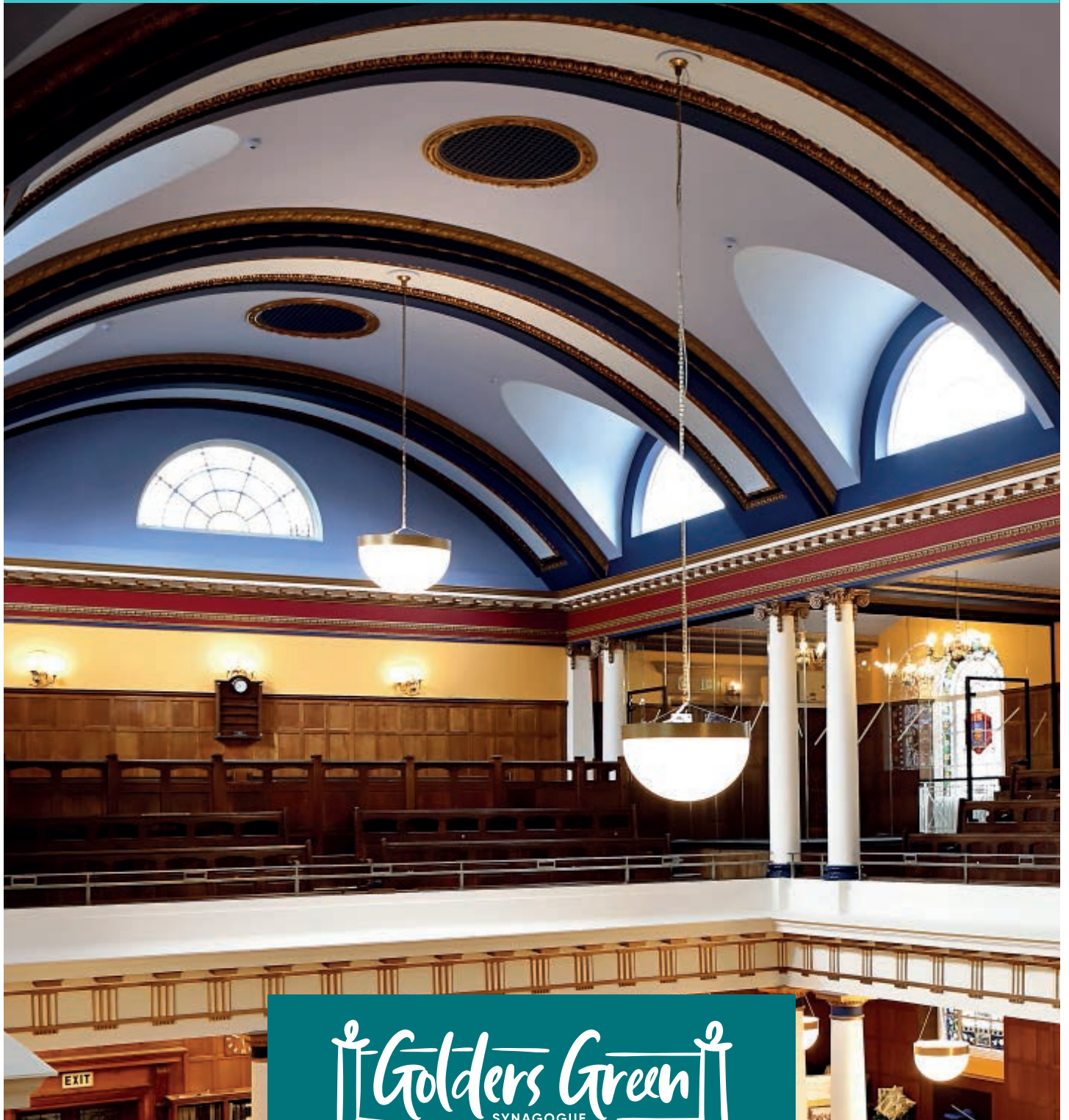


ISSUE 13

SEPTEMBER 2022, ELLUL 5782

THE GGS JOURNAL

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM GOLDERS GREEN SYNAGOGUE



The logo for Golders Green Synagogue, featuring the name "Golders Green" in a stylized, white, cursive font, with "SYNAGOGUE" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. The text is enclosed within a white, decorative frame that resembles a stylized menorah or a similar religious symbol.

WELCOME

BUILDING BACK BETTER

I am not a second or third generation Dunstan Roader. About 12 years ago, Samantha, Jemima, then aged two, and I moved to Golders Green and joined GGS. We sold our flat in Finchley and rented a flat in Corringway, whilst looking for a house in the area. With the exception of one family, we didn't know anyone else in the community.

Our arrival in 2010 signified the start of an inspiring journey. It feels a lot longer (in a good way), most probably due to my deep association with Rimon soon after joining the community.

As a family, we have been incredibly fortunate to have found such a warm, welcoming and interesting community, in which we felt at home straight away. We were overwhelmed by the sheer number of Shabbat meal invitations we received from across the community during our first year as members. We were struck by the openness of the community, the lack of stuffiness, the unusual thirst for knowledge and self-development, and the cross-generational integration.

GGS is unique in its diversity, open-mindedness and warmth. It is confident, open and tolerant. The diversity among our members means you don't need to conform to the stereotypical Jewish family to be welcomed here. I feel very passionate about our community's qualities and this informed my decision to agree to serve as its Chair.

We are now (hopefully) over the worst of Covid and have started to resume a full suite of in-person programming. Thanks to the remarkable generosity of benefactors, and the dedication of Naomi Verber in expertly leading this project, we can run these programmes from a beautifully designed and vastly improved building.

The challenge for 5783 will be to 'Build Back Better'. Though we have completed the works required to our physical building, we need to spend much of 5783 re-building our community post-Covid. As we enter a new year, I would like us to focus on three immediate challenges.

Firstly, as a result of the considerable success of Rimon, the demographics of our membership have changed materially over the years. We now have more members in the 31-40 age bracket than in any other category. We have re-evaluated our provision and now offer a range of children's programmes spanning all age groups.

When we joined in 2010, the Shul had no generational divide and it felt like a single family. We were made to feel welcome by everyone in the community. We need to work at integrating the different factions of our community so that we are able to maintain our special qualities, uniqueness, individuality and warmth.

Secondly, as a community, we need to grow sustainably. Although attendance on Shabbat mornings

AS WE BUILD BACK BETTER, WE NEED ALL MEMBERS TO SUPPORT US



is generally healthy, attendance at Friday night services is rather weak, and our daily minyanim always need support. If you are able to commit to coming weekly or even monthly, it will be greatly appreciated by all those who come, particularly those saying kaddish.

Thirdly, over the next few months, we are planning a wide range of exciting activities to cater to all age groups. We are fortunate to have a great professional and rabbinic team, but like all communities, we also rely on volunteers for events to happen. As we embark on our post-Covid journey and Build Back Better, we need all members to support us. Fasten your seatbelts, it will be an exciting ride!

I wish the whole community a happy and sweet new year – Shana Tova U'Metuka.

DAVID VAUGHAN
Chair, Golders Green Synagogue

A REALLY NEW YEAR

The idea of eating symbolic foods at the start of the Jewish year appears in the Talmud, when beets, pumpkin, leeks and dates were popular options. Consuming them on Rosh Hashanah was treated as portents for a year ahead, behaviours that could actually influence the quality of one's future. Later, eating special foods took on a symbolic value instead.

The familiar custom of eating apple dipped in honey on Rosh Hashanah is now almost universal. It probably originated in the Gaonic period, although the practice of eating sweet red apples on Rosh Hashanah was first mentioned in late 11th century France.

We say a short prayer after eating the apple and honey: 'may it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our ancestors, that You renew for us a good and sweet year'. This prayer encapsulates our longing for the year ahead – renewal, goodness and sweetness in our material and spiritual pursuits. The complementary inspirational liturgy, wonderful melodies and shofar blasts express our hopes that God will give us a year of opportunity and success, with an increased understanding and fulfilment of our obligations to Him, to other people and to society.

This Yom Tov season will be the first since 2019 in which services and programming will run normally. Although caution is still advised, the

harsh realities of the pandemic are behind us, thank God. It's also the first since the recent redevelopment of the Shul and the first in my 20 years as rabbi in which the place looks beautiful and truly fit for purpose. I hope those of you who haven't yet seen the refurbishments and new upstairs rooms will enjoy davening in a stunning, refreshed space. I know that once you've seen it, you'll want to come more often! This is also an opportunity to thank Naomi Verber and her team, as well as all the generous donors for making the refurbishment possible.

These positive changes are also part of propelling the community into an era of renewal. Yet it can be hard to remember that buildings – even those as magnificent as our reinvigorated Shul – are means to ends. They are an enhanced Jewish spiritual experience, deepening connection to God and a renewed appreciation of and commitment to Jewish life. I feel sure that our beautiful, renewed building will inspire generations of Dunstan Roaders to just that.

Vicki and I, together with Michali, Yoav and Shoshana, Tehilloh, David Chaim, Tomor Chemdoh, Rochel Tiferes, Shmuel Yosef and Moshe Simcha, wish you a meaningful and inspirational 5783.

RABBI HARVEY BELOVSKI



THIS YOM TOV SEASON WILL BE THE FIRST SINCE 2019 IN WHICH SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING WILL RUN NORMALLY

A SANCTUARY TRANSFORMED

FOLLOWING THE COMPLETION OF THE BUILDING RENOVATION AND DEDICATION OF THE RABBI LORD SACKS ATRIUM AND THE JONATHAN DAVIES ROOM IN MAY 2022, PROJECT LEAD NAOMI VERBER EXPLAINS THE KEY DESIGN CONCEPTS

I first walked into Golders Green Synagogue more than 10 years ago and it was love at first sight. The majestic space, the original Edwardian woodwork and the soaring ceiling imparted an impression of quintessential British glamour that's hard to find anywhere else. Yes, there was an enormous hole in the roof and the building was in a chaotic state, but it had 'good bones'.

Over the years that followed, I couldn't help thinking about the potential renovation of the building, from both a functional and aesthetic perspective. When I became chair of GGS in 2018, the need for more programming space had become essential, thanks to the influx of new families and children, and we were able to put together a plan.

It took nearly two years to get from design to approval, and as previous plans had been rejected by English Heritage, there was justified concern about the chances of success of the new plan. As we put together our application, we made clear not just

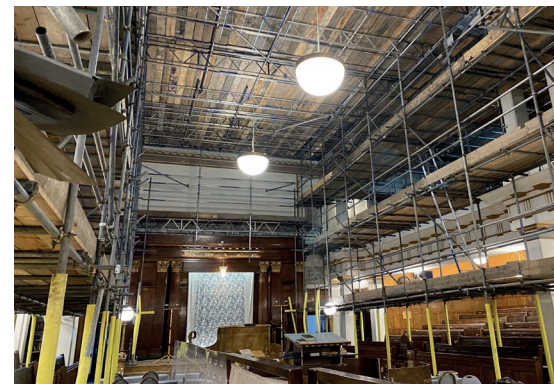
what we wanted to do, but also the benefits to our members and the wider community.

Our plan focused on the growth and needs of our community, imagining glass-walled rooms at the back of the gallery to allow unimpeded visibility of our beautiful building, while also creating valuable new programming space with the best possible noise insulation. Access to the main part of the gallery was to be maintained to ensure its continued availability when required. Architects and structural engineers transformed the sketches into a professional design and after a year of negotiation with English Heritage, we were granted full approval to proceed in late 2019.

Everything had to go on ice as we dealt with COVID in 2020, but once we had got through the worst of the pandemic and were able to put a tender out to contractors in 2021, it became clear that we would be able to renovate the entire Shul, restoring the most derelict parts of the gallery that had lost life and dignity over the years.

The work began in November 2021, and with it came to pressure to complete the fundraising and finalise the interior design of the Shul.

The inspiration for the colour scheme came from researching grand Shuls around the world. There is a colour pattern used in



many large imposing Shuls; blue ceilings, golden walls and red detail. I was particularly taken by the recent renovation of the Central Synagogue in Manhattan. While that was an infinitely more complex and costly project, I felt the core colour scheme would work well for GGS. We have taken the main colours in our stained glass windows to complement the dark wooden panelling and pews.

In designing the colour scheme in consultation with our heritage contractors and artist Mary Ross, my objective was to honour the history of the building while simultaneously

celebrating the life and vibrancy of our community today.

I'll never forget the thrill of walking the scaffolding planks at the very top of the Shul ceiling and seeing those blue colours applied to the peeling ceiling. I spent a great deal of time up there over the winter months, working out every detail of the paint application with our fantastic team of decorators. The design also had to take into consideration the woodwork, ironmongery, flooring and lighting. A key principle in this project was to re-use, recycle and repurpose materials – for example, we re-used the backing of the removed pews to create the barrier that runs through the Rabbi Lord Sacks Atrium. This not only saved us a significant amount of money, but visually links to the woodwork throughout the Shul. We also salvaged leftover oak from other building sites to construct the



new hanging units in the vestibule and shelving in the office.

We got there in the end – on-time and on-budget – and it was a joy to formally dedicate the Rabbi Lord Sacks Atrium and the Jonathan Davies Room as part of the overall redevelopment in May 2022. Of course, managing the community's real-time feedback as the colour scheme emerged was a challenge of its own, but we held our nerve and now the vision is complete, we have a sanctuary to be proud of.

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THE YEAR IN PICTURES

2021-2022

AS GGS PUT THE PANDEMIC FIRMLY BEHIND IT AND RESUMED IN-PERSON PROGRAMMING, THE PAST YEAR WAS DOMINATED BY THE RESTORATION PROJECT AND A WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES



FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN MAY 2022, THE RABBI LORD SACKS ATRIUM AND THE JONATHAN DAVIES ROOM WERE FORMALLY DEDICATED BY LADY ELAINE SACKS AND NEIL DAVIES



ARTISTS DISPLAY THEIR WORK FOLLOWING THE GGS BRUSH HOUR, JULY 2022

MITZVAH DAY PLANTING, NOVEMBER 2021, AND COMMUNITY CHANUKAH LIGHTING, DECEMBER 2021



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COMMUNITY IN STRIFE

FOLLOWING THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE IN FEBRUARY, MIKE POSEN RECOUNTS THE REMARKABLE WORK OF RABBI EHRENTREU TO EVACUATE MEMBERS OF THE ZAPORIZHYE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT THOSE LEFT BEHIND

Our involvement with Zaporizhnye began 30 years ago, after the breakup of the Soviet Union. A United Synagogue initiative linked Shuls with communities in the former USSR, and GGS was twinned with Zaporizhnye (then known by its Russian name Zaporozhnye), a city of 900,000 people in south-eastern Ukraine, of whom some 16-20,000 identified as Jewish.

We visited in March 1994 and found differing factions among those vying for leadership and no sense of community. It seemed to us there would be little hope of a vibrant Jewish community without a Rabbi. In 1997, Rabbi Ehrentreu and his wife Dina took over the leadership of the community after visiting to run Yamim Noraim services, raising seven sons in Zaporizhnye over the past 25 years. During that time, the links between our two communities have strengthened.

World Jewish Relief made a huge investment in Zaporizhnye, funding a community centre and buying buildings for Rabbi Ehrentreu to create a school and an orphanage. Our community also played its part in the resurgence of Jewish life. For the past 20 years, we have funded Sedarim, Sifrei Torah, Chumashim and community infrastructure.

The Zaporizhnye community has become a beacon for other cities in south-eastern Ukraine. Rabbi

Ehrentreu is highly regarded by the state authorities. He has built up excellent contacts with the regional governor, city mayor, the military, and officials at all levels in the administration.

While rebuilding the community, Rabbi Ehrentreu has also encouraged aliyah. Between 1992 and 2000, some 10,000 Jews left Zaporizhnye, some to Germany but more to Israel. In the 20 years prior to the invasion, a further 2,000 people left for Israel and Germany. About 10,000 Jews lived in Zaporizhnye before the Russian invasion.

In early February, with a Russian invasion looking more likely, Rabbi Ehrentreu asked for our help to buy food and medicine. As always, GGS responded wholeheartedly – we sent an initial £10,000, and Rabbi Ehrentreu's foresight and planning proved invaluable.

After the invasion on February 24, Rabbi Ehrentreu travelled to Israel and from there, together with his team in Zaporizhnye, he organised the evacuation of hundreds of women and children every week in March and April. They also worked to get people to safety from Mariupol and other occupied areas.

By the end of April, the Zaporizhnye evacuation programme had slowed to one bus per week. About 60% of the Zaporizhnye community has remained in the city. There are



RABBI EHRENTREU WITH THREE SOLDIERS BEFORE THEY LEAVE FOR THE FRONT LINE

occasional missile attacks, which cause damage and some loss of life. After each attack there is a slight increase in the numbers evacuating, but most of the community has decided to stay.

While in Israel, Rabbi Ehrentreu organised a large communal Seder for the Zaporizhnye refugees as part of his hope to keep the Zaporizhnye refugee community united. Rabbi Ehrentreu returned to Zaporizhnye after Pesach and organised plans for emergency evacuations in case the Russians advance.

Zaporizhnye is on the front line in what has become a long, attritional war. Rabbi Ehrentreu's greatest concern is for the children to return to full-time education in school. The authorities will only allow schools to reopen if they have bomb shelters. Rabbi Ehrentreu has started to raise funds to build a bomb shelter at his school – I hope that by the time you read this, he will have succeeded.

Our community has helped Zaporizhnye significantly over the past 30 years, but our concern and support has never been as valued and appreciated as during this conflict.

בס"ד

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAZEL TOV TO:

BIRTHS

- Jonathan and Micol Ben Garcia, on the birth of a daughter
- Joel and Nikki Bensoor, on the birth of a son
- Simon and Jennifer Friend, on the birth of a son
- Rabbi Sam and Rebbetzen Hadassah Fromson, on the birth of a son
- Dean and Danielle Leslie, on the birth of a son
- Binny Sacks and Rachelle Waxman, on the birth of a daughter
- Matthew and Sophie Somers, on the birth of a son
- Richard and Naomi Verber, on the birth of a son
- David and Sarah Waimann, on the birth of a daughter
- Brian and Myriam Baderman, on the birth of a granddaughter and a grandson
- Hen Blank, on the birth of a grandson
- Donald and Diana Franklin, on the birth of a grandson
- Malcolm and Gillian Freiberger, on the birth of a granddaughter
- Julian and Judy Goodkin, on the birth of a grandson
- Gillian Greenberg, on the birth of a great grandson
- Jeremy and Liz Manuel, on the birth of a grandson
- Ben and Lynne Nathan, on the birth of a grandson
- Jerry and Janet Patterson, on the birth of a granddaughter
- Elaine Sacks, on the birth of a grandson

- Norman and Viviane Waidhofer, on the birth of a grandson

BNEI MITZVAH

- Eliana Barasi
- Moshe Simcha Belovski
- Michael Bendor
- Ariel Choumon
- Elisheva Choumon
- Yonatan Cohen
- Sofia Cooper
- Aaron Gaynor
- Eve Glass
- Zara Jason
- Rosa Laming
- Yishai Lightman-Epstein
- Alice Melinek
- Jacob Scott
- Ari Snyder
- Jonathan Soccio-Marques
- Asher Weissbart
- Gedalya White

ENGAGEMENTS

- Cochava Kienwald, daughter of Eli and Denise, to Josh Koslover
- Sarah Manuel, daughter of Jeremy and Liz, to Yoav Raphael
- Ayelet Sperber, granddaughter of Trevor and Inger, to Yoav Jacob
- Meriel Serlin, daughter of Richard and Hope, to Harry Style
- Sara Shulman to Daniel Sher

WEDDINGS

- Svi Freedman and Joanna Hattab
- Tamara Freedman and Max Seitler
- Jessica Freiberger and Daniel Borgenicht
- Natasha Goldstein and Coren Lass
- Yoram Goodman and Miriam Szlezinger
- Dina Hochhauser and Tal Peretz
- Sam Kaufman and Dina Hill
- Martha Levy and Philip Reid
- Noam Roth and Hannah Mays
- Anthony Waidhofer and Mia Harris

DEATHS

We send condolences to the families of the following members who have passed away:

- Hildegard Abraham
- Miriam Bell
- Naomi Bloom
- Edward Bowman
- Douglas Davis
- Maurice Epstein
- Morris Greenberg
- Lance Kammer
- Ruth Kloot
- Zahava Kohn
- Betty Kuszer
- Charlotte Lang
- James Stern
- Marie Weinstock

WE WISH LONG LIFE TO OUR MEMBERS:

- Pearl Bowman, on the passing of her husband
- Simon Bowman, on the passing of his father
- Jonathan Briggs, on the passing of his mother
- Helen Davis, on the passing of her husband
- Gillian Freiberger, on the passing of her mother
- Ruth Glatman, on the passing of her brother
- Jeremy Kammer, on the passing of his brother
- David Lang, on the passing of his wife
- Naomi Lightman, on the passing of her mother
- Mervyn Medalie, on the passing of his sister
- Fleur Ruda, on the passing of her father
- Lisa Scott, on the passing of her father
- Ian Shefras, on the passing of his sister
- Dorothy Tuwie, on the passing of his brother
- Viviane Waidhofer, on the passing of her mother
- Karen Welch, on the passing of her mother

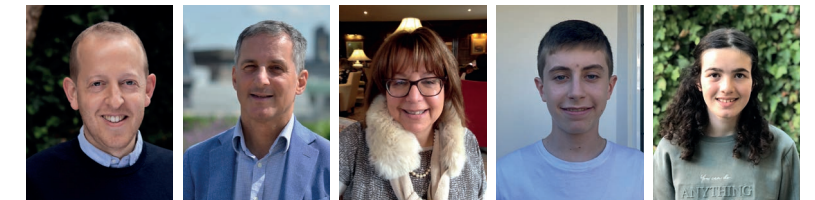
WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

- Rafi Adlestone and Caroline Gershon
- Lois Barron
- Daniel and Jessica Borgenicht
- Hayley Braude
- Gil and Maya Cohen
- Aaron Cramer
- Ralph and Giana Frank
- Tamara Freedman
- Elisheva Goodman
- Simon Hewitt
- Sam Kaufman
- Estelle Kolson
- David and Hannah Latchman
- Ben Schapira
- Terry Specter

MAZEL TOV TO THIS YEAR'S CHATANIM AND NESHEY CHAYIL

Chatan Torah	Joel Clark
Chatan Bereishit	Paul Morland
Eshet Chayil	Susan Freiberger
Junior Chatan Torah	Itsy Cohen
Junior Eshet Chayil	Keren Vaisbrot

Join us to celebrate Simchat Torah, starting with the tea after Minchah on Shemini Atzeret (October 17).



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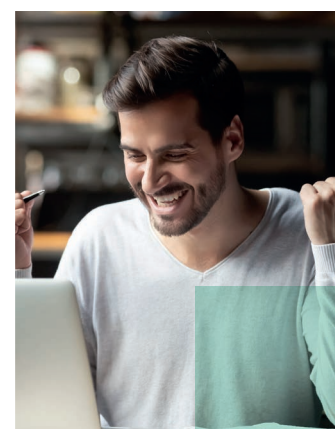


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