



## LAW, CUSTOM AND FOLK BELIEF

### The problem of the "Mazkir Exodus"

Dear Friends,

We are still very much into our Holiday season, having just completed our *Yamim Noraim* and now entering the festivities of the Succot week, culminating in Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. Please come to our synagogue and rejoice in the Holidays.

What I thought would be of most value to you is a little guidance on the following question: what exactly does Judaism require of me? What is law? What is custom? What is *bubbe meise*, or folk religion? The reason why I share this lesson with you is that each year at Yom Kippur, at Yizkor or, as we say at Belsize Square, Mazkir, there is a mass exodus from the synagogue as we begin to recite the memorial prayers, meditate upon the lives of our loved ones and recite our affirmation of love and faith with the words of the Kaddish, always in their memory.

The exodus from shul is one of the most interesting examples of how folk religion has in many ways come to replace the dictates of Jewish law and normative minhag, or custom. There is no good reason why it should have become such an odd replacement of traditional mandated behaviour, since there is no prohibition in any shape or form on reciting Kaddish and being in synagogue with living parents to remember our departed loved ones.

There is always someone for us to remember – a grandparent, friend, Jews of the past, anonymous individuals who need to be remembered. We miss a great opportunity, an essential part of our spiritual beings, in leaving just at the time we need to remember and do right by those no longer with us. Leaving is entirely *bubbe meise*, an unnecessary superstition.

There are three categories that dictate Jewish behaviour: halachah (Jewish law), minhag (normative custom or convention) – and then there's *bubbe meise*. Halachah is mandated, required for each and every Jew after Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Halachah is mitzvah, commandment.

The halachot are rooted in the 613 Torah Mitzvot, a large chunk of which we can no longer fulfill because they require the existence of a Temple. In addition, there are later rabbinic halachot, such as lighting Shabbat or Chanukah candles, which carry the same weight as a Torah commandment.

Halachot are both ethical and ritual and they run to a long list. To take some well-known examples: asking for and granting forgiveness (Teshuvah), ethical business practices, giving to those in need (Tzedakah), studying Torah, keeping kosher, observing Shabbat, refraining from gossip and slander (lashon harah), and fasting on Yom Kippur.

Halachah is required of us but halachah changes. Some halachot fall out of use or lose their relevance, such as *shatnez*, the Torah prohibition against mixing wool and linen, which pales into insignificance in today's wide range of materials. But these emendations to halachah are part of a process of legal interpretation, growth and evolution.

As an example of the evolution of rabbinic understanding of Jewish law, take the participation of women in Jewish ritual life. Not until the late 19th century were Jewish women allowed to study Torah in major Eastern European communities. Yet halachah has never restricted women in any way.

Minhag is a tougher definition since some "customs" do eventually find their way into normative Jewish practice while others fade away. We bow during the Aleinu, we eat honey and apples at Rosh Hashanah, we refrain from eating meat in the nine days before Tisha B'Av, we cover our mirrors in a house of

mourning, we do not eat dairy after eating meat for either one, three or even six hours depending upon local minhag, we come the long way to the Torah for our Aliyah, we recite early morning prayers before the formal call to worship, and so on.

There are different customs for Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews, as well as for Jews living in Israel today. All these customs have a vital role to play in how we as Jews express our commitment to halachah and Jewish values.

And then there are Belsize Square customs, customs that belong to no other Jewish community! Yes, we have our very own. You might have your favourites, here are some of mine: bowing at the Ark before the Torah scroll is removed, the Cantor shifting the Torah scroll from the right to left shoulder before the blessing of the coming month (birkat hachodesh), not announcing page numbers (in common, admittedly, with most British synagogues), calling Yizkor – the normal term for the Memorial Service everywhere else – Mazkir, and ... starting services punctually on time and, following unspoken guidelines, taking one hour on Friday evening and two hours on Saturday morning!

Finally, there are superstitions, pure and simple, developed over the years. Many originated from the kabbalistic movement in the late mediaeval shtetls of Eastern Europe. They are mostly concerned with graveside and mourning practices. One belief I heard recently is that it is inappropriate for a grandchild to recite Kaddish for a grandparent while the parents are still alive. That's totally superstition.

Reciting Kaddish is binding on the deceased's children, siblings, parents and spouse. But there is nothing that precludes a grandchild, or anyone for that matter, from reciting Kaddish at the cemetery, in synagogue or in a minyan.

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*Introducing this year's Chatanim*

## ADAM RYNHOLD Our Chatan Torah

I am honoured and proud to be Chatan Torah this year and am delighted to be sharing the mitzvah with John Abramson.

Having spent my early years at Southgate Progressive Synagogue with Rabbi Harry Jacobi, I moved to Palmers Green and Southgate Synagogue (United Synagogue) for my teenage years, where I joined B'nai B'rith Youth Organisation (BBYO), serving as Chapter Jewish Education Officer and Treasurer and finally as National Treasurer, at a time when BBYO had close to 1,000 members and all its activities were peer-led. I still use the skills I learnt in BBYO and have many close friends dating back to those days.

After celebrating my Bar Mitzvah party at Lord's Cricket Ground, I quickly got into cricket. I joined Middlesex County Cricket Club in 1981 and got to know a vast number of cricketers. My involvement with numerous benefit events for leading Middlesex players led me to club cricket as scorer for Hornsey Cricket Club. I now help out at Cockfosters Cricket Club, wherever and whenever possible. In 2001 I was elected a member of the MCC, which gives me the opportunity to see the sport and be uncontactable for a whole day!

From Palmers Green, the Rynhold family joined Belsize Square and the rest, as they say, is history: T-Squared (the younger members' fund-raising group); the Bazaar (now the Chanukah Market); setting up the football team with Keith Conway, Adam Hirschovits and Jonathan Bruck; teaching at Cheder; serving as Gabbai (warden) and working in the Synagogue Office.

So what does someone who spends seven days a week at BSS do with their spare time!? Well, there is football – through the Belsize Alyth team I found about at Maccabi and have had the good fortune to travel to three European Maccabi Games – in Stirling, Antwerp and Rome – and two Maccabiah Games in Israel.

There really is no better feeling than marching into an opening ceremony at the Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem or the National Stadium in Ramat Gan with 4,000 other Jewish people to an audience of 40,000, including the President and Prime Minister, knowing you are part of something very special.

Through the Maccabiah I was invited to stand for the Maccabi Southern Football League as Registration Secretary. That was seven years ago and I am still there, ensuring that close to 1,000 Jewish men are able to play competitive football every Sunday morning. I have been actively involved in Non League Football for many years, first at Wingate & Finchley during its period as the leading Jewish Football Club in the country and now as Press Officer for Cockfosters Football Club.

Five years ago I became a Local Authority Governor at St John's School, Friern Barnet, where I am able to use my charity knowledge gained here to help with Gift Aid. I also sit on the Wellbeing Sub-Committee, which looks after Health and Safety. And now it is time for the holder of an "almost encyclopaedic knowledge of our membership", as Rob Nothman so eloquently put it in a recent emailing of News From The Square, to return to his seven-days-a-week job.

### Simchat Torah Service

for families with children aged 5 & under  
Monday 5 October, 5.00-5.30pm



*(Continued from page 1)*

There is no bar on remaining in synagogue, even if both parents are alive, for the Mazkir/Yizkor service, which is also recited on the three Pilgrimage Festivals. And only superstition would stop a pregnant woman coming to the cemetery.

I hope this synopsis helps. If you have any questions about what Judaism requires of us through

halachah, or suggests that we do because of minhag, or seems to prohibit by virtue of folk religion, just ask. That's why I'm here.

My wishes to all of you for a week of Succot joy and celebration. To rejoice is a mitzvah. It's an order! So *mo'adim l'simchah* (fixed times for joy). May your Holidays be celebrated with simchah, with joy.

**Rabbi Altshuler**

### FESTIVAL SERVICES

**Shemini Atzeret Eve:** Sunday 4 October at 6.45pm  
**Shemini Atzeret Day:** Monday 5 October at 10.00am  
**Simchat Torah Eve:** Monday 5 October at 5.00pm  
(for families with small children)  
7pm (adults and older children)  
**Simchat Torah Day:** Tuesday 6 October at 10.00am

#### OFFICE HOURS

The Synagogue Office will be closed on Monday 5 and Tuesday 6 October, reopening on Wednesday 7 October at 9.00am.



### SALVATION ARMY COLLECTION

This year we shall be collecting tinned and dried goods (vegetarian only please) for those in need in Camden through the Salvation Army.

If you would like to contribute to this very worthwhile cause for those who are struggling to make ends meet, please bring your gifts to the Synagogue during office hours or before or after Services until Wednesday 7 October.

# JOHN ABRAMSON

## Chatan Bereishit



**My History:** I was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, but with solidly Litvak origins. Three grandparents originated in Lithuania, and my father's father came from Riga in Latvia. I grew up in a traditional modern Orthodox environment – going to *shul* every Friday night, and walking to my Granny's flat for chicken soup and *kneidlach* afterwards.

I went to an Orthodox Jewish day school in Johannesburg until just after my *Bar Mitzvah*, and then to a state high school. Narrowly avoiding being called up to serve my compulsory two years in the South African Defence Force, I went to university in Johannesburg and studied English and South African literature. I also became involved in student politics, and played my part in various anti-government campaigns. Perhaps as a result, I decided to become a lawyer and I came to London to study at the London School of Economics. I qualified as a solicitor, and for the last 25 years I have worked in the City, specialising in insurance law. Currently, I am the General Counsel for the European operations of a global insurance company.

**My Family:** My parents emigrated to the UK 37 years ago, took up residence in Oxford and are still there today. My mother is a retired professor of modern Hebrew literature at Oxford University, and my father is a semi-retired investment banker. My younger brother and his family live in Connecticut in the United States. I have two sons, Joel and Theo. We are all Arsenal supporters. My wife Paula has two children, Leah and Nathan. They support the other team.

**My Belsize History:** I have always loved Jewish liturgical music, and had not heard much Lewandowski and Sulzer. Our music at home was more traditional East European, sung by a male choir. One Friday night service here at Belsize was enough for me. I was entranced by the music and I joined. This year I celebrate my 23rd anniversary as a member.

In those years, I have done many different things here: I have taught at Cheder. I was involved in the start-up of Kikar Kids. I am privileged to be a lay leader of some of our services. For about nine years I was the community's representative on the Board of Deputies, I have been on the Liturgical Committee, the Israel Committee and ad hoc committees organising various things. I have also sung in choir and played the bassoon at shul "gigs". In 2011, I led the *chazan* search that resulted in Cantor Heller's appointment. I have been on the Board since 1998, and in 2012, together with Suzanne Goldstein, I was elected Co-chair of the Community.

Being Co-chair is at the same time the most rewarding and the most frustrating thing I have done. I am immensely proud of our community and greatly enjoy being one of its officers. That's the rewarding bit. The frustration comes from just not having enough time to do all the things that I would like to do here!

I am deeply honoured to be the Community's *Chatan Bereishit* this year. I look forward to many many more years of involvement with this rather special community.

### BELSIZE'S NEW CHANUKAH MARKET

**Where Carmel meets Spitalfields**

12 December 5.00pm - 8.00pm

13 December 11.00am - 4.00pm



### WANTED: Your donations now for

#### THE BOTTLE TOMBOLA

During the month of October the Bazaar Committee would like to receive filled bottles of drink, toiletries and alcohol

#### OUR NEW STALL of ONCE-VIEWED DVDs and BOX SETS

You have watched them once and will not look at them again. Give someone else a chance to enjoy them

#### VINTAGE CLOTHING

Please bring any contributions to the synagogue office during office hours or to the Religion School office on Sunday mornings. Your donations make a difference.



### SAVE THE DATE: BMG PUZZLE EVENING

Sunday 15 November, 7.30pm

For a fabulous fun-filled evening put the date in your diary and invite your friends and family. The BMG will provide a yummy home-cooked supper and the Happy Puzzle Company will provide a stimulating selection of puzzles that are suitable for all ages.

Watch out for further details in the next issue of *Our Congregation*.



# BELSIZE SQUARE'S OWN SHABBAT PROJECT

## Sue Mariner explains the background to our forthcoming event

A unique initiative launched in 2013 by South Africa's Chief Rabbi, Dr Warren Goldstein, designed to unite Jews all across the country, surpassed organisers' expectations, as an estimated 10,000 participants gathered for a country-wide Shabbat observance. It was estimated that approximately 90% of South Africa's synagogues joined "The Shabbos Project".

The project's mission statement urged Jewish South Africans to remove themselves from the distractions and pressures of daily life and to "keep one Shabbos according to the strictures set out in the Shulchan Aruch." While many of the weekend's participants were not Orthodox and some not even affiliated to any community, they did their best to keep Shabbat for 25 hours.

The response was extraordinary. Families, who were otherwise entirely secular, saw an opportunity to forget about the pressures of their daily lives for 25 hours and focus much more on their family, friends and community.

It was so incredibly successful and inspirational that the following year (last year, in fact) the event went global, with over 212 cities participating across 33 countries. In Britain, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis launched Shabbat UK, one of the most wide-reaching and ambitious projects undertaken by the Jewish community here.

The hope is that people will be encouraged to "up their observance a little". So for instance, if a person were to reserve washing their hands only as part of a Seder, they might choose to do it before the Shabbat meal. Or if only the first line of the Kiddush were recited as a rule, it might be a goal to learn the whole of it. (There is a recording of it on the Belsize Synagogue website.)

The web generally is a great source of information on the rituals of celebrating Shabbat. Another suggestion is to try not to be seduced by digital devices and turn off all tablets, phones and computers and, of course, the television!

Our local synagogue (we live next door to it) asked me if I would help organise the weekend and after much deliberation, the plan for the 25 hours was agreed. The UK event started with "The Challah Make", which took place on the Thursday beforehand in the late afternoon, open to all. I believe there

were over 3,500 challah-bakers at Allianz Park, the Hendon rugby ground.

We asked some members to open their homes and host guests who live in their area, for a Friday night dinner. We wanted to ensure that every person in the community would have the opportunity to celebrate a memorable Shabbat around a family table.

At the Shabbat morning service, various members gave entertaining and informative explanations of different parts of the service. This was followed by a communal lunch and the afternoon continued with a walk to a member's house where an eminent personality was interviewed by a journalist at a *seudah shlishit*, the third Shabbat meal. (Breakfast doesn't count!)

After Minchah and Havdalah, the synagogue's youth Klezmer Group gave a concert and the whole event concluded with fireworks. It was truly an exhilarating Shabbat.

Rodney and I were hosts on Friday evening to neighbours who we really didn't know very well and it was an extraordinarily bonding experience sharing our table with them. Enduring friendships were made across the community that evening and people who ordinarily spend Shabbat alone were included in family gatherings and this has continued throughout the year.

In this country, only a few non-Orthodox synagogues participated in last year's event but such were the rave reviews, that this year the Reform movement and Masorti have become involved too, arranging their individual programmes to suit their own minhag.

I felt this was a perfect event for Belsize Square Synagogue and, encouraged by friends, I suggested it to the Co-Chairs who embraced the idea with great enthusiasm.

The feedback we received last year was one of eagerness to repeat Shabbat UK this year. Isn't it an amazing thought – at the very least, an estimated million Jews world-wide will be observing this unique event together. In a world where so much divides us, how great to have something that creates a uniting celebration.

So, we are all hoping that this year, Shabbat UK will be even bigger and better and that everyone who

participates will enjoy the special quality that Shabbat brings, whether it is around the dinner or lunch table, or in Synagogue.

Shabbat is about reconnecting with our heritage and tradition, taking time out, being with family, friends and community and enjoying the peace, spirituality and *ruach* (atmosphere) that is the essence of Shabbat. Here's to a wonderful and meaningful Shabbat UK for everyone at Belsize!

### SHABBAT UK PROGRAMME

#### Thursday 22 October, 7.30pm

Challah Baking in the Hall under Jennifer Saul.

£5 per person, ingredients provided. Bake your prepared challah at home. All welcome: men, women and keen youngsters

#### Friday 23 October

Communal dinner for young adults (20s & 30s) in the hall or

Dinner in members' homes.

Please inform the Synagogue Office if you would like to be a host or guest or join the communal meal

#### Saturday 24 October Morning Sessions

Interactive educational service including Q & A with Rabbi Altshuler

Communal lunch in the hall

#### Afternoon Sessions:

Singing with Ben Wolf

Interactive comedy with Philip Simon

First-hand stories from converts who are now members

**Teatime:** coffee and cake

Minchah and end of programme by 5pm

Feel free to participate in as many or as few of our activities as you like. Please inform the office if you wish to join the communal meals, for catering numbers. Any donations towards Shabbat lunch and programme welcome.



## TOP RUSSIAN WARTIME NAVAL AWARD



*Bill Howard wearing the Russian 65th Anniversary Commemorative Medal (red ribbon) in the centre of his shirt and his new Ushakov Medal (blue ribbon) pinned onto his shirt pocket*

Two years ago *Our Congregation* published the story of Bill Howard, born Horst Adolf Herzberg in Berlin. Three months earlier he had received a package in the post, which contained the British Armed Forces' newly created Arctic Star medal in belated recognition of his participation in the Arctic convoys towards the end of the Second World War, bringing relief supplies to Soviet troops cut off in the far north-west Kola peninsula in the Arctic Circle.

However, this was not his first medal for this risky operation, braving fearsome weather conditions and German U-boat and Luftwaffe attacks from the Norwegian coastline. In 2010 he received a

Russian medal commemorating the 65th anniversary of the victory ending the Second World War.

Now 95, he has received a third medal, again from Russia. This is the Ushakov Medal, Russia's top naval award, named after the legendary 18th-century Russian admiral who never lost a ship or a battle. The medal was presented to him at

home on August 20 by Russian Embassy attache Oleg Shor. The naval operation rescued the Russian soldiers by bringing them vital supplies of food and armaments in merchant ships protected by a Royal Navy escort. Bill was a petty officer on board HMS Bellona, a light cruiser, which made three voyages, in August and October 1944 and March 1945. Their destination was Russia's most north-westerly region, bordering Norway and Lapland, within the Arctic Circle. Because of the warm westerly sea currents, the ports of Murmansk and Archangel are not completely iced over in winter storms and ice floes abound.

The Royal Navy has a policy of British-born recruits only but they were so desperate for people capable of understanding German communications that in 1943 they placed an advertisement for German speakers in the Pioneer Corps, the only unit that German-Jewish refugees were allowed to join. Horst, as he still was, applied and passed the stiff tests. He was immediately renamed William Ashley Howard.

He had left Germany as a schoolboy in early 1938 and had an amazing gift for language, accent and mimicry. His extraordinary proficiency in intercepting and interpreting communications between German ships – and understanding the different dialects – made him invaluable. He was recommended by his captain for promotion but his foreign birth was a step too far for the Admiralty.

As he said in our earlier interview, the experience was "something remarkable, in a very different environment. It was a very interesting and, for me, fulfilling time." The recognition is well deserved.

## CENTENARIAN DIES

Condolences to the family of Henry Stenham, who died on Friday 25 September, having celebrated his 100th birthday three weeks earlier, on 3 September.

The son of a Hamburg importer and exporter, Henry was sent to England in 1936 to continue his business training in an export company in a safe environment. On his visits home he managed to persuade his parents and younger sister to follow two years later. The family rented various rooms in Aberdare Gardens – if the name sounds vaguely familiar, think of the Abernein Mansions address of our columnist, Mr Klopstick. By good fortune, one of their neighbours worked as a secretary in the office of the Minister of Labour, Ernest Bevin. She obtained visas for them as friendly aliens, so Henry and his father, Arthur Sternheim, were never interned.

While Mr Sternheim senior worked in the fruit trade, Henry joined the Pioneer Corps in 1940, changing his surname to Stenham. In August he married Marion Gerstler, whom he met through mutual friends, and took two days honeymoon in Minehead in Somerset before returning to camp in



*Henry and Marion Stenham pictured with Cantor Paul Heller. Also displayed are the birthday card from the Queen and the Belsize Square Synagogue certificate of honorary membership.*

Scotland. She had left Dresden in 1937. Henry was posted to Normandy after the D-Day landings of June 1944, moved with the fighting to Germany and stayed on after the war to report on the situation in such details as the number of cart horses in use and the opinions expressed in church sermons.

He was finally demobilised in 1948 and joined his father in business. He started importing Danish whisky to fill the gap left by wartime interruption to Scottish production but he moved to the Real Thing as soon as Scotch started up again. His agency handled 50 labels, which he was involved in

marketing. He named two blends as Henry VIII and Queen Mary, creating labels which those in the know understood as referring to himself and his wife.

He celebrated his birthday at his home in Elstree with family and friends, including his wife, their daughter, Jennifer and her husband, children and grandchildren, plus the children and grandchildren of their late son, Tony. (Total of five grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.)





## Dear Fellow Members

Writing this article before I am regaled with the High Holiday sermons is quite difficult, because they always presented me with much after sort und subjects under which to base my massage for this month. I will therefore have to hold my houses at least for the first seam of sermons.

I very much conquer with the thinking behind the dress coat that has been adapted und circled round congregants. I think I can on be-halve of everyone here in Abernein Mansions guarantee that every und each one from them will be in their dress coat for all the services, weather in the synagogue oder at home on Belsize Life.

Although I am not personally infected with the problem of parking, I think it is borderline anti-semitism that Camden start water works at this time of year. Morefurther, the fact that the Tavistock is not allowing members to park is enough to drive anyone crazy. But what is quiet unrageous is that the bus stop for Belsize Square has been suspected. This is where we olden ones from Finchley Road unlight for the synagogue. I really don't know what we are going to do. We might have to chair a black taxi cap!

The first sermon on the Erev service given by Rabbi Altshuler was to set the seam for the High Holidays. He told us that today we are all frightful. Frightful of Al Keider, frightful of ICES und other murdering tourists. We are frightful of earthquakes, of drafts und floods, global warning, also frightful of poorness und being not well und so weider. This is not surprising as this is what is broadcasted in the newspapers every day.

But he went on to drew our attention to the good things in live. The success of Israel, the goodness site of people for charity. I can't remember so much but there were many pieces of good news that didn't find there way onto the Nein

o'clock news. Of course newspaper Birons, like Rupert Murder, only want to put horrible pictures unter frightful headlines.



What has made the front pages recently is that the new labour leader is Jeremy Putin. I think that this must be not good news for socialism. I understand that he is so far to the left that he sometimes falls of the page. The days of naturalisation are gone long. What might be verse is that he has not a good view from Israel from being an avocat from Hammas und Hisbowler. Not so important, but also not so exceptable is that he always wears a grumpy west.

**Klopstick's  
Kopplaint**

Und talking of entire, our Cantor Powel Heller arrived most stylish in a weid brimmed model with matching coat. But more congratulations to his wonderful clarity of pronouncement threw out und the sweat tones in harmony with the excelled chor lead by Sir Ben Wolf.

I still have problems with the up-getting und down-sitting, but it was good to see so many old faces. Mined you, I see enough from these at Abernein Mansions so I went to the childrens service to disperse with the wringles und because my great-grand-nephew und knees were doing things on the bima. It was a bit noisy und heart for me to hear everything, but still wonderful to be holed so many jungsters coming threw the rinks.

Mrs Klopstick und I are really beside ourselves over the refugee crisis. Not so long ago this was us. Therefore today Mrs K has taken many blankets from the bets of the inmates here und is on her way to Calais now. May the New Year bring health, happiness und much neckers to uns all.

With the best of intentions

**Fritz Klopstick**

# Scripture Readings

| Candle Lighting                         | Date                      | Sidrah/Festival                   | Torah                                 |                                 | Haftarah |             |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Friday 2 October<br>Doris Blass         | 3 October<br>Tishri 20    | Shabbat Chol Hamoed<br>Succot     | Deuteronomy<br>Deuteronomy            | 14:22-15:18<br>16:15-17         | I Kings  | 8:22-43     |
| Sunday 4 October<br>Ruth Rothenberg     | 5 October<br>Tishri 22    | Shemini Atzeret                   | Deuteronomy<br>Deuteronomy            | 10:12-11:21<br>28:2-6           | I Kings  | 8:54-66     |
| Monday 5 October<br>Emma Clostermans    | 6 October<br>Tishri 23    | Simchat Torah<br>Vezot Hab'rachah | Deuteronomy<br>Genesis<br>Deuteronomy | 33:1-34:12<br>1:1-2:3<br>4, 2-4 | Joshua   | 1:1-8       |
| Friday 9 October<br>Alex Antscherl      | 10 October<br>Tishri 27   | Bereishit                         | Genesis<br>Genesis                    | 1:1-2:3<br>6:5-8                | Isaiah   | 42:5-43:10  |
| Friday 16 October<br>Mira Ross          | 17 October<br>Cheshvan 4  | Noach                             | Genesis<br>Genesis                    | 6:9-8:14<br>11:29-32            | Isaiah   | 54:1-55:5   |
| Friday 23 October<br>Charlotte LeVay    | 24 October<br>Cheshvan 11 | Lech L'cha                        | Genesis<br>Genesis                    | 12:1-13:18<br>17:24-27          | Isaiah   | 40:27-41:16 |
| Friday 30 October<br>Elisabetta Winston | 31 October<br>Cheshvan 18 | Vayeira                           | Genesis<br>Genesis                    | 18:1-33<br>22:20-24             | II Kings | 4:1-37      |

# Community News

## BAR MITZVAH

### **Congratulations and best wishes to:**

Isaac Antscherl, son of Alex and Jeremy Antscherl, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 10 October

Daniel Winston, son of Elisebetta & Laurence Winston, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 31 October

## BIRTHDAYS

### **Congratulations and best wishes to:**

Mrs A Bruh (93) on 10 October  
Mrs E Maier (89) on 18 October  
Mr H Brook (96) on 19 October  
Mr E Ettinger (93) on 31 October  
Mrs G Hirsch (87) on 31 October

## DEATHS

### **We regret to announce the passing of:**

Henry Charles on 17 September  
Henry Stenham on 25 September

## Sunday Morning Adult Discussion Group

### **4 October**

**9.45-11.00** Rabbi Altshuler on Descartes and Pascal: The triumph of Kabbalah over Philosophy.

**11.15-12.30** Professor David Stone, paediatric epidemiologist: Has Israel damaged Palestinian health?

### **11 October**

**9.45-11.00** Rabbi Altshuler on Baruch Spinoza as a Jewish rationalist: The beginning of secular thought and the Converso influence

**11.15-12.30** Naomi Layish on Jewish women as rebels and radicals.

### **18 October**

**9.45-11.00** Rabbi Altshuler on the English and Scottish political thinkers: John Locke, Thomas Reid, George Berkeley.

**11.15-12.30** Stand with Us: Educating and countering misinformation about Israel in Britain. (TBC)

**25 October: Half Term**

## Course in Jewish Liturgy

**Learn to Leyn (chanting) Cantillation of the Torah with Cantor Paul Heller**  
**The Ancient Tradition of Reading Scripture**

Held on alternate Tuesdays, 8 September – 15 December  
From 7pm - 8pm in the Synagogue Library

This class is open to anyone interested in learning the unique trope used in the Synagogue on Shabbat.

A wonderful chance to repeat your Bar/Bat Mitzvah portion



טעמי המקרא

The copy deadline for the next issue of *Our Congregation* is Friday 16 October

## REGULAR SERVICES

Friday evenings at 6.45pm & Saturday mornings at 10.00am

### **Kikar Kids**

Saturday 3 October and 7 November at 11.00am

Under-5s Service in the Crèche

5-9 year-olds Service in the Library

11.30am – Kids Kiddush

Often followed by a Pot Luck Lunch

Contact Frank Joseph on 020 7482 2555 to bring a dish

### **Religion School**

Sunday mornings: 9.30am-12.30pm

**Half Term: Sunday 25 October**

## LOCAL LUNCHEON GROUPS

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

### **The NW3 and Wembley Group**

1.00pm on Wednesday 14 October and 11 November

**Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, NW2 2HY**

Please phone Deborah Jay on 020 7435 8835  
or Anne Goodwin on 020 8452 3997

### **The Edgware Group**

12.30pm on **TUESDAY** 13 October and 17 November

**Amaretto, 12 The Promenade, Hale Lane, HA8 7JZ**

Please phone Inge Strauss on 020 8958 9414

**Please note change of day and dates for Edgware Group**

## BELSIZE BOOK CLUB

Tuesday 6 October at 8.00pm

We will be reading:

**My Brilliant Friend** by **Elena Ferrante**

Call Dorothy White on 020 8445 6388 for information



## KRISTALLNACHT SERVICE

**Friday 6 November**  
**6.45pm**

Remembering the terrible attack on Jewish lives, property and places of worship that foreshadowed the Final Solution

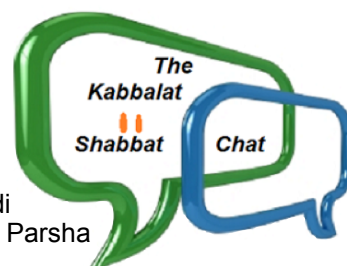


**Belsize Square and Cantor Heller invite you to...**

An Erev Shabbat opportunity to learn and share with the future B'nei Mitzvah

**Let's Learn:**

to make Kiddush  
to sing Lecha Dodi  
the lessons of the Parsha



Next session on **2 October at 5.30pm** in the Succah (weather permitting)  
Refreshments will be provided





## BRAVE NEW PLANS

About 20 people came on the evening of 3 September for a second showing of our designs for redeveloping our hall, following the initial display at the beginning of July.



Viewers came from two streams, synagogue members and neighbouring residents, to study the array of plans and put their questions to those involved in drawing them up. Residents were concerned with the protracted disruption of building works, which could take up to two years, but they welcomed the idea of introducing an open space to Belsize Square.

Members were more concerned with how necessary this was and how it would be funded. It was explained that the aim is to create a state-of-the-art multi-purpose venue, which will be available to our members and also the wider local community for a full range of celebrations, events and activities. At the same time, the plans envisage creating additional seating space in the actual synagogue.

The answer to the all-important financing question is that this will be a self-funding project. The new hall would be turned round 180 degrees to be parallel to the short side of Belsize Square (forgive the geometrical contradiction in terms) rather than the long side as at present. It would also be dug slightly lower.

The area above the hall would then be built up as a small block of flats, whose sale would fund the cost of the operation. The passage between this block and the back of the row of houses along the eastern end of Belsize Square (parallel to Lancaster Drive) would constitute the open space across the square accessible from both ends. Camden Council's policy of refusing to grant on-street parking permits to accompany newly built flats calms residents' concerns about further pressure on parking.

The whole process is very much in its infancy, with more issues to consider, and there will be many consultations to come. It has not yet reached the planning application stage but, on the whole, reaction has been positive, according to our Director of Administration, Lee Taylor.



## SYNAGOGUE HELP LINES

### THE BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HX

Tel: 020 7794 3949

Email: [office@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:office@synagogue.org.uk)

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

9.00am - 5.30pm

Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Lee Taylor - 020 7794 3949

BELSIZE MEMBERS' GROUP

Co-chairs: Marion Nathan - 020 8361 2443

and Dilys Tausz - 020 7435 5996

CHEVRA KADISHA

Chairman: Rabbi Stuart Altshuler

Joint Vice Chairs: Helen Grunberg - 020 8450 8533

Cantor Dr Paul Heller

COMMUNITY CARE CO-ORDINATOR &

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

Contact Eve Hersov on 020 7435 7129

or email [eve@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:eve@synagogue.org.uk)

or call the Synagogue Office for a leaflet

FUNERALS

During synagogue office hours phone 020 7794 3949.

Evenings/weekends phone Calo's (Undertakers)

020 8958 2112

JUDAICA SHOP

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

KIDDUSH

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

LIBRARY

Open Wednesdays 10am - 12 noon

At other times please check first with the office

CHEDER

Enquiries to the Head, Jeanie Horowitz, in the Synagogue

Office, or email [jeanie@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:jeanie@synagogue.org.uk)

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Chairperson: Mandy Brass - 020 8452 6936

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Email Youth Workers Yohel Heller and Michelle Heller -

[youth@synagogue.org.uk](mailto:youth@synagogue.org.uk)

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The Belsize Square Synagogue