

Our Congregation



News and views from Belsize Square Synagogue

FREEDOM AND ELECTION ISSUES

Dear Chevra,

Spring is in the air. It is Passover, the celebration not only of the change of seasons but also the commemoration of our liberation from bondage to freedom, the beginnings of the Jewish people.

Of course, Passover is a uniquely Jewish holiday, steeped in ethics and memories of our own experience. But it is a holiday whose message has resonated in the souls of many peoples and nations, in the quest for freedom.

Freedom, in order to be preserved, requires responsibility to the poor, to the disenfranchised, to the unliberated and the oppressed all over the world. The Jewish soul cannot rest until all are free.

“Let my people go so that they may worship me.” The latter part of this famous cry for freedom in the Book of Exodus is often left out. The purpose of freedom is to better the world; we call it “to worship” or “to serve” God in making this world a kingdom of God on earth.

I am writing this message a few weeks before Pesach but I think that this year's Passover is a reminder in a world often dominated by terror, autocrats and oppression, that we in a few selected countries enjoy the privilege to vote and choose our elected leaders. The Pharaohs of the world are not chosen.

We might complain about our elected officials, but we have the freedom – and responsibility – to choose them from among many. Freedom in the coming election for this nation's future in May; freedom exercised in Israel – Israel's democracy is often chaotic and volatile

but the people have chosen their next government in a swarm of nations surrounding her that know nothing of democratic choice; and in my country, the USA, next year will see another round of debates, primaries and the final vote in November 2016 for the next President. Cheers to all three nations!

Passover also allows us to ponder why God created our people and to ask what has been the uniqueness of Judaism, our message, since our liberation from Egypt in approximately 1290 BCE. I suggest the following possible answers for what we have taught the world:

- 1) Freedom must lead to education and learning. Literacy and knowledge leads to the right behaviour among us: *Talmud Torah k'neged kulam*, the study of Torah is equal to all other Commandments.
- 2) Freedom involves passionate and sincere debate. Many points of view, many paths of discovery and respect for the differences among us lie at the heart of religious faith.
- 3) It is OK to ask questions about everything: faith, religion, politics, social values, history, literature, freedom, justice. A society that suppresses the right to ask questions is a society of Pharaohs. In too many other places in the world, people still do not have the right to challenge what they have been taught and to question whether it is true.
- 4) Absolutism, fundamentalism, certainty of belief is the kiss of doom to freedom. Freedom means that we continue to search for the truth. It never

teaches us that all truth is revealed and known. Fundamentalism of the type the West is struggling against today leads to violence and intolerance, as was the case in the former Soviet Union, today's Iran and other terrorist-based entities.

5) The *chiddush*, that which is new, is to be cherished. Religion is not just to preserve the past but is meant to stimulate our search for new solutions, a more just society, a more moral society.

6) Seeking the “good”, morality, is the heart of true freedom, the basis of the Ten Commandments. Ours is a God who “brought us out of the land of Egypt”, not a distant God who created the universe but a God who cares the most about the way we treat other people – the heart of all religious life.

7) Making this world a place where God can truly dwell, a kingdom of peace on earth, is our most important quest and vision. It is our behaviour that counts the most, not what we believe. To seek each day a path that can lead us toward making this world into what it ought to be tomorrow should be the essence of every human being on earth.

Some day ... some day ... Adonai Echad u'shmo Echad – The Lord is One and His Name will be One.

My wishes to you and your loved ones for a blessed, rich, tasty, freedom-filled Passover with family and community.

Chag Pesach sameach to all.

Rabbi Stuart Altshuler

SECOND NIGHT SEDER Saturday 4 April After 6.45pm service At Belsize Square Synagogue

Rabbi Altshuler and Cantor Heller, and their families, invite you to join them for a delicious three course meal, all the Pesach songs and some thoughtful insights.

£30 Members £35 Non-Members £15 Children

Please phone the Synagogue Office on 020 7794 3949 or email office@synagogue.org.uk if you wish to attend.

OFFICE HOURS OVER PESACH

The office will close at 5.30pm on Thursday 2 April. It will be open on Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 April from 9am-5.30pm and on Thursday 9 April from 9am-12.00 noon. The office will re-open on Monday 13 April at 9.00am.

On Other Pages

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LINKING PAST WITH PRESENT

Henny Levin and Sue Leon report on our annual Holocaust Memorial schools programme

Emotional stories from Holocaust survivors and refugees were heard by over 650 students from five local schools as part of this year's Holocaust Memorial Programme. The programme offers annual visits for schools to learn about the lessons of history and engage in follow-up discussions on current issues of bullying, discrimination and intolerance.

The year-9 students (14 year-olds) took part in sessions on the rise of Hitler, the persecution of Jews and other minorities, and the story of Anne Frank, before hearing moving accounts from survivors and refugees, mainly from our congregation. Each school visit ended with the lighting of six candles in a ceremony to remember the six million Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis.

The best way to describe what the students gained from this experience is to quote their own words in the thanks and comments sent to the synagogue, following their visit:



Students being shown our synagogue's religious artefacts

"I found your talk so interesting at the synagogue – I think because it was quite different to any other talks I've had previously about the topic. I thought that it was very clever, how you started off talking about your father, which was so interesting as your passion about the topic was so evoking. It made us really feel for what you were saying. I also liked how you backed up your argument with relevant facts and figures, which put things into perspective in a way no one else has really done before. Its bluntness was incredibly effective. What then really grabbed me was how you linked it to more recent events, like the death of Stephen Lawrence and other racial attacks. I've never heard those links made before. I never really thought of genocide as a racial attack – I've only ever thought of this as its own separate, terrifying topic. Thank you so much for making me see through new eyes and looking at the Holocaust in a different way."

"Coming to the synagogue has made me realise that, in order for evil people to succeed, good people have to do nothing about it. This relates to a lot of current affairs, as some people are too scared to speak out against people, in fear that they will be physically hurt. I have also learnt that it is extremely important to keep the legacy of the Holocaust alive as future generations need to know how horrifying it all was. We can do this easily by reminding ourselves of it regularly and wanting to learn more about World War II, the Nazis and the Holocaust."

"Thank you for telling us your inspirational story. I feel lucky and honoured to have heard about it. It is so noble and brave of you to be able to talk about something so personal to a bunch of unknown schoolgirls. My uncle once said to my mother that the Holocaust was exaggerated and didn't really happen. She was very mad at him. I was little at the time and didn't understand why she was so upset. However, now I do know and assure you that I ever have kids, I will make sure to tell them about you, your story and the War. Thank you."

We are so grateful to everyone who make this programme what it is. Many of our volunteers also talk to students and adults throughout the UK and abroad. In January, Marianne and Peter Summerfield received a commemorative medal issued by the Government to mark 70 years since the end of the Holocaust. The medal recognises their participation on behalf of the Holocaust Educational Trust, a separate charity, and features the words "Liberation 1945" cutting across a symbolic line of barbed wire. The reverse commemorates the liberation of Belsen by British Forces and features the eternal flame that has come to memorialise Holocaust victims.

Marianne and Peter Summerfield add:

People are unaware of the sheer amount of work and organisation that goes into this educational fortnight. Henny Levin and Sue Leon do a fantastic job, with excellent work by the subject leaders (Eve Hersov, Jeanie Horowitz, Rob Nothman and Hilary Solomon) and the shepherding of groups by facilitators (Jackie Alexander, Julia Burton, Marion Godfrey, Barbara and John Horwitz, Helen Kuttner and Petra Morris.) The Rabbi and Cantor speak to the schoolchildren and refreshments are provided by Enid Flynn, Helen Grunberg, Jennifer Saul, Maureen Walsingham and Henny, under the administrative eye of Sue Arnold. The survivors' testimony was provided by ourselves (Marianne also acted as a facilitator), Ruth Barnett, Jan Goldberger, Harry Heber, John Izbicki, Ruth Jacobs and Vivienne Kendall. We are so pleased to be able to contribute to this invaluable work.



Jan Goldberger and student lighting the candles at one of our closing ceremonies

The first Sunday evening in March saw a line-up of the candidates for next month's General Election, hosted by our Synagogue.

With Labour MP Glenda Jackson stepping down after 23 years, Hampstead and Kilburn is the most marginal seat in the country – her majority in 2010, when constituency boundaries changed, was 42 votes. So all eyes were on the line-up of candidates to succeed her.

An audience of some 100 slightly weary people welcomed the five candidates facing us on the stage: from our left, Magnus Nielsen (UKIP), Maajid Nawaz (Lib Dem), Simon Marcus (Conservative), Tulip Siddiq (Labour) and Rebecca Johnson (Green). Additional comment was provided by the executive editor of our respected local paper, the Ham & High, Northern Irishman Geoff Martin (2nd from right in photo). They were chaired by our member Jonathan Charles (centre), an experienced ex-BBC interviewer, for an evening arranged by retired board member Peter Leon.

Highlight of the evening was the pressing concern of security, extremism and radicalisation. The natural opener of this discussion was Maajid Nawaz, a reformed terrorist and co-founder of the Quilliam Foundation, a counter-terrorism think tank. His message was that Islamic extremism must be openly recognised and named. This will allow the ideology to be confronted, as it needs to, rather than skirted around.

For him, the challenge is to make extremism unattractive and to retain the high moral ground. His unambiguous stance won him the evening's biggest round of applause. Backing him up were Simon Marcus, who said "we need more people like Mr Nawaz", and Tulip Siddiq, the British-born scion of one of Bangladesh's ruling families, who said she did not want to live in a community where Muslims and Jews do not feel safe. They also earned their round of applause.

Rebecca Johnson and Simon Marcus emphasised the need for closer monitoring of communications, while Magnus Nielsen informed us that, as a classicist, he had read the Qur'an right through several times. His apparent invitation of a challenge from the audience was not taken up, nor did he impart any of his knowledge or opinions on the subject.

Earlier questions revolved round the cost of housing in the constituency – all the candidates confessed to being

unable to afford to live in it – and the need to provide cheaper housing. Labour's proposed mansion tax was roundly condemned by all except the Labour candidate, and she criticised the use of the word "mansion" since even a flat in the area can cost over £2 million.

Later questions touched on the potential EU referendum and the economy. Mr Nielsen came into his own here, if only to say that Britain should leave the UK. Simon Marcus displayed his party loyalty by declaring that if his leader decided to leave, he would follow him out of the EU – raising murmurs of concern in the audience and leading Ms Siddiq to accuse the Conservatives of pandering to UKIP. However, he agreed with the other candidates, who were in favour of staying in, that reforms are essential.

On a personal note, Geoff Martin, our local newspaper editor, spoke touchingly of his holidays in Spain and trips to watch football matches. For some people the EU has sentimental as well as economic value. Mr Martin also backed the Labour candidate's criticism that for poorly paid workers on insecure "zero hours" contracts, the Prime Minister's mantra that "we are all in this together" does not apply. They are "out of it". The comments from both were warmly applauded.

Much to my excitement, chairman Jonathan Charles introduced the question of lowering the voting age to 16, following the Scottish referendum. To my surprise, all the candidates were in favour. For Mr Marcus, the argument was that since the 18-24 year-old age group votes the least, it should be encouraged the most.

For Mr Nawaz, who considers it crucial to get young people engaged in politics, it should be made more accessible by, for instance, introducing voting by phone. He also advocated changing the election date since May is exam time for students. He received the most applause, though Rebecca Johnson accused the Lib-Dems of "not being sure where they wanted to go". Ms Siddiq was applauded for her complaint that parties create policies to entice the elderly, who are more likely to vote.

Geoff Martin concluded the insightful, entertaining evening with this delightful quote: "No matter who you vote for, the government gets in."

Amy Morris



Memories of Beit Shemesh by Ben Lachman

I read with great interest the article about Ramat Beit Shemesh (*Beit Shemesh Heights*) by Mrs Goddard in the February issue.

In the early months of 1948, as a member of a Tel Aviv Haganah unit, I was stationed in Hartuv, a village close to Beit Shemesh. At that time, Beit Shemesh was purely a cement factory. The residential upper quarter had not been built. We went there and took several 2-inch water pipes, to use as camouflage and give the impression that we had artillery pieces. We were under siege as the relief convoy had been attacked and had to return to Jerusalem. On 13 May the order was received to evacuate. At nightfall, the whole population started to walk to Zora, the nearest Jewish village.

Our Israel committee has contributed via Magen David Adom to the rebuilding of the local MDA station. The Jaffa Institute, with whom we have a longstanding association in its focus on helping children through education and good nourishment, also has a dormitory in Beit Shemesh.

Correction

The article about the rededication of the Irish Ark in Ramat Beit Shemesh mistakenly said that Ramat Beit Shemesh was outside the "Green Line".

Beit Shemesh and its suburbs, including Ramat Beit Shemesh, is well within the 1948 truce lines marking present-day Israel and there has never been a dispute over its status. We are happy to make this clear.



ORIENTAL SPICE AND ROMANCE

Helen Grunberg and Sue Arnold report on a special book launch



Kings Place, where Jewish Book Week was held last month, was the venue for a fascinating final evening to launch a debut novel, *Under An Orphan Sky*, by singer and pianist Ella Leya. If the name is unfamiliar to you, think Mrs Stuart Altshuler.

A mix of romance and spy thriller, the book is inspired by Ella's childhood in Soviet Azerbaijan, in particular the capital, Baku. It is set in the 1970s, politically under Communism, but with its own culture and history from its position at the crossroads of Turkish, Persian and Russian cultures. This is where Leila, our heroine, meets Tahir.

The story is in many ways influenced by the legend the author learned at six from her mother about the Maiden Tower of Baku. A princess, walled up in this mediaeval tower, was said to have jumped to her death in the Caspian Sea below when the prince she was expecting to rescue her did not arrive. Of course he was on his way and, like so many stories of star-crossed lovers, this is a tragedy of poor communications and mistiming.

Ella's own array of talents was drawn out by the interviewer, well known author Tracy Chevalier, who is married to one of our members. Ella had a happy childhood and spent a lot of time browsing in a nearby bookshop. But as she described the landscape and communities of her youth, she made us realise the difficulties of being Jewish

under Russian rule, for instance, by being refused admission to university.

But she studied at music college, becoming a gifted song-writer. Her talent took her to Moscow, where she worked at the Yiddish Theatre and Russian State Orchestra. As well as composing songs for Russian films, she also discovered jazz and became a jazz singer.

She was heard by Armand Hammer, the highly successful and influential American businessman, who was deeply involved for decades in Russian-American transactions. (His own parents were immigrants from Ukraine.) Through him and another sponsor, Ella gained the coveted green card to live and work in the USA.

She arrived in 1990, the year of Armand Hammer's death, accompanied by her son who, sadly, died of leukaemia before his ninth birthday. However, she met and married Rabbi Altshuler and they now have a teenage son.

Her CD albums, *Queen of Night* (2001), *Russian Romance* (2005) and *Secret Lives of Women* (2011), are widely acclaimed and we were treated to hearing her play the piano as she sang songs for us in Russian, Hebrew and her native language, Azeri. This is her first novel. We look forward to reading it.

Under An Orphan Sky by Ella Leya is published by Sourcebooks Landmark (Chicago), price £9.99, currently available from Amazon before future bookshop launch.



PESACH VEGETABLE STRUDEL: Exclusive Recipe from the Daily Mail's Anne Shooter

Serves 10. The pastry for this strudel also makes an excellent quiche or can be used to make sweet tarts.

For the pastry

4 eggs, beaten
120ml olive oil plus extra for greasing
200g fine matzah meal
50g potato flour
4 tbsp cold water
1 tbsp sugar
1 tsp salt

For the filling

500g butternut squash, peeled and cubed
1 red pepper, peeled and cut into strips
1 red onion, cut into eighths
6 garlic cloves, unpeeled
2 sprigs of rosemary
3 tbsp olive oil
Sea salt flakes and black pepper
200g mushrooms, sliced
1 egg, beaten



Preheat the oven to 200°C/Gas 6. Grease a baking sheet and a large roasting tray with oil. For the pastry, mix all the ingredients in a bowl, then bring together to form a pastry and squash slightly into a flattish disc. Wrap in cling film and refrigerate while you make the filling.

Put the butternut squash, pepper, onion and garlic on the roasting tray. Scatter with rosemary leaves and drizzle over the olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Roast for 40 minutes, or until everything is soft, adding the mushrooms after 20 minutes. Once cooked, set aside until cooled and turn the oven down to 180°C/Gas 4.

Roll out the pastry into a rectangle around the size of an A4 piece of paper. This is easiest to do between two sheets of greaseproof paper as you cannot use flour to stop it sticking. Get it as thin as you can – around 3-5mm. Take off the top piece of greaseproof paper and squeeze the roasted garlic out of its skins onto the pastry, spreading it over evenly. Arrange the filling down one long side of the pastry, leaving a 2cm border around the edge. Brush a little beaten egg around the border to help seal the pastry when you roll it.

Using the greaseproof paper, roll the strudel up. Finish with the seam underneath and seal the ends. Lift it onto the baking sheet and brush with the remaining beaten egg. Make a couple of little diagonal slashes in the top to help air and moisture escape.

Bake for 30–40 minutes, until the pastry is cooked and golden. Serve warm, in slices.

This recipe comes from Sesame & Spice (published by Headline at £25), the debut cookbook of food writer, recipe columnist and Daily Mail blogger, Anne Shooter. Anne will be a headline speaker at this year's Gefiltefest, Jewish Food Festival, on 28 June at JW3. Bookings on line www.gefiltefest.org from 1 April. Tickets £18 per adult.

FROM THE FIRE TO FESTIVITY

Contrasting student life at SOAS with New York University



Last April we published a letter from an Austrian-born student and convert to Judaism, thanking us for the support we provided him, both spiritually and financially, while studying in London.

Gabriel Schaller studied with Rabbi Altshuler before his conversion under Masorti

auspices. This followed his three-year undergraduate course in politics and economics at London University's School of African and Oriental Studies, where he gained his BA in 2013. During this time, he said: "I had the pleasure of calling Belsize Square my spiritual home."

Supported by a grant from the synagogue, he then spent a "gap year" in Israel, first studying Jewish texts at Pardes Institute in Jerusalem, then learning modern Hebrew at an intensive *ulpan* course at Ma'agan Michael, a flourishing kibbutz north of Caesarea. His kibbutz day was divided between *ulpan* learning and kitchen labour. His Israel stay was divided between religious college and secular kibbutz.

Now 23, he is at New York University, funded by a local fellowship, on a master's degree course for Jewish communal professionals, covering managerial skills and academic knowledge. He has also found part-time work at the Bronfman Center for Jewish Life at New York University. He confesses himself dazzled by the openness, abundance and variety of Jewish life in New York.

"Living in New York is a Jewish experience in and of itself," he wrote in December to the congregation via Rabbi Altshuler in a letter giving an update on his studies and thanking the "entire congregation of Belsize Square Synagogue" for enabling him "to pursue my dream".

It is a far cry from his "two-year experience as co-president of the SOAS Jewish Society". With SOAS's notoriety as a hotbed of student hostility to Israel and a platform for inflammatory speakers, New York must seem a doddle.

The situation in Britain has in fact reached the stage where the Government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill, now going through Parliament, includes a section imposing a statutory duty on universities to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. The bill, introduced last November, is a response to young British Muslims going to fight in Syria and joining the hard-line "Islamic State" extremists.

Policies to vet and potentially ban external speakers are a vital part of these proposals against the promotion of violence. But academics, while alive to the dangers of incitement, are wary of infringements to free speech – whose protection is also part of their statutory duty.

So how was Gabriel Schaller's experience at SOAS? This is his carefully considered response:

"Thank you for reaching out to me. I am very happy to share my thoughts with you on the topic. However, I do have to mention in advance that even though I was president of the SOAS Jewish Society for two years (2011-2013), in general, I avoided political discussions in this role. Our goal was to focus on the discussion on cultural and religious topics instead. Thus, I left the discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the SOAS Israel Society, in which I was not officially involved.

"SOAS's student body is very politicized, and, while some students do indeed harbour strong anti-Israel sentiments, they are rather a vocal minority, and I would thus be careful about extending this label to all students. In my two years as president of the Jewish Society, I did not generally encounter anti-Semitic behavior, and most students were rather curious and genuinely interested to find out about my Jewish identity. In my personal relationships, I encountered people from a vast array of backgrounds and beliefs and with each one of them I have had civilized and respectful political discussions, even if our views did not align.

"Yet, SOAS as an institution has a history of being very silent about the activities of the student organizations and the speakers they invite. As a result, a number of highly controversial speakers have made it to the podiums of the university and its management has often stood back and washed their hands of responsibility. At the same time, the SOAS Student Union has unfortunately boycotted the State of Israel for a number of years already [*since 2005*], and thus made it impossible for a unbiased debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to occur in an official context.

"I am unfamiliar with the specific law proposal you mention, being away from England for almost two years, and can therefore not comment on it. However, hate speech should be prevented in the interest of protecting democracy and, in particular, the safety of the Jewish People. In light of the recent terror attacks in Paris, academic institutions need to take an active role in this effort."

Note: Last month the SOAS student body presented the college authorities with its latest request to break off links with the Hebrew University. The Jewish Society president complained to the Jewish Chronicle that the college's Israel Society had been "hijacked" by supporters of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement and that the atmosphere in the college was intimidatory to Jewish students.

But, as recently retired SOAS academic Colin Schindler, professor of Israeli studies, explained, SOAS is the best and right place to study Israel in its full Middle Eastern context. Though students and junior academics are virulently anti-Israel, he says this has never applied to the institution itself, which steadfastly refuses to bow to student pressure. Like Gabriel Schaller, he enjoyed superficially good relations with his colleagues. He also notes that Jewish students who survive the SOAS experience are very positively committed to Israel.

More Book News

Jewish Book Week was also the occasion to announce the shortlist for the Jewish Quarterly - Wingate Book Prize, which includes two Belsize Square members: Thomas Harding, author of *Hanns and Rudolf*, and Professor Antony Polonsky, author of *The Jews in Poland and Russia*. The winner will be announced in late April.

Invitation to Nominate Candidates for Membership of the Board of The Belsize Square Synagogue (The Synagogue)

The third Annual General Meeting of The Synagogue (the AGM) will be held on **Monday 1 June 2015**. Formal notice will be given in due course.

The Board hereby invites the members of The Synagogue to nominate candidates for the Office of Chairman and for election to the Board for a period of three years commencing from the AGM. There are 15 vacancies.

Nominations must be in writing, addressed to the Hon. Secretary and submitted to the Synagogue Office by twelve noon on **Friday 17 April 2015**. Each Nomination must be signed by at least five members of The Synagogue who are themselves entitled to vote at the AGM. Only valid nominations which are received by that date can be considered. No member may sign more nominations for the Board than the number of vacancies (namely 15).

In accordance with the Articles of Association of The Synagogue, the following 9 members will be retiring from the Board by rotation but are eligible for re-election if duly nominated: **Brenda Brod, Philip Brass, Joe Brookes, Paul Burger, Deborah Cohen, Adam Hurst, Annette Nathan, Vera Pollins, Sam Sanders.**

From 20 April, a list of the candidates duly nominated will be available for inspection at the Synagogue Office and the formal notice of the AGM will also include a list of those candidates.

Election of Deputies

Election of up to two Deputies to the Board of Deputies of British Jews to be undertaken as a postal vote. Nominations should be sent in writing to the Hon. Secretary not later than **Friday 17 April 2015**, with names and addresses of the persons nominated, whose consent should be obtained.

Any person eligible for nomination as a representative to the Board of Deputies must have been, for at least one year prior, not under 18 years of age or an undischarged bankrupt or convicted of a serious criminal offence or a paid employee of the Board of Deputies. Retiring Deputies are eligible for nomination. Should there be more nominations than there are places, a postal ballot will take place.

Our present deputies are: **Eric Moonman** and **Robert Sacks**.

Dear Fellow Members

Unfortunately I am becoming a bit olderly. There are quite a few things I would love to be in attendance for, but I have to limit my goings out. For example I would love to be at the Evening of Promiscuity just to see what was on offer. I don't think I have the recourses to be a strong participator, but there is no harm in a bit of widow shopping.

I am also very sorry to have missed out on the joined fluctuations with St Peters. I have always much enjoyed the cross fertilisation with other religious faces. There is enough trouble in the world with storms und decease without human confliction. Every morning I listen on Radio For to Sort for the Day. Sometimes it is a Dr Sing from the Seeks, oder a bishop of Schottland und a wicker from Wales, even several Rabbis on occasions like still Lord Sex und the currant Sheaf Rabbi Mervous und many other communes. Weather they are Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslamist or otherwise they all say we must get on und be good und kind und so force. Only the much missed Rabbi Lionel Blew was a bit different und talked



*Klopstick's
Kompliment*

about tea at his antis house und always added a yoke. By the time you read this kolumne you will properly be in the beginnings from Pesach. Mrs Klopstick will have plugged the chicken, burned the eggs und dug up the hores raddish from the Abernein Mansion's garten. Every year we plant the left over rudes und it grows up again. It is a very good representative from the circle life. Equally every time I open my Hagadah some more of the passed falls out as matzo crumbs. I am very tempted to have an NDA to see how old some of them really are

At this punct I have to refrain myself und cut myself off. You will have noticed that my kolumne has shrunk to a forshortened version this month. This is because the editor in sheaf, Roth Ruthenberg, had advised me that her spaces were being tightly squeezed. It is something to do with the general AMG elections und also extra Pesach tables. I therefore pull out from any further injection here und wish you all from me und Mrs Klopstick a good und unconstipated Pesach.

With the best of intentions

Fritz Klopstick

Scripture Readings

Candle Lighting	Date	Sidrah/Festival	Torah		Haftarah	
Friday 3 April	4 April Nissan 15	Pesach - 1st Night	Exodus Numbers	12:29-51 28:16-18	Isaiah	43:1-21
Saturday 4 April	5 April Nissan 16	Pesach - 2nd Night	Leviticus Deuteronomy	23:1-22 16:1-3	II Kings	23:1-9 21-25
Thursday 9 April Vivien Lewis	10 April Nissan 21	Pesach - 7th Day	Exodus Exodus	14:5-15:21 13:6-10	II Samuel	22:1-7 17-31
Friday 10 April Hilary Solomon	11 April Nissan 22	Pesach - 8th Day	Deuteronomy Numbers	15:12-16:17 28:19-25	Isaiah	11:1-10 12:1-6
Friday 17 April Maya Brookes	18 April Nissan 29	Sh'mini Machar Chodesh	Leviticus	11:1-47	I Samuel	20:18-42
Friday 24 April Lara Isaacs	25 April Iyar 6	Tazria-M'tzora	Leviticus	14:33-15:33	II Kings	7:3-20

Community News

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:
Rebecca Gammage
Nigel & Harriet Jackson

B'NEI MITZVOT

Congratulations and best wishes to:
Maya, daughter of Emma & Joe Brookes, on 18 April
Lara, daughter of Penelope & Stephen Isaacs, on 25 April

STONE SETTING

The stone setting for the late Edna Kerry will take place on Sunday 19 April at Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery at 12.45pm

Yom Ha'atzmaut Concert

**Performed by the Wallace Ensemble
under conductor Ben Wolf**

Sunday 26 April at 7.30pm at the Synagogue

Programme: Handel, Prokofiev, Bruch, Copland and Ben Wolf's Piano Concerto.

Tickets £15 from office@synagogue.org.uk or 020 7794 3949 or book online: www.synagogue.org.uk/events

Retirement Kiddush for Dorothy White

After 13 years Dorothy White is retiring as our Community Care Co-Ordinator.

We invite the whole Community to join us on Saturday 16 May for the Service and Communal Kiddush

**THIS PESACH,
WILL YOU HELP
JEWISH CARE?**

We support and care for over 7,000 people every week.

To make a donation just call 020 8922 2600 now, or visit jewishcare.org/donate

Ivor Perl photographed in the synagogue at Lady Sarah Cohen House

Charity Reg No. 802559

REMEMBER **JEWISH CARE**

The copy deadline for the next issue of *Our Congregation* is Friday 17 April 2015

Regular Services

Friday evenings at 6.45pm & Saturday mornings at 10.00am

Kikar Kids

4 April and 2 May at 11.00am

Under-5s Service in the Crèche

5-9 year-olds Service in the Library

11.30am – Kids Kiddush

Often followed by a Pot Luck Lunch

Contact Frank Joseph on 020 7482 2555 to bring a dish

Religion School

Sunday mornings: 9.30am-12.30pm

LOCAL LUNCHEON GROUPS

Still running and happy to welcome new members
Please let us know if you plan to attend

The NW3 and Wembley Group

1.00pm on Wednesday 22 April and 20 May
Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, London, NW2 2HY
Please phone Debra Jay on 020 7435 8835 or Anne Goodwin on 020 8452 3997

The Edgware Group

12.30pm on Wednesday 29 April and 27 May
Amaretto, 12 The Promenade, Hale Lane, HA8 7JZ
Please phone Inge Strauss on 020 8958 9414

Sunday Morning Adult Discussion Group

April 5, 12, 19: Pesach break. No meetings

Sunday 26 April: Summer term

9.45-11.00 Rabbi Altshuler: The Great Philosophers and the Jewish Response

11.15-12.30 Angela Schlüter: The Nazi Officer's Wife

BELSIZE BOOK CLUB

Wednesday 8 April at 8.00pm

We will be reading Vera Brittain's memoir, **Testament of Youth** at the home of Romy Lis



Please call Dorothy White on 020 8445 6388 for info

B'nai B'rith Leo Baeck (London) Lodge

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 15 April

Afternoon event and tea at the Imperial War Museum to commemorate the liberation of Bergen-Belsen

Wednesday 22 April at 8.00pm

Yom Ha'Atzmaut

One of the charities that we support in Israel is Reut. It operates in the fields of health, welfare & old age and is one of the country's most advanced facilities for rehabilitation and long-term care. We will see a film and hear about the tremendous work that is done by them.

This event take place at the Leo Baeck Hall,
11 Fitzjohn's Avenue, NW3 5JY



PURIM

PARTY TIME

With all its colourful costumes, megillah reading, gregger rattling, nourishing nibbles, music, singing, rhymes and hand-held puppetry, the organised chaos of our Purim evening never quite got out of hand. (This is Belsize Square after all.)

Our thanks to catering supremo Pat Hirshovits, youth choir conductor and stage set designer Alyson Denza, stage managers Leah Hurst and Emma Brookes, sound engineer Stephen Wiener, puppet mistress and witty script writer Jeanie Horowitz (with some help from her professional writer mother, New York-based Gloria Goldreich), master of the scroll and trainer of the *Ieyners* Cantor Paul Heller, and a refreshed Rabbi Stuart Altshuler back from his inspiring American conference, for a joyous carnival of free-wheeling fun.

Among the teenagers, thanks go to our megillah chanters: Yohel Heller, Ben Nothman, Audrey Assouly, Hannah Strauss, Gil Sherman, Rudy Brass, Jackie Purits, Robert dos Santos, India Capper, Roberta Sher, Josie Bergman and Benjamin Yass.

Congratulations also to the young cast of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, with brothers Ben (unbroken voice) and Josh Hurst playing young and older Joseph, Rebecca Nisbet and Daniela Kobrin as Narrators and Rudy Brass as Pharaoh, plus the Brookes family (Asher, Eleanor and Maya), Georgia Barclay, Jake Brass, Mia Brent, Anna Brown, Max Cutner, Emma Fox, Isaac and Jacob Sanders, Helen Trenner, Leah Trijbits and Saul Zur-Szpiro.

Utter admiration at the topical rhyming repartee in the adult version of the Purim story, as delivered by the red-throated puppet heads wielded by Graham Brown, Sam Sanders, Mandy Brass, Micala Fox and Ira Gaberman.

And a good time was had by all!



Family photo: Joseph lounging at the back behind his brothers, with father, Jacob, far right with unnaturally grey flowing hair and Narrators and character actor sitting in front. The two adult heads peeking through (back left) weren't supposed to be there but, hey, it's Purim!

SYNAGOGUE HELP LINES

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Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

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Lee Taylor - 020 7794 3949

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and Dilys Tausz - 020 7435 5996

CHEVRA KADISHA

Chairman: Rabbi Stuart Altshuler

Joint Vice Chairs: Helen Grunberg - 020 8450 8533

Cantor Dr Paul Heller

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BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Contact Dorothy White on 020 8445 6388

or email dorothywhite@synagogue.org.uk

or call the Synagogue Office for a leaflet

FUNERALS

During synagogue office hours phone 020 7794 3949.

Evenings/weekends phone Calos (Undertakers)

020 8958 2112

JUDAICA SHOP

Open during office hours and on Sunday morning during
term time only

KIDDUSH

Rota enquiries to Jennifer Saul in the Synagogue Office
(not Thursdays or Fridays)

LIBRARY

Open Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon

At other times please check first with the office

CHEDER

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