



THE GIFTS WITHIN US – WHAT ROSH HASHANAH TELLS US

Shalom Chaverim,

We will be gathering again shortly to usher in a new year, 5778. The tone for our High Holy Days is set for challenging ourselves, *heshbon hanefesh* (account of the soul), and to find uplift in our special time together. The theme of this year's sermons is about knowing who we are and recovering the gifts that are too often hidden right inside us!

This story says it all, *The Apple Tree's Discovery* by Penina Schram. It's a beautiful tale of how we keep searching for more and more and more, only to discover that what we want is within us.

In a great oak forest where the trees grew tall and majestic, was a little apple tree. It was the only apple tree in that forest, so it stood alone. Winter came and snow fell, covering the branches of the little apple tree. The forest was quiet and peaceful.

One night, the little apple tree looked up at the sky and saw a wonderful sight. Between the branches of all the trees, the little apple tree saw the stars in the sky. They seemed to be hanging on the branches of the oak trees.

"Oh God, oh God", whispered the little apple tree, "How lucky those oak trees are to have such beautiful stars hanging on their branches. I want more than anything in the world to have stars on my branches. Then I would feel truly special." God looked down at the little apple tree and said gently, "Have patience, little apple tree."

Time passed. The snow melted and spring came to the land. Tiny white and pink apple blossoms appeared on the branches of the little apple tree. Birds came to rest on its branches. People walked by, admiring its blossom. All summer long the apple tree grew. Its branches formed a canopy overhead.

But night after night the little apple tree looked up at the sky with the millions of stars and cried out, "Oh God, I want stars on my leaves and branches, just like those oak trees." And God looked down at the little apple tree and said, "You already have gifts. Isn't it enough to offer shade to people and fragrant blossoms and branches for birds to rest on and sing to you?"

The apple tree sighed and answered, "Dear God, I don't mean to sound ungrateful! I do appreciate how much pleasure I give to others but I really want stars, not blossoms, on my branches. Then I would be special!" God said, "Be patient, little apple tree."

The seasons changed again. Soon the apple tree was full of beautiful apples. People walking in the forest reached to pick and eat them. And still, at night the apple tree looked at the stars in the oak tree and cried, "Oh God, I want stars on my branches to make me feel truly special."

And God asked, "But apple tree, aren't your wonderful apples enough? Doesn't that satisfy you? Doesn't that give you pleasure and make you feel special?" Silently the apple tree shook its branches from side to side. At that moment, God caused a wind to blow. The oak trees began to sway and the apple tree began to shake. From the top of the apple tree, an apple fell. When it hit the ground it split open.

"Look," commanded God, "Look inside yourself."

What do you see?" The little apple tree looked down and saw that right in the middle of the apple was a star. And the apple tree responded, "A star! I have a star!" And God laughed a gentle laugh and added, "So you do have stars on the branches. They've been there all along, you just did not know it."

This season is a sacred season, a time to reflect on the meaning of our lives. How about rediscovering those gifts we know are embedded in all of us but we sometimes refuse to acknowledge?

We will explore our heritage, history, and contribution to the world as Jews. Why neglect the hidden treasures of Jewish life – our values and beliefs, rites and rituals, links to the State of Israel and to God that, like the little apple tree, we have not yet found? This is the theme of our services.

My warmest greetings to you as we prepare to usher in the new year, Rosh Hashanah 5778. May this be the year of blessing, joy, celebration, health and peace for you, your loved ones, the Jewish people and all humanity.

Rabbi Stuart Altshuler

HIGH HOLYDAY SERVICES

KEVER AVOT (Visiting the Grounds)
Sunday 17 September - 11.00am

We will gather at Edgwarebury Lane Cemetery, HA8 8QP, to remember our family and friends who are buried there.

SELICHOT

Saturday 16 September - 10.00pm
(See notice overleaf for pre-service programme)

ROSH HASHANAH

1st Eve: Wednesday 20 September - 6.45pm
1st Day: Thursday 21 September - 9.30am
2nd Eve: Thursday 21 September - 6.45pm
2nd Day: Friday 22 September - 9.30am

KOL NIDREI

Friday 29 September - 7.00pm
Fast commences at 6.28pm

YOM KIPPUR

Saturday 30 September - 9.30am
Fast ends at 7.30pm

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**WILL YOU HELP US CARE FOR MORE PEOPLE LIKE DAVID
AND YVONNE THIS ROSH HASHANAH?**

Yvonne's 84. She's living with dementia and Parkinson's disease. Her husband David is absolutely determined to care for her in the home they've shared for over 60 years. He can't do it alone.

Every day, our meals on wheels service brings them a hot kosher meal and once a week, Yvonne goes to one of our day centres for people living with dementia.

Jewish Care supports David and Yvonne, but we need your help to keep on giving them all the services they depend on. They're only two of the 10,000 lives we touch every week. More Jewish people are living with dementia or caring for their relatives than ever before.

Please call 020 8922 2600 or visit
jewishcare.org/donate to make a donation.

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HIGH HOLYDAYS GREETINGS & INFORMATION

Members will have received a pack with all the information required for our High Holydays Services. Please contact the Synagogue Office if you have not received this pack or to discuss any aspect of these arrangements.

The Rabbi, Cantor, Emeritus Rabbi and their families, Honorary Officers, Members of the Board and Staff extend their best wishes to all our Members for a healthy and peaceful New Year

"On Rosh Hashanah it is written and on Yom Kippur it is sealed." May it be written and may it be sealed for you and your dear ones to enjoy a New Year bringing fulfilment and happiness, peace and prosperity, all of life's best things.

Have a healthy, happy New Year!

לשנה טובה תיכתבו ותיחתמו

L'Shanah Tovah Tikatevu veTichatemu

Cantor Paul, Antge, Michelle and Yohel Heller



SELICHOT SERVICE & DINNER

Saturday 16 September 2017

Service begins at 10pm

Dinner and discussion - 7.45 for 8pm

Contact the office to book for dinner!

Our traditional musical **SELICHOT SERVICE**

Led by **Cantor Paul Heller**, together with **Ben Wolf** and
The Belsize Square Synagogue Choir

The pre-service programme includes:

- Havdallah
- Fish & Chip Supper followed by dessert
- Discussion led by **Rabbi Altshuler**

Price: £12 per adult (£8 under 16s)

Belsize Square Synagogue, 51 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HX Tel: 020 7794 3949 Email: office@synagogue.org.uk

Synagogue Office Hours

The office will be open for the collection of Prayer Books and non-member tickets 10am - 12 noon, on Sunday 17 September. The office will be closed on the following dates:

Rosh Hashanah: From 12 noon, Wednesday 20 September until 9.00am, Monday 25 September

Kol Nidre: From 12 noon, Friday 29 September until 9.00am, Monday 2 October

Succot: From 12 noon, Wednesday 4 October until 9.00am, Monday 9 October

Shemini Atzeret: From 12 noon, Wednesday 11 October until 9.00am, Monday 16 October



RONI HIRSCHOVITS: CHATAN TORAH

I grew up in Finland where my family were non-observant members of a nominally Orthodox synagogue. My family has been there for five

generations and my father ran a small textile business. I went to a Finnish-speaking school, spoke Swedish at home and learned English through being sent to summer school in Britain.

The Jewish community in Helsinki numbered around 1,200 when I left for Scotland in 1974 to work for a textile company in Dundee. Two years later I moved to its headquarters in London and two years after that I married a second

generation Belsizer, Pat Bock.

Our two sons, Daniel and Adam, are BSS products. Daniel in a sense "married out", as his wife, Georgina Irving, is from Leeds, whereas Adam is more incestuous, having found his wife, Katie Davis, within our own Belsize community – although, in their defence, they were ignorant of their joint backgrounds when they first met. I am particularly pleased to be sharing the Chatan Torah honour with Adam Davis.

Belsize has given Pat and me a lot of pleasure throughout the years, not least by introducing us to a number of people who have become good friends. Having spent my formative years in a United Synagogue type shul, I was at first horrified by both the organ and mixed seating and, more recently, by seeing

women on the bimah. However, whether I've mellowed with age or run out of arguments, I now appreciate that all this is part and parcel of our unique DNA and, whilst occasionally still rolling my eyes at seeing an adult female being called up, I have learnt to accept it.

My only other niggle is the absence of valet parking. Perhaps, with basements being all the rage in North West London, we should start digging under no. 51 and build a massive underground car park which would also be available to the general paying public (except on Purim, Shabbat and the major holidays). It could be a nice little earner.

Finally, Pat and I would like to take this opportunity to wish the congregation a sweet and happy New Year and well over the Fast.

ADAM DAVIS QC: CHATAN BERESHIT

I have been a Barrister since 1986. In 2012, I was appointed a Queen's Counsel, specialising in white collar crime and occasional murder case! I also pursue an active Sports Law practice representing football clubs, players and agents in tribunals. I regularly advise professional athletes, including current PGA European Tour golfers and sports management companies.

I am a registered lawyer with the Football Association. I am also an accredited lecturer on the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (Confiscation and Money Laundering) and continue to advise companies on money laundering matters.

I previously acted as a non-executive director of an AIM-listed company and am currently a non-executive director of Places For People PLC, one of the largest residential property development, management and regeneration companies in the UK. I chair a non-profit organisation, the Pro-Touch Soccer Academy, which provides football coaching in the community for children in Camden, Islington and Westminster.

I have been a member of Belsize Square Synagogue since 1990. My wife and I were married here in 1994 and our three children celebrated their Bar/Bat Mitzvah here. All three attended Cheder and the younger two went to the Belsize Nursery.

My wife, Cheryl, and I are regular attenders at the shul events. Cheryl is on both the Auction of Promises committee and the Chanukah Market committee. I am also now on my second term as a Board member and sit on the Finance Committee.

I am honoured to have been chosen to be Chatan Bereshit this year, if somewhat daunted at having to be a "Bar Mitzvah Boy" all over again!



THE BELSIZE RUNNER

In case you thought we were all a bunch of slowcoaches at Belsize Square, you will be pleased to know that we have some serious runners in our midst, among them Hannah Viner.

Hannah, an English Literature student at King's College, London, has been running for 10 years and is a member of the Highgate Harriers at Parliament Hill. Starting well before her Bat Mitzvah at BSS, she was drawn into this all-consuming activity through playing football with her two older brothers (she also has a younger sister). While at South Hampstead High School, she was asked to represent the school in a Camden Schools Cross Country Competition, coming second. She trains daily, sometimes twice daily, in cross country and distance running.

unaware of these fine distinctions, cross country ranges from 4 to 12km, on soft ground, incorporating varying degrees of muddiness. Distance running on road is generally 5 to 10km (apart from marathons, half and full, in which Hannah does not compete). Distance running on track (more of a sprint) ranges from 1500m to 10,000m (or 10km



Hannah Viner wins the 5000m at the U23 England Athletics Championship in Bedford, on 18 June

to any non-mathematicians among us).

She became the UK under-23 national champion at the end of May, and in July, just before turning 21, clocked up a huge personal best running time of 4 minutes 24 seconds in the 1500m, which ranks her in the top 20 of her age group.

Her next goal is to make the under-23 GB team at the European Cross Country Championship in December. To get there, she will have to finish amongst the top six in the trial race in Liverpool in November. She welcomed the drop in temperature after the June and July heatwave, which improved conditions to become "still warm but not horribly sweaty! And not so much pollen either. Perfect running weather!"

"Running is my passion," she says. We wish her well.

For those, like your Editor,





Helen Grunberg and Sue Arnold discover **EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE WIENER LIBRARY** *(including who is banned from it)*

People turned out in force on 4 June for this very informative and interesting lecture, when we heard the Wiener Library's director, Ben Barkow, accompanied by the Library's chairman Anthony Spiro and trustee Frank Harding, detail the history of this unique institution.

The Library's founder, Alfred Wiener, was born in Potsdam in 1885. After fighting in the First World War, he switched from journalism to head the main Jewish organisation in Germany, the Centralverein. As a Jewish civil servant, he campaigned against the widespread anti-Semitism that blamed Jews for Germany's defeat. He wrote and published pamphlets and protested against public and official apathy.

From 1925 he concentrated on the growing threat of Hitler and his followers, especially after the publication of *Mein Kampf* in 1928. He amassed a large collection of journals, newspapers and photographs portraying the Nazi regime.

In early 1933, when Hitler came to power, he fled to Amsterdam with his wife and three daughters. Later that year, worried Jewish organisations in Britain decided to set up a London office to keep watch on Nazi developments and propaganda. Alfred Wiener, who had travelled to London to meet their representatives, opened the Jewish Central Information Office in Amsterdam.

This was the origin of what became the Wiener Library. Despite losing much of his original documentation in the move from Germany, through his many contacts he stayed well informed on events in Germany and continued collecting pamphlets and similar material.

After the Kristallnacht attack in November 1938 he started to think about bringing his collection to Britain. In 1939 he moved to Manchester Square in London. His wife

and daughters stayed on in Amsterdam, despite his urging them to leave. In 1943 they were sent to Bergen Belsen concentration camp. He managed to get them out in a prisoner exchange in January 1945 but his wife died soon after their arrival in Switzerland.

In 1940 the Anglo-Jewish information collection office merged with his and it became a resource centre for the British Government, which initially funded the library, though it insisted on a change of name. So it became the Wiener Library. It was also used by the BBC and the US government. His collection comprised 17,000 books, periodicals and newspaper articles.

He attended the UN War Crimes Commission and Nuremberg Trials in the mid-1940s. In the 1950s he wrote about the persecution of gypsies and ultimately forged lasting contacts with young Germans, who were not responsible for their parents' crimes. He died in 1964.

Since Alfred Wiener's death

During the 1980s and 1990s the main Library activities were fundraising and building up the collection. Everything was microfiched. Now it includes all genocide, such as the Armenian and other genocides, as well as Holocaust studies, to educate future generations.

The collection has grown fantastically and is now huge. For instance, there is the International Tracing Service which includes 13 million pieces of information collected after the camp liberations as well as material on properties and businesses.

Then there is the vast Red Cross collection from 1950 to 2013, to which there was no access. One could only write to ask for a relative to be looked up. This took years. Now digital copies are available to everyone who wants to trace anyone and the archive is open to scholars through the Library.

Back in 1943 the UN War Crimes Commission was set up. From 1944-48, 8,000 cases were investigated involving 35,000 suspects though only 2,000 were brought to trial. Cases included rape and torture, which were classified as war crimes. More collections will be imported and Holocaust Education will play an even more important role, since Holocaust education in schools is mostly poor and patchy.

One of the Library's unique features is that collections were amassed at the time and not 50-60 years later. We were lucky enough to view a collection of witness testimonies obtained immediately after Kristallnacht, which Ben brought along for the occasion.

The Wiener Library is situated in Russell Square, where it moved from nearby Devonshire Street, in 2011. It is funded by the Wiener Trust, the Association of Jewish Refugees and the German Government, as well as donations from supporters. British Government funding ended long ago.

It has partnerships with the US Holocaust Museum, Yad Vashem and Berlin Museum. The Royal Holloway University offers a master's degree in Holocaust studies.

Only one person is banned from the Library – David Irving.



Posters from the Wiener Library's collection

EXAM RESULTS

Mazel Tov to all of you who have taken GCSE, AS, A-levels and University Finals this summer. News of superb results has been reaching us daily. We are always delighted to hear good news, so please let us know how you've done. Whether you are still at school, gapping, trekking, starting a career, or going off to University, we wish you good luck for a sparkling future and please keep in touch!

TREASURER'S REPORT by Jimmy Strauss

Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope you will indulge me for a moment before I get to the gist of my speech. I cannot help thinking back for more AGMs than I care to admit and looking for two elderly ladies sitting next to each other in the front row. One had white hair and the other red. One was totally blind and the other severely hard of hearing. Neither was financially competent but both had a deep love of this community and were concerned about its well being.

The first was Steffi Cohn who passed away in January this year. The second, as most of you will have guessed, was my dear Mother who passed away in May. It is unusual for us to single people out in this synagogue but both of them were stalwarts of this community and I, for one, miss their presence and will find it strange not to offer them tea or coffee at the end of the evening.

Anyway, enough sentiment and on to more important matters. Our financial position remains healthy and even improved by £142,000 over the course of 2016. We were helped by a significant legacy of £324,000 which increased our bank balance to over £1.3m.

Our liquidity is constantly reviewed by the Finance Committee and it has been felt that it would be inappropriate to invest surplus funds in the equity market as one needs to be able to ride out the peaks and troughs of the market over a minimum time span of five years. But we have taken advantage of better rates available on fixed deposits and locked away £500,000.

As mentioned last year, we have a Reserves Policy that requires us to keep sufficient sums to finance annual working capital requirements and to enable the

Synagogue to meet all its charitable objectives.

But there is a continuing area of concern. We still have an annual operating deficit of £49,000. To spell it out, our annual expenditure is more than our annual income. If you were to strip out the legacy, then our cash balance would be just over the million pound mark. That may sound healthy but at the current rate of excess expenditure, we would be down to a zero balance in 20 years even without emergency expenditure!

Lastly, a quick look into why we had an operating deficit of £49,000 as against last year's surplus of £10,000. The mathematicians among you will have worked out that the difference is, in fact, £59,000. But you may recall that the Night of Promises raised £60,000 net in 2015, which would explain it.

However, I should point out that membership numbers are holding up well, thus subscription income was slightly up. We also achieved a higher rental income from letting the hall to the nearby Central School of Drama during refurbishment of their own facilities. We had another successful Chanukah Market that not only attracted many members but also raised around £10,000. Our wage bill increased 1.5%, in line with inflation.

It would be remiss of me to end without a few thank you's. To our patrons, who generously and quietly provide financial support over and above their subscriptions. Without your assistance the deficit would be nearer £80,000. To the Association of Jewish Refugees for their continued funding of the magnificent work done by Eve Hersov, our Community Care Co-ordinator. I can testify from first-hand experience how helpful it is to have someone who can support our elderly members, especially when they have little or no family. Lastly to my co-Treasurer, Adam Hurst, and all my Finance Committee but especially Clive Goldstein, as well as the team from the office, so ably directed by Lee Taylor.

A full set of accounts is available from the Synagogue Office on request. See foot of page for tribute to Jimmy Strauss' mother.

Thanks for Funding Israel Experience

From Eve Phillips (19) who returned from a stay in Israel, part-funded by a Frieda Graumann Travelling Scholarship. Eve is about to study Politics and History at Manchester University.

Thank you so much for the generous amount of money you have given me which contributed to my eight-month Israel gap year programme this year.

I had a fantastic time on Shnat Netzer (a year's programme run by the Zionist Progressive youth movement) and my long period of time there was spent working in the date fields on Kibbutz Lotan in the Negev, teaching English in Jewish and Arab schools in the north of Israel and attending classes at the Machon (Institute) in Jerusalem.

I gained so much from this experience. For example, on an educational level, my Hebrew improved massively and I am now far more informed about the Arab-Israeli conflict and the issues facing Israeli society today. Apart from the knowledge I gained, I developed a love for Israel, made great friends from across the globe and got to know the country extremely well, as I even found a local football team in Jerusalem.

I am sure that the skills and knowledge I gained from this experience will be beneficial to the Belsize Square community, as I am sure that I will be back teaching at Cheder when I am not at university. I think it is great to encourage the young people of our community to go to Israel on gap years as it has become rare, and therefore a unique and valuable experience, to receive a Zionist and, in my case, left-wing education in such a volatile political situation and region.

The money that you have given me will also contribute to the amount I raised in March by running the Jerusalem half marathon for the Western Galilee Hospital in Nahariya, which treats wounded Syrian victims.

The Frieda Graumann Travelling Scholarship, set up to help young people further their Jewish experience through time spent abroad, gives one or two grants a year of up to £1,000. For details on how to apply for a grant, write to the Scholarships' Trustees c/o the Synagogue Office.



Remembering Irene Strauss (1927-2017)

by Patricia Tausz

A truly wonderful mother and grandmother you have lost,
No money will ever repay the cost.
She was a treasure to you all,
Many loving and fond memories you will often recall.

We too have lost a friend
Who was always willing to lend
A hand or even an ear,
Especially when it was necessary to shed a tear.

To our congregation she gave everything,
In our ears her voice now does ring:
To us all may she be for a blessing
As now she resides under the Almighty's wing.





ANTI-SEMITISM PEAKS ON CAMPUS

As the new academic year begins, two speakers, invited by our Israel Committee, cast light on disgraceful and disturbing developments in student activities but bring hope of a turnaround in attitudes. Report by Susan Storrington.

In the light of last year's dramatic anti-Semitic incidents on campus, the Israel Committee brought two excellent speakers to Belsize Square on 29 June, chaired by Rebecca Trenner. They also answered numerous questions.

Baroness (Janet) Royall, who worked for Labour leader Neil Kinnock in the 1980s and at the European Parliament and Commission in the 1990s, was made a peer in 2004. She stepped down from serving as Leader and Shadow Leader of the House of Lords in 2015 and has just become the new principal of Somerville College, Oxford.

At the other end of the age scale was Liron Velleman, who last year became campaigns officer of the Union of Jewish Students (UJS) while gaining his degree in politics at Leeds University. A sports lover and energetic member of the Jewish Labour Movement (formerly Poale Zion), he is passionate in defence of Jewish student life.

Baroness Royall started by expressing her deep shame at the virus of anti-Semitism which has infected 21st century multicultural Britain so badly that Jewish schools, synagogues and public buildings now require security guards. She came over as a woman of honesty, intelligence and integrity, acting in good faith while, at the same time, trying to put the best face on the Chakrabarti report and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn.

When a member of the audience later told her that in 2014 Corbyn attended a wreath-laying ceremony in Tunisia for a killer of Israel's athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics, she held her head in her hands in horror and despair. She appeared to have been unaware.

She outlined her role in the storm of anti-Semitism which exploded in February 2016, when Alex Chalmers resigned as co-Chair of Oxford University Labour Club (OULC), after a string of anti-Semitic incidents. The General Secretary of the Labour Party asked her to conduct an investigation.

She reported on clear incidents of anti-Semitism within the OULC and made 11 recommendations. Her report was adopted by Labour's National Executive Committee but not published, though the *Jewish Chronicle* publish it on 3 August 2016. Several people were reported to the Labour Party's disciplinary panel. Just as she began her investigation,

Labour MP Naz (Naseem) Shah (then a member of the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee conducting an inquiry into the rise of anti-Semitism) wrote on Facebook that Israel's population should be "transported" out of the Middle East to America: "Problem solved and save you bank charges for the £3bn you transfer yearly" – and Ken Livingstone said that Hitler was a Zionist.

Against her advice, Jeremy Corbyn opened a separate inquiry under Shami Chakrabarti, who asked Baroness Royall to be her co-Chair. While realising she was being used to give the report legitimacy, she said, better procedures are now in place to deal with issues.

The situation is now much improved in the OULC, she reported, and her recommendations have been adopted both there and around the country. In conjunction with the Jewish Labour Movement she has held training sessions for bodies, such as the National Union of Students (NUS), on "anti-Semitism and understanding Jewish students".

Her view is that the OULC is not anti-Semitic at its core and anti-Semitic incidents are not as rife as the press would have us believe. But in any case, she said, there are now better procedures to deal with the issues.

Liron then addressed us on the current situation on campuses and what the Union of Jewish Students is doing. He started with the "pretty sorry picture" of the NUS in April 2016, when Malia Bouattia became president. She was blind to anti-Semitism while the student movement was blind to her unsuitability for office.

She was widely condemned for complaining that her alma mater, Birmingham University, is a "Zionist outpost in higher education", oblivious to the fact that her home town of Birmingham – her parents are Algerian – has the second highest Muslim population in Britain, after London.

One of her first initiatives was to change the leadership of the NUS Anti-Racism Anti-Fascism (ARAF) committee, which had always been led by both a Black and Jewish student. She removed the right of Jewish students to lead that committee. The effect was to give every student who felt oppressed a space in the NUS –

except for Jewish students.

In reaction, three universities voted to leave the NUS and she was voted out of office after just one year. Her successor, Shakira Martin, apologised to Jewish students, saying that she saw now they were being shut out of the student union.

The NUS now has its first Jewish Vice-President (for Welfare), Izzy Lenga. Izzy had earlier described the Union as "toxic for Jewish students". Liron told us that there are now more moderates on its National Executive than there have been for a very long time.

He recalled last year's violent attacks on London University student meetings addressed by Israeli speakers: at King's College in January 2016 when former military and security boss turned peace activist Ami Ayalon was invited to speak, and University College London (UCL) the following October with speaker Hen Mazzig, also a former soldier turned humanitarian.

Police had to be called to protect the student audience. Liron had been at the UCL talk and seen "the hate in people's eyes against a young gay Israeli soldier. These students couldn't engage in debate. Instead, they yelled 'Shame!' at those present, Jewish and non-Jewish", he said. He added that universities and student unions now recognise the harm to their reputation from these incidents.

It is not just far-Left anti-Semitism on campus. Far-Right anti-Semitism is also on the rise. "The Left don't believe they're anti-Semitic but the Right are open about it," he said. Swastikas and Holocaust denial literature appear casually on campus but there are efforts to tackle it.

Educating people about this is primary. Up to now, Jewish students have been ignored, Liron told us. Now, Jewish Labour students and Jewish Labour Movement, run training sessions on anti-Semitism and understanding Jewish students. In February and March this year, 350 students took part. Student Jewish Societies have also conducted sessions, including at the London School of Economics.

"We want Jewish students to feel proud." In fact, he said, Jewish students are now having a wonderful time on campus with a record number of over 250 pro-Israel events last year.



MEETING ISRAEL'S DEEP THINKERS:

As Dalia Lichfield commented: "Our trip to Jerusalem from 6-13 June – our Rabbi with a dozen Belsize Square Synagogue members – was extraordinary! The programme included meetings with leading Israeli figures in the political, religious and military scene, as well as participation in a different style of Reform synagogue, all organised through Rabbi Stuart's contacts and executed through Claire Walford's excellent administration. I thought at first that having been a Jerusalem resident for many years, I would not learn many new things – but by God, I did!"

Seven days of intensive talks on what is going on in Israel now, listening to some of the biggest names in the Jewish world. This was quite an experience and, for me as for the rest of our 13-strong party, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Based in central Jerusalem, we were near all our venues and only had to cross the road outside the Kings' Hotel to the Conservative Judaism centre (Fuchsberg Center) to plunge into the complications which spell out life in Israel.

Wednesday

We started on 7 June with a welcome dinner in a nearby restaurant, hosting our guest speaker, the outspoken and often controversial journalist, **Melanie Phillips**. Melanie's strong right-wing views on social and political issues are well known through her columns in the *Daily Mail*, *Times*, *Jewish Chronicle* and *Jerusalem Post*.

But what surprised us was how late she came to focus on Israel, not till she was practically 50 and her daughter took a "gap year" in Israel in 2000 – just two months before the second intifada. Until then, she told us, she had no interest in Israel and had never wanted to go there.

Now she divides her time between Israel and Britain and has completely rejected the standard Western view that a two-state solution is the answer to this century-old Middle Eastern conflict. As she explained in her talk on *Changing The Narrative Of The Arab-Israel Conflict From A Dispute Over Land To A Dispute Over Existence*, it is the Arabs who have always rejected it. She also no longer considers them indigenous since so many arrived as immigrant workers. They had no national sentiment but

considered themselves pan-Arabs or South Syrians. In fact, the term Palestinian was rejected with scorn by Arabs and reserved for Jews. Only later, when the Jewish Zionist vision took root, did the Arabs appropriate the term in opposition to Zionism.

She also demolished the myth that Israel utilised the Holocaust to bring in white Ashkenazi Jews, since half the country's Jews originate from the Arab world and a fifth of the population is Arab. With such a large ratio from the developing world, Israel is simply not a white European colonising country. But with their historical connection to *Eretz Yisrael* and the blessing of the victors of the First World War, Jews have every legal and moral right to be there.

"We must state the problem accurately," she said. "This is not a fight over land but an attempt by one group with no claim to the land to exterminate another group."

Thursday

Strong stuff but echoed, in more nuanced terms, by succeeding speakers. However, the next day our first two speakers at the Fuchsberg Center focussed mainly on religion. **Rabbi Joel Roth**, professor of Talmud & Rabbinics, addressed us on *The Masorti Approach to Halachah*, Jewish law and practice.

His approach was gentle but clear. In essence, the movement (known as Conservative in North America and Masorti everywhere else, including Israel), which originated in 19th-century Central Europe, sees itself as successor to the over 2,000-year-old rabbinic tradition.

While staying within the confines of Jewish law, it believes in difference of opinion among the sages, the experts in Jewish law, as with Hillel and Shammai. Halachic pluralism allows for the evolution of Jewish law as it meets modern issues, such as women's participation and surrogacy. The movement differs from Reconstructionism and Reform, which reject halachah, at one end of the scale, and Orthodoxy, which freezes Jewish practice in the time frame of Rabbi Joseph Caro's *Shulchan Aruch* (completed in 1563) at the other end.

But despite what he considered the movement's outstanding virtues and advantages, Rabbi Roth lamented its

failure to appeal to a younger generation.

He was followed by **Rabbi Andrew Sachs** who, under the title of *Women, Pluralism And The Wall*, spelled out the complications of Jewish recognition in Israel, particularly in the crucial issues of marriage and burial. It also affects adoption and conversion, personal issues which cause deep upset when people are rejected as Jews by the religious bureaucracy.

Rabbi Sachs, who is the director of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of Israel and Religious Affairs Bureau and also the only Masorti mohel practising in Israel, acknowledged the legacy of persecution, which made Jews wary of proselytising. This fear underlies present-day attitudes, as does the worry that if conversion is easy, it will not be valued.

The late Rabbi Shlomo Goren, Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of Israel from 1973-83, was known for his controversial conversions of Soviet "refusniks" at refugee transit camps near Vienna airport in the 1970s and 80s. Many of those who left the Soviet Union as persecuted Jews were not Jewish in the eyes of the Orthodox and would have problems living in Israel. The question, according to Rabbi Sachs, was: were these "Orthodox conversions" or "conversions by an (indisputably) Orthodox rabbi"? One solution was to make the conversion valid only in Israel. But how do you stop people travelling?

It all goes back to the early years of the State of Israel, 1948-51, when Ben Gurion parcelled out powers and responsibilities. He gave "personal issues" and army exemption to the tiny Orthodox remnant. Exemption then affected 300 young men. Today they number 70-80,000 and the religious parties are vital to the ruling coalition's grip on power. Their schools have burgeoned from their original tiny number in the state education system.

There has also been a move to the right since Goren's conversions. So the 10% of the population who are Masorti or Reform cannot marry outside the religious bureaucracy, and civil marriage does not exist in Israel. Both parties must be of the same religion. In practice, a "problematic" couple goes to Cyprus for a civil wedding, which is then





Part 1 of Ruth Rothenberg's report on our synagogue visit to Israel for an exclusive lecture tour in Jerusalem and a Haifa experience.

accepted as legal in Israel and allows the couple to celebrate as they want in Israel. In this way, 700 couples a year stand under a Masorti chuppah.

On burial, Israel now has "alternative cemeteries" for non-Orthodox or secular burial and for those who are not accepted as Jews by the Orthodox. Burial can be in a coffin rather than a shroud [the standard practice in Israel though with exceptions for soldiers killed in action and victims of terrorist attacks]. The main cemetery is in Beer Sheva, authorised by the state in 1986.

Other issues touched upon were the attempt, still ongoing, to create a "mixed" area at the Kotel where men and women are not segregated, and school bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies for disabled and special needs children. [Masorti has been doing this for 25 years but Orthodox parents who are now keen on it object to Masorti venues.]

Rabbi Sachs spoke of the "need to build an Israel which inspires others through our values. Most of the changes come from the diaspora," he commented..

After a break for lunch nearby, it was back to the Fuchsberg Center to hear *Ethics In The Field* from a top military commander, Brigadier General **Benzion Gruber**. The son of Orthodox Holocaust survivors, he served the extended five-year military service-cum-yeshivah programme known as *hesder*. He gained a micro-computer engineering degree at an Orthodox Jerusalem technical college, Lev Machon, and a PhD in behavioural science from London University, as well as taking a business course at Harvard, then spent the 1990s in Israel's hi-tech, financial and property development fields.

Returning to the Israel Defence Forces, he fought in the 2006 Lebanon War and the 2009 and 2017 Gaza operations. As vice-commander of Armoured Division 252, he controlled 20,000 men. But his mission in life is to keep Israeli soldiers humane and able to cope with life after military experience. He is saddened at the fate of American soldiers returning from Iraq, where there have been over 400 suicides, quite apart from drug and alcohol abuse.

So he set up a charitable organisation called *Chesed* (equivalent to ethics) *In The Field*. It works in two directions, one by keeping young soldiers in touch with

younger people. They take kids on flights over Masada and join Chanukah parties in hospitals. The other way is to lay down a procedure for making rational decisions under pressure in action. A soldier has two or three seconds to make a decision, while tired and carrying a load of over 60lbs – his own load weighed three times that amount. "You lose your brains as you put your helmet on," the brigadier told us.

In a composite video, created from real incidents to illustrate his points, a suicide bomber drives up to an Israeli school bus near Sderot, less than a mile from the Gaza border. Shooting has already been heard somewhere else, as a ploy to distract the bus driver's attention. As the bus approaches a pill box, a soldier in the guard post is alerted to the car alongside the bus. He must address three vital questions before attacking the suspect car.

First, he can use force only to accomplish the mission, which can include neutralising the enemy. Second, he must attack only the enemy, that is, someone with a weapon. If you have a gun, you have a responsibility. If the unknown car driver has no gun, you must not shoot. Third is the issue of collateral damage. Is it proportional to the immediate threat? The soldier is not the judge.

The brigadier (known as Benzi) then explained how these principles applied to actions against Gaza, which must be the ultimate in asymmetrical attitudes. United Nations ambulances, for instance, are "kidnapped" and used for everything but the sick. They become terrorist carriers.

Another grainy and genuine video showed a man casually snatching a child from a group of youngsters playing in the street and holding the boy in front of him (a wall protected him behind) as he walked towards a group of men. When he reached them, he let go his grip and the boy ran off.

On the vexed question of destroying buildings, he said this was not a punishment for residents. A building is destroyed if it acts as centre of operations, is used as a strategic point for shooting, or serves as cover for the entrance to a large tunnel.

When a building is targeted for destruction, families are warned to leave. Their response is to invite friends over for a barbecue, preferably on the roof. They know the Israelis will not kill

them (unlike in Syria). Instead, they drop a few rockets onto a corner of the roof. The people realise it is serious and start to move inside, downstairs and finally come outside. The house is then destroyed. Interestingly, Benzi distinguished between Hamas, the ruling party in Gaza, and Hezbollah, based in Lebanon. Hezbollah is not happy about killing children and civilians. Hamas has no qualms.

As an aside, we were told that the population of Gaza is 2 million Muslims, the same number as in Britain now. Gaza is reckoned to have 30-40,000 terrorists, Britain 21-23,000 jihadists. We were also warned that if the Muslim community does not want to become part of general society, we will be in trouble, with the vast difference in attitudes and culture.

Ending on a downbeat note, he recalled asking a 17-year old boy in East Jerusalem why he was throwing Molotov cocktails at a car when he had just come out of prison after serving four years and two months. The boy said he needed five years to get a guaranteed regular payment from the Palestinian Authority. And in poor villages, men decide to sacrifice a child for a guaranteed family income.

Our last lecture on *The Israel-Palestine Conflict* came from Palestinian journalist, **Bassam Eid**. Now a commentator in the *Jerusalem Post* and on Israeli TV, he was born in East Jerusalem in 1958 and grew up in a refugee camp where he lived for 33 years.

(Continued on page 11)

Bracha Presents

THE VENUS PROJECT

by David Scheinmann

An exhibition of photography and video highlighting hereditary cancer

Curated by Tamar Arnon and Eli Zagury

Rosenfeld Porcini Gallery
37 Rathbone Street, W1T 1NZ

22-26 September, 10am-6pm
Sat 11am-6pm) Entry free

Sponsored by the Zamek family in loving memory of Nicola Zamek.

For more info and online donations, visit: www.bracha.org.il

Dear Fellow Members

First from all, here I would like to address our newer members who might be unfamiliar with my kolumn. You will properly be surprised to learn that Englisch is not my native country of burse. Luckily I am able to pick up quiet quickly the nuisances of a language as you can see from the contents of my peace below. If you have any compliments to make regarding my writings, please send them forward to the synagogue office and I will try to dispose of them as quickly as possible.

Now to all of you, I hope that you have hat a good sommer und are sufficiently reinfridgerated to phase what the rest of the year has to throw on you. I am fully aware that I have recently been lagging in one compartment und that is in the arena of komplaint. I just haven't komplained enough. This is something I will certainly put rite in the fourth coming months.

I am peculiarly pleased to relay that Mrs Klopstick has returned safely from camel racing in the Sarah Dessert. She said that they were much faster then she expected, so she had some difficulty keeping up with them most of the time. I personally took things much more easier, relaxing here in the commune gardens und having a shat with other inmates. I also spent much time looking into taking a cause in the Air University. I wood very much like to try to expend my linguistic talons.

One language I can't even begin to think about speaking at all is Courieran unlike this Young Kim Jung. He seems to get very highly excited und show unnatural passion when rockets are let off. It is hart to believe that someone who looks like a big baby with ridiculous hair can be so dangerous to the



world. Und speaking of dangerous und hair brings me to the Wide House. What is Donald Tramp doing deposing his staff one after the other? I personally don't sink he is right in the head. His only saving graze is his son in law, Yared Kutner. I hope he can put some good yiddisher cents into the president before he makes another fool out of himself with his silly twits.

There was big excitement here in Abbernein Mansions a few weeks ago when we celebrated the 75th wedding anniversary from our Professor von Arschitecture Brodt und Frau Dr Brodt. It is really admiral und wundervoll to see how they have stuck through sick und sin together. In a few months' time Mrs K und I will also have been in wetlog for 75 years. In all this time we have hat hardly a single cross wart – mostly they were cross silences, aber even then done with the deepest affliction. We wooden have it any other way.

We are soon now entering the days of Owe und Mrs Klopstick is already climbing onto her hobby house. Since she was left a ramps horn as part of her cousin Walter Katoffelhosen's will, she has been etching to blow the Shaufeur in public. She says that women are just as good blowers as men as she has shown with her many years of trombone concerts for the elderly. Now she would like to amulate her hero horn blower, Louise Armstrong.

I und my wive wish you all well over the New Year und a happy und healthy fast.

With the best of intentions

Fritz Klopstick

Shabbat Candle Lighting



Friday 1 September:	Jackie Rabstein
Friday 8 September:	Petra Morris
Friday 15 September:	Louise Keller
Friday 22 September:	Annette Bielesch
Wednesday 4 October:	Valerie Sussmann
Thursday 5 October:	Ashley Sternberg
Friday 6 October:	Rita Dos Santos
Wednesday 11 October:	Pat Hirschovits
Thursday 12 October:	Cheryl Davis
Friday 13 October:	Suzanne Goldstein
Friday 20 October:	Jacqueline Goddard
Friday 27 October:	Karen Sanders

COMMUNITY BABYSITTING REGISTER

Do you struggle to find a babysitter? Well BSS is here to help! We have created a list of 15-23 year-old members interested in babysitting for other members of the community. The list is kept by the synagogue office and only be given to members who request it. The only information that will be passed on are name, phone numbers and postcodes, so the babysitter can be contacted directly.

Rates and references are negotiated directly and the synagogue will not officially endorse or recommend any individual. The synagogue is only introducing people and is not responsible for any arrangements that are made. All babysitters are members of Belsize Square Synagogue or grandchildren/children of members.

If you are aged 15-23 and would like to add your name to the register, please email office@synagogue.org.uk including your contact details, postcode and details of your synagogue connection. If you are under 18 years old, please confirm that your parent or guardian is happy with your joining the list.

SAVE THESE DATES

The BMG Supper Quiz

Sunday 22 October 2017 at 7.00pm

Please join us with your family and friends

The Belsize Members' Group

Committed to your pleasure and entertainment, whilst raising essential funds for our Synagogue

SHABBAT UK: 27-28 OCTOBER

Following the success of last year's programme, Belsize Square is once again taking part in Shabbat UK. Our plans include:

Thursday 26 October

Challah Bake at the synagogue

Friday 27 October

Sharing your Friday night dinner with members of the community

If you are interested in hosting Shabbat dinner at your home, for fellow members of the community, or would like to be invited to a member who lives in your area, please contact the Synagogue Office. Full details of our Shabbat UK programme will be sent out later.

ANNUAL CHANUKAH MARKET

Saturday 2 December 5.00-8.00pm

Sunday 3 December 9.30am-4.00pm

(1st night Chanukah: Tuesday 12 December)





Community News

NEW MEMBERS

We extend a cordial welcome to:

Sam Friedman
Louisa Green
Jessica Lee-Rutter
Jeffrey Rothner
Stephanie Rothner
Suzanne & David Shalson
David Wiener & Jennifer Van Der Werf
Jonathan Lawrence & Khristina Belkina with their daughter Sevastiyana
Diana Rowland-Smith with her son Joshua

BIRTHS

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Susie & Joby Blume on the birth of their son Ezekiel
Sara & Hillary Katz on the birth of their daughter Laila

BAR MITZVAH

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Nathan, son of Jackie Rabstein & Nigel Levy, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 2 September
Rafi, son of Petra & James Morris, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 9 September
Jacob, son of Karen & Sam Sanders, who celebrates his Bar Mitzvah on 28 October

ENGAGEMENTS

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Adam Nathan & Roseanna Lewis
Andrew Laderman & Martina Tafreshi
Juliette Alexander & Rob Cruickshank
Ben Wolf & Bekka Friedmann

Deborah and Neil are thrilled to announce the engagement of their daughter, Harriet Nerva, to Zach Esdaile, son of Caroline and Raymond. Mazel Tov to grandparents Ruby and Lawrie Nerva and Jean Levison-Cohen. Thinking of the grandparents who are not with us, and of Zach's brother Jonathan.

BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations and best wishes to:

Mrs L Weinreb (96) on 3 August
Mr J Goldberger (90) on 4 August
Mr J Epstein (87) on 5 August
Cantor M Stone (86) on 8 August
Mr B Rebuck (89) on 10 August
Mrs S Allan (84) on 10 August
Mr S Kornhauser (84) on 30 August
Mr W Frank, (89) on 6 September
Mrs C Krasner, (87) on 25 September

DEATHS

We regret to announce the passing of:

David Tauber on 10 July
Marion Smith on 18 July
Marlene Altmann on 13 August

The copy deadline for the next issue of *Our Congregation* is Friday 13 October

REGULAR SERVICES

Friday evenings at 6.45pm
Saturday mornings at 10.00am

Kikar Kids

Saturdays 2 September, 7 October & 4 November at 11am

Under-5s Service in the Crèche (Crèche opens 10am)
Junior Service for 5-9 year-olds 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

Term starts: 3 September

Half Term: 22 & 29 October

CANTOR HELLER'S KABBALAT SHABBAT CHAT

An invitation and opportunity for Bar Mitzvah class pupils to make Kiddush, sing Lecha Dodi and learn the lessons of the Parsha.



On the second Friday of the month
5.30pm in the Library

Next session: 13 October

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT DISCUSSION

3 September

10.00-12.00 Rabbi Altshuler on Setting the Agenda for the year - Review of early Zionist thinkers: Krochmal, Graetz, Alkalai, Kaluscher and Hess
12.00-12.30 Open Forum - Events of the Summer

10 September

No Session (Organisers away)

17 September

11.00-12.00 Kever Avot service at Edgwarebury Cemetery

24 September

10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler - Reviewing messages of Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur
11.15-12.30 TBA

1 October

No Session - post Yom Kippur

8 October

Outing to The Tabernacle, 34-35 Powis Square, W11 2AY
10.00 Meet at The Tabernacle
10.15-11.30 Douglas Murray and Bernard Henri-Levi in Conversation: The Strange Death of Europe. Tickets must be booked in advance. Contact Claire Walford
11.30 Coffee and post-session discussion.

15 October

10.00-11.15 Rabbi Altshuler on Smolenskin and Lilienblum: From Enlightenment to Nationalism & the Crisis of Jewish Enlightenment in Russia
11.15-12.30 TBC: Ethan Schwarz on: How young Budapest Jews are resisting the rise of hate

22 October

No Session - Half Term

29 October

No Session - Half Term

LOCAL LUNCHEON GROUPS

The NW3 Group

Giacomo, 428 Finchley Road, London, NW2 2HY
1.00pm on Wednesday 27 September
Please phone Judy Field on 020 8455 0614

The Edgware Group

EDRS, 118 Stonegrove, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8AB
12.15pm on Tuesday 10 October & 14 November
Please phone Eve Hersov on 020 7435 7129



Our speaker, Melanie Phillips, with Rabbi Stuart Altshuler



*Resting outside the city wall
From left, standing: Rabbi Stuart Altshuler, David Rothenberg
Seated: Lilian Levy, Claire Walford, Ruth Rothenberg, Anthony Stadlen*



Claire Walford (next to Orthodox customer) inspects fruit in the market

(Continued from page 8)

Gripped by this long-running conflict, he became a human rights activist, based in Bethlehem for seven and a half years.

When the Palestinian Authority was set up a year after the 1993 Oslo Accords, he created the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group to check on the Palestinian Authority. His criticisms of its first president, Yasser Arafat, led to his arrest in 1996. But he was freed after 25 hours in jail, thanks largely to US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher. Since 2002 he has lived in Jericho. A sharp and perceptive analyst, he wants each side to take responsibility for its role. But the Arab side has several players at each other's throats.

Israel and Gaza are both keen on reconstruction but for Israel this means housing and civilian centres while for Hamas, which rules Gaza, it means tunnels and military installations. Last year Israel cut down to 20 the opening days for the Rafah crossing. There were 20,000 crossings as opposed to nearly 500,000 in 2011. Israel supplies Gaza's necessities and utilities, for which it gets only criticism, and Egypt offers no help.

In the West Bank, President Abbas represents only his family (wife and two sons). "The people have lost trust in their leaders. They need jobs and a health system. They seek dignity, not identity." Although Israel and the Palestinian areas are the safest place in the region, "people are afraid to speak out."

According to Mr Eid, the whole world is complicit in keeping the conflict going, to the detriment of Palestinians but benefit of their leaders. A survey of refugee camps showed that 70% would accept

compensation. But if the camps closed down, 30,000 UN employees would be out of a job, so the UN has no interest in solving the problem.

The media highlight personalities like Marwan Barghout, a prominent terrorist organiser imprisoned in Israel since 2002 and a potential player in the PA succession. The PA leadership gets money and power by escalating the conflict. Each new USA administration thinks it can solve the problem. "Don't believe it," Mr Eid said. "No third party can, only good will can solve it." Terror itself will not be ended by the end of conflict but by stopping the flow of funds. But money can also play a positive role through increasing the economy.

Questions followed this stimulating talk thick and fast, leading to further revelations. On Israeli businesses set up in the West Bank (ie. Sodastream) Mr Eid opposed the boycotters, who set the hurt done to Israel above that suffered by Palestinians. Sodastream's profits went up threefold after relocating to the Negev. Mr Eid visited 120 American universities, braving leaflets and demonstrations, to explain that his cause is Palestinian lives, not the Palestinian cause.

Having earlier dismissed Trump's declaration that, as a businessman, he could make a deal, he noted that the American president was more concerned for the Palestinian economy than is the PA. The average income of the West Bank is now five times that of its neighbour, Jordan. "We send money to our uncles in Jordan," Mr Eid confided. "They used to send it to us." In the 1970s and 80s, Jordanians came to work in Israel. Today, it is hard to get visas.

Jordan's population has gone up from 7

to 9 million, due to the influx of refugees. With 4 million Iraqis and Syrians, plus half a million Egyptian workers, Palestinians are now a minority. The country is unstable and only kept going by the USA and Europe, with King Abdullah as fundraiser. "When Israeli-Arabs complain and talk about 'Apartheid', I say they should move to Syria," is Mr Eid's no-nonsense response.

Last year the highly respected PA finance minister, Salam Fayyad, was dismissed by President Abbas, who thought him a rival for the presidency after he produced plans to unify the politics of the West Bank and Gaza. Neither state wants a rapprochement. Each uses the other's ruling party (Fatah and Hamas) to scare its own voters and put off elections. But after the ageing and declining Mahmoud Abbas goes, there will be a huge succession struggle.

An outraged Peter Leon exclaimed: "But that's not democracy!" To which Bassam Eid replied: "Where is democracy? In the pocket of rulers. Arab and Muslim leaders are not interested in peace with Israel. They corrupt their own people under the umbrella of liberating Palestine." This is not a problem of Islam, but of Muslims.

We ended an exhausting but exhilarating day with a social visit, much appreciated, to the top floor flat of a retired American, Dov Peretz Elkins, Rabbi Emeritus of the Jewish Centre Princeton, New Jersey, a Conservative synagogue. Surrounded by books, including his own studies of Chasidism, and tasty refreshments supplied by his wife, we enjoyed chatting about their new life in retirement and admiring the view from their windows.

And the rest, not quite as intense, will follow in our next issue.





SCHUBERT LIEDER CONCERTS

Sue Leon reports: St. John's Wood Church was the location for a vocal and piano recital at the beginning of July. The 19th century building (1815) with its cool white interior, was perfect for the enjoyment of a charming programme on a bright sunny day. The performers were our Cantor Paul Heller (baritone), Simone Sand-Victor (soprano) and Michael Cayton (piano).

Cantor Heller began with a variety of Schubert Lieder. The mood changing from soothing, wooing to teasing. Simone Sand-Victor delivered two arias by Charpentier and Verdi with clarity, force and charm. Michael Clayton, not often heard solo, played Schumann's Romance no.2, a joy. The trio ended with Schumann's setting of *Er und Sie (He and She)*.

A delightful musical treat. *Encore*, please!



Cantor Heller repeated his recital of Schubert Lieder, together with Ravel's Kaddish, at Fundación Beit Avot, the Jewish old age home in Bogotá, when he went to Colombia to visit his mother, who now lives in the home and is pictured sitting close to him on his left. He dedicated the afternoon performance to "three matriarchs": his two aunts who had lived at the home and the home's founder, who had "encouraged and supported" him in his student days.

ARBA MINIM (FOUR SPECIES) FOR SUCCOT

Succot is a Chag full of symbols: the Succah, Ushpizin (guests), fruit and flowers, and the Arba Minim (Lulav & Etrog)

The Arba Minim comprise the Etrog, Willow, Palm and Myrtle. These are nothing on their own but, when brought together, they are a wondrous sight. On each day of Succot it is customary for everyone to fulfil the mitzvah of waving the Arba Minim in each direction of the compass, plus up and down, to show that God is everywhere. And on each day of Succot, up to and including Hoshana Rabbah, they are carried in procession around the Bimah.

The Liturgical Committee is encouraging all members to purchase a set of Arba Minim, at a cost of £25.00, via the Synagogue and to join us at the Services on Thursday 5 and Friday 6 October when you will be able to fulfil both mitzvot.

Please contact the Synagogue Office no later than Friday 15 September to place your order.

Branch Line

If you are thinking of pruning your pine, laurel or cypress trees, the Synagogue would be very grateful to receive branches for the Succah which will be erected on Sunday 1 October.

Please contact the Synagogue office to make arrangements for delivery if you can help.



SYNAGOGUE HELP LINES

THE BELSIZE SQUARE SYNAGOGUE

51 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HX
Tel: 020 7794 3949

Email: office@synagogue.org.uk

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

9.00am - 5.30pm

Fridays: 9.00am-2.00pm

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Lee Taylor - 020 7794 3949

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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

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

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Chairperson: Mandy Brass - 020 8452 6936

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Email the Youth Workers, Melanie Nathan & Zoe Cowan
youth@synagogue.org.uk

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