated by the United Synagogue. Which of our grandiose ideas would be jettisoned in favour of something less pretty but more important?

We hope this Community will agree with our order of priorities being disabled facilities, kitchen and seating with reading desks attached. For the kitchen we have to thank Neil Lerner, son of Lili, who grew up in the Community and supplied it at cost price.

An enormous amount of thought has gone into the choice of every item and as to what should and could be transported. An example is the



design of the bimah, the order of which was delayed while we tried to persuade Kibbutz Lavi that the standard design was not what we wanted though the standard cost was. We needed a bimah with seating, with a rail surround and insets in which to place the Sifrei Torah during the Haftorah reading. Also, we wanted to replicate as far as possible the design of our original bimah. How do you get annoyed with someone who signs himself “Yankele”?

My heart stopped when on the Friday before work was due to begin on the Monday, after the Community had worked like Trojans on morning, afternoon and evening shifts to pack up all the contents of the Communal Hall for shipment to Bushey (don’t ask!) the schedule of work necessary to implement to the structure of the building looked as though we were going to break the bank before we started.



Steven Rajbenbach of the United Synagogue explained in answer to my hysterical email that it was necessary to know precisely what had to be done beyond the original costings before the builders began so we would know the exact expense we were going to have to meet instead of getting unpleasant surprises once we had embarked on the project.

In fact, there had been many unpleasant surprises, even then, such as the condition of the central heating pipes and the revelation when the wooden panelling that the walls had not been plastered but simply wood panelled over poor quality brick.

Now there was the now legendary delay in starting because the builders had not considered how heavy lorries would get in. My suggestion of reversing one into the wall thereby eliminating the obstruction was dismissed and the problem resolved as you have all seen.



It was been a great privilege to be involved in this fantastic venture for the Community, notwithstanding all that and to work with Mike, the Steering Committee and our wonderful, painstaking and empathetic architects Leon and Cheryl. Our relationship with the United Synagogue (at the time of writing) has been warm and one of mutual respect. I did send Steven Rajbenbach a copy of horoscope for 2011 saying that "while certain decisions in my life would be in the hands of others, I would like the results". I think he took it to heart.

We hope the Community will similarly like the results of our decisions and understand that we did the very best we could.



Since these photographs were taken, the building work has come a long way. The ramp is now in situ, the furniture is winging its way from Kibbutz Lavi in Israel, and the kitchen will be transported from Neil Lerner's showroom in Hampstead. There will be a special Shabbat (tentatively 21 May) of transferring the Sifrei Torah from the old shul to the new building—this date has yet to be confirmed but everyone will be notified in due course. In the next Rosh Hashanna edition of The New Ealing Review we hope to give you more photographs of the new shul/hall and an update on the career of "Bob the Builder".

BEFORE I FORGET

By Joan Michaels

Although I am looking forward to moving into the new Shul in the communal hall, I shall miss the Ladies' Gallery. In all my years of attending Shul, I have sat in the gallery and felt close to the proceedings. As a teenager I gazed down on rows of good looking young men and boys and perhaps had a crush on some of them. I expect they are now overweight, balding and old, just like me, except for the balding.

The Yomim Noraim were my favourite times. I remember dear Nat Isaacs z"l, Honorary Secretary of the Shul for 40 years, who used to sit in the corner with his hat perched jauntily on the side of his head; the man who only arrived for Ne'ila and HAD to sit in his seat, although the row was full to capacity; the father and his three sons who arrived at about 2 o'clock on Yom Kippur, and the time a family took exception to part of the Rabbi's sermon, stood up and marched out.

My Grandpa, father, numerous uncles and cousins used to attend the Shul and we youngsters would attend the children's services in the Board Room. Sam Rosenbloom used to officiate and the boys read the Hebrew and the girls the English.

As the years went by, the young people married. Some moved away but others stayed and our children joined the Cheder and took the Chanukah services. They

became involved in "Study Group" - a great organization which met every Sunday in the New West End Shul at Bark Place. It held winter and summer schools at Carmel College, where there were lectures in the mornings and free time in the afternoons and evenings. There was a swimming pool too and Israeli dancing and a good time was had by all. The boys certainly learned much about running Shul services, as Study Group weekends were held all over the country. In Ealing, we entertained the youngsters in our homes and organised Friday nights and Shabbat lunch in the Hall. They ran the Shabbat services and I remember there was a gentleman who did not like the new tunes and would walk out and slam the door.

We used to prepare teas (bread and jam and orange squash) for the boys who attended mid week classes, after which they played table tennis with Rabbi Silberg. The girls attended Brownies and Guides and once a month they all came to Shul and squeezed into the front row of the gallery facing the Ark.

I must not leave out the Shabbat lunches we organised for many years, frying four hundred fish balls in the Shul kitchen. We were very smelly. It was all great fun and there was never a cross word.

These are some of my happy memories.

EALING SYNAGOGUE WELFARE COMMITTEE

By Alison Shindler, Coordinator



Alison Shindler

The Ealing Synagogue Welfare Committee operates according to the ethos of the United Synagogue Community Cares group. We are all members of Ealing Synagogue and our aim is to support members of the community who may be experiencing difficulties, for example relating to loneliness, bereavement or illness. The support can be in the form of telephone contact, visits or practical help. We follow strict guidelines relating to confidentiality and attend relevant training sessions organised by the United Synagogue.

We welcome volunteers of all ages and hope to use whatever time you feel you can offer.

We also provide appropriate "seasonal"

input such as Pesach gifts and are hoping to resurrect the teas which were enjoyed by many members in the past. This will hopefully give the opportunity to some of our members who do not attend shul regularly to meet together.

If you would like support from a volunteer, know someone in the community who you think would benefit from some support or would like to volunteer then please email me at alisonshindler@aol.com or leave a message with the shul office on 020 8579 4894.

Committee Members:

Rabbi Hershi Vogel
Ros Eger
Joyce and Ron Frankal
Ella Marks
Joan Michaels
Judith Robinson
Neil Shestopal
Leslie Sommer



STRICTLY ISRAELI DANCING!

By Marianne Izen

It reminds us of when we were teenagers. We do Israeli dancing every Tuesday evening and invite you to join us. We alternate between lessons and a practice so that we increase our knowledge of dances and the steps and sequences they contain. Much of the music is exquisite. We dance to settings of religious texts, poems and folk tunes. Some of the compositions and choreography are modern but many dances are those we remember from decades ago. Calling what we do "Israeli" is a misnomer, as we learn dances from around the middle east and dance to music from a variety of sources. The group that we attend uses the hall at the Ealing Liberal Synagogue but some of us also dance at Kol Chai, in Hatch End on Sunday

mornings, at JFS and elsewhere. We regularly go to dance festivals, such as the annual Hora Derbyshire, held over a weekend in June, or Machol Europa, in Loughborough in August, where people from all over the world meet to dance. Apparently in the folk dance world, Israeli dancing has a high reputation because of the range of types of dance and musical genres used. A number of us decided to join in on the beach at Tel Aviv last summer, but alas we were severely outclassed and stood by watching in awe.

We welcome beginners and if you are interested in joining us, even just once, to see how you like it, please contact Judith Robinson, who will be happy to give you details.

VOLUNTEER READING HELP

By Estelle Jacobs

Did you know that 1 in 5 children in the UK leave primary school without reaching the required reading level? Illiteracy leads to low self-esteem, low employment prospects and a high chance of turning to criminal activity.

Volunteer Reading Help (VRH) is a national charity and our aim is to build a nation of confident children who are literate for life.



We do this by training and supporting a team of amazing people who volunteer their time to become reading helpers in a

local primary school. They provide personalised reading support to 6-11 year olds and work with three children, one to one outside the classroom for half an hour each twice a week. They see these children for up to a year, or longer. The results of pupil surveys show that this intervention really works, improving reading skills and self-confidence generally.

As some of you already know, I began working for VRH in 1998, when I opened the Ealing Branch. Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow have been combined to form the West London Branch. We have over 90 volunteers and we are recruiting constantly, in order to reach even more children. Recruiting, training and managing these dedicated volunteers has been a rewarding experience for me. They have helped hundreds of children who struggle with their reading, building their confidence and encouraging them to learn.

And now – how can you help? Like all charities, VRH relies on funding and donations to continue our work. Here is one way. Anytime you order an item from Amazon, go to the VRH website first (www.vrh.org.uk) and then click on the Amazon logo/button (bottom left of the screen) you will then go into the Amazon website to place your order in the usual way. 5% of your purchase price will go to VRH.

My thanks to the editorial team for giving me an opportunity to tell you about this successful organisation and how you can help. If you would like to know more about VRH please do not hesitate to contact me. on 020 8998 7932.



Rosh Hashanna 2011/5772

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.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NEW BORN

Rabbi Hershi and Rebbetzen Zelda Vogel on the birth of their daughter Elisheva

Aviva and Robin Preston on the birth of a grandson Ziggy, to David and Suzi Preston, and a granddaughter Talya to Sarah and Ryan Dritz, in Israel

Joan and Tony Hitman on the birth of a new great-grandchild, Alex



BAT MITZVAH

Jessica Shindler-Glass



BIRTHDAYS

Edna Fortuyn on her 85th birthday

Joy Crystal on her 83rd birthday

Lilli Temple on her 83rd birthday

Valerie Fisher on her 80th birthday

Richard Goldwater on his 80th birthday

Shirley O'Gara on her 80th birthday

Brian Robinson on his 75th birthday

Stephen Hirst on his 60th birthday

Isabel Kosky on her 60th birthday

Alan Sierota on his 60th birthday

Oliver Gilford on his 18th birthday

Imogen Franks on her 12th Birthday



ENGAGEMENTS

Lilli Lerner on the engagement of her grandson Ashley (son of Neil and Lesley Lerner) to Sasha Mond

Eileen Eckman on the engagement of her granddaughter Michelle Hart to Joshua Pomerance



ANNIVERSARIES

Gillian and Arnold Livingstone on their Golden Wedding Anniversary



CONDOLENCES

Leslie Sommer on the passing of his mother Lilly Sommer

Peter Young on the passing of his wife Barbara Young

Lesley Filer on the passing of her sister Shirley Meier

Ilana Tahan on the passing of her mother Bianca Mattes

Hilde Stern on the passing of her great-granddaughter Maudie Watkins

Estelle Jacobs on the passing of her mother Sophie Nahum

Geoffrey, Ken and Reginald Edward on the passing of their mother Stella Edward

Janet Sharples on the passing of her mother Florence Morris

N

oah

Noah lived a long, long time ago and was a direct tenth generation descendant of Adam and Eve. He was not a Jew as he lived in the pre-Abrahamic era but he is said



to have been the only good guy in the wicked world of his time. His debut appears early in the book of *Genesis* and the story of the flood, the Ark, the animals going in two-by-two and all that business with the dove is well

known, even by little children. But it also contains several unique features which are worthy of special mention.

It records the first ever weather forecast, [*prolonged heavy rain in all areas; widespread flood warnings*], the first details of a ship-building project, the first project for animal conservation and protection of endangered species and the first mentions of wine-making [good], binge drinking and drunkenness [bad].

N

aomi

A famous Jewish mother-in-law whose love for her widowed, non-Jewish daughter-in-law, Ruth, was echoed by Ruth's devotion and enduring loyalty to Naomi which is immortalized in the biblical Book of her name.

Note - Ruth became a Jewess, married again, [to a nice Jewish fellow] and King David was her great-grandson.

N

uns

Nuns are religious women who have taken vows of dedication to lives of spirituality. Some forms of Judaism do have women rabbis but they do not have any nuns, or female bishops. Yet.



N

naches [Yiddish]

A feeling of pride and pleasure especially on the achievements of those close to you. Children are the prime sources of *naches* until they are supplanted by grandchildren whose achievement requirements may be minimal or absent.

N

nebbish [Yiddish]

A person who is inept, shy, timid, ineffectual etc.; definitely not *alpha* material and usually has a low *naches* rating. However, *nebbishes* are often just late developers.

N

Nobel Prizes

Established in 1895 by the will of the Swedish chemist, Alfred Nobel, who had invented dynamite, these prizes are regarded as the most prestigious recognitions of academic achievement in many fields. The fact that Jews have been recipients of an inordinately high proportion of these awards has long been a source of well justified *naches* amongst the Jewish community at large. (Note- Some Nobel laureates probably started off as *nebbishes*).



THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPAEDIA

THE LETTER "N"

N

Nebuchadnezzar (II)

A Babylonian king who, though quite definitely not Jewish, has a prominent mention in the biblical book of Daniel, and is notorious for having conquered Judea and Jerusalem, destroyed the first Temple and sent the Jews into exile and slavery. He also has a bottle



named after him which has a capacity of 20 standard wine-bottles, or 15 litres. That is a lot of bottle but it is not mentioned in the Bible.

N

Nazarites

In biblical times Nazarites were Jews who had taken ascetic vows. They lived separately from others and abstained from haircuts and wine. If whisky had been invented in those days it would probably have been forbidden too. The most famous Nazarite was Samson, who was noted for his phenomenal strength. You don't see many about nowadays and long hair is generally a matter of fashion or neglect.

N

nu? [Yiddish]

A form of questioning which may be short in syllables but is rich in meaning, e.g. -well?...so?...what now?...how much?...etc., but unfortunately the nuances are lost in translation.

N

New Year [commonly known as *Rosh Hashanah*]

It might appear to be rather odd that our new year starts at the beginning of the seventh month, *Tishrei*, rather than at the beginning of the first month but it is not so odd if the following points are considered:-



1. In the Bible it is not called *Rosh Hashanah*, the New Year, but *Yom Hazikaron Teruah*, a day of remembrance of blowing of the *Shofar*. [Lev.23.23], or just *Yom Teruah*, a day of blowing of the *Shofar* [Num.29].
2. Every day begins a new year. In secular life we have the income-tax year starting in April, the academic year starting in autumn, the grouse shooting year in August and various sports beginning at various times.
3. Rosh Hashanah can rightly be regarded as the commencement of a spiritual year as it heralds a new season of High Holy Days.

N

Noodles

Lockshen to you [or *vermicelli* if you should happen to be an Italian]. These thin strips of pasta are the reason for the invention of chicken soup.



Pesach 2011/5771

Times of Services

Sunday 17 April

Shacharit

Rabbi Vogel will be in the synagogue purchase Chametz.
The search for Chametz should be carried out after night fall that day.



8.15 a.m.

9.00 a.m.—
10.00 a.m.

Monday 18 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



6.45 a.m.

10.40 a.m.

11.50 a.m.

7.15 p.m.

7.48 p.m.

Tuesday 19 April—1st Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

Second Seder commences after

9.30 a.m.

7.30 p.m.

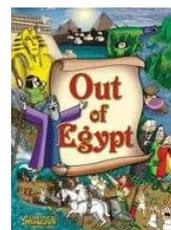
8.55 p.m.

Wednesday 20 April—2nd Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

Yom Tov ends



9.30 a.m.

8.15 p.m.

8.56 p.m.

Friday 22 April

Mincha/Maariv

Shabbat begins

7.15 p.m.

7.54 p.m.

Shabbat 23 April—Shabbat Chol Hamoed

Shacharit

Mincha and Rabbi's Shiur

Maariv and Yom Tov ends



9.30 a.m.

8.15 p.m.

9.02 p.m.

Sunday 24 April

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

7th Day Yom Tov begins

8.15 a.m.

7.15 p.m.

7.58 p.m.

Monday 25 April—7th Day Pesach

Shacharit

Mincha/Maariv

8th Day Yom Tov begins



9.30 a.m.

7.15 p.m.

9.08 p.m.

Tuesday 26 April—Last Day Pesach

Shacharit—includes Yizkor

Mincha/Maariv

Pesach ends

9.30 a.m.

8.15 p.m.

9.08 p.m.



14/100

Peter