

## A central graphic of a blue and white globe showing the continents of Africa and Europe. The globe is surrounded by a circular arrangement of various cultural and architectural icons, including the Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Colosseum, the Great Wall of China, the Sphinx, the Pyramids of Giza, the Sphinx, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Colosseum, the Eiffel Tower, and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. A red arrow points from the top of the globe towards the bottom. The background is a light blue gradient with a subtle pattern of city names in a light blue font, including ASLE, EDINBURGH, JERUSALEM, CAPE TOWN, BR, OUSTON, ROME, DE JANEIRO, CAI, SLO, NAIROB, Y, DELHI TO, ANTIAGO, LAGOS, RUGES, VBO, SIN, CE ME, ALA CA, ARCELO, BON NA, ONACO, NA GEN, OME NEW, JERUSA, SLO NAIROB, DELHI TO, YDNEY PERTH, SINGAPORE, MA MELBOURNE, JOHANNESBURG, KAMPALA CA.

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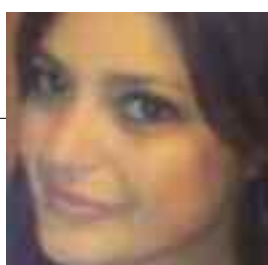
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# CentralMagazine

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**Central Magazine**    **Designed and printed by:**

Brightside Print & Design Ltd. 020 7960 5111 • [www.brightsideonline.com](http://www.brightsideonline.com)

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## FROM **the Rabbi** Barry Marcus

*Dear Congregants*

In an age where the place of faith is very often questioned and its relevance challenged, it is most heart warming to witness increased activities and membership of our beautiful Shul and historic community.

Our community has built an enviable reputation as a place of harmony and hospitality in keeping with our tradition that so values accord, warmth and conviviality.

The countless letters, emails and communications from members and guests from all over the globe testify to the warm atmosphere that has been created at the Central.

While events in the Middle East threaten to destabilise the area further, our hopes and prayers are for the safety and security of Israel and all its citizens and to an end of the ongoing violence in so many of its neighbouring countries.

We look forward to welcoming you all on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succot in the hope that you will continue to contribute to the strengthening of our community.

*Warmest wishes for a Shana Tova.*

**Rabbi Barry Marcus**



## EDITOR'S MESSAGE **Nicola Burns**

Welcome to the 5774 issue of Central – the magazine for all of our members and friends.

This issue is brimming with all the news and the many varied events that have made the Central Synagogue such an exciting and interesting place to be this past year.

Read all about our annual quiz evening and the Purim party, extravaganzas of music, food and wine. Our new events committee ran a very enjoyable bowling evening, the first of many, and of course the delicious annual Lag B'Omer barbeque.

This was also a very musical year including two wonderful concerts and a Chazanut convention, arranged by Steven Leas, in June.

Rabbi Marcus has been honoured this year by the Holocaust Educational Trust and continues with his meaningful work in Belarus and at Auschwitz. His work in these fields, enrich and inform us all.

I urge you to read a most moving and thought provoking article by Adam Newman on his visit to Eastern Europe. Adam is a wonderful writer and I'm delighted that he submitted this piece to us.

As always, there are so many people to thank and most especially, Yoav Amit and Jeremy Davidson, who so generously help us with our Shabbat Services.

I must also mention our administrator Craig Levison and our Community Development Officer Raquel Amit. They are both dedicated and wonderful people who have helped enormously with this magazine. We have become close friends and it is impossible to imagine how the Shul could manage without them!

This is my sixth year as editor of the Central Magazine and I have decided to step down to let others bursting with fresh ideas take over this role. Therefore Raquel Amit and Daphne Schogger have agreed to become joint editors from next year, and I wish them the very best of luck!

And so it only remains for me to thank you for your wonderful support and to wish you all a most happy, healthy and fulfilled New Year.

Laurie Phillips opened the Annual General Meeting of the Synagogue in May. Laurie informed the meeting that he would not seek re-election this year and that Nicola Burns, our Vice Chairman, who had stood for election unopposed was to be Chairman of the Synagogue for the forthcoming year; this was a 'first' since the constitution of the United Synagogue had recently been amended, making it possible for the first time in 150 years for a lady member of a Synagogue to become Chairman.

Laurie also confirmed that Nigel Gee had previously informed the Honorary Officers that he would not be standing for the office of Warden. Having served for the previous nine years, he wished to stand aside to make room for someone else to serve in the office of Warden. The Honorary Officers are delighted to report that Melvin Lawson and Harold Schogger had expressed a willingness to serve respectively as Vice Chairman and as a Warden of the Synagogue and we are happy to confirm that both Melvin and Harold have become the latest members of Central to take on roles as Honorary Officers.

Stanley Salter and Stuart Lewis continue in their respective offices as Financial Representative and Warden for the year to May 2014. The Honorary Officers are united in their commitment to work together as a considerate team so as to ensure the secure future of the Central Synagogue as well as the welfare of all the members, Rabbi Marcus, Chazan Leas, their families and everyone else employed by or associated with the Synagogue.

Rabbi Barry Marcus takes the pivotal role at Central Synagogue; leading the community in prayer throughout the year; at the very well attended Morning Minyanim (organised by Michael Bayer), he also leads and delivers sermons on most Shabbat mornings, inspiring the congregation to seek a deeper meaning to life on the most solemn and joyous religious festivals throughout the Jewish calendar. Rabbi Marcus is highly respected not only within the British Jewish Community, but also among a much wider cross section of the British public. He continues to lead visits to Auschwitz and is recognised as taking a leading role in educating young people from schools throughout the country regarding humanity's darkest hour.

Rabbi Marcus is also there to celebrate with families on the happiest of occasions, as well as when members experience those very sad events when he is a pillar of strength.

Chazan Steven Leas inspires the Central Community with his beautiful voice. His care for the whole congregation is expressed by his commitment to our members. Together with his wife Ruth, their son Jonathan and their daughters Rafaella and Danielle he brings a warmth to our community. On the High Holy Days, Steven's Chazanut expresses the hope for a long and full life blessed with good health and happiness. Steven and the Central Synagogue Choir sing a combination of traditional as well as contemporary prayers at Shabbat services during the year and at the monthly Rosh Chodesh services. At the time of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the musical compositions bring back memories of years gone by and inspire us to both count our blessings as well as remember the guidance of past generations.

Steven was once again a key participant in arranging the Eighth European Cantor's Convention. This year the gathering took place at Central; the convention was accompanied by a Cantor's Concert in June when leading Cantors from around the world, including Sol Zim and Yechezkel Klang participated, together with four leading English Male choirs and a fine children's choir. More than 600 people attended including the Chief Rabbi Elect Ephraim Mirvis. The concert united everyone present with the beauty of song. The following Shabbat some of the outstanding Chazanim participated with Steven in a 'Cantorial Shabbaton'.

Nicola Burns has a presence and grace which helps make Central a very special place indeed, she edits the Synagogue magazine and keeps in touch with those in need in our community. She serves as a member of the Board of Deputies and as liaison with US women. Having served as Vice Chairman for five years she is now making her mark as a most accomplished Chairman. Financial Representative, Stanley Salter, continues to keep the Synagogue's finances in very good order, and the clarity of the Synagogue accounts was widely praised once again at the recent Annual General Meeting. Stuart Lewis is now serving his second year as Warden; he is hard working and his wisdom and experience are of great benefit in the running of the Shul. Whilst Harold Schogger has just recently become a Warden his generous nature and his warm and friendly communication skills are a great asset. Likewise, although Melvin Lawson has only recently taken on the role of Vice Chairman, he has always shown enormous support and commitment to the shul and we welcome them both as new Honorary Officers.

Adrienne Phillips became the Chair of the Ladies Guild at the AGM in May and she has succeeded Sara Cohen who organised the Ladies Guild faultlessly over the past two years. We wish Adrienne well in her new role. We also thank Sara Cohen for the special Kiddushim she organised during Passover, and at the time of the breaking of the Fast

after Yom Kippur. The Ladies continue to plan for a number of important events and special occasions each year. We thank the Ladies' Guild for their hard work and all their efforts.

We thank the Board of Management and Synagogue Elders for their work and efforts for the Synagogue. At the meetings held though the year they give sound advice and each one of them helps in the running of the Synagogue. Roger Cohen, Maurice Shamash, Ze'ev Galibov and Margaret Grant all left the Board of Management at the Annual General Meeting this May and we thank all of them for being a great help to the Synagogue over a number of years and we hope that they will continue to serve the Synagogue in many ways and that they will all enjoy happy events at Great Portland Street for many years to come. We welcome five new members onto the Board of Management; Phillip Collett, James Hyman, Guy Ornadel, Richard Midda and Clarice Shamash; they are all most warmly welcomed and we hope they will play important roles at Central in the future.

In May, the national press announced that the Chief Rabbi Elect, Ephraim Mirvis, would have private offices and reception facilities at Central. This was unanimously supported by the Board of Management at an Extraordinary Board Meeting in July and we are delighted to welcome the new Chief Rabbi here.

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah in September 2012, we welcomed His Excellency the Israeli Ambassador, Daniel Taub and family. After the service Steven and Debra Tucker hosted a fabulous Rosh Hashanah Kiddush.

A number of special events took place at the Synagogue in the past year and among these were the Simchat Torah celebrations in October 2012 when Michael Lewis and Yoav Amit were the Chatanim; in November there was a very special Klezmer Concert held in association with the Polish Embassy; in January this year the Annual Supper Quiz took place and this raised funds for the Synagogue and there were many moments of high spirits during the evening; in February we held the Purim Party at Central in association with Marble Arch Synagogue – this year there were ample opportunities for the young people to sing. On 27th February many young and 'young at heart' members of the community took part in a Ten Pin Bowling evening at Bloomsbury. This was a great success and repeated twice over the Spring; on 11th March a concert was held in the Hall and Steven Leas excelled himself once again accompanied by the London Jewish Male Choir; on 14th March the new Central Synagogue Website was launched and many thanks go to Michael Fishberg for the great deal of work he contributed to its success. The Lag B'Omer BBQ was held in April and good weather helped to ensure that this was a most enjoyable event; on Shabbat 13th April the Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks made his last official visit to Central when he addressed the Congregation in the Sermon, the visit coincided with a special celebration on the occasion of a family reunion of over 200 members of the Wolfson Family; on 26th April there was a special 'Carlebach Friday Night' followed by Sushi and Schnapps and this was a great social success; on 11th May the newly refurbished Synagogue Hall was rededicated as "The Wolfson Hall". We thank all the participants in these events. Many parties of schoolchildren again visited the Synagogue in the past year and they were from many different religious backgrounds, our thanks to Rabbi Marcus, Raquel and Nicky who made sure that their visits were filled with an understanding of Jewish Religion and traditions.

Our weekly lunch and learn with Rabbi Mordechai Nissim as does the regular women's shiurim with Liat Mayerfeld.

David Baker has continued to act as Head of Security over the past year and our thanks go to him. David continues to greet our visitors with a smile. He is ably assisted by our exceptional security officers Jayson and Steve. We congratulate Maurice Shamash who has been appointed Security Liaison Officer. We also thank the Community Security Trust who help to secure the building throughout the year.

We thank Craig Levison, our highly experienced and informative Administrator; and also Raquel Amit, our very efficient Community Development Officer. We also thank Douglas, our super caretaker who continues to help the Synagogue in many ways as well as most considerably helping to keep the Synagogue secure along with Louise and Sylvia.

Kol Nidre – The proceeds of the Appeal this year will once again be allocated primarily to the needs of our own growing community and in the year ahead our focus will be on the completion of the restoration of the original Hallam Street wing which houses the small Synagogue, the children's Synagogue as well as the administrative offices. Works will also be carried out to repair and keep watertight the roof of the main Synagogue which will soon be old enough to qualify for a bus pass!

We look forward to seeing you and greeting you in person when you visit Central Synagogue in the year ahead.

We wish all our members a 'Happy and Healthy 5774 and well over the Fast'.





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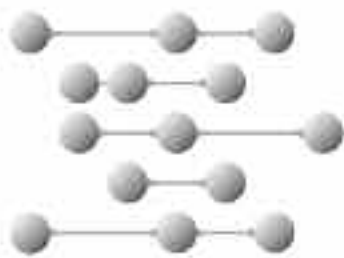
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## Rosh Hashanah Message 5774



In Jewish tradition, the names we give to places and concepts invariably capture the essence of what they represent. Our central congregational location for prayer is no exception. Located at the heart of our communities, it has three well-known names: beit tefillah, beit kneset and shul.

Firstly, beit tefillah or 'house of prayer'. This title was given by G-d to the Temple in Jerusalem and continues to be a most apposite term used to this day. It expresses the building's core purpose of providing a place through which we connect with our Creator and experience His presence in a spiritually rewarding way. Through our synagogues facing Jerusalem, we also recognise the centrality of Israel in our lives.

Another name is beit kneset or 'house of gathering'. In vogue since ancient times, beit kneset adds a significant dimension to the role of our synagogues. Indeed, the Greek word synagogue similarly means 'house of gathering'.

The connotation is clear: our synagogues, especially in the Diaspora, are the central focal points for Jewish social and cultural interaction for individuals of all ages and groups of all types. Not only do we enjoy an encounter with G-d within its walls; we also engage socially with friends and acquaintances. The weekly kiddush epitomises the beit kneset, providing an opportunity for us to connect with others in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It is encounters of this nature that weave the social fabric of our communities.

The colloquial name for our synagogues – shul – is taken from the German word meaning 'school'. Historically, the local school was housed within the synagogue building. In this spirit, many shuls today have a kindergarten and run a cheder for children on their premises.

The word 'shul' adds a further dimension to our communal vision. Formal and informal education, for members of all ages and all backgrounds, must be at the heart of our shared communal

experiences. In seeking to guarantee the on-going vitality of our congregations, we recognise that an in-depth awareness of our rich heritage will pave the way for a meaningful and fulfilling Jewish life in the future.

It is my hope and prayer that all our community centres live up to the three names we give them, becoming outstanding houses of prayer, houses of gathering and shuls rolled into one. Providing a combined location for communal spirituality, a meeting place for communal interaction and a home for communal learning will ensure we have vibrant and dynamic centres of Jewish activity. Building on the successes of the past we will transform our synagogues into powerhouses of Jewish religious, social, cultural and educational activity.

I feel very privileged to have been selected to be your Chief Rabbi and I am looking forward to having a close association with your community and others throughout the UK & Commonwealth. We are blessed to have such outstanding rabbis and lay leaders and, together with them, I will be seeking to further enrich community life.

Valerie and I extend to you all our very best wishes for a happy, healthy, peaceful and fulfilling New Year. I look forward to working together with you to develop and grow our local congregations and our wonderful British & Commonwealth Jewish communities for the benefit of us all and all of Am Yisrael.

*Shana tova*

**Chief Rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis**

Rosh Hashanah 5774



## RABBI Marcus



**On September 10th 2012, over 400 guests and dignitaries attended the Holocaust Educational Trust's Appeal Dinner at The Savoy to honour those who have dedicated their lives to Holocaust Education.**

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP presented Rabbi Barry Marcus with an award for his dedication to Holocaust education. He explained that "there is no better way to remember than education. Rabbi Barry Marcus has done so much, coming into contact with over 17,000 students and teachers. He has made us all proud of the work he has done."



**Special Award  
to Rabbi  
Barry Marcus**



**Meeting with HRH  
Prince Charles at  
Clarence House for  
the Campaign for  
Youth Social Action,  
27th June 2013.**



The following report was written by a Year 13 student following a visit by Rabbi Marcus to the St James Senior Girls' School:

### Rabbi Barry Marcus visits St James Senior Girls' School

Monday 29th April 2013

On Friday 26th April Rabbi Barry Marcus of the Central Synagogue in Great Portland Street came to speak to us about Jewish heritage and the message of the Torah. We felt the warmth and immediacy of his presence as soon as he started to speak: he drew us in by inviting us to ask anything at any time during the presentation. He also had a wonderful sense of humour which made communication with him very easy.

He said that Judaism was not a religion in the sense that Christianity, Islam and others are because it is about how to live life well; furthermore it does not proclaim to be the only way to G-d.

He asked us what we thought prayer was and we said that it involved praise, gratitude and sometimes asking for things. By the time we left the assembly hall we had an understanding of the true meaning of the Hebrew word for prayer, 'le-hit-palal' which is a reflexive verb meaning to judge oneself. This was an entirely fresh view. Rabbi Marcus made it clear that this practice exists at the heart of Judaism; when 'praying' one must assess one's actions and expectations, not unlike the famous Socratic saying, an unexamined life is not worth living. A lack of 'le-hit-palal' can result in tragic human suffering. Rabbi Marcus used the Nazi period as an example of this; even today, any group in society could be a victim of this human evil. On a small scale it is bullying, for example through social media. There is always a risk that a human being's ability to judge and reflect on his or her own actions will fall short of the mark, resulting in the perpetration of injustice. The need to pray in the sense of teaching is, therefore, a duty of the highest order.

A Year 13 pupil asked how one can keep a strong faith in G-d in the midst of tragedies inflicted on humanity by humanity; as is so often asked: where was G-d during the Holocaust? Rabbi Marcus gave an inspirational response saying that the question ought not to be: where was G-d but where was man? Man must take responsibility for his actions. Self-judgement would make all the difference. He also warned

about the dangers of making a 'wish list' for G-d.

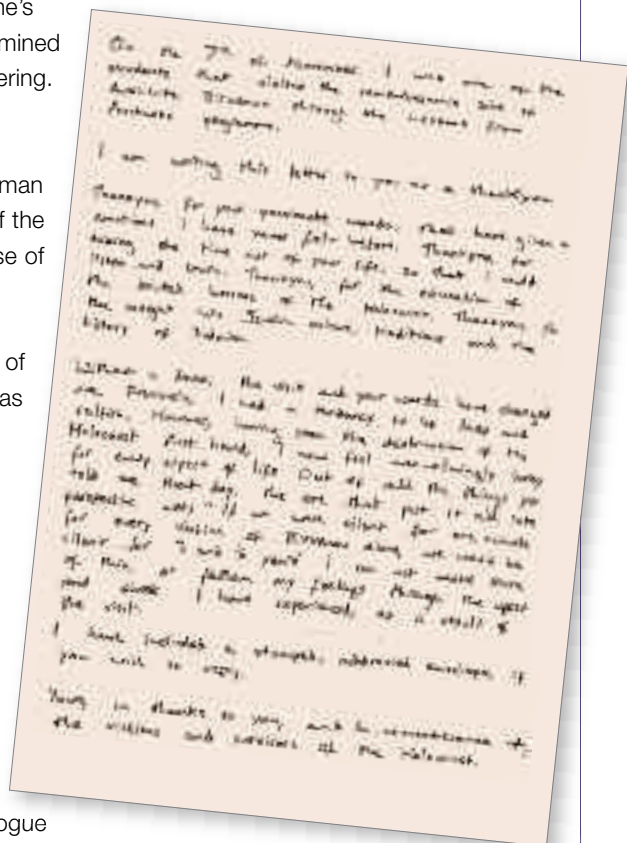
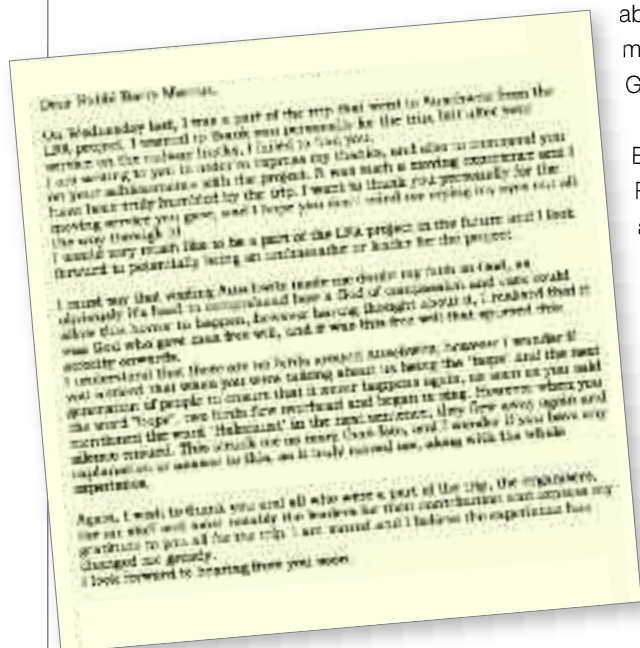
Equally enthusiastically, Rabbi Marcus talked about the traditional simplicity of the Synagogue and the Hebrew words that are in our language today, for example, alleluia and amen. Perhaps, most importantly, we were struck by the universal morality of the Jewish religion.

Rabbi Marcus' talk was a whole-school open conversation which engaged every year group equally. He made us laugh and think deeply; and the end came too soon because we wanted to hear more!

Lauren, Year 13



Rabbi Marcus with Headmistress Laura Hyde and Deputy Head Christian Daw



**The idea being that a Synagogue is not just a place to come and pray on Shabbat and Yom Tov, but a place where the community can come and socialise and learn about Jewish values, join in different social events and in that way, grow the community as well as creating a closer tie to Judaism whilst making new friends.**

With this in mind we set about reaching out to different people in the community to ask them whether they would be happy in joining together in this venture.

Our first meeting attracted no less than 20 people from all walks of life. We had students attend who wanted to attract more students to this lovely community by creating social events and learning sessions as well as people wanting to interact with people and learn Jewish values and Torah.

What came out of this meeting was a whole host of ideas and it was great to see people's enthusiasm and a sense of wanting to help grow this wonderful, prestigious community.

We started off with a bowling evening which was very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all and this was followed up by an inter-Synagogue bowling evening where we "thrashed" both Marble Arch and St. John's Wood Synagogues. It was a lovely evening and I refer you to our website blog "Fallen Arches".

This brings me on to the website. Michael Fishberg took the lead in developing a great new website for the Synagogue and this has been a huge success and resulted in us being able to market our Synagogue to a much wider and more varied community.

Our main event for the year was the Cantorial Convention, concert and Shabbat which was a huge success and I refer you to the article regarding this on pages 28 and 29. This was a sellout and the first of a series of concerts we hope to bring to you in the coming year. We were also honoured by the attendance of the Chief Rabbi Elect Mirvis at the reception.

We held another fantastic concert in March this year which was put on together with the London Jewish Male Choir as well as Broadway sensation Marc Joseph, who wowed us with his lyrical tones. We sang a mix of opera, musical theatre, Jewish and Yiddish numbers. The highlight for me was a piece that the LJMC choirmaster, Joseph Finlay,

arranged for the choir from a musical called "The Rothschilds" with music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick and based on the book by Frederic Morton. It is worth a read as it tells of the rise of the Rothschild family from their humble beginnings in Germany to their financial empire and political influence. Have a look on YouTube at Sammy Davis Jnr singing it. As usual, no Central Synagogue event is without food, and we had an abundance of rogelach, pastries and other.

We also had a carlebach sushi and schnapps Friday night service. The idea here is to bring people to our Friday evening service who wouldn't ordinarily come and to have an evening of song, prayer, food and good conversation.

We have come up with many different ideas from a cocktail evening at an art gallery to a wine tasting, cupcake decorating for kids, movie nights for all ages and a host of other great ideas including an old Central favourite, challah baking.

The idea of the committee is that people take ownership of different events and they then go with the concept.

We also intend to have speakers and a "desert island disc" idea where we will interview famous, interesting people in our Synagogue about their lives and careers.

We are most fortunate that our warden Harold Schogger, a renowned bridge player, is starting bridge lessons for all levels, at the Synagogue in September.

We are also placing a large emphasis on attracting more kids to our Synagogue and are trying out different ideas for the children's services and other activities during the year.

This is just the beginning and the list is endless.

I encourage you to join us and to give us your expertise and by so doing, help us grow a vibrant community not just on Shabbatot and Yom Tov, but during the week as well.

**Steven**

# ONE AMAZING SHABBAT WITH THE THREE CANTORS

By **Antony Craig**

The highlight of the Central Synagogue Choir's year has to be that amazing Shabbat in June when the Three Cantors, stars of the international Chazzanut convention, took over.

The convention had been held at the Shul and that Shabbat we sang with not only our own Steven Leas but also with Sol Zim (modestly self-styled as 'America's superstar of Jewish music') from New York and Yechezkel Klang, originally from New York but now living in Jerusalem. Three of the world's leading cantors.

During our longest Shabbat morning service of the year, highlights included the choir singing with the man himself new versions of two of Zim's own well-loved compositions – Avinu Shebashamayim (the Prayer for the State of Israel) and Sim Shalom from the Musaph Amidah.

This followed the exciting concert in the shul three days earlier, when a number of the best Jewish male voice choirs in Britain took turns to sing with the visiting cantors. The London Jewish Male Choir, which has close associations with the shul, was one and our own choir joined forces with Neimah in some of the choral high points of the evening, including an acclaimed performance of Atta Yatzarta (from the Musaph Amidah on Shabbos Rosh Chodesh), which was new to the Central Synagogue Choir, and our own Shema Koleinu (from Yom Kippur). The joint choir was conducted variously by Neimah's Jonathan Weisbart and Central's own Anthony Caplan.

Anthony, who has long been the mainstay of the first tenor line here, took on the conductor's mantle after Michael Etherton left and he has been making his mark, discretely introducing more traditional pieces into the Shabbat

repertoire. This had tended to be heavily influenced by the compositions of Steven Glass, a choirmaster and arranger of Synagogal music who now lives and works in Canada.

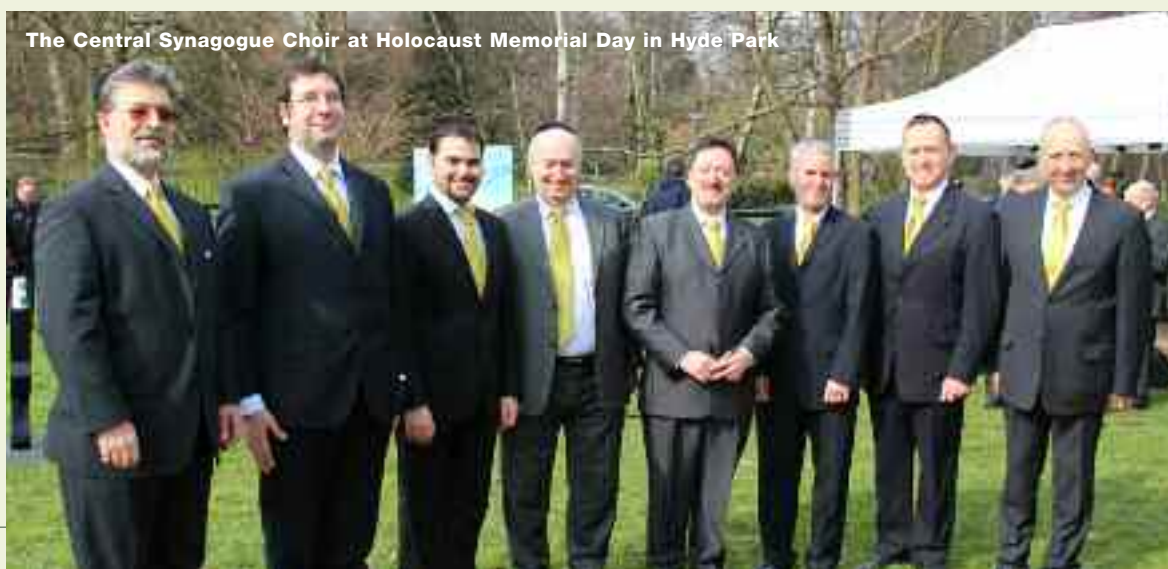
Another major event for the choir was the annual open-air Holocaust Memorial Day service with the Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, at the Dell in Hyde Park. For several years the choir has sung with Steven at this moving event, which always draws more than 500 people. Our full regular choir was able to attend this year. The choir members, pictured here, are (from left) Jeffrey Blum and Jeremy Lowe (basses), Anton Eriera and Antony Craig (baritones), conductor and tenor Anthony Caplan, and Rob Davis, Mike Singer and Alan Bluman (tenors).

An exciting project, which we hope will materialise over the coming year, will be the recording of a second choir CD – you can hear excerpts from our first CD, Central in Song, on the Shul's website. The repertoire for the new recording has yet to be decided but we hope it will include some of the congregation's favourites.

The current choir was formed by Steven in 2004, but it is part of a great tradition of choral music at Central, dating back to the middle of the nineteenth century! Steven's aim was for the choir to augment but not overwhelm the services, by introducing new melodies to enhance the spiritual experience and to encourage congregational participation. That's our objective – and I hope we go some way towards achieving it.

## **Antony Craig**

Antony Craig is Production Editor of Gramophone magazine ([gramophone.co.uk](http://gramophone.co.uk))





# PURIM

This year it was Central Synagogue's turn to host the evening and as usual we joined up with the Western Marble Arch and Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld who was his usual brilliant self. He made us live the story!



The most important part of any Jewish get together is the food and there was an abundance of this!!! Well done Ladies' Guild for the delicious goujons with salads, herring and bridge rolls.

Whilst this was happening, we also had Mr Marvel join us to entertain the kids and it was great to see so many young faces.



**Jonathan Leas**



The highlight of the evening was of course the annual central "Purim Show". Nicky Burns started the show to great acclaim with her own 'Purimised' version of "oom pah pah" from the musical "Oliver!" Eric Charles followed with a great version of "If I ruled the World", except that he changed the words to "If I ruled the SHUL". This was very funny and went down really well. Eric sang this in tribute to the composer of the original song, Cyril Ornadel, father of our members Guy and Dan Ornadel.

Our Synagogue children sang Purim songs and songs from the musicals. Jonathan Leas sang "O solo mio" to the words of "Adon Olam" – this was really wonderful and afterwards we were treated to Emily Cohen who sang beautifully for us.



**Rabbi Lionel and Natalie Rosenfeld**





Lionel joined Steven in an unrehearsed “La Donna e Mobile”. The English title, by the way, meaning “Women are fickle” – Brave!

Thanks to Kevin Lee who was here from Australia he played his harp to “Con te partiro” and was magnificent as was Sydney Pochin on his accordion. Especial thanks to Malcolm Miller our pianist for the evening and of course to his amazing children.

In all, a great night, completed by another reading of the Megilla the next morning at WMA with a fantastic breakfast as usual from Linda Sharpe.



# KNOW YOUR NEW ELDERS

## **Laurie Phillips**

Laurie's involvement with Central Synagogue began 36 years ago. He is a past Chairman and has served on the Board of Management for 26 years. During this period, he was Security Officer for seven years, representative on the Council of the United Synagogue for 14 years, and served on the Board of Deputies for two years.

Working together in the soft furnishings business for thirty seven years, Laurie and his wife Adrienne (our Ladies' Guild chairman), celebrated their golden wedding anniversary this year.

They have a son David and daughter Mylene, both of whom were married at Central. They have also had the privilege of seeing two of their grandsons celebrate their Bar Mitzvahs in the shul. Having kept the Honorary Officers with an Arsenal majority, Laurie is a patient and kind person, a magistrate for twenty years, he is always ready to advise and help others. He will be a great asset to the shul as an Elder of the community.

## **Nigel Gee**

Nigel is the third son of the late Cecil and Anne Gee, who together with his two elder brothers and their families have been members of Central for many years.

Nigel is a good humoured Arsenal fan whose hobbies are many and varied. Although qualifying as a Solicitor, Nigel's retail genes saw him spend many years as Managing Director of the Cecil Gee division of the Moss Bros Group. He then founded his own corporate concierge business.

He is a bass singer in the London Jewish Male Choir and also sings with the Hampstead Garden Opera. As Vice Chairman of British ORT, Nigel's warmth and care for others has yet another outlet. He has been a Warden at Central for nine years, where his kindness and general good sense were always visible and of great help to those who followed and served with him as Honorary Officers. We are delighted to now welcome Nigel as an elder of our community.





# WE THINK WE KNOW WHO WE ARE! **By Lois Peltz**

It is a well known paradox that the more we learn about our grandparents' lives the less we know about them as living entities. So it was with great trepidation that Sam and I set off on a trek to Oudtshoorn a small town in the Little Karoo, in the Cape Province of South Africa.

It was hot and as we travelled by air conditioned car, I wondered how on earth my grandparents could have made that same journey with four or so small boys, she in a corseted dress, he in his thick black suit, over the Oudeneke mountains to what had been described as a 'new city of culture and light'. It took us two hours, but must have taken them a lot longer without a decent road and driven possibly by horse and wagon. They were coming at the request of a section of the Jewish community in Oudtshoorn who had felt that the services in their Shul in Queen Street were too liberal and influenced by English and German traditions. This group was mainly Yiddish speaking with strong orthodox principles and in 1894 their first minister was my grandfather Emmanuel Lipkin from a well known rabbinic family in Lithuania, an artist who designed the Aron Kodesh for his new Shul modelled from his sketches of the one in the principal synagogue in Kelm. My grandfather had come to them, from England where he had been the Chazan at Prince's Road Synagogue in Liverpool at which my husband Sam and I were married in 1957. Oudtshoorn is a very pretty town – even though the temperature reached 140 degrees! My grandma must have thought that she was to spend all her years there but it was not to be: within a few years her husband died she was left a young widow with six children.

During the First World War, the trade in ostrich feathers was ruined and as Oudtshoorn was the centre of that industry, most of the community were prosperous ostrich farmers now facing poverty – the Jewish population left. Both Synagogues experienced a

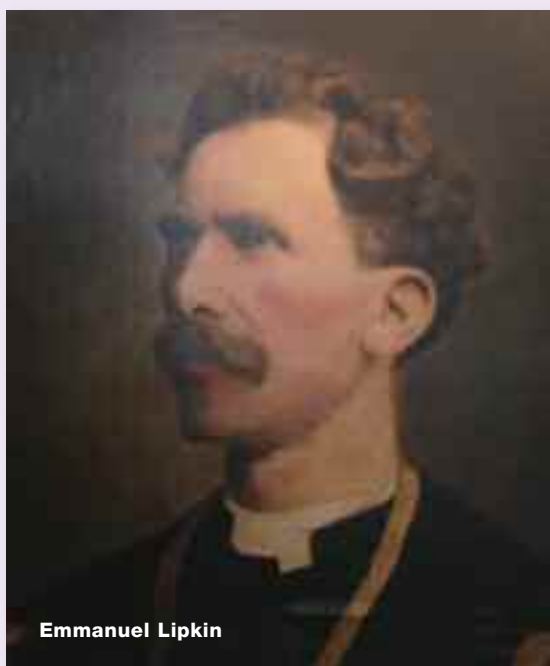
constant drop in attendance figures and after a long period of decline it was decided to sell one of them. A Jewish gallery was established and opened simultaneously with the inauguration of the C.P. Nel Museum in 1973. In this way a miniature Synagogue museum with the reconstructed Aron Kodesh, Bima and benches-including the ladies gallery was created. This was a magnificent tribute to the Jewish community and their contribution to the town in religion, culture and economic development in a comparatively isolated Dutch world. We did have the privilege of visiting the museum – where there is a small photo of my grandfather's portrait which has hung in my home since my father died.

My grandmother, Gutta, returned to Liverpool with her younger boys. My father only returned to Oudtshoorn on a visit at the end of his life.

*Lois Peltz will be exhibiting fine art at the Centre for Jewish Life in October 2013. Phone 020 7495 6089 for details.*



**The Ark designed by my grandfather, Emmanuel Lipkin**



**Emmanuel Lipkin**

# THE CHILDREN'S PAGE

*Hello everyone!*

Having been away on maternity leave for much of the year, it was lovely to return to the children's services in January. We have been fortunate to see a rise in attendance over the past few months and welcome everyone who comes through our door. We run two services - one for toddlers based on Shabbat songs with lots of actions (and eating) and the other for older children based on the sedra of the week and associated games.

Rosh Hashanah is, of course, the beginning of a new year and we look forward to a fresh approach to the children's services! We will be inviting parents and grandparents to sponsor a special multi-flavoured ice cream Kiddush with cones, sprinkles, sauces and more (which proved very popular with both young and old on the few occasions we have tried it). We will also be setting aside one Shabbat per month to run a dedicated toddlers service to bolster numbers on that particular week.

Parents and grandparents - How many times have you heard a tune hummed or a song sung and tried to remember where and when you had heard it before, delved into your memory banks and realised it was a tune you had learned in cheder or children's services long ago. Last year, I was approached by someone in the Kiddush who asked me to listen to a tune that had been going round and round in her head, unsure of its origin. After hearing just a few notes, I smiled and joined in. She was singing 'K-ah Ribon', one of the traditional zemirot sung at the Shabbat table. When I explained where she would most likely have heard it, she was amazed - a tune that she had sung as a child and probably hadn't heard in the 40 years since had just reappeared in her conscious mind.

It is certainly true that the songs children learn in their early years stay with them forever... and this is why it is so important to encourage your little ones to come to the Synagogue and absorb as much as they can. Please join us!

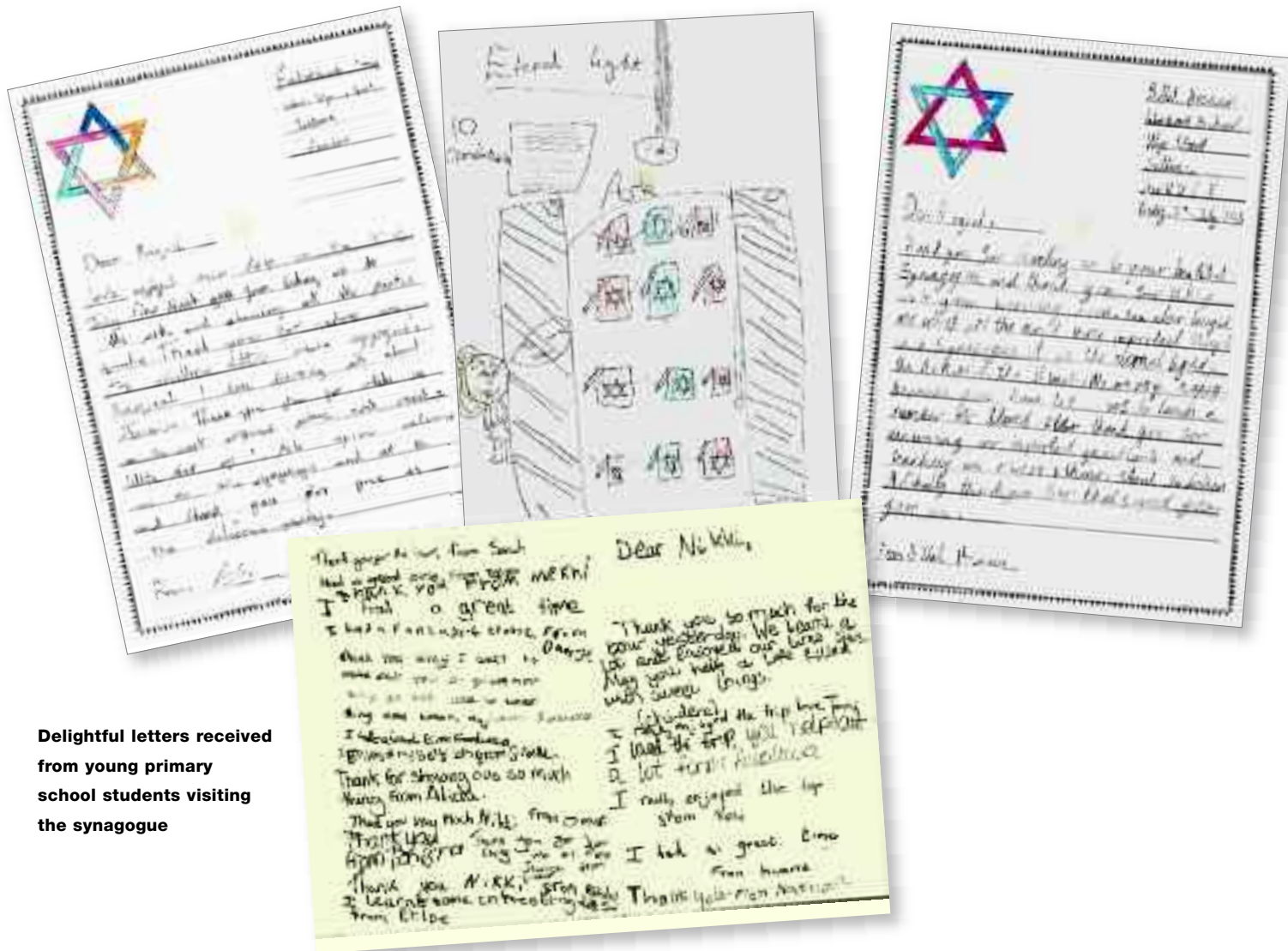
*Raguel*



"We both celebrated our Bar Mitzvahs at Central within one week of each other - 9 and 16 March 2013. (I'm Gideon on the left, and I'm Jacob on the right). Born within one day of each other, we've been friends since nursery school. Our parents both joined the shul at the same time. We both had memorable ceremonies, surrounded by our friends and families, and will never forget the welcoming atmosphere which everyone in the community creates. Our special thanks go to the Rabbi who managed to make all of our guests laugh, and to Chazan Stephen for making us both feel relaxed and confident on the bimah. Finally, we also wanted to thank Sara Cohen and Roz Laren for organising our kiddushes which were delicious, and appreciated by all of our friends."

**Jacob Barnett**  
**Gideon Lister**





Delightful letters received from young primary school students visiting the synagogue



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# NEW DELHI, PESACH, 1990 **By Michael S. Fishberg**

For the first time in my life, I wouldn't be spending Pesach with my family! There's an airline strike on and I cannot find a plane to get out on and I'm stuck at the Taj Man Singh Hotel in New Delhi.

Well, that's not such a terrible hardship, but how to celebrate the festival here in India?

I had heard that there was a Shul nearby, so I took off to have a look at the Judah Hyam Synagogue – about a five minute walk away.

To quote from the then secretary, "There are only about 7-8 Jewish families who are long-term residents of the area. In addition, Judah Hyam Synagogue is the primary place of worship in New Delhi for many Jewish diplomats, business people, artisans and many others from around the world who are based in India's capital city."

I asked him what arrangements, if any were being made for Pesach (in less than three day's time)?

He told me, that because of the strike, so many more people than had been anticipated were asking the same question. He "feared" probably a hundred or so! His fear was based on the fact that he would not be able to cater for the multitude and he was really worried about the situation.

I couldn't in all consciousness allow a situation to develop where there were not going to be enough ingredients to go round. I volunteered my services and assured him that everything was going to be fine and that he shouldn't worry.

In reality, it was I who was worried! I thought hard, and called a pal of mine in London who had an office in Marble Arch. I explained the problem, and he suggested that he go to Selfridges who (then) had an extensive kosher section and he would buy everything that was needed. Matzo, wine – haggadot even – all the accoutrements that he felt would be needed for such an unusual long-distance catering job! The manager there agreed to arrange shipping by air, and I would collect it at the airport the evening before the evening of the first night. The airway bill was faxed and I got my local driver, a fiercely protective Sikh called Amarjeet who carried a cutlass underneath his driver's seat! I told him that we'd need more than just his taxi. He arranged for other family members to arrive in convoy to meet Amarjeet and me at the airport for the Thai Airways plane which got in at about two in the morning. I presented the airway bill to the customs officer who examined the manifest with bemused interest. Our enormous shipment (some of it requiring immediate refrigeration!) stood before us in the withering airless heat of the night. I was told in no uncertain terms by the huge moustachioed customs officer – another Sikh – that I needed licences for just about everything before they would even consider releasing it! Especially the cases of Palwin! I could feel the perspiration cascading down me, not only from the furnace of the airless surroundings, but the genuine fear that all my efforts were an utter waste of time. I hadn't bargained for India's reputation for farcical bureaucracy.

What was I to do? Amarjeet said he would try to reason with his 'brother'. That involved some serious shouting. It looked like officialdom would succeed until I tried one desperate ploy. I was tired and wanted to get this over with and was concerned about the food that might be spoiling. But most of all about letting the Jewish community down!

I walked over to the customs official. I knew it wasn't a matter of 'baksheesh'; I had a better idea. I asked the officer if I could have a 'quiet', i.e., no shouting – word with him. I explained briefly about the Jewish Festival of Passover and the huge importance to us to have the special food which was for strictly religious purposes. He listened patiently, lifting his face up as if to hear more. I played my trump card: "It would be my pleasure and honour on behalf of the Jewish community of New Delhi to invite you and your family to our festivities tonight at the Judah Hyam Hall at 7pm." He thought for what seemed like an age, carefully studying the manifest details. Finally, he looked at me and said, "Chello!" – "Go!". I came out of his little office and gestured to Amaarjeet and his men to quickly load everything up and get to my hotel, where the kitchen had agreed to store our perishables in their industrial fridges overnight.

"How did you do it Mr. Michael,?" Amarjeet asked grinning on our way back to the city, rubbing his thumb and forefinger at me. I shook my head gently. I told him there were other ways.

The following day, after breakfast, I went to the Shul to break the news to them. They were beyond excitement! Volunteers were arriving to prepare all the essential symbolic foods. I could see a huge number of eggs on the boil in their kitchen and paper plates and plastic cutlery being laid out for 120 places.

"Who's coming?" I asked. I was told that many members of the Diplomatic corps would be attending as well as many tourists from as far afield as Australia, the US, many Europeans and even Mexico. It turned out that I was the only person from the UK!

At a little reception before the evening's festivities, I was introduced to the wife of the Romanian ambassador who was Jewish along with her 18 year old daughter who had never seen a Seder in her life before.

A young Israeli boy offered himself to run the service, and everybody sat down with great excitement.

There were two moments about this evening that I shall never forget. I looked around the packed hall where Jews from literally all over the world were united for such an extraordinary evening. The ambassador's wife who sitting next to me was crying during the simultaneous recitation of "Ma nishtana". She herself had not experienced a seder for nearly thirty years since her childhood, and she was patiently explaining the details to her eagerly-listening daughter.

And then it happened! In through the main door came a man dressed in white with a white turban, a beautiful woman at his side and two equally beautiful little girls – all also dressed in pure white.

He beamed at me beneath his huge twirled moustache and fastidiously coiffed beard.

It was my new friend, the customs officer and his family! It was all too much of an emotional charge for me.

I had to go outside and cry. Not out of sadness, but as a release for everything that had happened in the previous 48 hours. How great I felt when I came back inside.

I was asked to make a small speech, but honestly cannot remember what I said. I surely thanked my friend in London, surely the customs officer and all the volunteers at the Synagogue and Hashem for making it really happen!



# JOSÉPHINE MURRAY

In April this year we lost a true woman of worth. Joséphine Murray at the age of 95.

She had led a full life. From her schooling at St. Paul's Girls School where her music Masters were Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan-Williams, she acquired a set of values that shaped her life, and was always involved in charity work. She met her husband Alfred at an early age and was married at 19 in 1937. They had a good marriage cherishing Jewish family values and they were still holding hands while watching television after 58 years.

After the war, they settled in Wimbledon where they were founder members of the Wimbledon & District Synagogue. She and Alfred formed friendships there that lasted the rest of their lives. Later on they moved to Kensington, finally moving to West Hampstead in 1961 when they became members of The Central Synagogue. José promptly got involved with the Ladies Guild, followed by the Friendship Club after she retired and finally starting up the very successful Bridge Club (which was sadly brought to an end by the congestion charge). She was a valued member of the Board of Management.



She was the first recipient of the "Lady of The Year Award" at the Central which illustrated her immense work for the community and how she was regarded by all who knew her. In later years she was less visible due to illness although when she was able to attend shul the community was always delighted to see her.

She will be remembered for her warm smile, her sense of humour, her twinkle in her eye, and above all her hats.

## **Rabbi Marcus:**

"In 1995, on possibly my first Shabbat at the Central, I saw a beautifully attired couple enter the building. What struck me was that they walked hand in hand and I couldn't but admire their warmth and love that was so tangible."

## **Terry Samek:**

"José was a sweet person and lovely lady who was a pleasure to be around. She always wore the most delightful hats and I had never seen her without a smile. She really was one of life's optimists and being in her company was a joy."





## A LUNCHTIME SPECIAL **By Craig Levison**

On Sunday, over 60 guests came to the Central to enjoy the splendours of our Lag B'Omer barbeque. With a wide variety of cooked food ranging from sausages, burgers, shishlik to name but a few, a lunchtime treat was enjoyed by all. Dessert of course was our traditional feast of Raquel's chocolate brownies together with watermelon, grilled pineapple and ice cream.

Yoav, Steven and Roger (dressed ready to play for Arsenal) as ever, slaved away preparing our delicacies with Sara and Raquel using their catering experience to ensure that everything else ran smoothly.

It was a wonderful occasion to see such a lovely mix of members from young babies to some of our more senior members.



**Top right: Freda and Leon Dwek enjoying the day with Rafaella Leas**

**Circle photo: Kenny Arfin with granddaughter Amy Netser**





# BOWLING AT THE LANES **By Guy Ornadel**



Central Synagogue has a variety of events – lunch and learning, morning minyans, children's services, barbeques and guest speakers. But as part of the future, our new events committee were tasked with putting together social events for members and non members, alongside our religious study groups and spiritual growth.

Bowling has always been a fun pastime event, from kids under ten to strikes at any age, there's nothing quite like that feeling of rolling a ball down the centre and clearing those ten pins, or the frustration of seeing it roll down the gutter. Now after three events a lot has since been revealed – members that were sure they were just dropping by to socialise, or complaining of injuries, have all turned to laughing at their success, or rolling their sleeves up with renewed determination to do better on the next go. Across the events, amongst many others, we've had visitors from both St John's Wood and Marble Arch Shuls, visiting students from America, our Lady Chairman Nicola and infamous husband Gary battling it out between them till the end, Eddie Kilzi literally throwing the ball half way down the lane and our humble shul organiser Craig "The Rocket" Levison revealing himself to be an ex-league bowler (beware!).

But bowling aside, what has been so nice is to see people chatting in a relaxed environment. Hopefully along with a range of upcoming events, other young professionals and visitors of all ages in the central area will get to know more about the Central Synagogue that we're so proud to be a part of.



**Bottom left: Smile for the camera.**

**Bottom middle: Guy Ornadel and Craig Levison**



# WALKING IN STRANGE SURROUNDINGS **By Adam Newman**

Fourteen years ago aged 12 I wrote an essay 'Waking Up in Strange Surroundings', inspired by my father's visit to Auschwitz organised by Rabbi Barry Marcus. The essay was published in the Central Synagogue Magazine, winning an award from the Board of Deputies for the best article in a Jewish publication in the country for that year. Some of you reading this article may even have read it. However, the truth is that after returning from a three day trip to Krakow and Auschwitz, I feel so naive for ever writing that story; for ever trying to express in words the unimaginable horror and evil that took place during the Holocaust. This is why at the start of this article, I wish to begin with an apology for my failings in trying to convey what simply cannot be understood. My motivation for writing this follow up article is to share my thoughts and interpretations from my experience.

In early May I went with approximately 30 people on a truly remarkable trip organised by Young Jewish Care to Auschwitz, something I see as a pilgrimage to the darkest place in the history of not just the Jewish people but also of humanity as a whole. This was a trip I always knew I had a duty to make and one that will haunt me for the rest of my life.



Stepping off the plane and onto Polish soil for the first time in my life I felt a wave of anger at the thought of what happened here 70 years ago. It was a sunny day – nothing like the winter images of the camps I had seen before.

It almost felt like it could be an enjoyable day, same as any other 'normal' continental European city. Which of course it was, as 'normality' for those cities was also for Jewish blood to be spilt during the Holocaust.

Touring Krakow, a place steeped in history, heritage, and once the centre of the European Jewish community, I couldn't help but feel that all around us, there was a commercialisation and creation of 'Holocaust tourism'. This troubled me deeply. On balance, however, it is better that people have the chance to educate themselves about what took place. I just wish it didn't feel that there were people profiting and making a living from this part of our history, without any visible emotional connection with the past.

That evening I went to Friday night services in one of the old Synagogues. This was followed by an uplifting and thoroughly enjoyable Friday night dinner together at the Jewish Community Centre; a rare continuation of Jewish life in a place where it has been almost entirely eliminated. Up until this point the trip had been predominantly educational, which whilst important wasn't personal in its impact.

This all changed the next day.

The following morning a very special service took place in one of the oldest Synagogues in Krakow. The occasion was to mark the 100th birthday of a member of their community – a man who fled Poland to escape the Nazis and joined the Red Army to fight against them. He was later captured and sent to a Prisoner of War Camp where he pretended to be Muslim as a cover story for being circumcised. A few months later some Muslim soldiers were captured and informed the guards that he wasn't one of them. He was then sent to Auschwitz by a train from which he managed to escape.

He was taken in by a Polish family, hidden on their farm and looked after by a young girl for the duration of the war. He returned each year to visit the family and when the girl who kept him alive turned 18, he asked her to marry him. She accepted.

I stood there in the congregation watching something against all probabilities. After fleeing that very Synagogue and town so many years ago, this special man was being called up for Aliyah. As he moved forward to recite the prayer, he began to cry with such emotion and joy, it was heart rending to imagine the suffering he had endured. This moment was truly unique.

After Shabbat lunch, we were privileged to hear a talk from a Holocaust survivor called Rene Salt who had accompanied us on the trip. Sitting a couple of metres away from this petite and gentle 84 year old lady, I soon realised she was, without question, the strongest and most inspirational person I have ever, and am ever, likely to meet.

Nazi officers took over her family's flat, throwing them destitute onto the street. They split up, living with various relatives, moving from ghetto to ghetto, desperate to survive the infamous 'selections'. During a deportation to the Lodz ghetto in 1942, the Nazis demanded all parents hand over their children. Rene's mother tried to hide her and her 10 year old sister under her coat. The Nazis found and took away her sister with all the other children. None are believed to have survived.

During one of these selections, Rene recalled how a mother in the crowd was screaming how happy and thankful she was. At first everyone thought that this woman had gone mad. The woman then explained that her young child had died only a few months earlier, avoiding being taken away by the Nazis in this selection.

The Nazis, in addition to all their incalculable evils, had created

such a monstrous world – a world where it made sense to be thankful for the death of your own child.

Deported from the ghetto to Auschwitz-Birkenau aged 14, Rene told us how her mother pricked her finger, wiping blood on Rene's cheeks to try and give her some colour to look healthier and be selected for work. Immediately upon arrival into Birkenau, women and men were instantly separated; no chance to say good-bye – just herded off the trucks. This was the last time Rene saw her father. He was sent straight to the gas chambers. The conditions in Auschwitz and the details of what she recounted cannot be described.

It was almost surreal that such a person – actual living history – was sitting in front of me relating what had happened to her.

Rene and her mother survived the selection, suffering in Auschwitz for a month before being sent to a labour camp in Hamburg. Towards the end of the war, by some miracle, Rene and her mother were still alive. The Germans decided to liquidate the Hamburg camp, sending them to yet another death camp where they were separated but later found each other.

Never in my life have I heard someone describe anywhere in the world as being worse than Auschwitz. However, this is exactly how she described Bergen-Belsen. This was a place where it was impossible to tell the dead from the living, as they lay side by side, piled on top of one another.

Rene, desperately weakened in body and mind, collapsed and fell unconscious for almost a week – saved only by the liberation from Belsen by the British Army. Rene explained how she and her mother kept each other going; each giving the other the reason, the will, the purpose for survival in a place devoid of hope and morality. Despite being mauled by wild animals for the Nazis' 'entertainment'; despite the horrific wounds; despite inestimable human suffering, Rene's mother kept on fighting – fighting to live; fighting to see the day her daughter was free.

Rene's mother died a few days after the liberation.

Some years later in Paris, Rene met and married a Jewish soldier; one of the liberators of Belsen. They started a family – a new and free generation.

As this noble, dignified and selfless lady finished recounting her story, the room was silent. I didn't cry only because I was in shock. I was completely numb and frozen.

I couldn't comprehend what I had heard. I couldn't understand how people could treat each other like this and how anyone could have survived.

At that moment, my connection



**Adam walking with Rene Salt**

with the Holocaust took on a new dimension. The rest of the day was really a blur as I tried to process Rene's story and prepare myself for the next day: the day we went to visit Auschwitz.

Sunday morning I felt sick and scared by what I knew I was about to see. After a brief trip to Schindler's factory we were in our coach driving to the camp. I sat there feeling incredibly guilty that I was alive and comfortable, knowing how millions had been taken on trains in trucks to be slaughtered. Staring out the window, my mind in a complete mess, I then noticed disgusting modern day Anti-Semitic graffiti on the buildings on the road leading to Auschwitz.

I was in disbelief and shaking with anger. This wasn't just history. This was, this is, today.

As we arrived at Auschwitz I put on my Kippah and so proudly wrapped an Israeli flag around my shoulders. Six million Jews were murdered in total in the Holocaust, 1.5 million of them children. You can read these statistics. You can hear these numbers. It is impossible to understand what this means.

On the tour, our guide showed us one display after another of personal possessions from the camp warehouses. As you walk around you try to picture and imagine that each item belonged to a person who had almost certainly perished in the gas chambers. You walk through a corridor where there are glass walls on both sides, fighting to keep back a sea of 80,000 pairs of shoes. Then another display dedicated just to children's shoes and baby clothes. Thousands of spectacle frames, kitchen utensils, suitcases with names on them, written by people hoping that one day they might be able to leave with the possessions they brought in.

Each item, each name, represented a life or family that had been taken for no reason other than that they were Jewish.

I was speechless. It was horrific.

Cameras were turned off before we entered the next room. I walked in and saw behind a glass sheet what seemed like a never ending pile of human hair, some still woven in pigtails from women and little children. Hair used by the Nazis to make mattresses and textiles for peoples' homes. I could not believe what I was seeing.

It didn't feel real.

I didn't want it to feel real.

You shouldn't be able to imagine what two tonnes of hair looks like. In a normal world why would you ever have to?

We then went to Birkenau, the death sub camp built specifically to eradicate the Jews. It is impossible to convey how vast, how bleak this place is. Once surrounded by electrocuting barbed

wire onto which hundreds would hurl themselves daily to escape their grotesque reality and dehumanisation. This is a place devoid of life where no birds settle. It is as if nature itself pays its respects by remaining absent.

Birkenau is where Hell on earth once existed, a place where gas chambers lay dormant only because the crematoriums were already at peak capacity, where hideous 'medical experiments' were carried out on children; on twins.

I walked along the train tracks chilled to my core, trying to imagine the terror of those that were murdered here. How petrified as they were herded off the trains into this death factory. All they could hear were barking dogs and SS commands. All they could see was the fire of the chimneys. All they could smell was burning flesh. This was the site of the most efficient and largest mass murder in history, where a flick of the finger by a sadistic SS officer meant life or death.

I felt guilt and despair walking on this ground, yet somehow protected walking arm-in-arm with Rene: the youth and survivor linked in an act of defiance against the Nazis.

'They didn't win' I kept telling myself. This was, in a strange way, the proudest I had ever felt.

We recited Kaddish. I have joined in the Prayer for the Dead in Synagogue services before, however this time I wept and wept and tears streamed down my face. Rene lit a memorial candle and said "this is for my mother, my father, my sister, everyone else in my family and everyone else that was murdered here including all of the children". I can't even try to describe the emotions I felt at that moment. There are simply no words that exist. As I tried to fight back the tears and recite the prayer I felt the responsibility of paying my respects to all those that were slain here, my audience being the collective suffering of the Jewish people.

When the words for Kaddish were written, not even the sickest of minds could ever imagine such a situation for which they would ever be used. Furthermore, those imprisoned here 70 years ago could never have imagined that 70 years on free Jews would be saying this prayer for them and for all the others that will never be forgotten.

How if a place like this could ever come to exist, could they have ever imagined a world where this could cease to exist? How did people like Rene have the strength to carry on? At that moment I thought that I wouldn't have had the strength and then I realised there and then that is precisely why we must be strong in the face of adversity and more importantly ensure that this never happens again. We proudly sang the Hatikvah at the site of one of the destroyed gas chambers, then walked in pensive silence along the tracks and out the gate under the watch tower where a million were brought to their death.



This trip has had a profound impact on me and it is not possible to make sense of it all or convey it in its magnitude to others.

After much reflection, there are three key issues I would like to express. Firstly, it is vital to understand and explain to others the enormity of the Holocaust and why Israel is our shield against a repeat. In this context, the words of former Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, are immensely profound and poignant, when he addressed the Knesset on the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz: "When the Nazis began deporting Jews from Hungary to Auschwitz in large numbers in 1944, the Allies did not bomb the railroad leading to the death camp in Poland. Over several weeks more than 600,000 Hungarian Jews were murdered in the camp. The sad and terrible conclusion is that no one cared that Jews were being killed. At the time of the most terrible test, friends and benefactors didn't lift a finger. This is the Jewish lesson of the Holocaust. The State of Israel has learned this lesson, and since its founding, has defended itself and its residents, and provides safety to Jews everywhere. We must always remember this is the only place in the world in which we, the Jews, have the right and the power to defend ourselves with our own strength. This we will never surrender."

Over future generations, economic circumstances and political environments inevitably change. Anti-Semitism still and will always exist. We must remain strong in preventing this part of history from ever repeating itself. Genocides still go on today. Far too few voices protested for us, so we must all ensure we are the voice for those that have no voice today. Finally, the ultimate defiance against the Nazis is not just for us to live but to hold central to our perspective one of tolerance to all people. This may sound idealistic, however if we are all tolerant as individuals, then it makes it impossible for us as societies to abandon our sense of morality and let the evil wishes of extreme minorities, establish their views as the mind-set of the collective.

I would like to thank Rene Salt for giving me permission in sharing some of her story and all those at Young Jewish Care, the Jewish Community Centre in Krakow and everyone else that made this trip possible. I would urge any of you who haven't been to go on one of these trips and watch Rene's story on her documentary on the BBC Website called 'Grandchild of the Holocaust'.



# JEWS OF SPAIN **By Nicola Burns**

Inspired by Joan and Arthur Bovarnicks' tales of visits to Southern Spain, I decided to find out a little more about this fascinating region and its Jews.

For many years Spanish Jews were one of the largest and most prosperous communities. Flourishing under the Muslims and the Christians, until they were forced to convert or be exiled (often with death being the only other option).

The Jews arrived in Spain when it was under Roman rule, and they enjoyed an active and social role until the late 6th century when anti semitic edicts were issued by the Christian Council of Toledo. The Jews were forced to either convert or leave. Many Jews converted.

In the eighth century the Jews were liberated by the Muslim invasion and the lives of the Sephardi population improved dramatically. Many Jews arriving from other parts of the world settled here, becoming prosperous, immersing themselves in the Muslim culture becoming enriched, both religiously and intellectually.

The Arabic way of life had an enormous effect on the Sephardi Jews, bringing a re-evaluation of scripture. Greek philosophy had been preserved by Arab scholars and was now available to and enjoyed by the Jews of this region.

Sadly zealous Arab sects put paid to this hiatus in relations between Arab and Jew, and liberation arrived for the Jews in the form of the Christian army.



The following two hundred years brought mixed fortune to the Sephardi population, there were some kings who showed great kindness and support to the Jewish community, kings such as Alphonso IV and Peter IV of Aragon and Alphonso XI and Peter 1st of Castille who should be remembered for endangering their own lives by the favouritism they showed towards the Jews.

There were also evil and murderous monarchs who found their zenith in the edict of expulsion in 1492 decreed by the inquisition of King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castille. This extraordinary couple who united Spain were obsessed with the conversion of the Jews and the Muslims. Their inquisition under the hated Cardinal Torquemada remains a memory of magnitude and horror. Ironically, at the same time that they introduced the inquisition, Ferdinand and Isabella sent Columbus to discover the new world, America, a haven of safety for all Jews.

Spanish Jews converted or fled into other countries welcomed by those in Europe at war with Spain, and this exile lasted for centuries.

In the nineteenth century Jews slowly returned to Spain and during the second world war, Francoist Spain remained neutral, providing visas and allowing thousands of Jews, fleeing the Nazis to escape through the country.

Today the Jews of this region are part of a large and vibrant society, producing kosher foods and opening Jewish schools, there are growing reform and liberal communities with many Ashkenazi Jews moving into the areas where they have joined their Sephardi brethren in the sun.





# LADIES' GUILD **By Sara Cohen**

The Ladies' Guild has had another busy year organising many sponsored kiddushim, from big to small, all of which have received wonderful comments.

As always, Succot kiddushim and our wonderful Succot dinner were enjoyed in our lovely succah. Everyone had a great time at the Simchat Torah and Shabbat Bereishit celebrations thanks to our exceptional chatanim Michael Lewis and Yoav Amit.

Our Purim party received glowing praise from all corners and was the envy of our Marble Arch guests with great food and plenty of it, and a very warm atmosphere, and made most enjoyable by the wonderful entertainment organised by Steven Leas and stage decorations by Grazyna Solland.

The quiz supper was an unmitigated success on all levels and raised around £1,200 which will be put to good use by providing items for the Shul and supporting charities which benefit the community at large. It was especially heart-warming to have so many people take part who were not members of the shul and to hear from one table of regular shul quiz participants that it was the best they had been to.

It has been a pleasure to welcome some new faces to our Ladies' Guild meetings over the last year but we desperately need more people to get involved and bring with them fresh ideas.

As always, none of what the Ladies' Guild achieves is possible without its mainstays so my special thanks to my vice-chairman Roz Laren and Treasurer Adrienne Phillips, for their help, advice and constant support and encouragement. Many thanks also to Clarice Shamash, Coral Jowell, Margaret Grant, Nicky Burns and Terry Samek for their invaluable help every Shabbat, Yom Tov and many other occasions.

Big thanks to our wonderful Mary who keeps us plied with coffee and who, together with her merry band of girls, can always be relied on to have everything looking as though the caterers have been in.

Lastly, but certainly not least, my immeasurable appreciation and thanks to Douglas, Louise and Sylvia who keep everything ship-shape and for whom nothing is too much trouble. Douglas has also transformed our dark and dingy store room into a bright, organised and functional space.

So, after two years as Chairman of the Ladies' Guild, and just as I think I might be getting the hang of it, I am retiring due to the pressures of my day job and hand the reins over to Adrienne Phillips. I wish her every success and, as a life-long Manchester United supporter, it seems fitting that I have chosen the same day to retire as Sir Alex Ferguson, Paul Scholes and David Beckham. However, unlike Becks, I won't cry as I leave the pitch.



# MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN... By Daphne Schogger

It was some years ago that we decided that after visiting and staying in Eilat several times a year, that it could be more cost efficient to actually buy a property there.

That was in 2004 and we haven't regretted it at all! We used an English solicitor based in Netanya whom I had known from my days in FZY.

Of course, there have been a few problems but nothing that has been insurmountable.

We bought a new ground floor apartment, with its own entrance and front and rear garden. It is not in a tourist area and we live amongst the locals. It's a 15 minute walk to the sea and a 20 minute walk home as we are uphill!



On our first evening in the flat, we slept on a blow-up bed that we had brought from the UK as Harold refused a kind offer from friends to stay the night in a bed, which I would have much preferred!

Our flat was fully furnished by the evening of the next day. Eilat is still quite small and all the furniture and white goods were installed and in working order by the time we retired for the evening – and yes, we had a bed!

By the next visit, we had a garden but the costs of maintaining it were too high and we thought we had a water leak, so we had the garden removed. We overlook a small public park and it is delightful to sit in the shade under our pergola and look at the beautiful array of plants.

On one occasion, we thought that we might wish to upgrade to a larger place. However, on returning after a spell away, a neighbour told us that the former deputy mayor of Eilat had been bringing different women to our apartment. He worked in the estate agency in which our key had been held! We quickly changed the locks!

On another occasion, our electric window shutter broke. Within a few hours, the local repairman had repaired it, even though it was only a few hours before Shabbat. In fact the service levels in Israel are, in our opinion, far better than those we have in London.

We are fortunate that a supermarket opened just 2 minutes' walk from the apartment so in temperatures of 40 degrees + in the summer, this is fantastic.

We should like it more if it were more convenient to travel to Eilat either from the north of Israel or directly from the UK. The flight timings are not great and it does necessitate either quite long waits at the airport or a mad dash to make the connection! They have been saying for years that a new airport is to be built just outside Eilat and now they are talking about a train line but, you know, Israelis are good at talking!

We love visiting the jazz festival in Eilat held at the port in the summer but the highlight of the cultural activities was when we attended a 60th birthday anniversary for Eilat held in the presence of President Peres and to hear the Hatikva sung then was most moving.

# JEWISH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE By Nicola Burns

I have always identified strongly as an English Jew, I identify equally strongly as a woman. This may be simply because I grew up in a home which had gender specific roles. My father and my brother would chat together after dinner, enjoying the relaxed ambience, whereas I would help my mother in the kitchen, washing dishes, where there was no such relaxed feeling!

Our home was also a liberal one, where Daniel and I were encouraged to think for ourselves and to think of others. We learned that discrimination of any kind was wrong, and against this backdrop I became a feminist. Not something you would think necessary in the second half of the 20th century, but nonetheless, I was born at a time when women could not sign for a mortgage or hire purchase, and could not have their own bank accounts.

It took another fifteen years after the death of Emily Wilding Davison at the Derby (1913) one hundred years ago, before all women were allowed equality with men and given the vote.

It is shocking that 143 years after the founding of the United Synagogue women have only this year been allowed to stand as Chairmen of their Synagogues. Women had to pay membership though, which brings to mind the phrase 'no taxation without representation'. It is this dreadful prejudice that made me want to find out about the Jewish suffragettes.

**'Blackguards in bonnets'** – these were the words used by the Jewish press to describe protestors from the National Union of Women's Suffrage who were forcibly removed from Synagogues in London, jailed and then force fed.

Support for them came from politician Herbert Jacobs, who stood on a suffragist platform in the 1910 election – he lost. The writer Israel Zangwill, who was appalled by the attitude of those who would discriminate against a person because of their gender – quite rightly felt that this was no different to the discrimination of a Jew from a non-Jew, and refused to speak to those newspapers that demonised the suffrage movement.

In 1912 The Jewish Union of Women's Suffrage was formed, tying together both political and social emancipation. These

*“Feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings”*

Jewish women began to campaign for votes for women members in their Shuls. The Liberal Synagogues were joined by the orthodox Chief Rabbi Hertz in supporting the women's right to a say in Shul management, but they were rejected by those who believed that Jewish men would be 'driven out' of their Synagogues by 'irrational and emotional women'.

Jewish family members found themselves on opposite sides of the debate – the women of the Montague family fell out with their cousin Herbert Samuel who opposed votes for women.

It was this opposition that forced the women into the Synagogues to protest.

Working class Jewish men were afraid that the influence of the middle class women who were the leaders of the suffrage campaign, would impact on the lives of working class women. This made it almost impossible to recruit working class Jewish women to the cause. Sadly the lives of such women was to see little change over the next sixty eight years, until in 1970 Germaine Greer was published and the sex discrimination act was later passed.





# HOSTING THE CONVENTION **By Steven Leas**

Trying to organise 50 cantors from all over the world to attend an international convention is no mean feat. It is the 8th year since its inception at the Central Synagogue and has grown to be considered as THE cantorial convention in the world.

Building on previous years' success, we decided to have a concert as well as a convention, and to follow this up to hold a chazanut shabbaton.

We really started to get excited when two weeks prior to the convention we had a feature in the Jewish Chronicle, an article in the Jewish News and a feature in the Jewish Tribune. Featured at the convention were tunes and nusach for Shabbat, showing how to bring new people into Synagogue with old styles versus modern cantorial music.



**Left to right; Alex Klein, Chief Rabbi Elect, Ephraim Mirvis and Steven Leas**

The legendary Sol Zim from New York and Yechezkel Klang from Israel were the teachers. Sol has composed thousands of songs for the Synagogue, the most famous being his Avinu Shebashamayim which Jonathan and I

sing together with the choir on many Shabbatot.



**Chief Rabbi Elect, Rabbi Mirvis with a number of the cantors from the convention**

The highlight of the convention was the concert. We had 6 cantors, 5 adult choirs and a 35 piece children's choir together with a trio of baby-grand piano, violin and clarinet.

The highlight of the concert was most definitely my son Jonathan – singing together with Sol Zim – in a great rendition of Avinu Shebashamayim.

We had a wonderful mix of old versus new styles of music and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it.

This was preceded by a Gala buffet reception in the Wolfson Hall where the guest of honour was the Chief Rabbi Elect, Ephraim Mirvis. He spoke beautifully about the future of cantorial music and we were so thrilled that he is prepared to partner our cantorial mission. Thanks must go to Daphne Schogger and Sara Cohen for organising the reception refreshments.



The week long excitement ended with a magnificent Shabbat where we were treated to a great exhibition of different musical styles. We had a lovely dinner on Friday night where all the cantors sang and spoke until late into the night. Shabbat morning was a treat with 5 cantors singing at the Ark together with the choir and all joining the choir on the Bimah to lead the Musaph service.

Again this was followed by a communal lunch deliciously organised by our Ladies' Guild.

As Shabbat went out, the cantors were left inspired to carry on another year with the most important task of leading the congregation in prayer by uplifting, inspiring and making a real contribution to people's lives.

Thanks to everyone who has supported us in this endeavour.



# US FUTURES – HELPING THE NEXT GENERATION



From its inception the US Chesed Bursary Fund has had tremendous support from the community and is now entering its next stage in its development. Its core aim is to ensure no child is left behind due to financial constraints. The fund awards bursaries to enable children to take part in Tribe's summer camps in the UK, Europe and Israel and on Learn to Lead trips to Poland and Jerusalem. All our Jewish youth should have the chance to connect with our rich cultural heritage and there is no better place than in a 'full-immersion experience'. Making this connection creates and cements bonds that really help the long-term good health of our community.

We are noticing that there is a growing disconnect occurring in the London Jewish community amongst young adults. Whilst some are embedded and thriving, too many are not and their only engagement in community life, if there is any, is at most on the first day of Rosh Hashana and on Yom Kippur for the sake of their parents, otherwise they do not take part in any community activities. Whilst we can stand by and allow this to happen turning a blind eye to the fact that this is a very limited contact experience, we really should be reacting and thinking how to improve the situation. We entirely understand, that there are so many demands on their time and both pressures and distractions which, too frequently, means that they lose touch with their community after University or beginning working life. The United Synagogue is responding to this with the creation of Young US, a Tribe project led by a group of young adults all in their mid 20s who are looking at creative ways of building a vibrant young community that speaks to and speaks for them. They have great ideas and energy and have been chosen for their enthusiasm and commitment; they are already creating events and ways for young people to connect. It's a project that it simply makes good sense to support as we all reap the benefits of its success.

We would like to introduce you to US Futures; its trio of aims is to give financial support to Young US, continue to make sure the Chesed Bursary Fund has sufficient funds each year to award bursaries and to be a mechanism for supporting a variety of important Tribe projects. At the heart of this endeavour is the aim that no child or young adult is left behind and that each is able to feel part of their community.

If you would like to support, share your ideas or give a donation to these interlinked projects, please contact me via the synagogue office. These projects are entirely reliant on individual donations and any donation however small will make a meaningful difference to someone's life.

## **Gaby Morris**

Chair US Futures

US Chesed Bursary Fund



## BRIDGE TIPS by Harold Schogger

### Bid Logically and then use the bidding to get the play right 😊

<b>Dealer West</b>		♠ 8 4			
<b>Both Vul</b>		♥ Q 10 5 3			
		♦ J 10 6 2			
		♣ 9 6 3			
			N		
♠ K Q J 10 9 5 2					♠ 6 3
♥ J 8					♥ K 6 4 2
♦ Q	W		E		♦ 7 5
♣ 10 7 5			S		♣ A Q J 4 2
		♠ A 7			
		♥ A 9 7			
		♦ A K 9 8 4 3			
		♣ K 8			
W	N	E	S		
			1♦		
3♠	NO	NO	3NT		
NO	NO	NO			

On the above hand from OK Bridge, a super online bridge site, I opened 1♦ and next hand overcalled 3♠ promising a pre-emptive hand. What to bid when it came back to me after two passes? I had a source of tricks (Diamonds), a stopper in West's suit and if partner turned up with even a morsel there was a chance to conjure up 9 tricks so with this in mind I chanced 3NT which got passed out.

West, of course, led top of his sequence and I viewed the dummy (not a lot, but maybe enough).

If West had his bid (seven card suit), the first thing I needed to do, was hold up the first trick.

West continued Spades and I had to win the second trick. I now cashed a Top Diamond pleased to see everybody follow. I then entered dummy with the Diamond Jack. I now had 8 tricks (1 Spade, 1 Heart and 6 Diamonds). The 9th trick had to come from Clubs and East had to have the King.

After winning the Diamond Jack this was going to be *my last time in dummy* so now was "Do or Die" and I played a small club from table and when East played the Queen I released my King (finessing) with bated breath and when it held I could claim 9 tricks.

The main playing points in this hand were to play West for a seven card suit (not unreasonable given that he had pre-empted) and to play East for the missing Club Ace (again very likely given that West should have no outside strength because of his pre-empt).

NB 3NT was a calculated bid and didn't need a lot from dummy. Next time you are fixed as to what to bid TAKE YOUR CHANCES and bid what you think you can make 😊



## OUR FIRST LADY By Daphne Schogger

### Our First Lady

Nicky Burns has been associated with Central for many years. Her father Sam Peltz is our esteemed Honorary Life President, her mother Lois is always available to give good counsel whilst her husband Gary has been an Honorary Officer, Vice Chairman and Elder.

But none has ever been the lady Chairman of Central.

This has been achieved by sheer hard work and dedication, the many years spent running the Children's service, the years of silent work for the Ladies' Guild, and the many years spent serving on the Board of Management, the last five as Vice Chairman.

It's very easy to describe Nicky as the person with a ready smile, willing to help and more importantly being so welcoming to all members and visitors.

She lives and breathes Central and the honour that she now has shows that hard work and dedication do really count.

It's a new beginning for Central and I do hope that it is also the beginning of a wonderful term of office for her.

Central is the greater for having her.





# THIS YEAR, TAKE YOUR FIRST STEPS TOWARDS RELIEVING YOUR KNEE PAIN...

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References: 1. Bar-Ziv Y, et al. Arthritis Journal 2012 2. Elbaz A, et al. Clinical Biomechanics 010;25:920-925. 3. Independent telephone survey

**Code NY19**

# MAKING TIME FOR 'US' WOMEN



United Synagogue  
Women

A woman's work is never done. An old saying that seems to ring true for so many women I know. Daughters, sisters, wives, mothers and friends. Professionals and volunteers. There is always something else to do for work, our families, our communities and our society. Yet, as we start the new year 5774, we should try to take some time and reflect on what we have achieved during the past year. It has been a busy year for us all but especially for the women of the United Synagogue.

US Women started the year by electing a new executive and swiftly managing to change the bylaw, now allowing its women to stand as chairs in a United Synagogue. This change in law led to nine women being elected by their communities in May, and many more as vice-chair and board members.

The Executive created a new focus: education, advisory and communications. It set about organising a series of panel events, which many people have now attended, entitled 'Women, the Rabbi and The Law'. Each event had two Rabbonim and two female members of the United Synagogue or women who were knowledgeable on the subject matter, discuss a topical subject. These included women's megillah readings, lay leadership and a woman's relationship with the Sefer Torah. This series plans to continue, focusing on Bat Mitzvah and women's ritual.

A new brand and logo were created for US Women, giving it a fresh and modern look. We can be found on Twitter #US\_Women and will have an extensive and informative section of the soon-to-be-updated United Synagogue website. There were numerous articles in the Jewish press and in the United Synagogue's own weekly e-newsletter 'You and US' and in our monthly 'Women's View' online magazine.

We hosted our biggest annual dinner, attracting over 360 women from 31 shuls to celebrate Lady Elaine Sacks' contribution to the United Synagogue. The evening brought together so many of our communities to share best practice and meet with friends, both old and new.

During the summer, we launched 'It's Your Torah Too'; helping women across our communities feel a greater

connection with the Sefer Torah in their shuls. In the run up to Simchat Torah we are working with the US Rabbonim so that there are programmes in our shuls that ensure women feel excited about the chag (festival). Ideas include arranging a learning programme on a relevant topic, bringing in female speakers to lead a discussion and, where appropriate, enabling women to dance with a Sefer Torah, should they wish to.

From October onwards, there will also be an educational roadshow. This will explore several modern day topics, grouping together neighbourly shuls and bringing a series of experts to teach and discuss interesting and relevant subjects.

We have many plans for the coming year including a networking event in October, quiz in November and the highly anticipated second US Women's conference on Sunday 9th March 2014.

Like all women, the United Synagogue's female members are busy with their families, work and communities. However, it is up to us all to ensure our shuls are places where women feel inspired and engaged. As Rabbi Tarfon says in Pirkei Avot "we are not required to finish the task, yet neither are we free to neglect it". There are many ways to feel a connection with your community: physically or spiritually; on a Shabbat morning or during the week; at a religious service or a communal activity. US Women will continue to be a voice for women in the United Synagogue, to support them, put on educational events and ensure the organisation stays relevant and engaging. But we need your support, ideas and enthusiasm to make this work.

Every shul should now have a Liaison Officer (LO) – a woman who is the link between US Women and the women of the US. Get in touch with your LO to find out more about the events US Woman is organising. Share your great events with the rest of the US community. Email us if you would like to write an article about a successful initiative your shul has arranged for its women, or if you have any other ideas or suggestions for all US Women to benefit from.

Shana tova U'metukah. May all US Women, their families and communities be blessed with a healthy and inspiring year ahead.

[uswomen@theus.org](mailto:uswomen@theus.org)



# US MESSAGE

Over 60 Synagogues are part of the United Synagogue family, each with its own unique profile but all adhering to an authentic, inclusive and modern Judaism. We are immensely proud of all our communities' eagerness to provide educational, social and cultural programming for their members, as well as running Shabbat services. None of these initiatives would be possible without our dedicated team of fantastic Rabbonim, Rebbetzins, lay leaders, Tribe youth directors, administrators and all other staff members and volunteers.

Many communities have travelled to Israel and Poland on successful heritage trips, organised in partnership with the Living & Learning department. We are delighted to support communities in arranging these fantastic tours for adults throughout the year. Closer to home, three of our communities hosted their own Shabbatons away from home. Over 350 US members took part in these Shabbat experiences, hosted by Stanmore & Canons Park, South Hampstead and HGSS. The Shabbatonim were a first for the US Living & Learning department who jointly organised the weekends with the local Rabbonim and Tribe. Everyone had an amazing time sharing a unique Shabbat experience.

All community trips, regardless of whether they are held in the UK or abroad, are not only educational; they are an excellent way to strengthen community bonds in a more informal setting. If your community is interested in organising a Shabbaton away from home or a heritage trip, please contact our wonderful events co-ordinator, Nomi Goldberg ([ngoldberg@theus.org.uk](mailto:ngoldberg@theus.org.uk)).

The United Synagogue is proud to be a Zionist organisation. We encouraged our communities to take part in the Closer to Israel parade, celebrating 65 years since the establishment of the State of Israel. Our bus was proudly decorated with Israeli flags and it was great to see so many of you out in support.

We have been delighted to welcome this year both Highams Park & Chingford and the Wanstead & Woodford communities who both voted overwhelmingly in favour of becoming full US member communities. Additionally, we were also thrilled to

announce that Hadley Wood has become a full member of The US. We are looking forward to working with these new communities, to help them grow as vibrant centres of Jewish life.

Times are changing too for the entire Jewish community as our esteemed Chief Rabbi, Lord Sacks, begins the next stage in his illustrious rabbinical career. Almost 2,000 attended our farewell event for Lord Sacks, titled "Our Journey with The Chief..." which included a fascinating live conversation between Lord Sacks and Sir David Frost. The evening was an opportunity for our members to thank the Chief Rabbi for the tremendous impact that he has had on British society, and on the United Synagogue in particular. We wish him and Lady Elaine all the very best for the future.

Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the tenure of our new Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis. Since the announcement of his appointment, we have established a healthy working relationship with Rabbi Mirvis, with regular meetings to update him on the fantastic work of the United Synagogue and to discuss future strategies. We look forward to continue working very closely with Rabbi Mirvis. He is truly an outstanding Rabbi, and will grace the position of Chief Rabbi.

We wish all of our members a happy, healthy and meaningful new year.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy Jacobs'.

**Jeremy Jacobs,**  
Chief Executive  
United Synagogue

If you want to ask me anything, or would like to know more about the United Synagogue and our services, please do send me an e-mail to [cx@theus.org.uk](mailto:cx@theus.org.uk) as your feedback is valuable to us.

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT 5772-5774



Dear Friends,

This last year, 5773, has been a challenging but a successful one for the Board, and for the community we represent. Apart from the huge range of work carried out by the Board, defending the community's rights and promoting its vitality, we have also been engaged in a radical internal restructuring. Although the process of recruitment is not yet complete, we have already seen exciting improvements in our ability to deliver our message to government and to different sectors of the community. We are especially grateful for the contribution of our extremely dedicated staff, both past and present, and our 280 Deputies.

There is much talk at present of changes in the architecture of the community, but whatever happens, a strong representative body like the Board – cross communal with a national reach and above all democratically elected and accountable – will be right at the centre of it.

It is hard to do justice to all our activities in a brief report so some examples will have to suffice. We have continued to be at the forefront of political engagement, including regular meetings with MPs of all parties, with the crowning event of a question and answer session with Ed Miliband who gave a virtuoso performance. Our Chanukah Reception at the House of Commons also drew a large number of parliamentarians, including Cabinet members, MPs, MEPs and members of the House of Lords. These engagement events are vital two way processes, allowing politicians and the Jewish public the chance to engage with one another and for the Board, therefore, to fulfill its mission of protecting Jewish interests.

We have again been active in confronting anti-Semitism, with hostile comments by Lord Ahmed, David Ward MP and Patrick Mercer condemned by us in the strongest terms. Gerald Scarfe's cartoon drew an immediate apology, and Rupert Murdoch wrote to me personally to express his regrets.

Interfaith initiatives are an area where we have been particularly active, including the Righteous Muslims Exhibition, which recognised the heroism of those South East Europeans who saved Jewish lives in the Second World War. Positive interfaith engagement, apart from being valuable in itself, is vital in creating friends and allies in the general community.

On the defensive side of interfaith, we have intervened with the Church of Scotland and Quakers when motions have been proposed that we feel are unbalanced and detrimental to the cause of Israel and peace in the Middle East.

Social action, has seen us take part in several 'green' initiatives: one is "Sharing Eden", written by our social action and interfaith consultant, Rabbi Natan Levy, alongside others, on religion and the environment. Our "Grow Tatzmiach" food hunger project has produced several excellent initiatives set up by our Deputies. 'Green' Judaism is so much more than giving a religious perspective, although we believe that can often be a starting point. It is also about utilising our position as the community's representative body to speak out on issues affecting other minority groups. We have done this in supporting asylum seekers, the Roma in Hungary, and the Bahais, where we have spoken against the persecutions taking place in Iran.

Education is an area that allows us to engender a positive world view of Jews from among the UK's youth. This year 1500 non-Jewish children went on a Seeing Jewish Life Tour; whilst our Jewish Way of Life Exhibition tours the country: from Devon to Derby. It's a fun and engaging way for young school children to learn about Jewish practices.

I should finally mention our work on heritage regarding the medieval community in Norwich and our donation of a 300 year old Sefer Torah, to Yavneh College. The Board is the Custodian of much of British Jewry's history and, as has been said often recently, a people that neglects its past jeopardises its future.

These are just a sample of the work which we have carried out this last year. If you wish to keep in touch with our work you can do so by viewing our website at [www.bod.org.uk](http://www.bod.org.uk). You can also join the 1500 community members signed up to our weekly Community Briefing and join in the conversation on facebook and twitter where we have nearly 2,500 followers.

May 5774 be a good and sweet year for you, for all the community and for all the house of Israel.



Warm wishes,

Vivian Wineman

**President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews**

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# NEW YEAR'S *Greetings*

Wishing everyone at the Central a Shanah Tovah U'Metukah! Raquel, Yoav and Maya Amit.

Wishing all our family, friends and fellow members a happy and healthy New Year. Mandy and David Baker.

Pauline and Frank Barnett with all their family wish the Rabbi,  
Chazan and all the congregation a very happy and peaceful New Year and well over the Fast.

Nicola, Gary, Madeleine and Hannah Burns wish the Rabbi, Chazan,  
and all members of Central Synagogue a Happy New Year and well over the Fast.

Jacqueline and Eric Charles send best New Year greetings to Rabbi Barry Marcus, Chazan Steven Leas and the entire Community.

Ze'ev Galibov wishes Shanah Tovah and well over the Fast to all at the Central Synagogue.

Shanah Tovah to you all from Margaret Grant.

Reverend Simon Hass wishes all the community at Central synagogue a happy and healthy new year.

To all my friends at the Central. A happy New Year and well over Fast from Coral Jowell.

Peter Koritschoner wishes Rabbi Marcus, Steven Leas and the Central community a happy and healthy New Year.

Caroline, Craig, Yonah and Meir Levison wish Rabbi Marcus, Steven Leas,  
the Honorary Officers and everyone at the Central a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Zea Lewis and all her family wish their fellow congregants a new year of good health, happiness and peace and well over the Fast.

Terry Samek wishes her family, friends and fellow members a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Daphne and Harold Schogger wish all at Central a Happy New Year.

Clarice Shamash and Maurice wish their family and friends and congregation a happy New Year and well over the Fast.

Sylvia Shine and family wish Shanah Tovah to Rabbi Marcus, Chazan Leas, their families and all our friends at the Central.  
May our Central Synagogue, b'eizat Hashem, continue to thrive and flourish.

## The Morning Minyan

We, the members of the Morning Minyan, send our very best wishes for a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year to our esteemed Rabbi Marcus, the Officiants, Honorary Officers and all the members of the Central Synagogue.

Yoav Amit	Phillip Collett	Roger Gibbons	Lloyd Keisner	Guy Ornadell	Maurice Shamash
Yoini Apter	Tim Cowen	Shlomo Gods	Peter Koritschoner	Mark Phillips	Billy Sharron
Kevin Arenson	Jonah Cowen	Stanley Goldstein	David Kosky	Rob Phillips	Leslie Shull
Adam Arnold	Bryan Coyne	Howard Goulden	Raymond Laren	Martyn Pizer	Aubrey Silverstone
Howard Ash	Jeremy Curtis	Andy Graham	David Laurie	Jonathan Plant	Michael Sinclair
Colin Baker	Stephen Davis	Ian Grant	Melvin Lawson	Sydney Pochin	Neil Sinclair
Jonathan Barnett	Ashley Davidson	Malcolm Green	Steven Leas	Gennadis Raivich	Abner Sollard
Simon Barnett	Russell Dunstan	Billy Grossman	Edward Lee	Paul Rayden	Stuart Stanton
Jamie Baruch	Leon Dwek	Ilan Gutkin	Marshall Lester	Darren Richards	Jonathan Stein
Daniel Baum	Sammy Dwek	Norman Gutkin	Nick Levene	Michael Richards	Simon Stone
Michael Bayer	Simon Einberg	Steve Haffner	Craig Levison	Westley Richards	Ian Stowe
Rael Berelowitz	Melvyn Epstein	Paul Harrison	Julian Lewis	Joel Rockman	David Teacher
David Berkley	Nick Esses	Robin Hilton	Michael Lewis	Gregory Roediger	Jeremy Trent
Andrew Brecher	Leonard Fertleman	Peter Hoffman	Steven Livingston	David Rodney	Jack Wachsstock
Gary Burns	Laurence Finger	Michael Howard	Paul Martin	Sam Rogoff	Colin Wagman
Eric Charles	Aron Freedman	Frank Hunter	Allan Messing	Issy Rondel	Joe Weston
Marcos Chazan	Clive Freedman	Alan Jacobson	Michael Milston	Paul Rosen	Greg Woolf
Avron Cohen	Adam Gamzu	David Judah	John Newman	Richard Rosenberg	Norman Yellon
Giles Cohen	Nigel Gee	Chuni Kahan	Mark H Newman	Bob Rubin	Guy Zylberszac
Roger Cohen	Ben-Shalom Gentely	Melvin Kay	Peter Ohrenstein	Stanley Salter	
Simon Cohen	Jonathan Gibbons	Stephen Kay	Richard Olswang	Stephen Schaffer	

The Morning Minyan has often been commented on by visitors as being the most friendly and successful minyan that they have attended. It is renowned for its magnificent breakfasts given by members to celebrate Rosh Chodesh, Yahrzeits, celebrations of happy events and on other occasions just because members enjoy having breakfasts together! 'Membership' is free and you qualify simply by turning up! Come along and enjoy a great experience.

### Welcome to New Members

- Taube Brahms
- Hannah Burns
- Sarah and Peter Crystal
- James Collins
- Joshua Davis
- William Davis
- Peter Goldsmith
- Cherry Hughes
- Karina and Ashley Katz
- Daniel Midda
- Gary Millner
- Carole Murray
- Gavin Rabinowitz
- June Rose
- Emma and Michael Semp
- Daniel Silverston
- Pamela and Colin Wagman
- Esther and Martin Watts

### Births. Mazeltov to:

- Juliet and Jamie Avi-Dan on the birth of a son
- Kate and James Hyman on the birth of a son
- Adrienne and Saul Konviser on the birth of a daughter
- Katherine and Max Robinson on the birth of a son
- Lauren and Alexander Reuben on the birth of a son
- Jacqueline and Julian Segal on the birth of a son
- Susan and Marc Sperber on the birth of a son
- Cheryl and Peter Abbey on the birth of a grandson
- Joan and Arthur Bovarnick on the birth of a grandson
- Janet De Botton on the birth of a grandson
- Angela Fineman on the birth of a granddaughter

- Elaine and Michael Fishberg on the birth of a granddaughter
- Andrea and Colin Freedman on the birth of a granddaughter
- Michael Green on the birth of a grandson
- Susan and Stuart Harrison on the birth of a grandson
- Jane and Basil Hyman on the birth of a grandson
- Laura and Julian Konviser on the birth of a granddaughter
- Dawn and Frank Lewis on the birth of a grandson
- Rabbi Marcus on the birth of a grandson
- Carole and Robert Morris on the birth of a grandson
- Ian Reuben on the birth of a grandson
- Carol and Victor Segal on the birth of a grandson
- Elizabeth and Hugh Taylor on the birth of a granddaughter
- Britt Ziff on the birth of a granddaughter
- Jessell Harrison on the birth of a great grandson
- Sylvia Reuben on the birth of a great grandson
- Ruth Wolfson on the birth of a great grandson

### Bar Mitzvahs

- Jacob Barnett
- James Leof
- Gideon Lister

### Bat Mitzvahs

- Emily Sherwood

### Engagements. Mazeltov to:

- Elaine and Jeremy Curtis on the engagement of their son Charles to Chloe Selbo
- Fay Sandler on the engagement of her daughter

### Marriages. Mazeltov to the families of:

- Sarah and Peter Crystal
- Elaine and Jeremy Curtis on the marriage of their daughter Georgine to Mathew Harris
- Susan and Ian Grant on the marriage of their daughter Samantha to Ben Hamburger
- Emma and Michael Semp

### Bereavements. Condolences go to the families of the following members who have passed away in the past year:

- Peter Collins
- Marie Gilbert
- Geoffrey Lawson
- Maisie Lewis
- Lilly Pepper
- Renee Marco
- Josephine Murray
- Renee Rudolf
- Jocelyn Saper
- Valerie Taylor
- Michael Webber
- George Whyte

### Condolences go to: the following members who have lost loved ones in the past year:

- Tracy Benjamin for his Sister
- Louis Green for his daughter
- Stephanie Harris for her Father
- Laura Konviser for her Father
- Gillian Lee for her Mother
- Barbara Lederman for her Mother
- Jonathan Metliss for his Father
- Harold Schogger for his Mother

### Mazeltov to:

- Yoav Amit on receiving a Masters of Science in Financial Mathematics
- Stephanie and Victor Aptaker on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary

- Susan and Kenneth Arfin on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Harold Berman on his 100th birthday
- Helen and Stephen Berman on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Janet De Botton on being becoming a Dame Commander of the British Empire
- Sarah Box on her 100th birthday
- Madeleine Burns on receiving the Michael Guthrie Prize and BSc Hons degree in Hospitality Management and Marketing Management.
- Nicola and Gary Burns on their Silver Wedding Anniversary
- Rosemary and Leonard Fertleman on their Golden Wedding Anniversary
- Rosemary and Dennis Friedman on their 65th Wedding Anniversary
- Ze'ev Galibov on being awarded a Gold Medal for his Military Post Collection, exhibited in Israel "Tel Aviv 2013" Multinational Stamp Exhibition
- Edna and Zorach Gehl on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Anne and Robert Harris on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Susan and Stuart Harrison on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Klara and Hermann Herlinger on their 65th Wedding Anniversary
- Betty and Alfred Lawson on their 65th Wedding Anniversary
- Coral and John Lawson on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Jacqueline and Melvin Lawson on their Silver Wedding Anniversary
- Rabbi Marcus on his award from the Holocaust Educational Trust.
- Lionel Marks on his 100th birthday
- Wendy and David Meller on their Silver Wedding Anniversary
- Susanne and Jeffrey Nedas on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Lynn and John Newman on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Evelyn and Meir Nutman on their Golden Wedding Anniversary
- Adrienne and Laurie Phillips on their Golden Wedding Anniversary
- Suzanne and Lawrence Reuben on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary
- Pamela and Clive Saron on their Ruby Wedding Anniversary

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2013 - 2014

### 5 September –

1st Day Rosh Hashanah

### 14th September –

Yom Kippur

### 15th September –

Decorate the Succah – all helpers welcome

### 15th September –

Start of beginners bridge

### 18th September –

Communal dinner in the Succah

### 19th September –

1st Day Succot

### 26th September –

Shemini Atzeret (Yizkor will be recited)

### 26th September –

Simchat Torah evening celebration with Chatan Torah Ian Balcombe and Chatan Bereshit Nigel Gee together with the Central Synagogue Choir

**5th October –** Choral Shabbat

**26th October –** Visit by the Polish Ambassador

### 2nd November –

Choral Shabbat

### 7th December –

Choral Shabbat

### 19th January –

Ladies' Guild Quiz

**Back page photographs:** From top left across: Adrienne and Laurie Phillips, Ria and Natanel Abras, Peter and Sarah Crystal, Amy Netser, Fiona Fishberg, Sam Sperber, Yoav, Raquel and Maya Amit, Madeleine Burns BSc, Billy Sharron with Steven and James Leof.





# CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE LONDON

