

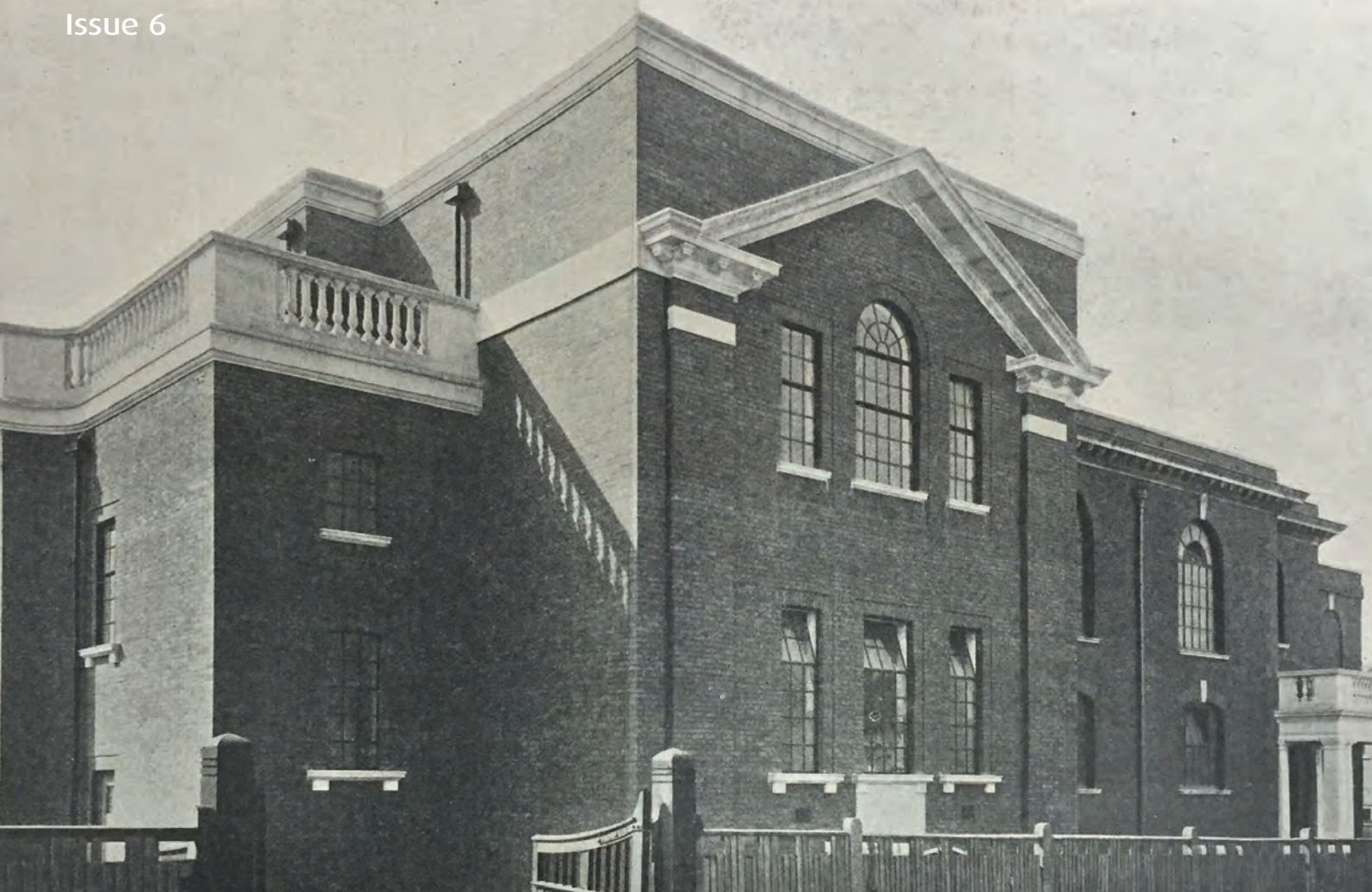
# THE GGS JOURNAL

CENTENARY  
EDITION

September  
2015  
Ellul 5775

News and views from Golders Green Synagogue

Issue 6



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- GGS, then and now: memories and photos from the past century
- Special centenary message from Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis
- Interview with Barbara Michaels, daughter of Rev Isaac Livingstone



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## FEATURES



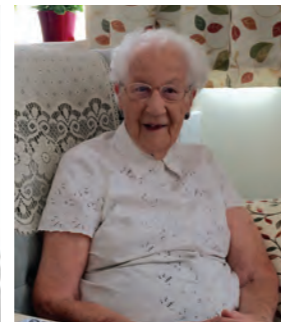
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# 100-YEAR JOURNEY



This special edition of *The GGS Journal* marks the mid point of our centenary festivities, which celebrate the first 100 years of our Golders Green Synagogue community.

Rather than focusing on the building, which opened in 1922, it was always our intention that these celebrations would centre on the community itself, which was established in 1915, in the middle of the First World War, in the hall of Golders Green Parish Church.

The journey over the past century took us through the First and then the Second World War and the waves of social change in the 1960s and 1970s. And just as society has evolved, so too has our community; from the exponential growth of the early days, that led to packed overflow services, to the decline in members over a 30-year period and the more recent resurgence.

A taste of this journey is memorably recorded in the poster presentation currently on display at the back of the Shul hall, which was compiled by the historian Helen Fry. Dr Fry's book, *Golders Green Synagogue: the First Hundred Years*, will be launched in January.

A community means people, and in many ways, this magazine and this year have been all about honouring and remembering those people, past and present, who have made the community what it is today. In the pages that follow, you will read about Rabbis and lay leaders whose dedication and commitment has contributed to the community's growth and development over the years.

Reverend Isaac Livingstone, for example, served the community for nearly four decades from just after its inception, and remained active as emeritus minister well beyond his retirement in 1954. His younger daughter Barbara, now 97, shares her recollections of her father's legacy and the community's earliest days on page 18.

Reverend Livingstone's successor, Rabbi Dr Eugene Newman, became a much-respected leader in the years that followed, and his death on a Shabbat morning in 1977 left an indelible mark on all who knew him. Alan Mays writes movingly on page 9 about the impact of that day.

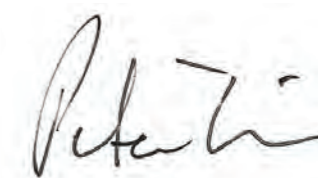
Aside from further contributions from Dayan Binstock and our current Rabbonim, this edition features recollections of other important individuals and events from the past century. The many photos featured in the magazine and the book also tell an important story – of how traditions and protocols have changed as the community has evolved.

As we reflect on the growth of our community in recent years and prepare for its next century, I would like to express my thanks to all those who have given up their time to mark this centenary year.

Those who were present at our special Shabbat event in June will have had the opportunity to hear Chief Rabbi Mirvis and Rabbi Belovski speak about this historic occasion, and we are grateful to both of them, and to the Presidents of the United Synagogue and the Board of Deputies, for their support. It was also a pleasure to welcome our local MP, Mike Freer, the Mayor and Lady Mayoress, the leader of the council and the ministers of our two local churches.

Finally, our thanks go to Julia Chain, who kindly agreed to chair and drive the centenary celebrations, and her committee. The next two events – the centenary lecture with Professor Simon Schama and Lord Sacks on December 7, and the book launch with Dr Helen Fry on January 13 – promise to be a great success.

While all of these centenary events and publications naturally look back on the extraordinary journey of the past century, we are still on that journey, and our ability to adapt to changing circumstances will be fundamental to our survival and continued success. We will do well to remember that as we embark on our second century.



PETER ZINKIN  
CHAIRMAN  
GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE

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Production of the magazine is made possible by the generosity of our advertisers and those taking out sponsored greetings.

To place an advert in the next edition, please contact the Shul office.

Cover photo: Exterior of Golders Green Synagogue, 1927

# ON BRITISH VALUES

Rabbi Dr Harvey Belovski uses the occasion of the GGS centenary to explore how Jewish sources deal with the interface between Jewishness and British values

**A**m I a British Jew or a Jewish Brit? I'm never quite sure which, or if there is really any difference. My family and, indeed, everyone in the British Jewish community, have enjoyed the incredible privilege of living in a 'malchut shel chessed' – a benevolent, tolerant and wonderful country. We have benefitted from the very best of British education, cultural experiences and complete equality in the law; opportunities that for most of history, Jews and other minorities could only dream of. All this while living a full and rich Jewish life, dressing as Jews and educating our children in the ways of our ancestors. The UK has always been and continues to be a marvellous place for a Jew to live. I am a proud, happy and profoundly grateful subject of Her Majesty. But with those incredible opportunities come weighty responsibilities, ones that Jewish sources take seriously because they lie at the very heart of Judaism itself. To be a Jew is to share responsibility for the building of society and to partner with those of other faiths and none to create a tolerant, respectful, safe and functional Britain.

**CITIZENSHIP**  
Actually, long ago, we were the first people to think about citizenship, when Jews first experienced exile from their homeland and began to grapple with the prospect of minority-hood. The prophet Jeremiah, who lived at the end of the first Jewish commonwealth in the Holy Land and faced the prospect of exile, encourages us to actively seek the

peace and prosperity of whichever country we find ourselves living in. He points out that Jews can only prosper if our host nation, its values and aspirations, are effective for all people. And we do not sit on the side-lines – we must be at the forefront of making that success possible. These ideas have been repeatedly emphasised throughout Jewish history by thinkers, philosophers and law-makers.

In the first century CE, Rabbi Chanina insisted that we pray for the welfare of the country in which we live for "if it were not for government, people would eat each other alive". This was said about 1500 years before Thomas Hobbes noted that a society without stable governance would deliver lives that are "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short".

Jewish liturgy includes a prayer for the Queen, the government and the armed forces. In fact, all British synagogues recite a version of this

## TO BE A JEW IS TO SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BUILDING OF SOCIETY AND TO PARTNER WITH THOSE OF OTHER FAITHS

prayer every week. It may seem like an anachronism, but it encourages us to remain focused on peace, order and stability for all.

This is a core Jewish/British value – loyalty to and love of the country and respect for its authorities. Critically, this has nothing to do with our own political affinities or whether we agree with government policies



RABBI HARVEY BELOVSKI

but is a basic feature of Jewish life. And following this, we must emphasise the importance of teaching and understanding British culture, national history and developing sensitivity towards its norms and expectations. Of course, you won't catch me eating a black

pudding or putting a Christmas tree in my house, but I want my children to know about the lives, loves and beliefs of others as mature, contributing citizens.

**RESPECT FOR LAW**  
My next, related, British values are respect for law and knowledge of right from wrong. By 200 CE, Rabbi

Shmuel was advocating the core legal construct 'dina demalchuta dina' – the law of the land is the law; a principle that has been enshrined in Jewish law and practice ever since.

To teach right from wrong, we needed a compulsory school system. In fact, the first in the world was invented around 50 CE in a Jewish town called Yavneh. Indispensable features of that Jewish education include respect for law and order, honesty in business dealings, and, most crucially, a recognition that every human being is equal before the law – in, as we might say, the eyes of God and Man.

This last point can't be overemphasised - it starts right back in Genesis 1:27 with the phrase – betzelem Elohim bara otam (God created every human being in His image). This notion has been repeatedly overlooked throughout history, yet it underpins everything we believe, and most importantly, how we conduct ourselves in relation to those whose beliefs we don't share.

Without exception, every human being contains the divine spark. Tolerance, mutual respect and fair play for all – all central British values flow obviously from that basic, universalist biblical principle. Most of the time these principles manifest themselves positively, but we also subscribe to taking the rough with the smooth. Over 20,000 Jews fought for the British in World War I and over 30,000 in World War II, many losing their lives to defend king and country.

My late father-in-law carried out his national service in the Army, teaching literacy and numeracy to recruits. My own father performed his in the 1950s – as a radio operator in the RAF at Bridlington in Yorkshire. Of course, we hope and

**CENTENARY PRAYER**  
THIS SPECIAL CENTENARY PRAYER WAS COMPOSED BY RABBI BELOVSKI AND HIS SON DOVID CHAIM, AND THE HEBREW ORIGINAL WAS RECITED AT THE CELEBRATORY SERVICE IN JUNE

May He who blessed our ancestors Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless this holy congregation - Kehillat Kenneset Yisrael Golders Green – as it completes 100 years from the year of its founding. May He also bless all those who visit it to pray, all its leaders from the day of its inception until now, all its supporters and all those who are occupied with its needs. May the merit of its founders and their aspirations stand for us today and for the generations that will follow us. May the Holy One, may He be blessed, send blessing and success upon all the works of our hands and may He grant length of days to this holy congregation with peace and insight until the coming of the redeemer. Let us say: Amen.

pray that none of this will be needed again, but Jewish law and ethics require us to stick with our host country through thick and thin.

Continuing this theme, my family suggested another core British value – having a sense of humour, and not taking ourselves too seriously. It takes a lot of confidence to do this, but it's really British to be able to poke gentle fun at oneself and one's community's foibles. Maybe the Jewish experience has been unique, but while we have many faults, we're rather good at this. We have much to learn from other cultures and faith groups, but this is one that others might learn from us.

**ADDRESSING CONFLICT**  
But what happens when our religious beliefs or practices clash with British values? Jewish sources are clear here – we can advocate for ourselves using only legitimate political means – i.e. within the system. But at root, tolerance is so enshrined in the

British psyche that, with God's help, religious liberties for Jews and other minorities will continue to flourish.

There are many reasons why religious and other minorities have succeeded in the UK and other Western countries, notwithstanding the occasional difficulties that arise. We may wonder why members of minorities can wear their own clothes, build their own places of worship and are able to believe, pray and practice as they choose.

In previous centuries, and in many other places around the globe, when societies were more religious, they were also more closed-minded and intolerant. I believe that the western liberal democracy, of which the UK was one of the first and remains one of the best, is the reason.

Judaism, Islam, Catholicism – in fact all non-establishment religions – have flourished side by side because of the freedoms of the West. And at the heart of those freedoms is free speech, the freedom to criticise, not necessarily the obligation, but the right to probe, expose, reject, disagree and, yes, sometimes offend.

I hear hurtful, and often untrue things said about Judaism, Jews and Israel, and I know that my colleagues from other faiths feel the same about the way their own faiths are portrayed. But I will defend with great vigour the authors of those ideas and their right to express their views within the law, even when they deeply upset or even affront me.

This is the last, and arguably most important British value that I validate and embrace as a senior British Jew – or is it Jewish British – leader. 🕊

THIS ESSAY IS BASED ON A TALK GIVEN AT NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY IN MARCH 2015.

# NURTURING DIVERSITY

Rabbi Sam and Rebbetzin Hadassah Fromson, who joined Golders Green Synagogue as assistant Rabbi and Rebbetzin in May 2015, reflect on their first four months with the community

Joining a new community can be daunting. Will the people be friendly? Will our daughter have a good peer group? Will we like the atmosphere? What will people expect of us? These were just some of the things going through our minds during the months between accepting the position in February and moving here in May.

We now know that we have a lot to be thankful for. We are so appreciative of the warm welcome and strong support that we have received from all directions and it is clear that our fears were unfounded, because this community already feels like home.

We have very much enjoyed getting to know people from across the community at a range of different events. From the first outing of the Dunstanites, our

We have been so impressed by the sincerity and dedication of the committed people who make the shul tick. Equally, we have been encouraged by the almost constant stream of new arrivals to the community who are keen to contribute and looking to find their place.

Hadassah grew up in Gibraltar, fondly described by a visitor as a Sefardi Chareidi shtetl on the Costa del Sol. The Jewish community in Gibraltar numbers around 600 families and there were only 24 kids in the entire Jewish high school. The pace of life is beautifully relaxed and during the summer months the school closes early due to the heat and all the kids go to the beach. In contrast, Sam grew up in HGSS, a United Synagogue community of more

SAM & HADASSAH FROMSON



RABBI AND REBBETZIN FROMSON ON HOLIDAY IN BATH

When God tells the Jewish people to build the Mishkan, the mobile sanctuary in the desert, He orders them "v'assu li mikdash v'shachanti b'tocham" conventionally translated as "make for me a sanctuary and I will dwell in it." As the commentators point out, however, this is not grammatically sound. "B'tocham" is plural, therefore the verse literally translates to "make for me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them."

What does this mean? The message is that if we succeed in making a "mikdash", a sanctuary for God in our lives, then God will dwell within us. This explanation is reminiscent of the famous line from the Kotzke Rebbe. A follower going through a crisis of faith once asked him, "Rebbe, there are so many bad things happening, where is God in the world?" To which he replied: "God is wherever you let Him in".

As a community, we need to make the effort to let God in. To carve out time from our busy lives to dedicate towards spirituality and religious connection, to building our wonderful community based on shared values and actively demonstrating the respect and care we have for each other. 🌟

## OUR VISION OF WHAT WE CAN ADD TO THE COMMUNITY IS TO HELP NURTURE ITS GROWING DIVERSITY, WHILST SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF SHARED VALUES

five-a-side youth football team, through to barbecues, Shabbat meals, Rimon events and shiurim. Each experience has helped us to understand something more about the needs and interests of different groups of people, and of course we still have a lot left to discover.

### EXCITING FUTURE

This is a great time to be at Dunstan Road. The community has a rich history, and we are honoured to be part of the ongoing centenary celebrations to mark that, but more importantly it has an exciting future.

than 3000 and went to City of London School.

Our families have very different religious hashkafot, education, experiences, languages and places of birth. But these differences only make our lives richer, because they are underpinned by shared values.

Our vision of what we can add to the community is to help nurture its growing diversity, whilst supporting and developing a culture of shared values – values of Torah, of religious inspiration, of respect and care for each other. This is something that we all have to work on.

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# GG SYNAGOGUE, THEN AND NOW...

The Golders Green Synagogue community was established in 1915 in the hall of Golders Green Parish Church. Though there are few surviving members from those earliest days, many current members cherish fond memories of growing up in the community. Our centenary coverage begins with photos and recollections from the past century

## BACK IN THE SIXTIES

ROBIN SUMMERS

In the early sixties, Golders Green Synagogue had a full choir in the room above the Ark, led by the magnificent bass baritone, the late Martin Lawrence.

The imposing presence of the late Reverend Livingstone wearing canonicals and looking, as one local east European once described him, like the Pope. I will always remember a statement from one of his sermons in the sixties: "Some of you will remember the Chief Rabbi's conference of 1904".

The major change from those days is in the occupations of members from manufacturers of dresses/coats/gowns/furniture/furriers and tailors to the rise in the professional classes today. Even more marked is the change in the number of women in those professions.

Perhaps we always had a fair number of doctors - I well remember a congregant collapsing on Yom Kippur and being surrounded by as many as five medical practitioners.

Having survived two World Wars, I hope the Shul will continue to thrive and prosper in its next century.



TOP RIGHT: A GGS SHABBATON AT YAKAR; RIGHT: RABBI NEWMAN (CENTRE) WITH HARRY WARD (LEFT) AND REV TASCHLICKY (RIGHT); BELOW LEFT: MINISTERS AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT WITH CHIEF RABBI HERTZ AT THE OPENING OF THE BUILDING, 1922

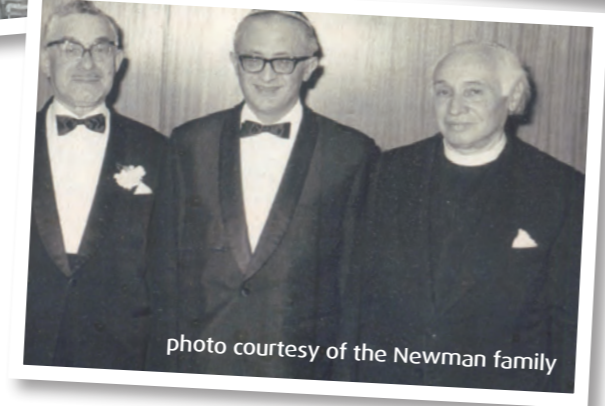


photo courtesy of the Newman family

## WARMTH OF COMMUNITY

DAVID RURKA, RA'ANANA

I have many fond memories of Dunstan Road Shul, as we fondly called it from the early to late sixties. My late father Simon Rurka was the financial representative for a number of years, combined with his masterful Shofar blowing, which he executed with perfect pitch.

What I remember most was the warmth and friendship exuded by the congregation at large, the rare occasions when the then aging Reverend Taschlicky would, out of nowhere, hit a phenomenal top C, and the beautiful choir during the Yamim Noraim. My very best wishes for your centenary celebrations.



GGs, THEN

## HALF A CENTURY AT GGS

MONTY BRAHAMS

I first joined Golders Green Synagogue in 1967, having moved to the area two years before with my late wife, Anita, and my daughter Susan. Anita served the Kosher lunches to the Jewish children from Wessex Gardens at Shul during the week.

At that time, the Shul was so busy that there were almost no seats available - on the Yamim Noraim every seat would be filled, with some even sitting in the aisles. The gallery was a sight to compete with Ladies' Day at the Royal Ascot.

I'd never previously led the services, but one Shabbat morning the imposing figure of Leslie Green approached me and persuaded me to lead Pesukei d'Zimra. I was so spiritually uplifted by the experience and have since led the start of the service many times.

After I retired in 1988, I started to attend weekday services in the Lebetkin Hall and always enjoyed the warmth that permeated among the regulars. Over the last two years I have been unable to go to Shul on Shabbat due to lack of mobility, but I am very grateful to Terry Sopol, who drives me there every Sunday morning, and to Robin Summers, who always steps in if Terry is unavailable.



## A ROSE HAS BEEN PLUCKED FROM OUR MIDST

ALAN MAYS

No one who was in Shul on Shabbat morning January 1, 1977 will ever forget that service.

Rabbi Newman had uncharacteristically not arrived for the start of the service. A neighbour of his dramatically rushed into the Shul to seek help from one of our doctor congregants, as the Rabbi had been taken ill as he was about to leave home for Shul.

The doctor returned a while later shaking his head sadly and gave the devastating news to the Wardens that Rabbi Newman was dead. The Gaboim decided not to disrupt the service at that stage, but to break the news to the congregation towards the end of the service, after the repetition of the Musaf amida.

I was the choirmaster of the voluntary choir at the time, and the chazzan told me what had happened but instructed me to tell no one. After the Sefer had been put back in the Ark before Musaf, Dayan Swift gave an impromptu sermon, during the course of which he cleverly weaved in the theme of a rose being plucked.

Musaf was then recited and at the end of the Kaddish that followed, I gestured to my choristers to sit, rather than leading the community into singing Ein Keilokeinu. They were puzzled but sat, as did the somewhat bemused congregation.

Dayan Swift returned to the pulpit and alluded to his earlier remarks about the plucked rose. He told us to brace ourselves for what he was about to say, and then delivered the stunning news about the death of our beloved and respected Rabbi - concluding with the words "a rose has been plucked from our midst".

The kehilla was deeply shocked and many of the choristers actually burst into tears, but I persuaded them to continue with Ein Keilokeinu, which we did with difficulty. The memory of that service was indelibly engraved in the minds of all of us who were there that morning.

TOP LEFT: INDUCTION OF JONATHAN SACKS AS RABBI, SEPTEMBER 14, 1978; ABOVE: INTERIOR OF THE SYNAGOGUE DECORATED FOR SHAVUOT

## BOOK WORMS

EVA BLUMENTHAL

The Dunstan Road Book Circle was established 13 years ago. We started with about a dozen members and although over the years there have been a few changes in membership, we now get about 15 people at our monthly meetings.

Our oldest member made Aliya at the age of 99 and on her hundredth birthday she was presented with a birthday card from the Queen by the British ambassador in Israel.

We take it in turns to choose the books and host the meetings. Originally we read only books on Jewish subjects or by Jewish authors, but we have widened our scope and there are now no restrictions. We have some very literary members, but most of us just like to read.

Although we are a large group and, unlike most other groups, include both men and women, no one is afraid to voice their view. Occasionally we have invited distinguished speakers who were friends or relatives of members, to talk to us about their work.

Amazingly we have never had any rows and indeed have become close friends.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DUNSTANITES FOOTBALL TEAM WITH RABBI SAM FROMSON; MITZVAH DAY ACTIVITIES, NOVEMBER 2014; PURIM CARNIVAL, MARCH 2015; COOKING FOR THE HOMELESS ON MITZVAH DAY, NOVEMBER 2014**



## MY YOUTH IN THE COMMUNITY

PENINA BOWMAN

I have four memories from my childhood at Golders Green.

The Sukkah in the Lebetkin Hall, decorated lavishly with a thick layer of shiny green laurel leaves with a vast array of real fruit hanging far above the heads of us children. We were welcomed and ushered in to "move down the Sukkah" by the tall and imposing Herbert Goldsmith. A kichel and a crisp in a huge crush of people seemed to be a religious requirement of the holiday.

Up to the 1970s, all the Jewish children at Wessex Gardens Primary School were taken to GGS by coach for Kosher dinners. A boy we knew explained that they were called Kosher dinners because you went to get them by coach.

Cheder in the 1970s, three times a week with my teacher Miss Kohn who taught me so well that I still remember her lessons 45 years later. Thank you Miss Kohn.

My sister Judith being in the first Bay Chayil group – the ceremony was held in the Joseph Freedman Hall in 1981.

## GROWING UP AT GGS

EMMA MAYS, NETANYA

I remember when my Dad did the choir. When I was little I used to sit downstairs next to him and I remember Mick Stoller, Uncle Sydney Torrance, Laurence Jacobs, Ralph Cohen, Ubbi Cowan and Monty Land singing.

I still know all the pieces. We used to have rehearsals in our house before Rosh Hashanah and Dad got cross if they made mistakes. A couple of times I came downstairs and sang the right tune, which made Dad more cross with the choir!

I remember my Bat Mitzvah in the Joseph Freedman Hall. It was great. We had pink and white balloons, strawberries and cream and I gave a speech.

I remember on Simchat Torah sometimes naughty boys (I think my brother was one of them) dropped rubber spiders from the choir gallery.

I love living in Israel but I really will always love Golders Green Shul and will never forget all of our lovely friends.



ABOVE: DANIEL HOCHHAUSER AND DANIEL BECKMAN AT A GGE EVENT, OCTOBER 2014; ABOVE RIGHT: RABBI BELOVSKI WITH ADAM AND ELIJAH QUINT; RIGHT: SHUL BOARD MEETING, JULY 2015





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**MESSAGE FROM CHIEF RABBI EPHRAIM MIRVIS  
IN HONOUR OF THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF  
GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE**

Valerie and I are delighted to extend our very best wishes to the Golders Green Synagogue on the occasion of its centenary celebrations.

It was an honour for me to address the community at the special Shabbat morning service to mark the centenary. There was a wonderful atmosphere in Shul as we celebrated 100 years of community excellence. That the words 'Golders Green' have become all but synonymous with the Jewish community in London, makes clear the significant and lasting impact that the Shul has had over the last century.

The first time the number 100 appears in the Torah in its own right is in Bereishit (26:1): "Now Isaac, planting seed in that land, was blessed one hundred times over (*Meah shearim*), for the blessing of Hashem was with him." 100 is therefore associated with eating the blessed fruits of one's labours, and this is something that the Golders Green community is most certainly doing right now.

Two key factors have contributed to the Golders Green success story. The first is the partnership between religious and lay leaders. Renowned Rabbis who have graced the Shul's pulpit have worked hand in hand with outstanding community leaders to guarantee the ongoing vitality of the congregation. This is the key to the current success of the community. Rabbi Dr. Harvey and Rebbetzin Vicki Belovski are a most accomplished Rabbinic couple, providing inspirational leadership and guidance. They are working in close partnership with the outstanding lay leadership team, led by Peter Zinkin. With the recent addition of Rabbi Sam and Rebbetzin Hadassah Fromson, the community is blessed to have a formidable leadership line-up.

The second feature of the congregation's success has been its ability to adapt successfully to changing circumstances. This has found its current expression through the redevelopment of the Synagogue building and the opening of the highly successful Rimon Jewish Primary School. The Golders Green Synagogue site is now a wonderful centre of Jewish religious, educational, social and cultural excellence.

Mazaltov and Hatzlacha Rabba,



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# GOLD AND GREEN

Dayan Ivan Binstock, Rabbi of Golders Green Synagogue between 1983 and 1996, recalls his time in the community

I am delighted to participate in this special edition of *The GGS Journal*, in honour of the centenary of Golders Green Synagogue, as the Shul and community occupy a unique place in the affections of our family.

My period as Rabbi, 1983-1996, was framed by Semachot. Rachie and I arrived in London just a few weeks after the Brit of our son, Yisroel, together with our daughters, Rivka and Shoshana. Our last Shabbat was Yisroel's Bar Mitzvah, Parashat Bamidbar. During that time we celebrated, together with the community, the birth of our children: Elisheva, Shira, Shimon, Yossi and Mochi.

In the months leading up to my appointment I had been in contact with Dayan Moshe Swift, the acting Rabbi of the community, following Rabbi Sacks' move to Marble Arch. I had very much been looking forward to building up a relationship with him and learning from his experience. Sadly, Dayan Swift passed away a few weeks after I took up office in 1983, though his influence would continue to endure in the community.

The community embraced us, and friendships we made then have continued years later. Coming from Kollel life in Jerusalem, we were so grateful to be in a United Synagogue that was close to the main centres

bond with the Sassover Rebbe, of blessed and saintly memory, whose community in Helenslea Avenue was one of the nearest to our own.

## EDUCATION

Rabbi Sacks, who departed the community in 1982, had left a legacy of a thirst for learning on which I was delighted to build. Our signature programme was our termly Adult Education lecture series.

I found in Golders Green Synagogue a combination of loyalty to Minhag Anglia – Anglo-Jewish traditions – as they had always been, together with a willingness to develop and change. Few Shuls I had encountered before or since said, for example, an extra psalm after Maariv when the service was held after nightfall, as was prescribed in the Singers Prayer Book!

Nevertheless, there was an openness to new ideas and initiatives. As well as our Education Programme, featuring eight lectures a term, we pioneered ventures such as the Shabbat Kodesh programmes and explanatory services, which are now commonplace in many Synagogues.

The insistence on high standards of Synagogue service with a readiness to explore flexibility in



THE BINSTOCK FAMILY

DAYAN IVAN BINSTOCK WITH HIS WIFE RACHIE AND THEIR CHILDREN AND GRAND CHILDREN, PRIOR TO THE WEDDING OF THEIR SON SHIMON, EARLIER THIS YEAR

period, there would always be somebody who would pull me up. If my sermon or shiur contained an argument that wasn't watertight, I could be sure that at least one person would point it out to me.

Yet at the same time we innovated. Welfare programmes, volunteer visiting, the 3Gs, and Chevra Kadisha, were all indicators of a community that was sprouting new shoots of growth in many areas. Gold and Green!

## SELFLESS SERVANTS

Looking back, Rachie and I think of individuals that had an enormous impact on us and were such selfless servants of the community. To mention just a few of them who now have sadly passed on: the late Gabi White, Leslie Green, Herbert Goldsmith, Lucy White, Joe Friedman, Aleihem Hashalom. They, together with many others, touched our lives and we feel greatly enriched for having known them.

We are delighted to learn of the recent resurgence in Shul membership. Our warmest good wishes are with Rabbi Dr Belovski and the community, that the next century will be even more glorious than the first, and that the achievements of our forebears will be a source of blessing for us all. 🌟

## GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE WAS ALWAYS A SHUL THAT SET GOLD STANDARDS IN LITURGY AND LEARNING

of Jewish life and resources and within easy reach of many members of our family.

I quickly established links with Rabbis of neighbouring shuls. I remember with particular affection the fact that I was able to forge a close

other areas became encapsulated for me in the very name of the Shul: Golders Green Synagogue – Gold and Green. It was a Shul that set gold standards in liturgy and learning. If I sang the wrong tune to Lecha Dodi during the Sefirah

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# OUR MUSICAL

# HERITAGE

Serving the community from 1935 until 1969, Chazan Moshe Taschlicky was a popular and melodious cantor. Jonathan Weissbart reflects on the contribution made by the community's many chazanim and choristers over the years

Many members of Golders Green Synagogue will surely remember the melodies and dramatic tenor voice of Chazan Moshe Taschlicky.

Also known as Moise or Morris, Taschlicky was born in 1901 in Southern Ukraine. Having moved to Hungary with his family at the age of five, he studied music with his father, who was also a fine tenor.

Propelled onto the stage early in life, he was appointed Chazan in Budapest at the age of 16. After a peripatetic early career, which took him to synagogues, concert halls and opera houses in Berlin, the US, Vienna and Holland, he moved to London in 1935 to take up the vacant post in Dunstan Road, beating 12 other candidates to the position.

Over the next 35 years, Taschlicky cemented himself in the London Jewish community and endeared himself greatly to Dunstan Roaders. Throughout his time as Chazan, he was accompanied by one of the finest Shul choirs in London, many of whose choristers were professional singers in their own right. Most congregants came to Shul to be entertained rather than to daven, and would look forward to a full choral Musaph Kedusha, good enough to rival the best opera performances of the day.

The central Bimah wasn't constructed until the 1970s, so the choir sang from high up in the choir gallery. Communication between the Chazan in front of the Ark and the choir was made through a complex series of mirrors. By the 1970s, the professional choir had disbanded and was succeeded

by a voluntary congregational choir under the direction of Alan Mays.

Taschlicky was actually the second Chazan at Dunstan Road. In 1922, Rev Asher Littenberg, whose name appears on the foundation stone in front of the Shul, was invited by Rev Livingstone to apply for the post in the recently completed Shul building. They had originally worked together in Bradford, and Littenberg had also served as Chazan in Derby and Bayswater Synagogues, as well as being Chazan Sheni at the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place. Littenberg, as well as being a fine Chazan, was a very devout person.



CHAZAN MOSHE TASCHLICKY

### MUSICAL STYLE

In its heyday, the Shul had three parallel services on the High Holydays. Rev Livingstone's successor, Rabbi Dr Eugene

Alman, augmented by Lewandowski, Sulzer and Dunajewski, as well as other Western and Central European composers. Each Chazan added his own melodies and the tune for

PHOTO COURTESY OF JUANITA DEMELLO, GRAND-DAUGHTER OF REVEREND TASCHLICKY

## OUR COMMUNITY IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE A TRULY DISTINGUISHED MUSICAL HERITAGE, WHICH WE WILL SURELY CARRY FORWARD

Newman, was an expert on Nusach Anglia (Anglo-Jewish liturgy and musical traditions) and made a melodious contribution to those services.

The musical style of the first half century of the community's life was very much guided by the liturgy of the Great Synagogue in Duke's Place. Much of the repertoire was from the famous 'Blue Book', with compositions from Anglo-Jewish composers like Mombach, Hast and

'V'Chol Ma'aminim', which is still used today, was originally introduced by Taschlicky.

After Taschlicky's retirement in 1970, an 18-year-old Meir Finkelstein, also the son of a Chazan, was appointed as his replacement, having already served as Chazan in Glasgow since he was 14. His stay in Golders Green was short-lived but he was remembered particularly for his fine lyric tenor voice and outstanding musicianship.

### COMMON THREADS

Thereafter, our community was served very ably by Chazan Chaim Abramovitz, who moved to St John's Wood after 10 years' dedicated service, followed by Reverend Michael Binstock, who served for nearly a decade as part of a family team together with his cousin Dayan Ivan Binstock. Due to financial pressures, Binstock became the community's first part-time Chazan.

Chazan Abramovitz now resides in Bet Shemesh, while Reverend Binstock still lives in Golders Green. Meir Finkelstein now lives in Houston, Texas, serving as Chazan to the largest Conservative congregation in

the US, having had a successful career as a Chazan and composer and arranger of both Shul and film music. In between appointments there were other part-time Chazanim, including Rev Reuven Turner and Peter Cowan.

Sadly, the community's most recent Chazan, Rabbi David Katanka, passed away last year. He possessed a sweet voice and a gentle personality. When Rabbi Katanka retired in the late 1990s, the community was going through difficult times and he was not replaced.

The common thread of the past 50 years of the Shul's musical journey has been the immense contribution made by Alan Mays as a senior

chorister and choirmaster, and latterly a fine baritone Chazan. Alan updated the melodies of the community, while staying faithful to the tunes introduced by past Chazanim.

Daniel Greenberg, who grew up in the community and attended Alan's davening classes as a teenager, has also provided a continuing link with the past. He now returns every year to lead services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, to great acclaim.

Our community is fortunate to have a truly distinguished musical heritage, which we will surely carry forward into our next century to reach greater spiritual heights. 📖

I am indebted to our member Tony Litten, grandson of Rev Littenberg, Juanita DeMello, the only child of Rev Taschlicky's only daughter, and to Alan Mays, for their help with this article. Juanita would be delighted to hear memories of her grandfather and can be contacted at [concheet@gmail.com](mailto:concheet@gmail.com).



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# THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER

Reverend Isaac Livingstone led the growth of the Golders Green Synagogue community for 38 years, seeing it through transformative and challenging times. Joel Clark talks to his younger daughter, Barbara Michaels, about her father's legacy

It is the small details of her father's tenure as long-serving minister of Golders Green Synagogue that Barbara Michaels (nee Livingstone) recalls most vividly.

The canonical robes he wore throughout his ministry, right from the community's earliest services in Golders Green Parish Church. The physical about-turn he made at her wedding when, having walked her to the chuppah, he then officiated at the ceremony. And a decorative ribbon that was tied around a plant pot at home when her family entertained Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz for a meal to mark the opening of the Synagogue building in 1922.

These are the hallmarks of a family life dedicated quietly and modestly to the growth of the community from its very earliest days.

## VOCATION

The younger daughter of Rev Isaac 'Ni' Livingstone, Barbara was born in Golders Green in 1917. Now 97, she recently moved back to the area and lives in sheltered accommodation in East Finchley. It has been 36 years since her father's death, but she still recalls him very clearly, and the selfless dedication with which her parents served the community.

"This was a calling for him rather than a job – he looked on his ministry as a real vocation. He wasn't academically brilliant, but he loved being minister, particularly the communal and social side of it. He was a people's minister, which was what the community needed in those early days," says Barbara.

Born in Nottingham in 1885 and raised in Manchester, the young Isaac Livingstone moved to

Portsmouth at the age of 14 where he finished school and began his ministerial training. Having studied at Aria College in Portsmouth and then Jews College in London, he married Henrietta Goodman in Portsmouth in 1912 and took up his first posting in Bradford. Their first daughter, Nancie, was born in Bradford just before the family moved to Golders Green in 1916.

"It would have been a very big move for them at that time and they were very badly paid, but my father thought it was worthwhile and he could see a future for Jewish people here. For a young couple in their early 30s, it must have been an exciting opportunity," says Barbara.

## EARLY YEARS

The community had already been established when the Livingstones arrived in London, but it was still tiny, having been led through its first year by Rev Nathan Levine, who had been appointed on a temporary basis. In the early months, Rev Livingstone and his wife went out and knocked on doors in the area wherever they saw mezuzahs, as they sought to grow the community.

During his 38-year tenure in the pulpit, from 1916 to 1954, Rev Livingstone presided over a period of dramatic transformation for the community, with its membership growing exponentially, the landmark opening of the Synagogue building and the proliferation of social, educational and welfare programmes.

"As a child, it was exciting to be in the midst of a flourishing community, and with the extension of the underground to Edgware,



BARBARA MICHAELS

more and more Jewish families were moving out of the East End. At one time there were as many as five simchas every Shabbat, and the Shul would be packed. Services were always conducted with great dignity, and there were overflow services on High Holydays," says Barbara.

## EVER-PRESENT

At home, Barbara and Nancie lived a calm life and benefited from a father whose work meant he was often present during their childhood. As the minister's daughters, they naturally had to behave themselves, and Barbara remembers helping to decorate the communal succah and prepare kiddushim as a child.

"We saw a great deal of my father because he lived at home and worked from home. He was a lovely man – one of the eminent Anglo-Jewish ministers of his time, who were very well respected and conducted their ministries with a similar outlook. He was very

BARBARA MICHAELS, 97, AT HOME IN EAST FINCHLEY. PHOTO BY JOEL CLARK

tolerant of everybody and particularly keen to build links with other faiths," says Barbara.

But life wasn't easy for the family. Rev Livingstone's low salary brought with it financial struggles, particularly in the early years when they were raising two young children. The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 heralded a time of unrest for Jewish communities across Europe, but it also had a big impact on the Livingstones.

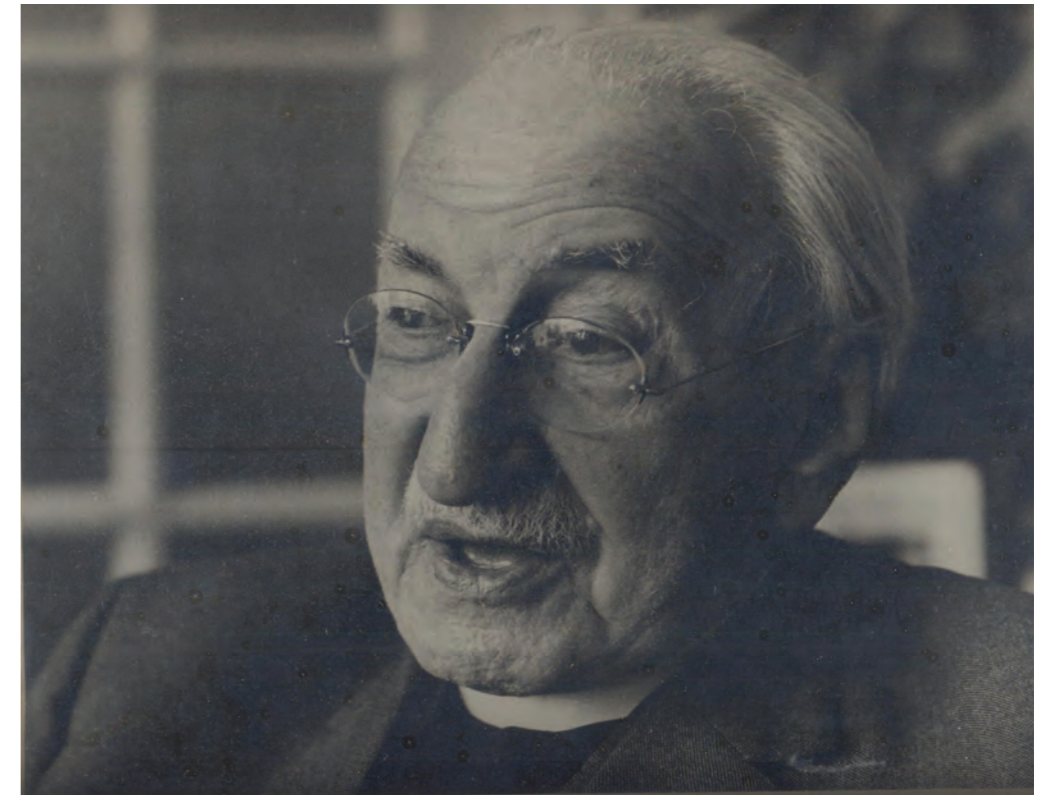
Having rented a small terraced house in Golders Gardens for most of Barbara's childhood, the family had bought a house on Woodstock Road just before the war. In 1941, nine houses on that road were decimated by a landmine, including that of the Livingstones.

While the residents had fortunately been evacuated in time and nobody was hurt, the family lost everything. For three months in 1941, Barbara and Nancie stayed with their mother at the home of friends in Welwyn Garden City. Their father remained in Golders Green to continue his job, visiting the family once a week, until the government eventually requisitioned a flat, allowing them to move back to the community.

"That was a dreadful time," recalls Barbara. "Life was certainly a struggle for my parents. He had no perks at all, and while he was looked after and well respected by the community, he always had to finance his professional and personal expenses with a very low salary."

## MARRIAGE

In 1948, Barbara married Isaac 'Dick' Michaels, a pharmacist who had heard her give a talk about Jewish family life to the London Jewish Graduates Association. At a time of severe post-war austerity and rationing, 1948 wasn't an easy time to hold a wedding, but rather than send out invitations, the Livingstones placed a notice in the



REVEREND ISAAC LIVINGSTONE, AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN AS THE 'BISHOP OF GOLDERS GREEN'. PHOTO COURTESY OF BARBARA MICHAELS

Jewish Chronicle so as not to offend anyone. Both the Shul hall and the Joseph Freedman hall, where a tea was held after the Chuppah, were packed for the occasion.

Barbara and Dick spent the first two years of their married life at home with her parents and then, after a year in Stanmore, they

warden at the Shul for many years.

As some current members of the community will recall, Rev Livingstone himself remained in Golders Green after his retirement in 1954, attending services throughout the tenure of his successor, Rabbi Eugene Newman. He died in 1979 at the age of 94, two

THIS WAS A CALLING FOR HIM RATHER THAN A JOB - HE LOOKED ON HIS MINISTRY AS A REAL VOCATION AND LOVED THE SOCIAL SIDE OF IT

bought a pharmacy in Ealing, where they lived for 50 years, becoming very active members of Ealing Synagogue. Initially trained as a teacher, Barbara had gained a degree in psychology and worked as an educational psychologist. Her sister Nancie stayed in Golders Green until her death in 2001, and her husband, Seymour Craig, was a

years before his wife.

"I think it probably would have been wiser to move elsewhere after he retired, but they didn't want to and it seemed to work quite well most of the time. He preached on his 90th birthday and remained a well-respected emeritus minister right up until his death," says Barbara. 🍷

# STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Ruth and Moshe Cohn were active members of GGS for nearly three decades, prior to making Aliya in 1997. They recall the stalwarts who made the community tick during those years

When we were asked to write this article our first reaction was that we're the newcomers – why not ask the revered figures who we recall as the stalwarts of the Shul?

Like Maisie Wray (the Queen of the kitchen sink), the powerful Harry Ward, elegant Fay Mays, or tall Herbert Goldsmith pouring drinks for the Kiddushim. It came as a shock to realise that while their wonderful example lives on, we are now the 'older' generation.

We began our association with Golders Green Synagogue when we moved to Helenslea Avenue in 1968, a few months after our wedding. Rabbi Newman was the Rabbi at that time. On the Yamim Noraim, there were three services; the main one in the Shul, a second in the Joseph Freedman Hall run by emeritus minister Reverend Isaac Livingstone, and a third in the Lebetkin Hall run by Reverend Joe Halpern. It was in this third service that we, as new members, were assigned seats.

Julian Verbov ran the children's

chaired by Brian Beckman, with monthly Shiurim in private homes attracting mainly singles, and a monthly meal in the Joseph Freedman Hall. It was always a great meal, prepared by members in the Shul kitchens, using unreliable ovens, co-ordinated by Jackie Crossley, with a great speaker and a tzedaka box at every meeting.

There was an active Parents Association and Cheder. Brian Beckman set up the Mishloach Manot distribution, which the dressed-up children delivered to the housebound of the community, creating friendships across the generations.

## LEARNING

Jonathan Sacks introduced the Tuesday evening learning sessions; a choice of lectures, a tea/coffee break to socialise, and another choice of lectures to finish off the evening. We enjoyed weekends away at Yakar in Stanmore and Annan Court – quite a different experience being away with our Shul friends.

The Tikkun Leil Shavuot began in 1979, with three attendees!

As the Sacks era came to an end, the Binstock era began. The Alexanders hosted Wednesday evening Shiurim on the Sedra, initially with Rabbi Binstock and later with Rabbi Katanka. There was

RUTH & MOSHE COHN



RUTH AND MOSHE COHN IN HAREI EILAT, NEAR THE SINAI BORDER WITH EGYPT, JANUARY 2011

a Rosh Chodesh ladies group. We also started special breakfasts on Purim, Yom Ha'Atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim.

We remember the children's services. Led by Robert Lipman and followed by Mike Posen, featuring 'Super Ish' and 'Whitestone Pond'. On the Yamim Noraim children packed the hall – parents also enjoyed the short, well-planned, abbreviated services.

We were overawed by the activities of the 35s (the campaign to help Soviet Jewry). Zena Clayton, Sylvia Wallace and Barbara Oberman – members of Golders Green, together with their friends, were inspirational as they successfully tackled the might of the former Soviet Union.

What an amazing mix of congregants made up Golders Green Synagogue in those days – everyone was accepted, and the Shul was an integral part of our lives. We were all family. We left the Shul when we made Aliya in 1997, but we can see from a distance that it has grown from strength to strength. Ken Yirbu! 🍷

## WHAT AN AMAZING MIX OF CONGREGANTS MADE UP GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE IN THOSE DAYS. EVERYONE WAS ACCEPTED, AND THE SHUL WAS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR LIVES

service. The Shul would host private Kiddushim and it is to Leslie Green's credit that when he entered the box he did away with that custom, ensuring Shul inclusion.

After an interim period with Dayan Swift, the baton passed to Jonathan Sacks in 1978. He initiated the 3Gs,

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# GGG: THE FIRST 100 YEARS

Researching the history of Golders Green Synagogue for a special centenary book yielded a number of surprises, writes historian Helen Fry

Writing the history of a community is a journey in itself. It is a re-living, albeit at a distance of some years, of the triumphs and struggles of a community.

When I started researching the history of Golders Green Synagogue, one question was dominant in my mind: why begin a congregation in the midst of the Great War? I soon discovered that the congregation's history is bound up with the history of Golders Green itself, and the rapid expansion from open green fields to densely populated urban development. Who moved into the area and why? I soon discovered that this was an up-and-coming middle class area, and those Jews who moved here were coming, not primarily from the East End as one might have expected, but from around Cricklewood and Kilburn. Golders Green was becoming a very fashionable place to live.

My research threw up something else unexpected as well. The religious life of Golders Green Synagogue was formally established in 1915 and the nascent congregation of only 20 members rented St Alban's Hall, which belonged to the local Anglican Church. The hall had only been built in 1908. The local vicar, Rev. Herbert Trundle, was himself in the throws of establishing a new congregation and trying to raise funds to build a church.

## PARTNERSHIP

And so I learned from its current vicar, Rev. Rex Morton, that St Alban's Church was not actually finished until 1937 – at least 15 years after Golders Green Synagogue was consecrated. In the early decades of these two

communities, until Rev. Trundle's death in 1937, Rev. Isaac Livingstone, the first minister of Golders Green Synagogue, and Rev. Trundle had a close working relationship of cooperation and respect – all this in the days before the new wave of Jewish-Christian dialogue.

Golders Green Synagogue rented St Alban's Hall from 1915 until 1922, not an insignificant timespan in the congregation's history. Rev. Morton also enlightened me as to how these congregations co-existed. The Christians worshipped in St Alban's Hall on Sundays and their festivals, and the Jews on Friday nights, Saturday mornings and all their festivals. The church was 'High Church' and this would have necessitated moving, or covering up, all Christian symbols and artifacts for a Jewish service. I was shown a rare photograph of the hall from this period.

Of surprise, too, was to learn why it took so long to actually build the Synagogue on Dunstan Road. This was the midst of the Great War and the government was using the plot as an allotment to 'feed the nation'. These gems in the Synagogue's history are fascinating and underpin just how interesting local history can be.

The task of writing this history was made simpler by the fact that the Synagogue has kept a substantial archive that includes thousands of papers and correspondence since its foundation in 1915. The first Minute Book survives from July 1915, and all subsequent Minute Books until the 1990s, when records became computerised.

The congregation holds all marriage registers, dating back to the first wedding solemnized in 1919,



HELEN FRY

and also bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah records. This archive tells a very important history, without which, and with the passing of eyewitnesses to its early years, it would not have been possible for me to reconstruct. Whilst the community, quite rightly, serves the present needs of the congregation and looks to the future, the preservation of these records is absolutely vital. They are, quite simply, irreplaceable and some thought should go into deciding where best to deposit them for posterity.

What I have enjoyed, too, about writing this history is the amazing collection of photographs that I have been able to gather from disparate sources. There will be more than 200 black & white photographs in the book, which tell a pictorial story of this, the first purpose-built Synagogue to be erected in Golders Green. The book will take the reader on a full and fascinating 100-year journey from 1915 to 2015.

**'GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE: THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS' WILL BE LAUNCHED AT GGS IN JANUARY 2016 BY HALSGROVE. LOOK OUT FOR DETAILS OF THE BOOK LAUNCH**

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# RIMON MOVES ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

As Rimon's fourth intake of pupils starts this month, the school is delighted to also welcome a new headteacher, and it is grateful for the community's ongoing support, writes chair of governors David Vaughan

This has been an exciting and action-packed year at Rimon, as our first cohort of pupils reached the end of Key Stage 1 and prepared to enter Year 3 (Key Stage 2) in the new academic year.

Although only three years have passed since our first class of pupils began their journey at Rimon in 2012, the school is barely recognisable, with a rapidly growing community of pupils, parents, and staff, and a state-of-the-art building, into which we are now well settled.

A major achievement this year was the recruitment of our incoming Headteacher, Ms Sara Keen. Ms Keen, formerly founding Headteacher at Beit Shidvler Primary School (Edgware), brings a wealth of experience and a remarkable reputation to Rimon.

Having originally qualified and

success as she embarks on the new role and leads the school on the next stage of its exciting journey.

## FUNDRAISING DINNER

In June, Rimon hosted its first fundraising dinner, with legal journalist Joshua Rozenberg as our guest speaker. The event exceeded all expectations, raising £68,000 to fund a number of key projects identified prior to the event. Plans are already well underway for a complete revamp of the front playground and back quadrant area; a project that will bring both educational and recreational value to the children.

It was a particular pleasure to host the dinner in the Shul hall, and to welcome many members of the community to celebrate Rimon's achievements over the past three years. The hall looked spectacular

WE ARE, AS EVER, GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF GGS AND LOOK FORWARD TO MANY MORE SHARED SUCCESSES IN THE FUTURE

practiced as a speech and language therapist, working with children with special educational needs, Ms Keen brings many years of experience in teaching both secular and Jewish Studies across age groups, and has a strong background in curriculum development.

We are delighted to welcome Ms Keen to Rimon and wish her every

and created just the kind of unique and intimate atmosphere that reflects the school's values.

We are, as ever, extraordinarily grateful for the ongoing support of Golders Green Synagogue, and in this centenary year, we look forward to many more shared successes in the future, as our Shul and school communities continue to thrive. 🌱



FROM TOP: SHUL HALL DECORATED FOR FUNDRAISING DINNER; MIKE FREER MP; DINERS LISTEN TO SPEECHES; GUEST SPEAKER JOSHUA ROZENBERG

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AUTHOR VISIT TO CELEBRATE WORLD BOOK DAY; AFRICAN DRUMMING WORKSHOP; YEAR 2 TRIP TO A FIRE STATION; CHESS CLUB; MATZA BAKING; FAIR TRADE SALE

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# THE SIMCHAH OF TORAH

On Simchat Torah, it is customary to nominate a Chatan Torah and a Chatan Bereshit, with whom the community celebrates. Avraham Shapir explores the origins of the tradition

The terms Chatan Torah and Chatan Bereshit are not mentioned in the Torah, the Talmud, or by the Rishonim (early commentators of the Talmud). In fact, even the term Simchat Torah is not mentioned in these early sources.

But we do find a reference to celebrating the completion of the reading of the Torah in the Talmud: in the tractate Shabbat 118, we read that Abaye, the head of the yeshiva, made a feast for all the students when they finished studying.

Only in the late Middle Ages do we come across the term Chatan Torah. Harav David Ben Joseph Ben David, one of the most important Spanish commentators on customs and prayers discusses this in his book Abudarham (1340), which became a reference work for generations to come.

He tells us: "This day is called Simchat Torah because we finish reading the Torah and it is appropriate to celebrate this event". He also writes: "in some communities it is the custom that the one who ends the reading of the Torah and the one who commences the reading of the Torah should give a drink to all their friends and relatives". Abudarham does not mention explicitly the terms Chatan Torah or Chatan Bereshit, so we can only presume that this custom was not yet prevalent in Spain.

**VILNA GAON**  
The Vilna Gaon explained this case beautifully. It is written "sisu vesimchu besimchat Torah" – "celebrate and rejoice in the rejoicing of the Torah". Why are both expressions of simchah mentioned? What is the difference between the two? The answer is that the term simchu denotes a state of happiness

that stems from achieving something new. The term sisu denotes the rejoicing of something that has already been achieved. For example, we say in our prayers every Shabbat: "semechim betzetam vesasim bevo'am", which means that they rejoice (semechim) at the beginning of their journey and celebrate (sasim) at the end of their journey.

So the word semechim relates to the beginning of the journey, to the Chatan Bereshit, and sasim to the end of the journey, to Chatan Torah. This is what Simchat Torah is all about.

This explains what happens later on when we start to read the beginning of the Torah. When the reader reaches the end of each day of creation, the congregation chants aloud the same words. We don't do this at any other time, not even on Shabbat Bereshit. The reason we started to read Bereshit as soon as we finished the last sentence of the Torah is in case the accuser who sits next to God will whisper in his ears and say: "You see my Lord, your favourite children have just

## CHATAN, BRIDEGROOM, IS THE EPITOME OF SIMCHAH AND HIGHLIGHTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHATANIM ON SIMCHAT TORAH

finished reading the Torah and they have already had enough of it!"

We start Bereshit and we don't just read it as we read every Shabbat, when the reader chants and we fulfil the mitzvah by merely listening. On this occasion we are happy to reaffirm to the Almighty that we are 'believers and sons of believers', and acclaim with enthusiasm that God is the sole creator of the Universe. So we state



AVRAHAM SHAPIR

that God created the world on the first day and the second day and so on until he gave us Shabbat, which lies at the centre of our belief in God's creative powers. And we say these words with exhilaration and with simchah.

And who can express this simchah better than the bridegroom on his wedding day? The words: "kol sasson, vekol simchah, kol chatan

vekol kallah" – the sound of celebration, the sound of rejoicing, the sound of the bridegroom and the sound of the bride are ringing in our ears. Chatan, bridegroom, is the epitome of simchah and we can now see the significance of the Chatanim and their role in Simchat Torah. The simchah they embody expresses the true meaning of Simchat Torah and lies at the heart of the celebrations. 🍞

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Shana Tova and best wishes

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# JOURNEY TO COMMUNITY

Having recently completed a year of saying Kaddish for his late father, Jonathan Weissbart reflects on Jewish mourning customs, and how they brought him closer to the community

**M**y father, a refugee from pre-war Germany, passed away in July 2014 at the age of 89, having lived an active life.

After the flurry of activity surrounding the burial and Shiva, I was faced with the prospect of a long year saying Kaddish three times a day. I have always been a regular at Shul, but this level of commitment was in a completely different league. And this was where my journey began.

I felt I'd be more comfortable going to the same place regularly to daven, rather than hopping between communities. So, having considered the options, I saw Golders Green Synagogue as the obvious choice. I wasn't a member at that point, but we live very close by and I immediately decided to join. If I was going to spend the next 11 months there, every morning and evening, it was my moral duty to be a fully paid-up member.

It is a long-established practice that a male mourner, provided he

mourner in a similar situation, what is the 'tie-breaker'? It can get interesting!

As with many Jewish traditions, our mourning customs can sometimes feel restrictive, but just as I'd found Shiva to be hugely cathartic and moving, I slowly found that the need to stand aside for someone else to daven was also beneficial. It helped me to empathise with another person who was coming to remember a long-departed parent.

In a traditional community like ours, it is the mourners and the Yahrzeits that bring the community closer together. A Shiva is an opportunity to pay one's respect to a departed friend or relative, and by coming to weekday services for nearly a year, I have come into daily contact with a cross-section of the community and started to build friendships

## MINYAN MILES

There have also been interesting occasions when I had to find a Minyan elsewhere. I led the davening on easyJet flights to Israel,



THE WEISSBART FAMILY

the ladies' section! An unidentified (and I imagine silently horrified) black-hatted and bearded man who also came that day was never seen again.

As unfortunate and upsetting as it is to lose a parent, it was a privilege to see my father live to a ripe old age, and I was pleased to pay back at least a little of the time and effort that he put into my upbringing. The Jewish way of mourning reaps dividends in ways that it is impossible to imagine until you are in that situation yourself. I may have lost a parent, but I found many new friends in this community as part of my daily Kaddish quest. Above all, I really have to thank my wife Annabel for covering for me at all times so that I could be at Shul.

My mourning period is now over, but I would like to think that my journey has made me appreciate other people's experiences, and how these experiences can shape the life of a community. I hope I can repay some of the kindness in the future, if only by being the tenth man when needed. 🙏

SAUL WEISSBART Z"l (LEFT) WITH HIS CHILDREN DAVID, YVETTE AND JONATHAN AT THE BRIT OF JONATHAN'S SON ASHER, JULY 2009

## MY JOURNEY HAS MADE ME APPRECIATE OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES, AND HOW THEY SHAPE THE LIFE OF A COMMUNITY

has the ability, should lead weekday services for 11 months after the death of a parent. A mourner for a parent in the Shloshim (the first 30 days after the death) takes precedence in leading the service over a mourner who has passed this stage. If a member has a Yahrzeit for a parent, then the preference moves over. But if there is more than one

at Ben Gurion Airport, at the Kotel, for a group of right-wing Rabbis in a Jerusalem hotel and, for Mincha during the whole winter, in a small Yemenite Minyan in Hatton Garden.

A number of women have come to say Kaddish too. Indeed one winter morning, an American lady arrived at Dunstan Road and proceeded to don Tallit and Tefillin, thankfully in



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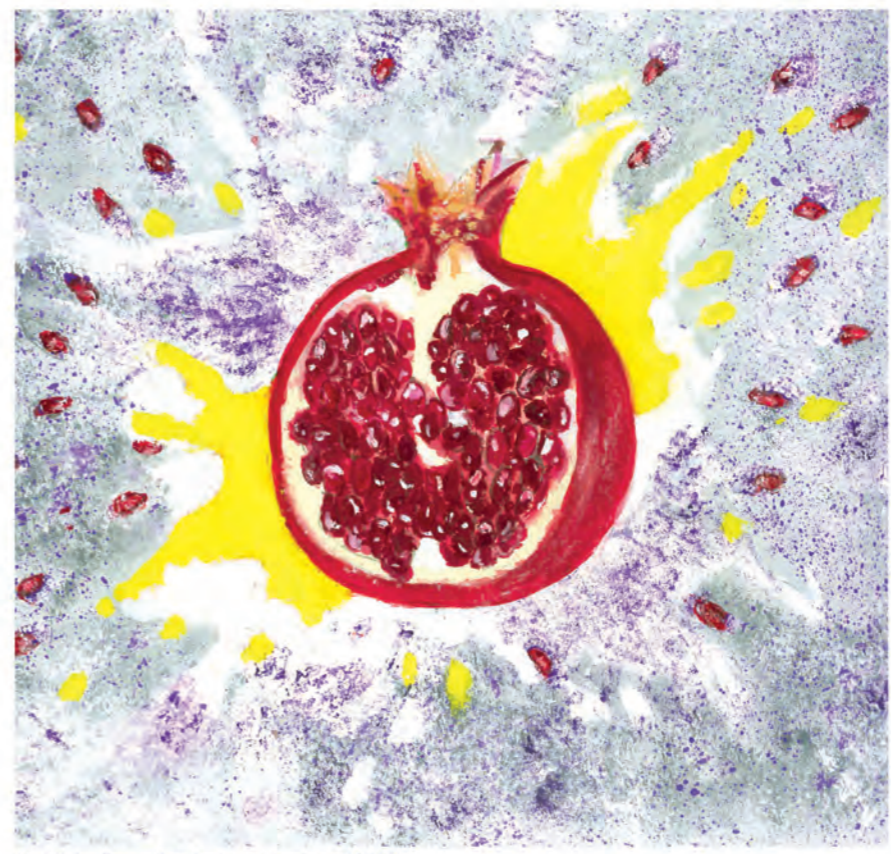
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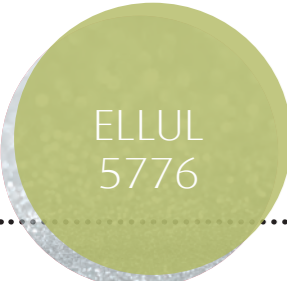
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# SHANA TOVA

# U'METUKA

Rosh Hashanah and Centenary greetings from the members of

Golders Green Synagogue

**MANUEL**  
All good wishes for a Happy, Healthy, and Sweet New Year from Liz, Jeremy, Ilana and Sarah Manuel, and Abigail, Chaim and Aryeh Burman

**MAYS**  
Shana tova to everyone and Mazel tov on the centenary. Love from Joyce and Alan Mays together with Mark and Dalia, Emma, Jenny and Uriel, Shoshana, Shiri, Rina and Eli

<p><b>BERKOVIC/ FISHBURN</b> A Shana Tova to everyone in the community from Sally Berkovic, Jonathan, Avigayil, Eli and Yonina Fishburn</p>	<p><b>BOWMAN</b> Simon and Penina Bowman wish a Happy and Sweet New Year to all our dear friends and family in Dunstan Road Shul</p>	<p><b>CHAIN</b> Looking forward to the next 100 years – Julia and Benny Chain and family</p>	<p><b>CLARK</b> Shana tova from Alfred, Jonah, Annie, Joel and Rachel Clark</p>	<p><b>COHEN</b> Wishing everyone at Dunstan Road Shul a very happy and healthy 5776. From Simon, Sharon, Avital, Sara, Itsy, Eli and Yishai Cohen</p>
<p><b>COWEN</b> Sylvia and Allan Cowen wish all congregants a healthy and happy new year</p>	<p><b>DAVIES</b> Shanah Tovah. Happy New Year and best wishes for 5776 – from Jonathan Davies</p>	<p><b>DOCTOR</b> Happy Birthday GGS! And thank you for the warm welcome. Alana, Josh and Harlan Doctor</p>	<p><b>EPSTEIN/ LIGHTMAN</b> Shana Tova. Wishing you all a sweet and good new year. Felicia, Daniel, Gavriella and Yishai</p>	<p><b>FRANKS</b> Happy and Sweet New Year to the Golders Green community. From Julia, Julian, Ella, Isaac, Gabriel and Michael Franks</p>
<p><b>FREIBERGER</b> Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. Gillian, Malcolm and Jessica Freiburger and all the family</p>	<p><b>FREIBERGER</b> L'Shanna Tova u' Metuka from Eve, Phil, Avi and Ben, Yossi, Alon and Tamar</p>	<p><b>FREIBERGER</b> Wishing all our family and friends a very good Yom Tov. Susan, Brian, Andrew, Anna and Lee.</p>	<p><b>GESSLER/ROTH</b> Shana Tova U'Metukah from Benedict, Sue, Adina, Noam and Tamar</p>	<p><b>GLATMAN</b> The Glatman family wish you all a very Happy New Year. At this time, we want to thank the community for all their kindness and support since our very sad loss of Sydney z'l, and in the Centenary Year we hope we will all go forward from strength to strength as he would have wished</p>
<p><b>GOODMAN</b> We are delighted to be involved and associated with Golders Green Shul, and wish it every success for the future. Best Wishes from Sara, Philip, Avi, Yoram and Shevi Goodman, 4th and 5th generation of Dunstan Roaders</p>	<p><b>HART/ RAHIMZADEH</b> Wishing everyone a very healthy and happy New Year, be well over the fast. Joanne, Daniel, Sienna and Olivia Hart Rahimzadeh</p>	<p><b>HABIB</b> Greetings to all members of our wonderful community for Rosh Hashana and for the next 100 years</p>	<p><b>HOCHHAUSER</b> Wishing everyone Shana Tova. With best wishes from Jo, Daniel, Dina, David and Rachel Hochhauser</p>	<p><b>IRWIN</b> With best wishes for a happy, healthy and sweet new year. Tom, Rebecca, Boaz and Elza Irwin</p>
<p><b>KAUFMAN</b> Shana tova from Corinne, Jeremy, Hannah, SAM and Emma Kaufman</p>	<p><b>KAUFMAN/ GINSBURG</b> Wishing the whole community Shana Tov u' Metuka from Dina, Rob, Avi, Eli and Aaron Ginsburg</p>	<p><b>KELLY</b> Mazal Tov to St Dunstan's – here's to the next 100 years! Love from the Kelly family</p>	<p><b>LEWIS</b> Wishing everyone a healthy, happy, peaceful and successful New Year. Vivienne &amp; Jeffery Lewis</p>	<p><b>MALINSKY</b> As the New Year starts, may you discover a new sense of possibility, of gifts you have to share and a renewed commitment to your faith and your dreams. Yarona and Meir Malinsky wish their family, friends and the entire congregation a Happy and Healthy 5776! L'Shana Tova Tikatevu VeTechatemu!</p>

<p><b>MORLAND</b> Wishing all of Dunstan Road L'Shana Tova um'tuka. From the Morlands</p>	<p><b>PAUL</b> Rachel and Geoffrey Paul wish you a year of health, happiness and satisfaction in everything to which you set your hands</p>	<p><b>PALMER</b> Best wishes for a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year from Susette and Monroe Palmer and family</p>	<p><b>SANDLER</b> Shana tova and happy one hundred years! Jenny, Jon, Theo, Amelie and Olivia Sandler</p>	<p><b>SHAW</b> Shana tova to everyone at London's premier kehilla from Fabia and Stephen and all the Shaws</p>
<p><b>ULLMAN</b> Many thanks for the interesting Shabbat Tea and Learning sessions over the summer! To the next 100 years, Lechaim, may the Shul continue to go from strength to strength in London and soon in Israel's green and pleasant land. Edith Ullman.</p>	<p><b>ULLMAN</b> To the next 100 years, Lechaim, may the Shul continue to go from strength to strength in London and soon in Israel's green and pleasant land. Moshe Ullman</p>	<p><b>W Aidhofer</b> Wishing the whole community a Happy, Healthy and Successful New Year ahead. Norman and Vivane Waidhofer and family.</p>	<p><b>WITTE</b> All good wishes to friends and all the congregation they see on Shabbat, from Rosalind and Alan Witte and family</p>	<p><b>WOOLICH</b> Shana tova and well over the fast to the Golders Green community from Denise, Sara, Anthony, Rebecca and Helena Woolich and Barbara Goldstein</p>

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

# SEPTEMBER 2015

## MAZEL TOV TO...

- Jonathan and Elisa Angel, on the birth of a daughter, Eva
- Sol and Yael Benady, on the birth of a son, Joshua
- Adam and Elissa Benjamin, on the birth of a son, Blake
- Joel and Rachel Clark, on the birth of a son, Alfred
- David and Laurel (z"l) Cohen, on the birth of a daughter, Ruby
- Shawn and Natalia Cooper, on the birth of a daughter, Emily
- Alex and Joanna Dale, on the birth of a son, Charlton
- James and Gemma Dunitz, on the birth of a daughter, Shari
- Benny and Elisavetha Menashe, on the birth of a daughter, Hannah
- Joseph and Suzanne Tager, on the birth of a daughter, Adi

- Ian and Simone Torrance, on the birth of two grandchildren, Sydney Gold and Alyssa Torrance
- Malcolm and Gillian Freiburger, on the birth of two grandsons, Daniel and Seth
- Norman and Viviane Waidhofer, on the birth of a grandson, Alexander

- Rochel Tif'eres Belovski, on her Bat Mitzvah
- Tami Snyder, on her Bat Mitzvah
- Max Gordon, on his Bar Mitzvah

- Talia Chain and Joshua Charig, on their marriage
- Daniel and Sharon Clyne, on their marriage
- Rachel and Saul Elliot Cohen, on their marriage
- Hannah Naomi Rose and Ezra Cohen, on their marriage
- Melissa Leigh and Noah Nathan, on their marriage
- Eva and Henri Stellman, on the marriage of Robert and Judith

- Rabbi Harvey and Vicki Belovski, on their Silver Wedding Anniversary
- Philip Goodman, on his 50th birthday
- Hanna Nisse, on her 85th birthday

- Jason Bruno Acker Holt, son of Robert Ackerholt, on receiving a CBE
- Richard Verber, on being elected senior vice president of the Board of Deputies

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

- Jonathan and Elisa Angel
- John and Sheryl Baker
- Victoria Baker
- Daniel and Judith Baliti
- Daniel and Zara Bendor
- Adam and Elissa Benjamin
- Benoit and Natalie Broch
- Gabriel Chain
- Joshua Charig
- Daniel and Sharon Clyne
- David Cohen
- Jon and Debra Cohen
- Saul and Rachel Cohen

- Michael and Nicola Coren
- Alex and Joanna Dale
- Joshua and Alana Doctor
- Edward and Philippa Ellis
- Danielle Etkin
- Lior Fengas
- Jonathan Ferguson
- Sam and Hadassah Fromson
- Paul Gilbert
- Emma Glatman
- Paul Goldin
- Richard Grant
- Marietta Kalasz

- Laurence and Susan Kogan
- Daniel Lightman and Felicia Epstein
- Mark Maurice
- Benny and Elisavetha Menashe
- Eran Messeri and Lital Pentelka
- Felicia Meyerowitz
- Leo and Natasha Pearlman
- Daryl Phillips
- Anthony and Elaine Reiff
- Samantha Rotenberg
- Ian Shefras
- Harvey and Jennifer Shulman
- Warren and Talya Trakman

## DEATHS

SENDING CONDOLENCES TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A FAMILY MEMBER

- Martha Beck
- Morris Beckman
- Netta Caplan
- Faye Clapich
- Joyce Evelyn Cohen
- Laurel Cohen
- Anita Daniels
- Kenny Davidson
- Elfrieda Erlich
- Jack Frankenthal
- Vivian Freiburger
- Rita Gelipter
- Sydney Glatman
- Raymond Graham
- Neil Hauser
- Lawrence Hillman
- Esther Lester
- Joan Lewin
- Clarice Morgan
- Benny Bertram Oliver
- Sylvia Richards
- Muriel Schreiber
- Daniel Schwarz
- Zilla Selinger
- Rita Solomons
- Albert Weiss
- Abraham Zwirek

## MAZEL TOV TO THIS YEAR'S CHATANIM

CHATAN TORAH  
CHATAN BEREISHIT  
ESHET CHAYIL

Rabbi Sam Fromson  
Brian Baderman  
Diana Wolfen



From left: Bar Mitzvah boy Max Gordon; Robert and Judith Stellman; Joshua Charig and Talia Chain

## GOLDERS GREEN EVENTS

It has been quite an inaugural year for Golders Green Events. We thought we would take advantage of our talented community and started off in November with Daniel Hochhauser interviewing Jonathan Beckman about his very well-received book *How to Ruin a Queen*. That was followed in December with Brains You Can Trust – a panel discussion with Helen Davis, Simon Hochhauser, Leonie Lewis and Stuart Adam, under the chairmanship of Joel Clark.

In March we decided to widen our geographical scope. Catherine Taylor from the Rothschild Archive at Waddesdon Manor gave a fascinating insight into the lives and times of the Rothschild family. By May it was time for a perennially popular quiz evening, and our thanks go to the amazing Barbara and Brian Nathan, assisted by Myra and Michael Litman, for a challenging and entertaining quiz. It certainly brought out the competitive spirit of a capacity crowd. Funds raised were donated to the increased security needs of the Shul.

We are now planning for next year and are becoming more ambitious, to the extent of venturing out of the Shul hall and

into the wider world. In October, there will be an outing to see "Blitz" at JW3, with a reception and talk afterwards. Apart from being an excellent show, "Blitz" also features local talent: Terry Sopol, Emma Kaufman and Helena Woolich. Book before it transfers to the West End!

In November we visit Somerset House, where the Ben Uri Gallery is celebrating 100 years in London. A guide will take us through its remarkable exhibition, "Out of Chaos".

VIVIENNE LEWIS

### DON'T MISS UPCOMING GGE EVENTS - BOOK VIA SHUL WEBSITE

- Thursday November 12: Sir Ralph Kohn, knighted for services to music, charity and the pharmaceutical industry, in conversation with Daniel Hochhauser. 8pm, GGS
- Saturday January 16: Ashley Blaker Unfiltered – 'the stand-up show from the only Charedi Jew in British comedy'. 8pm, GGS

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20

Young families: Making Sukkah decorations, 2-4pm, GGS, £3 per child or £10 for family

### THURSDAY OCTOBER 1

The Belovskis and Fromsons invite you to a Sukkot party, 8-10pm, at 41 The Ridgeway, NW11 8QP. Light supper and live music all evening

### MONDAY OCTOBER 5 (SHEMINI ATZERET)

Celebratory tea after Mincha in the Harry Littner Hall in honour of the Chatanim and Eshet Chayil

### SHABBAT OCTOBER 23-24

Shabbat UK: Hosted Friday night dinners, communal lunch, afternoon activities and kids' Havdallah party - details to follow

### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22

Mitzvah Day - social action activities across the community, full details to follow

### MONDAY DECEMBER 7

Centenary event: Professor Simon Schama in conversation with Lord Sacks, GGS

### FRIDAY DECEMBER 11

Young families: Chanukah lighting and Friday night dinner, GGS

### WEDNESDAY JANUARY 13

Centenary event: book launch - *Golders Green Synagogue: the first Hundred Years* with Helen Fry, GGS

### SUNDAY JANUARY 17

Blood donation - all day at GGS

### SATURDAY FEBRUARY 13

Young families: Seudah Shlishit and havdala, GGS

### SUNDAY MARCH 20

Young families: Purim party/carnival

## FROM RABBI SAM AND HADASSAH

The Learn to Lead Programme for Years 7-9 will run from November until April on Sunday nights once a fortnight. Highlights include Israel Advocacy, Self Defence, First Aid, Mental Health Awareness and Hadracha Training. The year will finish with a Shabbaton away!

Dinner and Debate will run for Years 10-13. Motions include "This house believes that religion causes more problems than it's worth", "This house would allow parents to create designer babies", and "This house believes Israel should abandon the settlements".

Our Introduction to Gemarah skills will run for five weeks from the end of October and a Women's learning group will run for five weeks starting at the end of January.

Contact Hadassah for more details about all of these programmes!

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# MY WEEK: GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE\*

\*according to Julia Chain, with abject apologies to Hugo Rifkind

### SUNDAY

Doors open at 8.15am for Shacharit. No announcements today as Peter is in Vienna. In the old days, Sundays used to mean Hebrew classes - lots of very bored kids sitting in rows wishing they could all go to the park. Now it's all about the Rabbi's shiur, which I have heard is very edifying and people actually learn something. Never thought I would remain upright long enough to see the day. And of course bagels - but would people come without them, I ask myself? We mustn't put it to the test, warns RHB.

### MONDAY

Doors open at 7am. No announcements today as Peter is in Melbourne. In the old days of course, the 3Gs had their suppers in the Joseph Freedman Hall (of blessed memory). They were the 'young professionals' of their day, although between you and me, most of them looked the same then as they do now. Anyway, now it's school dinners at lunchtime and pizza for the youth in the evening. Whatever happened to Monday evening bingo? RHB says that was only during the War, which is now over.

### TUESDAY

Doors open at 7.15am and we all look at Rob's new fangled electronic Sedra boards to remind ourselves what day it is. It's obviously Tuesday morning - no Sefer Torah, that's how you know. Bit of a fuss after Shacharit today though. The drainage problems all being long fixed, Peter decides to announce it's Tuesday, just in case. Rob gets very upset - 'Can't they all read the boards?' he says. No, shouts Peter. I think he's jet lagged.

### WEDNESDAY

Doors open at 7.15am. Big fuss today - apparently Peter promised we could have a full choral service every day for Shacharit. Terry says if we started at 6am, we could be finished by 11am. RHB's blood pressure literally went through the roof (not sure he'll even be fit to donate at next week's session now). Don't see what all the fuss is about personally. People can always spare a bit of extra time and this community works too hard anyway. I blame the professors.

### THURSDAY

Doors open at 7am. No announcements today as Peter is in Shanghai. Thursday is Mums and Toddlers club, or Ilana Banana as it's known locally. The hall echoes to the sound of lots of nursery rhymes and chatty mothers. Not like the old days when we didn't really like children to be heard. Remember Simchat Torah in 1968? Some unruly child threw a sweet into the box and knocked the Warden's top hat off - there was hell to pay. It's a wonder she is still allowed to be a member of the Shul. Frankly, I think standards are slipping.

### FRIDAY

Doors open at 7.15am. No announcements as Peter is in Dubai. Cleaners come in extra early for Shabbat and the Rimon children are getting ready for their own Kabbalat Shabbat. Despite the noise, I can only 'shlep nachus' at the sight of the lovely new school building. Of course we all miss the JF Hall, particularly the disgusting kitchen and toilets - Sic Transit Gloria, as Lord Sacks would say (whatever that means). Big fuss



tonight though, BIG FUSS. Someone who shall be nameless gave the dvar torah before Maariv and spoke for 5 minutes and 45 SECONDS. Everyone knows the maximum is 5 minutes. The Rabbi was getting very agitated; I'd definitely count him out of the blood donation now. Everyone was 45 seconds late home for dinner. Lucky this isn't Munks!

### SHABBAT

Doors open at 9.15am (if the Rabbi has the key), or 9.30am (if anyone else has the key), or 11am (if Julian Goodkin has the key). Beautiful service with ladies' section packed and 30 kids on the bimah for Adon Olam. A far cry from my youth, when ladies knew their place (upstairs) and no man would enter without a tie. Terry apparently very upset though, after he blessed the Queen using his new Trevor McDonald accent - Golders Green with a hint of Caribbean, and was told off by Peter. Well shekoyach to him, I say. Peter announces that there will be no announcements next week as he is in Rio. Shabbat shalom. 🌿



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