THE GGS JOURNAL

News and Views from Golders Green Synagogue

September
2012
Ellul 5772

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The GGS Journal is compiled and edited by Joel Clark. To propose articles for future editions, please email joelclark@gmail.com

Cover image: Golders Green Synagogue Ministers and Board of Management in the 1920s


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Golders Green Synagogue has a new website
www.goldersgreenshul.org.uk

Golders Green Synagogue
18 Dunstan Road, London NW11 8QS
Tel: 020 8441 7266
info@goldsy.org.uk

The GGS Journal is available on the website www.goldersgreenshul.org.uk

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COMMUNITY NEWS 2011-2012

Presenting the highlights from a diverse range of programmes across the community over the past year

**October 2011**
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- Communal Shabbaton with Rabbi Yehuda Gilad of Yeshivat Maale Gilboa

**November 2011**
- Mitzvah Day – social action projects across the community (see page 11)
- Communal Shabbaton with Rabbi Natan Slifkin of Yeshivat Lev HaTorah in Ramat Bet Shemesh

**December 2011**
- DRESS Supper Quiz, held in the Joseph Freedman Hall
- Shabbat Lunch for young families in the Lebetkin Hall, attended by 80 people

**January – March 2012**
- Torah to Warm your Winter series of three educational shabbatot - Aliza Bulow, Benedict Roth and Rabbi Belovski - Rabbi Dov Linzer - Rabbi Menachem Leibtag

**March 2012**
- Flagship annual Purim event – Megillah and hot-dog supper, attended by hundreds of people from within and outside the community

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Youth events, 2011-2012

It was a busy year for the youth, with highlights including a mock version of The Apprentice and a Zumbathon.

April 2012
- Communal Shul Seder in the Joseph Freedman Hall, organised by Julia and Benny Chain with a “Crossing the Red Sea” theme
- Yom Haatzmaut Shabbaton with his excellency Daniel Taub, Ambassador of Israel to the Court of St James’s

May 2012
- Shavuot – an innovative new educational programme, including Tikkun Leil, attended by 100 people, drasha by the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks on second day and afternoon programme with three women educators
- Communal Shul Seder in the Joseph Freedman Hall, organised by Julia and Benny Chain with a “Crossing the Red Sea” theme
- Yom Ha’atzmaut Shabbaton with his excellency Daniel Taub, Ambassador of Israel to the Court of St James’s

June 2012
- Best of British Jubilee themed Friday night dinner for young professionals, hosted by the Belovskis
- Barbecue for young families, hosted by Charles and Lucy Coleman
- Pre-Olympic Greek themed Friday night dinner for the youth, hosted by the Belovskis
- Fundraising lunch hosted by Sydney and Ruth Glatman, raising £1,500 for the shul redevelopment fund
- Tisha B’Av educational programme, with shiurim by Rabbi Belovski

July 2012
- Summer learning Shabbaton with Professor Elliott Malamet, lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities at York University and Department Head of Jewish Thought at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto
- Mitzvah Day in 2010 and 2011 saw our youth helping out at the Chicken Soup Shelter in Stamford Hill, a charity they chose to support and which provided the fundraising focus for the Dunstan Road version of ‘The Apprentice’, one of Gabz and Simon’s biggest successes.

Farewell to our youth directors

Golders Green Synagogue this summer bade farewell to Gabrielle and Simon Stern, who have served as the community’s youth directors for the past two years. Hope Samuel looks back on the successful events they have organised.

The youth of Golders Green Synagogue have been very lucky to have had Gabrielle and Simon steer us as youth directors for the past two years, but sadly we have had to say goodbye to them this year as they move on with their lives.

Highlights of the past two years of youth activity that particularly stand out include the weekly Jewish Philosophy course, devised and run early on in Gabz and Simon’s first year for the older years, and the Israel Advocacy programme they ran this year with the fantastically inspiring Glen Bezalel.

Mitzvah Day in 2010 and 2011 saw our youth helping out at the Chicken Soup Shelter in Stamford Hill, a charity they chose to support and which provided the fundraising focus for the Dunstan Road version of ‘The Apprentice’, one of Gabz and Simon’s biggest successes.

The Apprentice really captured the imagination and energy of many of our youth. Over several weeks, they formed themselves into groups and, with the help of some well-chosen speakers and Gabz and Simon themselves, they researched and devised various ideas to raise money for their chosen charity.

On a Sunday evening in January, each group presented their plans, including budgets and marketing ideas, to an audience and panel of judges that had to choose the best one, which would then be implemented. It was a thrilling coup to have businessman Claude Littner, who appears in the real Apprentice, as a judge alongside Julia Chain and Vivienne Lewis.

All of the youth were incredibly impressive, and highly commended by our judges. The winning group of Avigayil and Eli Fishburn, David Hochsader and Sam Baderman went on to run a very successful Zumbathon, attended by 80 women and girls, which raised a fantastic £1500.

As well as these headline events, Gabz and Simon have also organised a steady stream of meals, kiddushim, discussion groups, two tikkun leils on Shavuot, two rounds of ‘pizza in the hut’ and much more. They have re-established our occasional youth minyan and have been warm and encouraging to all our youth, while also being valued members of our community in their own right.

We will miss Gabz and Simon hugely, and thank them for everything they have done. They have been excellent role models for our youth and have tackled the job with passion, creativity and good humour. We wish them all the best for the future.

Gabz and Simon will be replaced by Jenny Mays and Sammy Epstein who take up the new role this month and will be featured in the next issue of the GGS Journal.
Rimon: Meet the Head Teacher

Dr. Zoe Dunn, newly appointed headteacher of Golders Green Synagogue's first community school, answers the journal’s questions

A year after the Department for Education approved Rimon Jewish Primary School as a new free school on the backlands of Golders Green Synagogue, the school will welcome its first intake of pupils in September 2012. The GJS Journal speaks to Dr. Zoe Dunn, Rimon’s founding headteacher, about her vision for the future of the school.

Q What is your background prior to joining Rimon?

Zoe Dunn (ZD): I was raised and educated in the south of Kent and then studied at Homerton College, Cambridge. After graduating, I moved to London to research my PhD, which focused on the economics of the literary and publishing marketplace in the mid-Victorian century. I have been teaching in North London schools for the past 10 years. I started my teaching career in the state sector in Kent and subsequently taught in preparatory and independent schools. Most recently, I was Head of Junior School at The Royal School in Hampstead for four-and-a-half years.

Q What attracted you to the position of headteacher at Rimon?

ZD: I love a challenge! Being the head of a new free school is a unique opportunity to literally build and shape a school community that reflects one’s educational ideals and philosophy. Excellent schools are synonymous with North London, in both the state and independent sector, but which is another way to re-engage a community and provide a different model of education. In this sense, this role provided me with the opportunity to blend the very best elements from both the maintained and independent school sectors in order to deliver a really unique and special educational environment.

I am also very interested in the diverse and varied culture of Golders Green and so being appointed as a non-Jewish head of a Jewish school is a challenge that appeals to me. I am very fortunate that all the Governors of Rimon have strong and wide-ranging talents, and that we all share the same educational vision of a local school founded by members of the community for members of the community. This committed and dedicated core of the school was a huge attraction and is a real strength of the school.

Q How would you describe the kind of school Rimon will be to prospective parents?

ZD: Rimon will be a happy, nurturing school with high expectation for all, diversity at its core, and which develops the knowledge, wisdom and joy of learning in all its capacities: social, emotional and academic. Rimon pupils will be considered and compassionate towards their community, peers and the environment, and they will have an understanding of how they contribute to the diverse and global society and economy.

Q What would you say are the most important elements of a successful primary school?

ZD: I believe that pupils learn best in an environment where they feel safe and where they can feel themselves, feeling valued and respected. Essential in a primary school is a nurturing environment that understands the needs of each individual child but creates opportunities for belonging to the community.

Primary education is about moments of wonder when children overcome challenges to master new skills and concepts. It is about strengthening character and resilience so that children embrace all the new challenges they face with excitement and a belief in their talents and ability. Developing an environment that stimulates and engages children so that they master basic skills while building on their natural talents and interests is key.

Having a curriculum that is both ambitious and relevant to the global, technologically advancing society, that also develops social and emotional awareness is absolutely central to the primary curriculum, and so I was keen to discover other programmes and approaches to developing the whole child and their good practice in America and Sweden. Indeed, many countries like Singapore and Finland, which top international league tables, are now placing emphasis on SEL to enhance the learning and educational experiences of children. I would recommend anyone to apply for a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship as it broadens your professional insight and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore your profession with colleagues from across the world.

Q What were the biggest challenges involved in preparing to open Rimon since you started your new role?

ZD: Building and shaping a school is a challenge, but nonetheless it has been a fascinating one. It has often been the little things that have caused most angst but I am pleased to say that the whole process has been an incredibly exciting learning experience. I have no doubt that all the hard work will be rewarded when I welcome the pupils and parents of the founding Reception class this September, looking forward to the start of term.

Q You were recently awarded the Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship. How did that influence your role at Rimon?

ZD: The Churchill Fellowship was an incredible experience and one I was very fortunate to have. I travelled to Alaska, New York, Chicago, Seattle, Texas and Sweden and visited numerous schools to research the impact of social and emotional learning (SEL) on school communities. SEL enables pupils to recognize and manage their emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and socially, and develop empathy, relationships, and avoid negative behaviour. It is the process through which children enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving in order to achieve important tasks and goals.

In the UK, SEL has mainly been dominated by Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) in the primary curriculum, and so I was keen to discover other programmes and approaches to developing the whole child and their good practice in America and Sweden. Indeed, many countries like Singapore and Finland, which top international league tables, are now placing emphasis on SEL to enhance the learning and educational experiences of children. I would recommend anyone to apply for a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship as it broadens your professional insight and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore your profession with colleagues from across the world.

Q What do you like to do when you’re not working?

ZD: I love going for walks on Hampstead Heath and generally being out and about in London and the surrounding areas. I also love spending time with friends and family, and am a keen walker and am interested in different places around the world.

Q What keeps you awake at night?

ZD: The same thing that keeps most people awake I would guess: worry. I am a list writer so I like to organise my worries and I can often be found jotting down notes and thoughts. At times, some of my best ideas or solutions have come to me in the middle of the night or in the early morning. On the whole though I have learnt, through my wonderful family, that there are not many worries that should keep me awake at night. But one worry is missing my family if they said anything to upset me.

And finally...-

Q What is your view on the role of the chair of governors in a new school?

Rachel Clark (RC): The role of chair of governors is crucial in any case, we got through and received the phone call in October to say that Rimon Jewish Primary School had been successful and we were now in the "pre-opening" stage of the process. The idea was first conceived in January 2011 when the Government’s Free School programme was launched, and Golders Green Synagogue has a long and rich history but there has never been a school in the area that complements its vision and ideals. A group of local parents, professionals and community members decided that the time had come to do something about this. The Free School programme was not right for every educational establishment, seemed to work well with Victorian and the process we eventually chose. Over the next four months we worked on our application – more than 100 pages of educational ethos, financial planning, curriculum planning, site analysis and governance. Added to the excellent resources of the New Schools Network, we were very fortunate indeed to have been awarded a Westminster Fellowship to support the “pre-opening” stage of the process.

With the planning in place we then began to consider the vision and ideals of the school, and considered carefully and passionately. Our chosen group also allowed us to be very carefully considered and systematic. Our steering group allowed us to be very carefully considered and passionate. Our steering group also allowed us to be very carefully considered and passionate. Our steering group also allowed us to be very carefully considered and passionate.

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Your Community Needs You

At a time when the net membership of Golders Green Synagogue is now rising for the first time in many years, the community needs volunteers more than ever to run the vast range of activities and support those in need. Rabbi Belovski and Susan Freiberger pay tribute to volunteers and appeal for your support.

The Value of Volunteering

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski

Today we celebrate the immense contribution of our volunteers. No community can function without those who give so generously of their time and expertise and who are especially blessed. I think it’s vital that once in a while we thank them, they should never be taken for granted.

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, the late nineteenth century founder of the Musar movement, was once approached by someone who claimed that he only had one hour a week available and asked what study during that hour. Rabbi Yisrael replied that he should learn Musar, because that would enable him to utilise that he actually had more than one hour free.

This sentiment applies to volunteering too. I suspect that many people feel they either have no time or are not well-suit to volunteering. This is rarely true. If you were to meet our volunteers, and those who benefit from their involvement, you’ll discover quickly how much time you can make available.

While of course volunteering enables the community to run smoothly, and to provide services that might not otherwise be available to assist individuals, anyone who does volunteer is or is engaged in any other type of chessed will tell you another side of the experience. They gain at least as much themselves as the recipient of the experience of volunteering.

Conceptually, this is no surprise: the act of giving is itself something goodly. Jewish life is guided by the principle that we “walk in God’s path” by emulating Him. Since God is the giver and we are the recipients, altruistic acts replicate the divine model, bringing goodness and satisfaction to those who perform them. On behalf of everyone in the community, may you be blessed with success, good health and continue to inspire me and others.

Golders Green Cares

Susan Freiberger

I have been a busy year for our care group, and the help of the group leaders has been invaluable. Please join me in thanking our group leaders: Sara Rafter for the Befriending in Bereavement Group; Eve Dolkett for one-to-one visiting, Rachel Paul for hospital visiting, and Ruth Glatman for hospitality and for Tov food gifts. Finally I would like to thank all the volunteers who are so busy in our community for their wonderful support and contributions.

In your王晓 mailing this year, you will have received a fridge magnet with details of our care group. Please put it on your fridge and if you need help, or you know someone that does, just call the direct number and someone will get back to you within 24 hours.

At the beginning of this year, I was very unwell and the support I received from my family, friends, volunteers and members of the community was incredibly special. It made me realise how important it is to be there when times are bad as well as good, and how appreciated it is.

However, our care group is in a very sad situation - we have many requests that we are unable to fulfil as we simply do not have enough volunteers. I was very fortunate to welcome a new band of volunteers this year, who are doing an excellent job. But we still need more help, in particular from volunteers who are available during the day to visit elderly members of the community in their homes.

This year I ask you please, when you make your Tzedakah contribution, to think about other ways of giving back. It is so easy to write a cheque or put your hand in your pocket and give a few coins in the passing charity tin, but how about giving something else to the community? Give your time.

I am sure there are many of you out there who are in part-time work, or perhaps have flexible hours, and could offer an hour every week or every few weeks. Whatever time you can offer will help the community, and it is immensely rewarding. Just ask one of the volunteers. Wishing you all a Shana Tova - a happy, healthy and sweet New Year.

Mitzvah Day

Joel Clark

Over the past three years, Mitzvah Day has become an increasingly important part of the Golders Green Synagogue community calendar, bringing together diverse groups from across the community for a day dedicated to social action.

Mitzvah Day’s mission is to reduce hardship and poverty, to help the environment and to bring a little joy where it is needed most, all done through the dedication of time rather than money. Mitzvah Day in November 2011 was the third year in which Golders Green Synagogue was involved, and saw the largest number of volunteers yet (pictured right).

In the Joseph Freedman Hall, Suzette Palmer led a marathon ‘knitathon’, with large numbers of volunteers turning out to knit squares, which were then pieced together to make two beautiful home-crafted blankets. Both blankets were donated to World Jewish Relief in memory of Rosalind Beckman Z’t.

The knitathon took place against a backdrop of the community’s annual ‘collectathon’, in which members turn out their wardrobes and store cupboards to find useful items to donate to our nominated charities. At the end of the day, 43 bin bags of clothes were sent to World Jewish Relief, to be distributed to communities in need in eastern Europe, with additional donations to Wizo and Vision4Kid.

On Golders Green Road, another highly successful project was registered in 2011 – the Mitzvah Day shopping project, in which volunteers ask shoppers to donate extra food items to our nominated charity. Located outside Sainsbury’s Local this year, it celebrated volunteers included Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski, Professor Benny Chain and Lord Monriee Palmer.

In total, the Mitzvah Day Shopping project generated 12 large crates of food, all of which were donated to Cricklewood Homeless Concern. “Our thanks to your congregation and supporters for the wonderful generosity they demonstrated. We will use the groceries for hot meals over the winter and hand out a selection of goods to our homeless people,” wrote CHC chief executive Danny Mahler afterwards.

Meanwhile the youth of the community once again used Mitzvah Day to support the Chicken Soup Shelter in Stamford Hill, making sandwiches for the beneficiaries and spending time volunteering at the shelter.

Mitzvah Day is not only a very inspiring initiative that brings our community together every year for a wholly positive cause, but as more people get involved in more projects, it is also having a greater impact on those most in need, both within the community and outside it.

Mitzvah Day 2012 will take place on November 18 and will be coordinated by Samantha Vaughan. Watch out for more details over the coming weeks, or email vaughan.samantha@googlemail.com to get involved.
In his Rosh Hashanah message for 5773, Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski considers the power of prayer - both as an individual and a community

The concept of community is important here: of course it is possible to do it alone, to connect with God on a mountain top or in our living room, but we can achieve more if we act together. While we each have our own needs, aspirations, fears and hopes that are quite distinct from every other member of the group, we benefit immensely from tapping into the energies of our community, meeting, singing and listening to God together.

For Rav Soloveitchik:

- The inclusion of others is indispensable. Man should avoid praying for himself alone. The plural form of prayer is of central Halakhic significance. The foundation of noble and prayer is human solidarity. (Ibid)
- And besides, there is safety in numbers, something helpful when we are struggling with our own personal issues.

This need may be what draws us to celebrate Rosh Hashanah together, why even the scarletly affiliated feel motivated to drop in on the festival in some way or other. The shofar, the prayers, tunes, special foods, and community bonding are the tools we use to celebrate the anniversary of creation and the universal sovereignty of God. But they also provide a safe space within which we can acknowledge and rejoice in the healthy tensions that make us human, annually renewing our conviction that God has chosen us as his partners in building a better world.

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski, interim of Golders Green Synagogue

In the prayer community the initiative belongs to man: he does the speaking and God does the listening. (Ibid.)

The power of prayer is a source of inspiration. Man should avoid praying for himself alone. The plural form of prayer is of central Halakhic significance. The foundation of noble and prayer is human solidarity. (Ibid.)

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski, interim of Golders Green Synagogue

REFLECTIONS ON A SUMMER CYCLE RIDE

Last year, Michael Levett hale, founder and director of the Jewish Food festival Geliftzeit approached me with what seemed like a madcap scheme. He and his fiancée Rachel Marcus were planning to cycle from Lands End to John o’ Groats in June 2012 and wanted one or more rabbis to join them for each stage of the trip – what he called a ‘rabbi relay ride’ lasting three weeks. Michael is not just one of the nicest people I know, but also one of the most convincing. Inevitably, I agreed to participate.

Michael and Rachel, cycling the whole 1400 miles with their friend (and now mine) the inestimable named Taryn Klobrick, pulled it off. They were able to persuade around 15 rabbis from all denominations to do a stint, fostering awareness of environmental issues and raising funds for worthy causes as well as for their own causes (mine were the Golders Green Synagogue re-development fund and Chaplaincy).

Instead of a baton, the rabbinical participants passed my shofar to one another as the ride progressed, although I cannot duplicate the feat of one colleague, who toasted the Marines on the shofar, I still hold the record for the single longest blast.

I had arranged to do my stretch night at the start of the relay cycling with the group for two-and-a-half days from Lands End to Bideford in Devon. Although I cycle short distances regularly – you may see me cycling around Golders Green – I had never attempted anything close to this distance and hillsiness, and I found the 160 miles so that I covered quite demanding. En route we met Brian, a Jewish fellow from Wembley now living in Cornwall, a delightful Methodist who’d come to Penzance station to greet us, and a woman who redirected us when we took a wrong turn; she claimed to be called Green, but we knew better – she was really Elysha Halkin in disguise sent to help lost cyclists.

It was an exhilarating, albeit exhausting, experience: a chance to talk to people and share ideas in a relaxed environment and a great leveller in many senses. After I’d completed my leg and was back at home, the relay team claimed to be missing my company and offered to arrange my return for a day’s cycling in the Highlands. So after a busy rabbinical Sunday taking in a shul, a store setting, a Shul barbecue and a bar mitzvah, I took the sleeper to Scotland and enjoyed a beautiful day’s cycling, ending at Oban, happily just before the distillery shut for the day. There are rumours of a reprise next year – this time starting from John o’ Groats. Count me in.

Michael Levett

Michael Levett, founder and director of the Jewish Food festival Geliftzeit
The Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks looks back on his 21 years in office and the substantial progress made by the UK Jewish Community during that time, across education, welfare and culture.

I think of the new London Jewish Cultural Centre, the London Jewish Community Centre currently being built, and events like Jewish Book Week that attract ever larger crowds. Most of our synagogues are no longer simply houses of prayer. They have become community centres with active and dynamic programmes of all kinds.

Jewish welfare organisations like Jewish Care, Jewish Blind and Disabled, Norwood, Nightingale House, Langdon and others throughout the country have achieved unparalleled standards of excellence. Chessed activities thrived through almost all of our organisations and schools, and Mitzvah Day has inspired other faith communities, becoming this year a national project backed by the government.

The Jewish voice has become a significant part of the national conversation on moral and social issues, listened to respectfully by people of all faiths or none. Even the demographic of Anglo-Jewry has changed. Having declined year-on-year for 60 years, in 2005 the tide began to turn, largely thanks to the growth of the Haredi community. We are now growing, albeit slowly.

And yes, there are negatives: the growth of antisemitism and the various campaigns against Israel. But Britain remains, for the most part, a tolerant society. Jews and Judaism are admired, and in the fight against prejudices we have good and often courageous friends. Were our Victorian predecessors 150 years ago to see us now, they would be frankly astonished at the richness and exuberance of Jewish life.

Le alecha ha-melakhah leigmor: It is not for us to complete the task, but neither have we desisted from it, and together we have achieved great things. Our children and grandchildren will have new challenges to face, but they will do so with more knowledge and confidence than any Anglo-Jewish generation in the past.

So let us give collective thanks to God shehecheyanu ve-kijemanu ve-higiyanu lazman hazeh, who has brought us safely to this day. May the shofar of Rosh Hashanah summon us to yet greater achievements. May we remain true to our faith and a blessing to others regardless of their faith. May God write us and our families in the Book of Life.

Bobirat ketivah vechathamah tovah

CHIEF RABBI LORD SACKS
Daniel Greenberg, who was a member of Golders Green Synagogue as a child in the 1970s, recalls some of the characters who devoted their time to running weekly services and gave the community its unique identity.

Daniel Greenberg, a former member of Golders Green Synagogue in the 1970s and son of current member's parents, Greenberg.

I must have been Yom Kippur 1938. I do not have much real memory of the day, but I do recall that after I got home from the shul, my wife took me away from Liverpool after September 1939, across the sea to my maternal grandparents in London and Dublin. So it must have been 1938.

Liverpool’s Great Street shul, a reclamiation from a modest non-observant, had taken over the shul, abounded in families whose devoted observance to Torah and midrash was determinedly combined with normal, common sense and commitment to professional and communal duty.

As a young child you could take your pick, pretty much roaming around to sit with whoever you liked from time to time. When I was a little sitting with my father, I spent most time sitting with Mr Gilbert, whose practical wisdom and gentle humour were intensely compelling, or with my dear friend Miriam Rosen, the exuberance of whose participation in anything with a catchy tune was matched only by his ability to distinguish one note from another. There are so many other faces that I learned much about how a shul is run from him.

His, Alan’s, gathering of a group of us together and taught us basic nusach, in inimitably efficient style he taught us everything we needed as a foundation, so that we could experiment from a basis of knowledge – a strong contrast to the method today where youngsters seem to think that a decent voice and acquaintance with some outdated Hebrew folk-songs are a sufficient survival kit for life at the Omdut. The blatant disregard of chazzanim for people’s lunchtimes has pretty much killed off chazzanut as an effective force in religious life; but Alan made sure that correct nusach, without which much of our liturgy cannot be properly appreciated, would survive a little longer.

Facilities for girls were much more limited, although a number of people did their best. The problem was that the whole attitude in those days was that we simply took it for granted that girls would be contented with their lot, which centred around waiting until it would be their turn to put out the Kiddush. Things have got a little better since then, but much more progress is required if we are to persuade modern girls that Judaism can satisfy them intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and socially.

I cannot help but recall that Neilah, which in retrospect seems so awesomely to presage what lay ahead.

The closing moments of Yom Kippur and the Neilah service are a time like no other in the Jewish year. Geoffrey Paul recalls a Yom Kippur more than 70 years ago in Liverpool’s Great Synagogue, when the emotion and elation of Neilah were replaced by drama.

The shul abounded in families whose devotion to Torah and midrash was determinedly combined with common sense.

was inspiring. People with serious issues about Judaism who asked me about them privately would receive a considered and honest response, which might have been expected from the image that he cultivated for public consumption.

Reverend Livingston

On the other side of the shul in all ages, sat Reverend Livingston. His demeanour was distant and his sermons were boring for a young child. But he exercised his influence nonetheless, just by sitting there in his neat clerical dress and serving as a constant, I believe deliberately passive, reminder that one could be Jewish without leaping around and shouting about all the time. I acquired a set of his sermons when his library was broken up, and I find that their influence on me increases every time I read them.

Like many United Synagogues in the days before the Churh-of-the-Month club took over, the shul abounded in families whose devoted observance to Torah and midrash was determinedly combined with normal, common sense and commitment to professional and communal duty. As a young child you could take your pick, pretty much roaming around to sit with whoever you liked from time to time. When I was a little sitting with my father, I spent most time sitting with Mr Gilbert, whose practical wisdom and gentle humour were intensely compelling, or with my dear friend Miriam Rosen, the exuberance of whose participation in anything with a catchy tune was matched only by his ability to distinguish one note from another. There are so many other faces that I learned much about how a shul is run from him.

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Lord Monroe Palmer of Childs Hill, a long-standing member of Golders Green Synagogue, was introduced to the House of Lords in January 2011. He recounts some of the debates in the Upper House in which he has voiced an opinion over the past two years.

After his recent retirement as gabbai in the New Minyan, Stephen Shaw offers some light-hearted observations and suggestions for future gabbaim.

**Life in the Lords**

I was introduced into the House of Lords in a short but impressive ceremony in January 2011. The House of Lords does ceremony very well. I had to wear red robes and was introduced by two barons, also in red robes. I wore a yarmulke to swear the oath on the Old Testament. This seemed to concern the Clerk who thought it might fall off with all of the head nodding. All went according to plan and feeling relaxed, I proceeded out of the Chamber. I was not allowed to speak in the Chamber until I had made a formal maiden speech. By custom, one includes a bit about oneself in the first speech. I said the following: “My family background is a cocktail of nationalities. My late mother was Polish, and in the context of today being national, Holocaust Memorial Day, I remember her mother and aunt, who stayed in Poland and were never heard of again after the end of the Second World War. Today, we remember all those, not only in the Holocaust, those who suffered so much as my mother and sadly perished in those dreadful times.”

As a member of the Upper House, I am able to host events in the Palace of Westminster. I particularly enjoyed hosting an event for the Jewish Volunteering Network in June 2011 (pictured right). In the image, Lord Monroe Palmer of Childs Hill (left) hosts a reception at the House of Lords for the Jewish volunteering Network. Pictured with him (from left) Leora Leven, director of JVN, Lord Jonathan Sacks, Barons of Braunstone QC, and Susan Weston, chair of JVN.

**Confessions of a Retired Gabbai**

I was trained by the best – Brian Beckerman. With Brian at the helm, everything ran smoothly; the right people got called up; we started on time; and the service ran on schedule. But though my admiration for Brian is second to none, I do think that each new Gabbai should make his own mark. I hung up my – whatever it is that gabbaim hang up when they retire – this past year, but I thought it wise for posterity to at least set down, prior to gliding into senility, the important principles of gabbayot, as I see them.

- Punchlarky can be over-rated. When people say we start at 9.30am, obviously that’s 9am. As Julian Goodkin, my prodygly, has pointed out, does the minyan not start because the gabbai is not there? Chill, it will start eventually.
- Of course, it’s always nice to have a solo torah in the aron at the start of the service. But what if Derek Diamond is not in that stall at that week, and therefore has not made the transfer from the Loidl to the Loidl? I think Derek should do that.
- Always think that little frisson of excitement as the aron is opened at 9.30am, without preconditions – a common theme of many of my contributions on the subject over the years. Topics I have addressed include the roshet attacks on Israeli towns, the Arab Spring, water problems in the Middle East, the threat of Iran, and a debate initiated by the Archbishop of Canterbury on Christians in the Middle East. In that debate I pointed out that of all the countries in the Middle East, Israel was the safest place to be a Christian.

The House of Lords does valuable work scrutinising parliamentary legislation and I am pleased to be able to take an active part in that work. All my speeches are recorded in Hansard and available online.

**Lord Monroe Palmer**

- “vayachem binsoar aron…” just adds to the service. Will there be a seller there? Won’t there? People need that thrill of uncertainty. With me they got it.
- A lot of fuss is made about calling people up by the right name. Obviously in an ideal world, this would happen. But I’ve always found people very understanding in this respect, and generally if at least one of the names comes up, this corresponds to their actual name, they’re happy. You can minimise potential problems in flagging the stage of the service, so who knows? Best therefore to go for the sillest academic sort, which our kehilla has in spades, so again, potentially no problem.

There is of course more, but maybe this is enough to be getting on with. The intention is to expand this into a proper manual for gabbaim generally, which at least I’ll then be paid for (which I wasn’t for this article, for some reason).

My greatest pleasure has been to hand over to a successor who I have nurtured with love, and whose prediclection for spontaneity has at times exceeded even my own. Julian, you give me great nachat. See you in shul at 9.30am – shalom.

On a less frivolous note, I should perhaps take this opportunity to thank the kehilla for the joy and privilege of serving as gabbai in the New Minyan for so long (I hope not too long), and also to apologise to those whom I may have offended by the not-infrequent muck-ups - all generated by my ineptitude rather than by design.

Shana Tova Umetuka!
DEAR FRIENDS,

We are delighted to have been asked to give you an update on our lives across the pond. One year of business school is now over and one more year remains before we head back to London in May 2013. We are looking forward to rejoicing the community on our return.

Our first year was an intense whirlwind of activity ranging from trips to China (Andrea’s school project), India (Adam’s school project), and the Maldives (the honeymoon) to finally understanding the Eurozone crisis, banking reform, how to start a business, and why good people can make bad decisions. Through full days of case study discussions with our 90 fellow students, we’ve managed to hopefully absorb a decent amount of knowledge and have fun in the process!

We are sad to be nearing the end of what has been a really great summer. Andrea has been working for a company called Biggen and has been helping them figure out the best way to launch a new drug to treat amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, if approved.

Adam has been working for a start-up company that will help the world lose lots of weight. Some clever students at Harvard Medical School have come up with a special pill that expands in the stomach and stays there for up to three months. Adam has been helping the company develop their market launch plan in addition to a bunch of other tasks as required. It’s been really fun to see a start-up from the inside.

We seem to have done some kind of trip almost every weekend over the summer. We have mostly stayed within a three-hour drive of Boston but that has taken us to the Hamptons, Connecticut, the Berkshires (Western Massachusetts), New Hampshire and Maine. Maine was really fun as we went with some London friends who came to visit us as part of a big US trip. The Hamptons were beautiful. In Connecticut we hung out with Andrea’s family on a really great beach, which was also very nice. In New Hampshire, we took a speedboat across a lovely lake to get ice cream. We have had visitors from Golders Green as well, including Richard Verber, Stuart Adam, Benedict Roth and Adina Roth. Please let us know if you are visiting as we’d love to meet up.

We have just found out what courses we will be taking this year. Andrea is going to be doing lots of healthcare, marketing and leadership, while Adam is focusing more on corporate transactions. Adam is also doing a “Commercializing Science” course, where you get to hang out with some scientists and help them develop a business plan for their scientific discovery. Most exciting is that it looks like our schedule will be pretty chilled out compared to last year.

We are particularly excited about our plans for the Harvard Business School Jewish Student Association for this year. Adam is the president and Andrea is the chief financial officer! We are printing T-shirts for the new members and we have written on the back “Chai Achiever” – genius, huh? We are currently trying to organise a big Chanukkah bash for all of Boston’s Jewish graduate students, so hopefully that will all come together.

Anyway, enough talking about ourselves. Hope to see you all soon.

STUART

SHANA

ANDREA

TOVA

AND

ADAM

xx
PAUL: Rachel and Geoffrey Paul wish the whole Dunstan Road family a year of health, happiness and the achievement of all their goals. Special greetings to our indefatigable rabbi and his family and the honorary officers who are taking us into a new era in the congregation’s history.

PALMER: Susette and Monroe Palmer and family wish everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

WAIHOFER: Shana Tova greetings and wishing you all a sweet and a happy year ahead. From Norman and Viviane Waidhofer, together with Benjamin, Andrew, Anthony & Robert.

Habib: Aldo and Eveleen send all the community good wishes for a happy and healthy New Year. Even if we are not able to get to shul very often, we appreciate the warmth and friendship show to us from all of you. Shana tova.

Your legacy is cancer care

A cancer diagnosis and living with the effects of treatment is often the most traumatic and overwhelming time in a person’s life.

Chai Cancer Care provides a comprehensive range of specialised support services to Jewish cancer patients, their family and friends. Remember Chai in your Will and help ensure that we can continue to provide our expertise and care for as long as there is the need in the Jewish community.

If you would like to know more about Chai Cancer Care or how to leave a Legacy, please contact Chai on 020 8308 2211.

Registered Charity No. 1109916.
After many years of planning and fundraising, the site of Golders Green Synagogue will undergo a comprehensive redevelopment over the coming year. Benny Chain outlines the plans as they currently stand.

The full plans for the redevelopment of the main synagogue building and the back of the site continue to evolve. These photos show the current state of the buildings, but we fully expect them to look very different in a year’s time! Rimon School will open in September, initially using the Lebetkin Hall, which has undergone a basic refurbishment to render it fit for purpose. After the Chagim, demolition of the Joseph Friedman Hall will begin, and it is expected that by the time the backlands are complete, both the Joseph Friedman Hall and the Lebetkin Hall will have been replaced by a state-of-the-art purpose-built school building.

As for the main synagogue building, work to repair the roof began over the summer. This work should be completed in a few weeks’ time, although unfortunately not quite in time for the Yamim Noraim. We will then at least have a building that is water-proof, insulated and has a new boiler.

The priority for the next phase of the redevelopment is to replace the essential facilities we will lose with the demolition of the back buildings: a new kitchen, new lavatories (men and women), and flexible spaces within the main synagogue to accommodate a Beth Hamidrash for our daily Minyan, community social functions, and of course our weekly kiddush. At the same time we plan to reconfigure the seating within the front of the main synagogue to provide a more intimate space for prayer for both men and women.

There is lots going on, and we recognise there is bound to be some disruption to community services while the building works are in progress. We will of course do our best to keep this to a minimum, and hope you will be patient in the knowledge that we will end up with a much improved centre for our community’s busy life.

There will be an opportunity to discuss the plans in more detail at an open meeting on Sunday 23rd September at 11am in the synagogue. Please come and let us hear your views.

BENNY CHAIN
ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAZEL TOV TO...

• Brian Beckman on the birth of a granddaughter, Rachel.
• Diana and Donald Franklin on the birth of a grandson, Yedidya Dov.
• Naomi Rose on the birth of four great-grandchildren: Jonathan, David, Green, Yaakov Menachem, Rose, and Kayla Goldberg.
• Jenny and Jonathan Sandler on the birth of a son, Theo.
• Samantha and David Vaughan on the birth of a son, Nathaniel.
• Oli and Dina White on the birth of a daughter, Oli.

MAZEL TOV TO THIS YEAR’S CHATANIM...

• Chathan Torah: Alan Rays, Chathan Bereshit: Charles Coleman.
• Eshet Chayil: Jacqui Zinkin.
• Junior Chatanim: David Charm Belovski, Abe Tolley.
• Junior Eshet Chayil: Emma Kaufman.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS...

• Hildegard Abraham, Linda Baum, David and Amable Bendor, Emmanuel Blankett, Martine Boogarts, Helen Freedman, Ruth Hajji, Paul and Gemma Hyman, Robert Jacobs, Adolfo Maggioni, Sharon and Galit Sadah, Avraham and Ann Shapiro, Loretta Sumeray, Sam and Heline Walden.

Deaths

Sending condolences to all those who have lost a family member over the past year.

• Reuben Cohen, Henry Dubosa, Bobbi Feiler, Harry Finlay, Gerald Geist, Mirjam Grinbin, Sara Habbil, Michael Harris, Leon Hartman, Sara Hershman, Sammy Issac, Dina Kelly, and Jason Ibrahim, on their marriage.

Dates for your diary

• Sukkot party hosted by the Belovskis, 41 The Ridgeway, Wednesday 3rd October, 8pm.
• Celebration chazan session on Shemini Atzeret (8th October), Joseph Freedman Hall, 5.30pm.
• Simchat Torah lunch on 9th October, Joseph Freedman Hall, after davening, booking essential.

Full details in your Rosh Hashana mailing.

The AL Fund

In memory of Rabbi Avichai Tzeitelboim, 7, Wavell Road, London NW3 3BE.

The AL Fund was born.

The fund provides basic nutritional staples such as bread, meat and fish on a regular basis. The fund also focuses on providing food in the holiday season before Passover and Sukkot, thus easing the financial burden at a time of great expense.

Now that the holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot are approaching, we are relying on your support more than ever. Hundreds of families in dire need in Israel are relying on us to provide them with the basics needed to get them through the holidays. We cannot do it without you! We are in desperate need of funds, so please consider the financial stressful times. These needy families view the donations as deliverance from G-d’s angels themselves.

We can be those heavenly angels sent to lay their empty tables in times of greatest need.

May these worthy donations bring all supporters protection from all accidents and misfortune, bringing them all blessings, with health, tranquillity and a long life.

Please make cheques and vouchers payable to: Ezer V’Hatzalah Ltd, Reg. Charity number 1171140

And return with freepost envelope supplied.

Ezer V’Hatzalah Ltd. 52 East Bank, London N16 5PZ.

Full details in your Rosh Hashana mailing.
Crystalline Dry Cleaners wishes all of its customers in Golders Green a very Happy and Healthy New Year

www.crystallinedrycleaners.co.uk

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