

Shalom

Rosh Hashanah Edition

No. One

Tishri 5780 September 2019



Photograph taken by: Hannah Frankel



ROSH HASHANAH 5780

Welcome to our new shul - Cranbrook United Synagogue. For some of us the move to new premises in May this year was difficult but we are now settling in and making new friends. We have a beautiful building, an outstanding Rabbi and Rebbetzen with their two lovely children, and our own Community Welfare Minister with his lovely wife, Gillian and family.

I have been told that "Cranbrook" is the name given to the stream which runs near to the shul, in Valentines Park. The origin can be found many hundreds of years ago, when the stream was called Cranebrook, probably because migrating cranes stopped there to feed and rest. The links to Judaism can be found in the Tanach, where the crane's wisdom was noted when knowing the exact time and direction to migrate (although they might have confused cranes with herons). Of course, the references to Torah being likened to the life- giving properties of water are many and obvious.

Welcome also to the first edition of Cranbrook United Synagogue's in-house magazine, Shalom. As you may know, I produced and edited the Newbury Park Synagogue magazine for many years and then joined with Martin Greenberg to edit the Redbridge Synagogue magazine. Martin has retired as Joint Editor, although he will still write articles for our magazine, but I hope to continue as Editor of Cranbrook's Shalom Magazine, keeping you advised on what is happening in our community and in other areas of particular Jewish interest, especially Israel. In fact, in this issue we have some excellent articles on Canada, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Iceland and Israel.

Cranbrook United Synagogue's first event was a Ladies' Sefer Torah evening in the shul with Rabbi Steven Dansky. This was a great success as it allowed the Ladies to see the Sefer Torah close to - an opportunity we don't often have!

We followed this up with Shavout - a wonderful weekend! All services were well attended and the children's services were thriving in our beautifully decorated shul. Rabbi Gideon Sylvester was an incredible scholar-in-residence, giving us plenty of inspiration, encouragement and food for thought through his sermons and shiurim. There was a good turnout for the Tikun Leil Shavuot and the Ladies' Tea and Torah was a full house with plenty of delicious desserts and thought-provoking discussions.

There are lot more exciting activities scheduled for our shul and you will receive notification in good time, both by email/letter and through our weekly Cranbrook News, produced by my colleague Robin Abrahams. However, I would draw your special attention to the very important event which is taking place in November - the Bat Mitzvah of our Minister's older daughter, Maya Miriam, who will be sharing a D'var Torah in shul on Shabbat 30th. Rebbetzen Siobhan's article explains more about it and invites everyone to join the celebration kiddush after the service.

I would like to thank Colin Emden, Martin Altman and all those involved in the production and distribution of this, our first Cranbrook United Synagogue magazine with a special "thank-you" to all our contributors. Please keep the articles coming in, I rely on you!

On behalf of the editorial team, I wish you and your families a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.

Philippa Stanton - Editor



CRANBROOK UNITED SYNAGOGUE

**22 Beehive Lane, Ilford
Essex, IG1 3RT**

Rabbi: Steven Dansky

Rebbetzen: Siobhan Dansky

Community Welfare Minister:
Reverend Gary Newman

Honorary President:
Martin Altman

Administrator:
Michelle Fraser

Office Hours:

Monday to Thursday:

10.00 am - 2 pm

Friday & Sunday:

(Sunday phone first)

10.00 am - Noon

Tel: 020 8629 2780

email: admin@cranbrooksynagogue.org.uk

website: www.cranbrooksynagogue.org.uk

Joint Chairmen:

Mike Callaghan

Malcolm Nathan

Joint Vice Chairmen:

Colin W Emden

Barrie Abrahams

Joint Financial Representatives:

Marc Levy & Ian Keller

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Harold Marco, Kenneth Black

and Joseph Rose (Honorary)

Joint Ladies Honorary Officers:

Lorraine Silver & Claire Barzilai

MAGAZINE:

Editor: Philippa Stanton

Editorial Assistant: Linda Stanton

Proof Reader: Hilary Segall

Advertising: Angela Levene

Graphics, Design & Production:

Martin Altman & Colin W Emden

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The Chief Rabbi's Rosh Hashanah Message

In our tradition, we have three well-known names for our Synagogues: Beit Tefillah, Beit Knesset and Shul. Each one captures a different aspect of what a modern Synagogue should aspire to be.

Beit Tefillah, meaning 'house of prayer', was a title given by Hashem to the Temple in Jerusalem and continues to be a most apposite term. It expresses the building's core purpose of providing a place through which we connect with our Creator and experience His presence in a spiritually rewarding way.

Beit Knesset, meaning 'house of gathering', is a name which has been widely used since ancient times and most closely mirrors the word 'Synagogue', which comes from the Greek *synagōgē* – meaning a place where people meet together. The connotation is clear: our Synagogues, especially in the Diaspora, are the central focal points for Jewish social and cultural interaction for individuals of all ages and groups of all types. Not only do we enjoy an encounter with Hashem within its walls; we also engage socially with friends and acquaintances. It is these encounters of warmth and friendship, which weave the social fabric of our communities.

The colloquial name for our Synagogues – Shul – is taken from the German word meaning 'school'. Historically, the local school was housed within the Synagogue building. Indeed, to this day, many Shuls have a kindergarten or run a cheder for children on their premises. The colloquial pre-eminence of this name sends a timeless reminder to us that formal and informal education, for members of all ages and all backgrounds, must be at the heart of our shared communal experiences. In seeking to guarantee the ongoing vitality of our congregations, we recognise that in-depth understanding of our rich heritage will pave the way for a meaningful and fulfilling Jewish life in the future.

These High Holy Days will be the first since the merger of Ilford United Synagogue and Redbridge United Synagogue and it is already clear to see how, together, you are excelling as a Beit Tefillah, a Beit Knesset and a Shul. Under the leadership of Rabbi Steven and Rebbetzen Siobhan Dansky, in partnership with the Shul's dedicated lay leadership, may the newly formed Cranbrook United Synagogue thrive always as a place of sanctity, a place of warmth and a place of learning.

There is no better time to experience all three phenomena in abundance than over the High Holy Day period. May this time of reflection and spirituality provide you with inspiration that you will carry with you for many future years of blessing and success.

Valerie and I extend to you our very best wishes for a happy, healthy, peaceful and fulfilling New Year.



Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis
September 2019 • Tishrei 5780



Rabbi Dansky's Rosh Hashanah Message

When I was growing up, birthdays were a very exciting thing. They meant being a year older it is true, but that wasn't what made it particularly exciting. It may have been gaining greater responsibility, but that wasn't it either. Honestly, it was the presents. Whether they be from your great aunt who hadn't seen you and just wanted to pinch your cheek, or from your school friends. The joy of unwrapping a large rectangular box, the tearing of the paper in frantic anticipation, the gleaming letters of the cardboard toy cover, and best of all, the toy itself, was what got my heart pumping. That, together with more sugar than any child should imbibe, together with a wonderful chocolate cake with some candles, was the highlight of my year.

With that in mind, I thought about the line that we mention in Rosh Hashanah "Today is the birthday of the world, today G-d will stand in judgement all of his creations". There is no birthday cake. There are no candles. Nor are there presents. What there is... is judgement. That doesn't sound like much fun. In fact, that sounds quite serious and possibly miserable. How do we reconcile the idea of judgement with the celebration of a birthday?

This isn't the first time this contrast has been presented to us. We are told that when the Jews returned from their exile, they heard it was Rosh Hashanah. And they cried. They knew that they hadn't fulfilled their potential. They knew they were about to be judged. It was at this moment that the last of the prophets Nehemiah returned to them saying, "don't be sad, eat good food, for the love of G-d is your power". Again we notice the contrast between the threat of judgment as expressed by the Jews, and the response of Nehemiah pointing to the happiness of the day. How are we to reconcile these two ideas of celebration and judgement?

Perhaps the answer to this lies in our perceptions of judgement. Generally we think about judgement in terms of its outcome rather than in terms of its ultimate purpose. For example, I recently got caught by the police because my brake lights had broken down without my knowledge. They fined me for this, and I was obviously upset about the result - why should I be punished if I didn't even know about my offence?

Afterwards, the policeman asked me: "tell me what happens when your brake lights don't work?" I thought about it and then responded: "the driver behind me won't know that I have decelerated and will drive right into the back of my car." The policeman nodded and added: "yes, and that would endanger your children as well as yourself." That is really when it hit me, and I realised that while the repercussions of my actions may not have been positive, the fact that there is such a process is good, because it creates a sense of responsibility and ensures that everyone has checks and balances which allow society to work in a responsible and coherent manner. Judgement is a positive thing, because it shows us that we don't live in a vacuum. What we do has got ramifications. What we do makes a difference.

If what we did didn't make a difference we wouldn't be motivated to try to be better, to develop ourselves and to grow. Rosh Hashanah is the moment in time when we come to the realisation that our lives are not meaningless. We are not a being who happens to be around for a certain period of time and then dissipates like a dying flame. Our actions, thoughts and words make a difference. G-d is called the "King of Judgement" to remind us of the fact that we all make a mark, and that our mark truly matters.

Doing things that truly matter, having meaning in our lives is ultimately a joyful experience. This is why the birthday of the world coincides with the day of judgement. We are given the knowledge that we all matter, and that our actions, no matter how big or small have the capacity to change our lives, and the lives of those around us.

I wish you all a New Year filled with health and happiness, meaning and development for you and for all of your families.

With best wishes

Rabbi Steven, Siobhan, Maya, and Talia Dansky

Report from our Joint Chairs'

After more than two years of meetings, discussions and negotiations, the merger finally happened on May 21st. Two communities became one; of course there are teething problems, as you would expect when two large groups of the same family start sharing the same house.

Most people appreciated the hard work that had gone into giving the shul building a facelift, with the painting, floor sanding, boards being moved around and many more things in the pipeline. A major overhaul of the kitchen, new and improved ladies' toilet facilities and repaving the rear area for the new sheds, just to name a few of the ongoing renovations.

Of course all this activity and increase in numbers has shaken a few people, not everyone adapts easily to change; but the executive Shul Council are working very hard to show that flexibility, compromise and cooperation are the key words to make this merger successful and to become the thriving and happy community that we deserve to be.

At the time of writing we are making preparations for the High Holy Days, with all the resultant challenges of the different services and trying to accommodate around one thousand people in the shul at peak times.

We are looking forward to the exciting programmes that Rabbi and Rebbetzen Dansky are planning for this period. After the High Holy Days we will be making long term plans for the future of this shul; we will try to put on events and programmes that will be aimed at all the different age groups within our community, hoping to engage people on all levels, with an emphasis on the young families and youth, who of course are our future.

We would be delighted if you would like to put forward ideas of activities that we can put on especially if you would like to get involved helping to run them. The more we work together the more we will grow together.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who was involved with the organising of the merger and particularly those of you who have worked tirelessly on the renovation and redecoration of the building.

We would like to thank our fellow executive members for their support and patience over the last few months and our Ministers for their hard work in helping to make this merger a success. We and our families wish you all Shana Tova, G'mar Chatima Tova and a long and happy future together.

*Mike and Malc
Co-Chairs Cranbrook Synagogue*



Michael Goldstein

President of the United Synagogue

Rosh Hashanah Message



Suppose you were alive in 1885 and were approached by an aspiring entrepreneur who had developed the world's most efficient horse carriage. Would you have invested?

It would have been wise not to, since one year later, another inventor by the name of Karl Benz would patent what is now considered the first automobile. Innovations can be revolutionary in nature: the automobile, the phonograph, the internet.

Others are evolutionary: better engines for cars, better sound systems for the phonograph and the World Wide Web for the internet.

I was reminded of this as we approach 2020 and are getting ready to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the United Synagogue with open top bus tours, a gala dinner and a series of heritage talks and walks.

A decade before Karl Benz, another innovation took place that was no less revolutionary for Jewish communal life.

Back in 1870 five Ashkenazi shuls in London decided that they were stronger together. The Great, The Hambro, The New, Central and Bayswater all joined forces to become the United Synagogue. Instead of duplicating resources, they worked together for the good of the community.

This was a revolutionary idea.

Since then, the United Synagogue has evolved further. Further communities have joined, including a growing number of regional communities and new Jewish areas. Recent innovations include the creation of a Women's Officer to ensure our communities are inclusive and welcoming. ShabbatUK provides a focal point for communities to engage members across the spectrum.

There is much to celebrate as we approach our 150th birthday. 1,167 new members joined last year. We established a multi academy trust to support Jewish schools. More than 700 young people took part in a Tribe residential programme this year. We launched two volunteer-run asylum seeker drop-in centres in Hendon and Woodford Forest United Synagogues. A National Lottery Heritage Fund grant will transform Willesden cemetery into a heritage and educational site.

But it is time for us to evolve again to address the challenges we face.

How can we ensure our children and grandchildren have the same love of yiddishkeit that we do? What can we do to support people with disabilities and non-traditional families? How can we attract young people and young married couples to our communities?

Change is not easy. My fellow Trustees and I will support our communities, lay leaders, Rabbis and Rebbetzins to come up with ideas to do just that.

Innovation applies to us as individuals, too. At Rosh Hashanah we consider the evolution of our own Jewish development. How can we take one step forward on our Jewish journey?

Might we attend one of our wonderful community services, learn Hebrew or volunteer to help people in need?

The Talmud teaches "פ'ח רגדרש בא חדש" – "It's not possible for there to be a House of Study without innovation" (Chagiga 3a). 1,500 years later, this message remains as urgent as ever.

Shana tova.

A Joyous Festival

By Rabbi Steven Dansky

ROSH HASHANAH puts the word 'awe' into awesome. It is the day where, according to the mystics, God judges the world. Every single human being, every creature is judged individually. This is an incredibly frightening thought. We stand in front of God on Rosh Hashanah, warts and all, and he can tell - we don't even have to tell him, so there is no chance of us trying to bend His ear - what we have been like over the last year. It is a very serious day.

On the other hand, there is a great deal of joy involved in the festival. I recall when I was studying in a Yeshiva in Israel, that when it came to Shabbat or festivals the Yeshiva never sang during the prayers. They used to sing afterwards, but never during the prayers themselves. However, when it came to Rosh Hashanah itself, the sound of song filled the rafters of my Yeshiva. The singing was joyous, it was loud, it was full of fervour, and most of all, it was filled with joy. In fact, wherever you go in the world, whether it is Jerusalem or Rio de Janeiro you will find Jews singing on this day. We have the most fantastic of meals, apples and honey, rich and delicious foods, promising only the best and sweetest of years.

This contrast between the joy and the seriousness of the day is encapsulated by the sage Rabbi Akiva, when he composed the prayer Our Father, our King. We relate to a father and a king in completely different ways. A king has control over life and death. In his hands is the decision to punish or to protect, to reward or to forsake. The judgements of

a king are impartial, and they are final. There are no second chances.

On the other hand, a father relates to his children with love. He cares for them - he knows their personalities, he knows their temperaments, he knows their backgrounds. He will never forsake his children. Any father will tell you that if his child is in trouble, he will run to them, and help them out no matter what trouble the child is in. That bond of love is never broken, no matter how old the child, no matter how estranged they might be. No matter where in history we are - even at our lowest ebb, God is with us, and he loves us eternally.

This is the unique place that we, as Jews find ourselves in during Rosh Hashanah. We are being judged it is true, but we need to remember who is judging us - it is our Father in heaven, and He only wants the best for us. Our job is to remember who He is - remember that He runs such an integral part of our lives, and that although we may at times let slip His role in our life, He never forgets us.

This is the role of the prayers - introducing us again to the creator of the world, who remembers the world in general, and us in particular in only the most positive of ways. He is the one who creates the world, and has ultimate power, and He is the one who will redeem us on a national and on a personal level from all our sorrows.

Let us get in touch with that perspective of God, and may he remember us favourably for a good and prosperous year filled with only blessings and goodness for the upcoming year.



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“It is hard to be as fit as a fiddle when you are shaped like a cello”

Rabbi Steven Dansky

It is funny, and it is funny because it is true. Personal change is an incredibly challenging thing. Every year we create resolutions about the type of people we would like to be. People who are more caring, people who spend more time with their family, people who listen better, the people who we would truly like to be.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is a time when we think about these resolutions, and about how we want to be better people. Year after year we make these resolutions, and year after year these resolutions are covered by the stress and strain of our daily lives. How are we to make changes in our lives? How do we develop, when it is so very hard?

The Torah has a lot to say about personal change. After all, the purpose of the Torah is there expressly for the purpose of developing ourselves as human beings. What advice can we gain from the words of the Torah?

Change IS possible here and now: Torah talks about Teshuva - about returning to truest selves - the people who we want to be; and when it does, it says that there are two fundamental points which are being made here. The Torah says “(1) [Personal change] is not in the heaven saying who shall go up to us to heaven and collect it for us, and (2) it is not over the seas saying who shall cross the seas and collect it for us”.

We are being told that there are two obstacles to change. The first is that we may think that change is something that can't be found in this world. We can't go to heaven to change ourselves! We have engaged in thought processes and behaviours which we have reinforced over many years to reach the level of person we are today, warts and all. To change that would be

nigh on impossible! The Torah is telling us that change is something that is possible, and is possible to accomplish. No one ever said that it would be easy, but it is definitely possible. The Rabbis of the Mussar movement have said that changing even one character trait is a truly difficult thing, but it is possible, it is reachable, it is achievable.

Change can take place in our personal circumstances whatever they may be: Often we say that we would change if things were different. If I didn't owe so much money, if I didn't have the pressures that I have, if I had better relationships and a more supportive environment then I would change. We are being told here that this is a mistake. Change can occur in your environment, despite all the pressures and stress that we experience in our lives. If you left your home and went across the seas you wouldn't find the perfect opportunity for change, because going across the seas will create their own special stresses and strains. We often think that the grass is greener on the other side of the pastures. What we don't realise is that while it may be greener, there is no sun, or one will become allergic to the grass there and not even be able to sit on it! There is no one place or circumstance from which to begin to start to change. Change needs to be real, something observable: We are also told: “For this matter [personal change] is very close to you, in your mouths, and in your hearts to do it”. Change needs to have three elements - 1. something that you talk about doing, 2. something that you feel in your heart, and 3. something that you carry out in practice.

(Continue on next page)

Verbalising what is going wrong and how to improve it is something really important. We may think about things, but until we actually say “this is something I have done” it becomes real. Things that are in our mind are there in potential, but don’t become a reality until we actually admit it to ourselves. Saying to ourselves - “this is something that I want to improve on” makes us come to terms with where we are - it is a reality, and it must be dealt with. If we don’t verbalise what we have done and how we intend to improve our lives, then we aren’t being true to where we are.

We have to start with that verbal statement, because it is this which ensures an investment for change. G-d tells us that if we make the smallest hole, and admit that we are not the people that we want to be, he will do the rest, to the extent that the heavens

themselves will be available for us. G-d can do incredible things, but we need to make that first small start.

We need to feel the impact of our actions, not only on ourselves, but on our friends and community. Positive change doesn’t only lift us up on a personal level, but it has the ability to lift all those who are around us. Changing one aspect of our lives has incredible ramifications for our relationships to our spouses, families and for ourselves.

Finally, we have actually to do something about it. Knowing we are doing the wrong thing and continuing with it anyway is a dangerous thing. Maimonides compares it to someone who wants to become pure, but while he or she is doing that they hold something impure in their hands. Make the decision, feel the ramifications of that decision and do something about it!

Newbury Park League of Jewish Women

Firstly, I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Healthy and Happy New Year.

The Newbury Park League of Jewish Women meets monthly – our venue being at the South West Essex Reform Synagogue in Oaks Lane, Newbury Park. We usually have guest speakers, but occasionally we just have a “social” evening – i.e discussions.

We still have volunteers who help at two local Jewish Blind and Disabled residences, namely Milne Court in South Woodford where we run the “Monday Club”, and Aztec House in Chigwell. At both places we organise special birthday teas, arrange guest speakers and entertainers and offer other help. We continue to have members who help to deliver “Meals on Wheels”. However we **DO NEED MORE HELPERS** – so if anyone can help, could they please phone Ros, on 020 8554 0268 or 07808 728790 for further details.

One of our committee members is still active in organising Macmillan collections which, most of you will know, involves collecting money in from the tins that are placed in various shops and other

establishments, as well as arranging for some of our members to collect at various local supermarkets. As one who helps in this way myself, I find it **VERY** rewarding and if you would like to help out please phone Sadie on 020 8530 5411 or Shirley on 020 8500 7832 for further details.

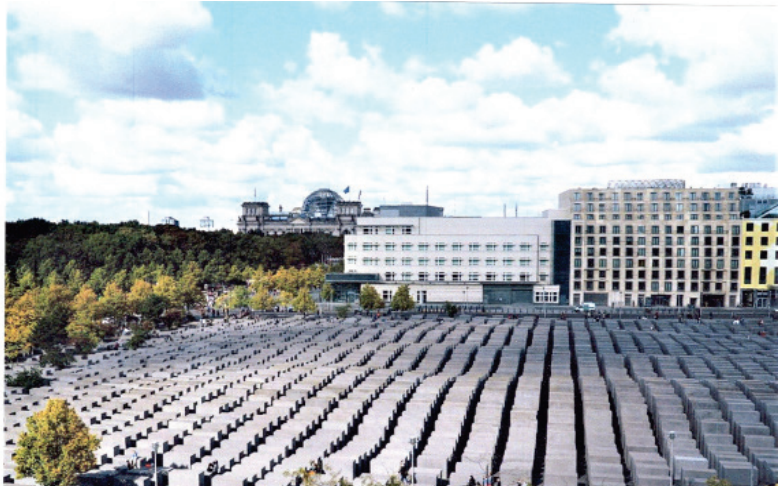
We always look forward to meeting ladies who have not visited us before - so don’t be shy - come along to one of our evenings and see what a friendly “mob” we are.

Just a reminder - we know that there are ladies who are members of Cranbrook United Synagogue but who are not members of the League and we would be delighted to see you – hopefully to join our lively and active group. For further details and information, please phone either Sadie or Shirley on the numbers above. We meet every month with one or two exceptions - usually due to religious holidays clashing with our dates.

We look forward to seeing you.

*Ann Belson
Publicity Officer for Newbury Park &
District League of Jewish Women*

Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



THE Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, also known as the Holocaust Memorial, is located close to the Reichstag and Brandenburg Gate. Begun in 2003, it was completed December 2004. Designed by architect Peter Eisenman and engineer Buro Happold.

It consists of an area of 200,000 sq. ft. covered with 2,711 concrete slabs of different heights arranged in a grid pattern on a sloping field. The memorial is open day and night.

The monument is on the former location of the Berlin Wall. During WW2 the area was an administrative centre of Hitler's killing machine, with the Chancellery building and his bunker nearby. Many of Berlin's foreign embassies are nearby.

There is also a memorial to the Shoah in an underground information centre (not open 24h).

Apparently, the concrete slabs are designed to produce an uneasy and confusing atmosphere and the whole structure aims to represent an ordered system that has lost touch with human reason. This is in fact the Nazis' system. Everything had to be in order such as the meticulous recording of victims, their fate and extermination. which was far removed from normal humanity.

Everyone has their own views on the structure, such as the grey slabs representing coffins with unknown occupants. Or the area being like a Ghetto, segregated and confined.

There is no significance in the number of slabs being 2,711.

Elaine and Bernard Chaplin
May 2019



A Very Interesting Ladies' Sefer Torah Evening



THE first event that took place at Cranbrook United Synagogue was a Ladies' Sefer Torah evening. Rabbi Steven Dansky removed the Sefer Torah from the Ark, "undressed" it and laid it on the reading desk. He explained how the Sefer was made up in columns and that there were no vowels. He also explained how one could tell when each portion ended.

This was a special event to show the Ladies the Sefer Torah close to - an opportunity we don't often have.

*A Very
Special
Bat
Mitzvah
for
Maya
Miriam*

In a couple of months time we are going to be celebrating our older daughter Maya Miriam's Bat Mitzvah. All Bat Mitzvah celebrations are special, but this one is particularly special for us as, when she was born, we didn't know if this day would ever arrive. Maya was born three months premature at twenty-eight weeks. After a seemingly normal pregnancy, I became suddenly and severely ill and was admitted to hospital. After a week on the antenatal ward, the doctors decided that I was "critical, but stable-critical" and wanted to send me home. Before they discharged me, they sent me for blood tests and a scan. The results showed that my white blood cell level was so low that I would likely need a transfusion but, more dangerously, the scan showed that the artery taking nutrients to Maya from the placenta was flowing backwards. From the time they had the scan verified until Maya was born took less than two hours. We were warned that her lungs may not be developed, so she may not cry like a normal baby after birth. But suddenly there she was - 700g in weight, bright red, looking a bit like a stick insect with her scrawny limbs, and screaming her head off. I was only given a few seconds to see her being held up by the doctors before she was whisked away for assessment and treatment.

We were encouraged to name her as soon as possible so that people could pray for her recovery. As I was still extremely ill, my husband and I were only able to go together to see her when she was three days old. We quickly settled on the name Maya - there are two possible spellings for her name in Hebrew, but the one we chose means 'from G-d', because she is. Given Maya's entrance into the world, we felt she needed a middle name as well. It took us longer to choose it, but as soon as we said it, we knew it was perfect. We chose Miriam because, in the Torah, it was Miriam who - in the middle of the traumatic birth of the Jewish People in Egypt - had the unshakeable knowledge that everything was going to be okay. Despite all the plagues and Pharaoh constantly changing his mind as to whether he was going to let the Children of Israel go free, Miriam rallied all the women and told them to pack their tambourines as they would need them to dance and sing when they were finally free. We needed that knowledge and inner strength for ourselves and for Maya. We needed her name to reflect the fact that despite the constant beeps of the machines, the scary information we were being told about the future problems she may face in life due to her premature birth, and looking at her tiny body with transparent skin, we needed to know that we would also sing and dance when she was finally allowed to come home.

Maya was a patient in the Starlight Neonatal Unit of Barnet General Hospital for just over four months before she was well enough to come home. I remember the first day on the unit - we were introduced to so many different people; nurses, doctors, families with babies at different stages of their neonatal journey. Everyone used the same words to describe their time in Starlight - roller coaster. I remember nodding back to them thinking, "of course this journey will have its ups and downs, but it will all be fine". Looking back, roller coaster was exactly the right phrase, but for different reasons. Just like a trip on a roller coaster has sudden changes of direction, sharp upturns and terrifying drops, so did Maya. There were no visiting hours in Starlight so we could come and see Maya any time of the day or night - and we did. We were there at least once a day, every single day. I remember coming to see her one Motzei Shabbat, going to her incubator, and my stomach dropping when I saw another baby in her place and I had no idea where she was; the baby I was looking at was much bigger than Maya, and had none of the tubes and canulans that she had. It took a lot of convincing on the part of the nurses to get us to accept that Maya had progressed rapidly over Shabbat, had grown a huge amount in twenty-five hours and no longer needed all the tubes she had been connected to on Friday. Then there were also the days when I innocently strolled in, smiling, ready to hold her or feed her or bathe her, only to find she had taken a sharp downturn and was back up to a higher level of care and could not be held that day.

Ultimately, the biggest set-back Maya had was learning to feed. Babies are generally born with a natural suck-and-swallow reflex. Because Maya was born so early and so small, she was intubated for her feeds for a couple of months before we tried to teach her to take a bottle. By this time, she had lost her suck-and-swallow reflex and so kept choking on her milk, turning blue and needed resuscitation. It became clear in time that Maya was not going to be able to learn to feed by herself. She was transferred to another hospital for twenty-four hours for a special investigation as to why she kept choking on her milk. Technical details aside, the specialist team worked out that we needed to thicken her milk with powdered carob to make it into a thick, milkshake like consistency. This would give her more time to process the sensation of milk in her mouth and allow her brain time to communicate with her throat and tell her to swallow. The other crucial part is something I always think of on Seder night; just as we lean to the left when we drink the four cups of wine, so too we had to feed Maya whilst she was lying on her left side on our laps. The simple reason for this is

so that gravity would help make sure the milk went into her throat, and not her windpipe.

When Maya finally came home, she was a patient at both hospitals for two years, seeing the various doctors and specialists every other week. Shortly after she turned two, she had the standard assessment tests given to all children at that age. She scored in the 98th centile for language and cognition, and not far behind that for her fine and gross motor skills. When we went for her next appointment with her paediatrician, he reviewed her scores and decided that she could be signed off entirely. He told me that if I had asked him at her birth where he would have set the bar for her development at two years old, he never would have set it anywhere near to where she had progressed. Without asking or prompting, he went on to tell me that "there was something above medicine working for this child". He was not Jewish, and I don't know if he was religious or not, but I do know that he was right. Since Maya was born, I have had many phone calls asking me to speak to parents of premature babies to give them comfort. I always say that I am happy to listen and provide any support I can, but I will never promise that things will be okay, because that is up to G-d and is not my promise to make.

For Maya's Bat Mitzvah, she wants to give back to Starlight Unit. In fact, she is going to be doing two huge acts of chesed in one go. Maya is going to be cutting her hair and donating it to Zichron Menachem, a Jewish charity that makes wigs for children suffering from cancer. This is actually the second time Maya will have donated her hair to them. She is also looking for people to sponsor her for doing this, and all the money raised will go directly to Fund 445 of the Royal Free Charity, which is Starlight Neonatal Unit. You can read more about her story and sponsor her by logging on to her fundraising page www.justgiving.com/fundraising/maya-dansky. We ask you to give generously to ensure many more babies can receive the exceptional standard of care that we did. We also invite you all to come and celebrate Maya's Bat Mitzvah with us. She will be sharing a D'var Torah in shul on Shabbat 30th November, and we invite you all to join us for a celebration kiddush after the service.

Rebbetzen Siobhan Dansky

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Director Dan Lion told us "It's all about the service. We are 100% customer focussed. For many, booking a holiday these days means searching and researching online, finding the cheapest price and pressing the buttons. Human interaction seems to be a thing of the past for many. Holiday Designers' philosophy is the complete reverse. Our team is passionate, dedicated and extremely knowledgeable. The feedback we receive from our clients is exceptional".

So for all of your travel needs wherever you may be planning to travel call Holiday Designers now on 0203 384 0023 for a chat or to make arrangements to visit them in the Travel Lounge.

Purim in Israel

By Linda Stanton

Ever since I can remember, Purim has been a special time for me. We celebrated it at home with gifts and hamantaschen. At shul after reading the Megillah there was the shul party with a fancy dress competition and even more hamantaschen.

This year for the first time, my sister and I spent Purim in Israel where the celebrations were on a completely different level. We travelled to Israel on the first day of Purim; the clerks at the El Al Desks where we booked in for our flight all had face masks, as did the cabin crew on the plane.

We arrived in Israel late at night. In the morning at breakfast many of the hotel staff were in fancy dress. After breakfast, we went to the hotel shul

to hear the Megillah being read and then we joined our group and exchanged Purim gifts and were given masks. This was Thursday.

During our tour of Israel, the streets were full of happy people - both adults and children - in fancy dress, dancing to loud music and enjoying themselves. Some of the outfits were very imaginative. There were snowflakes, a house, many fairies, as well as Esther, Mordecai and Haman. I thought the best was a child dressed as a lion in a cage made from a play pen!

Everywhere, we were given hamantaschen. It was a truly national celebration which still continued on Friday afternoon. The whole of Israel seemed to be celebrating.

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Nothing was too much trouble for the team at Holiday Designers and all arrangements were spot on. Would definitely recommend and use again.

– Says Mrs Abraham

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LET'S RAISE A NOISE WITH ESTHER AND MORDECHAI THIS ROSH HASHANAH

Every Jewish New Year, the shofar rouses our souls out of slumber. This Rosh Hashanah, Norwood asks you to 'raise a noise' for the thousands of families facing crisis and people with learning disabilities and autism whose lives we touch every year.

Children like Esther and Mordechai. Norwood has been there for families like theirs for nearly 225 years. With your support, we'll be there for ever. This Rosh Hashanah, help us to raise a noise by donating at norwood.org.uk/granbrook or calling 020 8420 6970.

#SoundTheShofar

Will you raise a noise with all our families this Rosh Hashanah?

Esther and Mordechai's family is one of thousands who benefit from Norwood's services every year – and not just at Rosh Hashanah, but all year. Another is Sophia's, featured in Norwood's Rosh Hashanah appeal.

Over the last four years, Sophia and her family have used many Norwood services.

In addition to providing specialist support for families facing crisis, we also support people with learning disabilities or autism, and people with educational challenges. Sophia's parents, Daniel and Lauren, contacted Norwood after Sophia was diagnosed with an extremely rare chromosome disorder at nine months. The family desperately needed support because Sophia lives with profound and multiple learning difficulties, is non-verbal and uses a wheelchair.

Lauren explains: "Five years ago, we knew very little about the world of children with special needs. Now, we know that it's not just the child that has special needs, but the whole family."

This is why Lauren attended our Rainbow Group, a support group for parents of children with special educational needs and/or a disability.

It's why we offer her and Daniel parenting support so that they can gain practical advice and planning assistance.

And it's also why Sophia's elder sister, Chloe, goes to Norwood's Siblings' Group, where she can make friends and share experiences with other children with a sibling with a disability.

As for Sophia, she's enjoyed fun and engaging play sessions at Norwood's Teeny Tiny service for young children with complex health needs. She also hopes to take part in creative activities at Unity, Norwood's recreational service for children and young people aged 5 to 18 with learning disabilities.

Daniel says: "All of these services have been fundamental in helping us navigate life as a special needs family. They are services that money simply can't buy. Without Norwood, our challenges would have been infinitely greater."

To help us continue to support Sophia's family and others like Esther and Mordechai's, please give a gift this Rosh Hashanah at norwood.org.uk/cranbrook or call 020 8420 6970, or get involved by joining our campaign online with **#SoundTheShofar**

150 not out

The United Synagogue (US) was formed in 1870 by the union of three major Ashkenazi synagogues in the City of London (The Great, The Hambro', and The New), and two branch synagogues (the Central and Bayswater). The vision of Lionel Louis Cohen and Chief Rabbi Nathan Marcus Adler was to unify and strengthen London Jewry. The Jewish United Synagogues Act of 1870 was the result. The US is still the only Jewish religious body established by an act of secular legislature.

The organisation grew rapidly, and expanded to the suburbs as the community moved. The appointment of Rabbi J H Hertz as Chief Rabbi in 1913, and the outbreak of the First World War, produced both support and opposition for the emerging Zionist movement. Chaplaincy for the Armed Forces largely came from the Ministers of the United Synagogue.

The development of suburbia in the interwar period led to the growth of many important communities, and membership of the US was perceived as

a step in the acculturation of those whose parents and grandparents had been part of the great immigration from Russia.

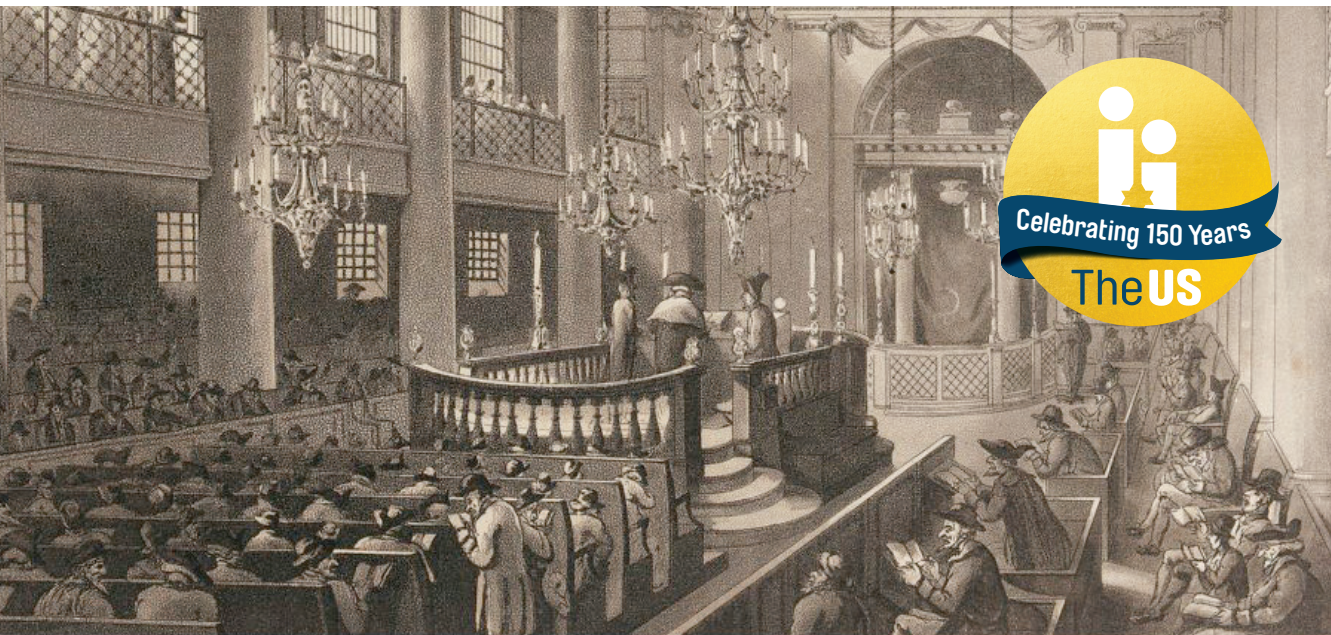
The Second World War brought renewed problems. Evacuation from London produced small wartime communities. Many ministers served as chaplains, and their place was taken temporarily by those who had escaped from Europe.

In rapid post-war expansion 40 new congregations joined the United Synagogue in the 25 years from 1945.

“In rapid post-war expansion 40 new congregations joined the United Synagogue in the 25 years from 1945.”

When J H Hertz died in 1946 he was succeeded by Rabbi Israel Brodie, only the second Chief Rabbi to have been born in England. Educated at Oxford, Brodie had served a community in Melbourne Australia, acted as a chaplain in both World Wars, been taken off the beaches of Dunkirk, and concluded the war as a Lt Colonel and the Senior Jewish Chaplain. He was succeeded in due course by Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits and then Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who have raised the status of the Chief Rabbinate within British society and have made it into one of the Great Offices of State.

Today the United Synagogue remains one of the most influential religious bodies. Its



The Great Synagogue in 1809 (from Ackerman's *Microcosm of London*)

structure has enabled new congregations to grow and old congregations to downsize gently with their assets used to support other communities. The Chief Rabbinate, today headed by Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, developed from the rabbinate of the Great Synagogue has proved a unifying force, restraining internal argument and break up. The London Beth Din and its attendant Kashrut division has an international reach. The Burial Society has established standards of dignity and care at the most vulnerable stage of life. The Singer's Prayer book (today in its most recent green-coloured edition) settled customs of prayer and the dignity of tefillot (services). Improvements in the status and conditions of the Rabbinate have spread to other Jewish communities that look to the US for a lead in so many different fields.

“Today the United Synagogue remains one of the most influential religious bodies.”

As the United Synagogue celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2020, we have so much to be proud of: vibrant communities led by dynamic Rabbinic teams and lay leaders, Tribe and Young US providing high quality young people's programmes, support for our Jewish schools, high quality educational publications and hundreds of volunteers supporting vulnerable members and beyond. It is the people both behind the scenes and in the public eye, who have created a vigorous and innovative force raising the standards of Judaism for its members and for the whole community to help ensure that the US continues to be at the forefront of British Jewish Life. Kol Hakavod!

Elkan D Levy was President of the United Synagogue from 1996 to 1999

*A message from **Michael Goldstein** (President)
and **Steven Wilson** (Chief Executive)
of the **United Synagogue***

Rosh Hashanah is all about new beginnings. We say in shul, Hayom harat olam,
"Today is the creation of the world".

This Rosh Hashanah also marks the creation of a new community as
Cranbrook United Synagogue enjoys its first High Holy Days.

We know the journey to get here has had its challenges. But we also know that with the support of your
dedicated Rabbinic team and lay leaders, the future is bright for your community.

The United Synagogue will be with you every step of the way and we look forward to visiting
to celebrate with you.

***"Drop this in there, move that round
and close up the box"***

An appreciation of MARTIN ALTMAN

How do you say "thank you" to someone who has produced the shul magazine, twice-yearly, for over 31 years, carefully considering the covers, the lay-out and the content?

Well, we must say a huge thank you to Martin Altman, our dedicated and brilliant magazine publisher for producing for us a real good read over all the years, first as Clayhall Kehilla, then as Clayhall United and latterly as Redbridge United.

It was way back in 1988 when I suggested to our then-warden, Leslie Pollock, that we needed a magazine. His first comment was: go away and produce it! So I asked Martin, knowing that as a Fleet Street printer and typesetter this was straight up his alley! Between us we created an A5 single newsheet, then an A5 booklet, which outlined our independence in July 1992 then onto the format that lands on your doorstep today – first in black and white and then the first-coloured issued in September 1994.

Between us we chivvied the community into giving us articles and Martin also sought out the adverts and taught me how to lay out the pages. Little did I know then that by January 1999 I would be working at the JC and watching them lay out the pages!

We had some wonderful front covers: Israel's 50th anniversary to the pics of the bumper crop of bar & bat mitzvah children: "The Future's bright, the Future's at Clayhall". We had sad covers too – a picture of Auschwitz entitled "60 years on", interspersed with pictures of the rabbonim who had graced our pulpit: Rabbi Jason Kleiman, Rabbi Nissan Wilson and latterly, Rabbi Steven Dansky.

And all of this was done without charge to the shul, without demur, with great care and attention and great joy.

So Martin, here's to you and all those copies of the Shalom magazine that we have loved and enjoyed. Thank you!

Hilary Segall

An interview with Rev. Gary Newman

Martin Greenberg: We are now at the beginning of our fifth month in our new spiritual home. What are your thoughts?

Reverend Newman: I am enjoying every minute of our time in the new synagogue with its stunning Beit Hamidrash for weekday services.

M.G. Shabbat is obviously a big success with its greatly enhanced attendance. However, I have noticed that we still occasionally struggle for a minyan at Shacharit, Minchah and Ma'ariv. Do you think that we will be able to encourage more members to come along?

R.N. The two communities have melded together very well. We will build on what we have already achieved by acknowledging the golden opportunity to enhance what is after all the third largest shul in the United Synagogue.

M.G. The past few years must have been, to say the least, quite an experience for you.

R.N. I started at Newbury Park then on to Redbridge United Synagogue and now we have progressed to Cranbrook United. I feel very privileged to be the Welfare Minister of this lovely congregation. I have to commend the lay leadership for all the hard

work and dedication that has gone into founding this community. Obviously a merger is not easy but, we will I am sure with Hashem's help, become hugely successful.

M.G. On behalf of the Synagogue I should like to thank you for all your dedication in bringing comfort to the bereaved and to our members who are unwell.

R.N. I will play my part in keeping the Ilford community as a whole on the map and look forward to serving this community for many years to come. I thank everybody locally and at head office for their continued guidance and support. The shul continues to have an outstanding welfare committee co-chaired by Lorraine Silver and Iris Taylor. The aim of our committee is to look after all who may be in need of our help.

M.G. I hope that you and your wonderful family are settled and happy in your new home.

R.N. We are delighted to be living just around the corner from the shul and look forward to welcoming everyone into our new home. May Gill and I take this opportunity to wish the entire community a healthy, happy and prosperous New Year. Martin Greenberg

Living in Peace

During a recent visit to Israel, my sister and I spent two days in the Galil. This area is in the North of Israel and has a mixed, mainly Arab/Israeli population. Jews and Arabs live together in harmony.

As it is a fairly poor area, the UJIA (United Jewish Israel Appeal) are developing it by building schools and colleges where all sections of society, Arabs, Jews, Christians and Druse, study together. The aim is to allow the local population to get an excellent higher education locally. It also encourages students from other more affluent areas in Israel to study in the Galil.

During our tour, we also visited the ancient Crusader Town of Akko. We saw the Jazzars Mosque, which is the main Islamic religious centre. Our (from Israeli Jewish) guide discussed religion in English, with the (Israeli Arab) attendant who stood outside the Mosque.

After seeing the Mosque, we walked round Akko. We visited the Arab Souk where, to our surprise, we found a new Kosher dairy restaurant - so we paused in our sightseeing to have an excellent lunch there! Unfortunately, we did not have time to see the ancient tunnels, but we hope to return to Akko so we can do this at some future date.

Linda Stanton

Welfare Committee Report

Reverend Gary Newman, Welfare Minister, welcomed everyone to the first meeting of Cranbrook United Synagogue's Welfare Committee meeting. Iris Taylor (Ilford United) and Lorraine Silver (Redbridge United) are both delighted to be working together as Co-Chairs. Iris and Lorraine's families lived in Forest Gate and their mothers worked together as members of Earlham Grove Synagogue's Ladies Guild; history repeating itself whilst bringing back such happy memories.

We were pleased to welcome two representatives from the United Synagogues' Chesed Department to our meeting who can provide us with training, guidance and advice on how to deal with difficult situations. Chesed also hold a yearly conference where volunteers and professionals have the opportunity to meet people from other United Synagogues as well as listening to different professionals within the field of welfare. Having attended the conference myself with Reverend Newman, I have to say that it was extremely interesting and enlightening.

Now that Cranbrook United has at least two thousand members, we certainly have our work cut out especially with quite a few members being over the age of eighty. We are looking towards the future and how we can help all our members with whatever life brings.

The committee has nine members, but we are fortunate to have at least twelve other shul members who will be working with us telephoning those aged eighty-five plus, four times a year, prior to the various Yom Tovim. However, telephone calls, home and hospital visits will also be carried out irrespective of age. If any member is interested in helping us with welfare matters, please ring the shul office with your contact details and we will get back to you.

So what else are we looking to provide for our new community? We are extremely fortunate to have Rabbi Dansky and Reverend Newman as our Ministers who do an admirable job with lavoyas and shivas. However, we are also there not only to support

them but also to visit our members who are sitting shiva. As we have quite a few ladies on the Welfare Committee, they can visit mourners during the day. We are not bereavement counsellors although a few of us have attended bereavement training. However, we can provide information about the different types of bereavement organisations that exist.

By the time you have received the shul magazine, we would have held our first Summer afternoon tea in the Mark Lewis Hall. This event was very successful at Redbridge United Synagogue and we have decided to continue with it. Each time it is held, different members are invited. This gives members the opportunity to meet other members as well as the Rabbonim and members of the Welfare Committee. It is simply a 'getting to know you' event.

Discussions are taking place in relation to different food activities and we hope that with the support of Chesed, we will be able to take this forward in the future. We know that, for whatever reason, some members are not very good at cooking and this is just one area that we are researching.

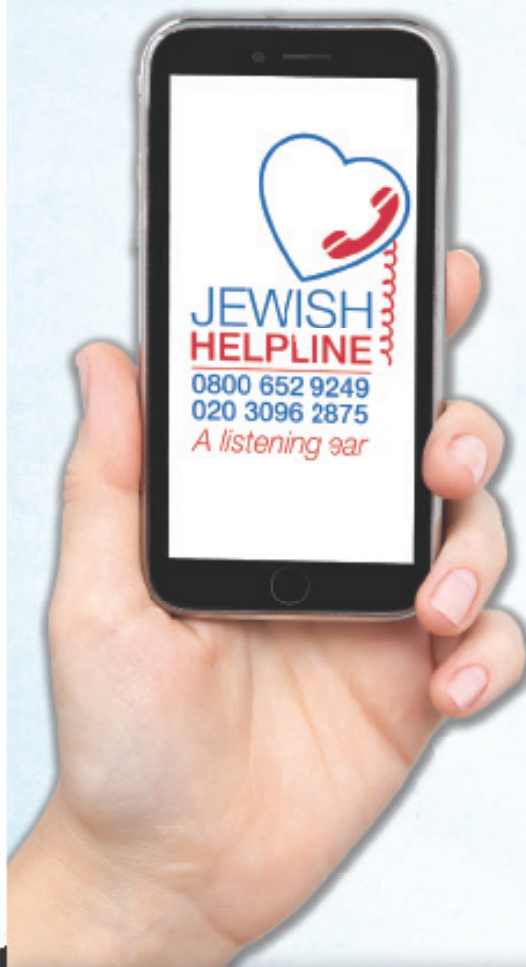
Again, by the time you receive this magazine, we hope that we would have held our first community event namely an Organisation Open Day in the Mark Lewis Hall. Many voluntary organisations will have been invited to provide information to all our members about what is available: for example Redbridge Carers, an organisation that has been in existence for many years and provides information and help for carers of all ages.

We are also putting together an information sheet about some of the different organisations that might be of assistance to our members. It is surprising how many voluntary organisations are out there but not known about.

On behalf of Reverend Newman, Iris, myself and all members of the Welfare Committee, we wish you a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year and well over the Fast

Lorraine Silver - Co-Chair
Cranbrook United Welfare Committee

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Our Visit to Iceland

By Ruth and Joe Rose

In June this year we decided to spend a week's holiday in Iceland.

Iceland is a Nordic island country in the North Atlantic, just south of the Arctic Circle and approximately three hours flying time from London. With a population of approximately 360,000 and an area of 103,000 km² (40,000 sq.mls.) it is the most sparsely populated country in Europe. The capital and largest city is Reykjavík, with Reykjavík and the surrounding areas in the southwest of the country being home to over two-thirds of the population. Iceland is volcanically and geologically active. The interior consists of a plateau characterised by sand and lava fields, mountains, and glaciers, and many glacial rivers flow to the sea through the lowlands.

The country was first settled in 874 AD when the Norwegian chieftain Ingólfr Arnarson became the first permanent settler on the island. In the

of pleasant parks and recreational areas including the Laugardalur valley which is a major centre for sports and recreation in the capital and includes the main stadium.

For those wishing to explore further afield there is a wide choice of tours, one of particular interest being the Golden Circle. This covers some 300 kilometres into the southern upland of Iceland and back and includes visits to Þingvellir National Park (which was the site of the national parliament from 930AD until 1798), the Gullfoss waterfall and the geothermal area in Haukadalur which contains the Geysers Geysir and Strokkur.

During our stay we visited the Jewish Community in Iceland. The history of the Jews in Iceland is relatively short, starting in 1625, and there are currently around 250 Jewish people there, most of whom live in Reykjavík. Over the years religious observance has tended to be minimal, and for several years Iceland had been the only



***Harper
Concert
Hall
Reykjavik
Iceland***

following centuries, Norwegians, and to a lesser extent other Scandinavians, emigrated to Iceland, bringing with them thralls (i.e., slaves or serfs) of Gaelic origin. In 1381 it came under Danish Rule, and finally gained its independence in 1944. English is widely spoken among the Icelanders.

Throughout our stay we spent much of the time exploring Reykjavík and surrounding areas. Reykjavík has many interesting sights and areas of note, including the City Hall, Hallgrímskirkja Church, the Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre, the harbour, Tjornin Lake (otherwise known as “The Pond”) and Laugavegur, the principal shopping area. There are also a number

European country which has not had a permanent Rabbi located. However, in 2018 this situation changed when the Chabad movement sent Rabbi Avi Feldman of Brooklyn, New York, accompanied by his wife and young children, to establish the “Jewish Center of Iceland” to become the permanent Rabbi there. Their arrival has heralded a new era for Iceland's tiny Jewish community and aside from congregations formed by British and American troops during World War II the Chabad Jewish Center has become Iceland's first institutional Jewish presence. At present accommodation is hired in a Reykjavík hotel for Shabbat and Yomtov services, but it is understood that the aim is to establish a Chabad House.

We attended the service on Shabbat morning and were warmly welcome. There were approximately 80 men and women present which included a group of visitors from Israel. The service was very enjoyable and was followed by a sit-down Kiddush.

Anyone wishing to obtain information concerning the Jewish Community and their facilities can do so through the Jewish Centre of Iceland website <https://www.jewishiceland.com/>.

However, security appears to be such that to obtain details of the venue where services are held, it is necessary to submit copies of one's passport.

On the whole it was a very enjoyable visit which we would strongly recommend. However, even in June the weather can be quite chilly and it is advisable to wrap up warm!



***Gullfoss
Waterfall
Haukadalur
Iceland***



Gary Green

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Chigwell & Hainault Group of the League of Jewish Women

Chigwell & Hainault Group of the League of Jewish Women continues with its many projects. It should be noted that although the Group is small in number the projects undertaken are many and varied.

However, there have been problems as the members have been ageing and downsizing in their properties which had originally been large enough to hold meetings and it was decided to look at the meetings in a different way. Fortunately a lunch venue was found which would hold everyone and we continue with our meetings but no longer have speakers. This has proved very successful and well attended. It gives the opportunity for a social and friendly gathering where all our projects can be discussed.

The "Hand in Hand" project continues with Linda Pitch and Toni Ferner who visit various care homes and events in the local area to give the benefit of relaxing hand massage. This has proved very popular and other members have noted an interest in being trained. It should be noted that members working with the public have been Police checked.

The residents at Milne Court continue with a

weekly Sunday afternoon knitting session with a tea organised by Sanara Ziles and Evelyn Camp. "Way Ahead" continues being organised by Pat Rackind with Marlene Gee-Grant.

Shelley Hyams set up the Reading project in 2011 and this continues with two members offering to continue with organising the reading rotas at various care homes.

Sadly during the recent period of time we lost our lovely Marilyn Graham who was a kingpin of the Group and always willing to help in any circumstances. She used to organise monthly teas at Seymour Gardens (for the learning disabled) with help from Helen Tranis and Joita Dias who continue to provide monthly teas at Seymour Gardens sponsored by Irvin Graham.

Further information about the Group can be obtained from Pat Rackind on 07973737077. More helping hands are always needed and there are also male members (LADS).

Rosalind Greenberg
Publicity Officer

Chigwell & Hainault League of Jewish Women

Stolpersteine or Stumbling Stones

I first came across this term, recently, in the Jewish News, before our trip to Germany in May.

The first stolpersteine were installed in Berlin in 1996. Today there are more than 70,000 in many towns and cities in Europe.

They commemorate the Nazis' victims including Jews, LGBT, Roma, resistance fighters, political prisoners and the disabled. Most were installed by the German artist Gunter Demnig - who came up with the idea. They are usually at the entrance to the person's house.

They "stones" are brass plaques cemented into the pavement with the name, date of birth and death of the person. There are persons who go around periodically polishing the "stones".

The first one we came across was in the centre of Berlin. Dr. Georg Lewinsohn, born in 1880, deported and perished in Auschwitz in 1943. I could not find any more details on the internet.

The second we saw in the town of Colditz (the ex-prisoner of war camp), near Dresden in the old East Germany. The family name was Nussbaum and the plaque situated outside their textile shop in the centre of town. I found the family on the internet.

Theirs was a typical story of the time, respected members of the community, living and working in the town; until the Nazis came to power, made them give up their business and eventually "sell" their house. A neighbour stated that in 1942 they disappeared. Later, evidence showed that they were deported and eventually perished in Auschwitz. That is the father, Seli, mother Helena and son Manfred.

A group of young people from Colditz Middle School explored the history of the Naussbaums. With the laying of the "stumbling blocks" in front of their house at least they and their suffering are remembered.

Elaine and Bernard Chaplin
May 2019

Ayelet Newman

'Student of the year'

For the past three years I have been studying hairdressing at Epping Forest College, and now this September I plan to stay on to do Beauty Level 2.

Every year, the college puts on a Hair and Beauty Show. The show includes the whole of the Hair and Beauty Department and allows us students to show off our talents and skills that we have been practising during the year. Every year the theme changes; this year our theme was Avant-Garde/Fantasy. I went with Fantasy. I dressed my model in a mermaid outfit; her hair was in two Dutch braids with blue hairspray and lots of glitter, and the rest of her hair was back brushed and curled. For the makeup I used blue, green, purple and glittery eyeshadow with a stencil to create scales on the face. All the models did a catwalk and at the end of the show they announced the third, second and first place. This year I came third.



At the show the tutors also nominate a particular student for "Student of the Year" and after three years, this was my year and I was chosen as Student of the Year. I was absolutely thrilled and overwhelmed that I got this award. I certainly did not expect it, but when my tutor started talking I knew it was me.

Over the three years it's been an absolute rollercoaster at college. It's had its ups and downs, where I've almost given up and almost dropped out! I'm so glad that I stayed at college and didn't leave. I can't believe how much I have grown. I'm definitely more confident thanks to the support I had at the college.

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Rosh Hashanah Recipes

From Philippa Stanton

Everyone has their own favourite Honey Cake recipe which they make for Rosh Hashanah, so for a change, I suggest you try this delicious Dundee Cake. I have made this regularly for birthdays and anniversaries for many years and it is always in great demand!

Dundee Cake

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) 10/12 oz currants and sultanas mixed | (6) 6 oz caster sugar |
| (2) 2 oz glace cherries | (7) 4 large eggs |
| (3) 2 oz chopped mixed peel | (8) 8 oz self raising flour |
| (4) 1 dessertspoon grated orange or lemon rind | (9) Pinch of salt |
| (5) 6 oz Tomor margarine | (10) 2/3 oz whole almonds for decoration |

Grease and line with paper a 7" round cake tin (preferably with removable base).
Heat the oven to Reg. Mark 3, 150°C.

Place the whole almonds in a bowl and pour boiling water over them. Leave for a few minutes and peel off the skin. Clean and prepare the fruit. Beat fat, add sugar and beat well. Add eggs one at a time. Add half of the flour and salt and mix well. Then add the fruit (except the peeled almonds) and remaining flour. Mix well. Turn into the greased, lined cake tin and level off. Arrange almonds on the top.

Place in the oven and bake for 2 1/2 hours. Allow to get cold before cutting. This cake will keep for several days in an air-tight tin - unless you serve a slice or two, when it will disappear speedily!

However, as it is traditional to eat Honey at this time of the year, I would recommend my mother's Honey Cakes. These delicious small cakes are ideal to make in an emergency, as they take very little time to prepare and only 15 minutes to bake! They can be eaten hot, warm or cold! I usually make them with butter, but you can use Tomor margarine if you require non-dairy cakes the flavour will be slightly different, but just as delicious!.

Honey Cakes

- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 egg
- 2 oz butter
- 4 oz self raising flour
- 1 teaspoon ground almonds

Grease 2 fairy cake tins. Heat oven to Reg. Mark 4, 180°C.
Melt honey and butter in a saucepan. Leave to cool.

When cool, add beaten egg and flour. Mix well.

Spoon the mixture into the greased tins and sprinkle with ground almonds. Bake for approx 15 minutes.

and two delicious sweets:

Apple Pudding

1 lb Bramley apples
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 oz sugar
2 oz Tomor margarine
1 tablespoon golden syrup
4 oz self raising flour
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon baking powder
Pinch of salt
1 large egg
1 tablespoon water

Heat oven to Reg. Mark 4, 180°C.

Peel and slice the apples; mix in the lemon juice and sugar and place in a deep greased over-proof dish.

Mix flour, salt, baking powder and cinnamon.

Melt the margarine and golden syrup in a pan, and pour over the dry ingredients. Add the beaten egg and mix to a stiff batter with water. Spread over the prepared fruit.

Bake for 35/40 minutes. Serve hot or cold, plain or with cream or ice cream.

Honeyed Baked Apples

Cooking apples (1 per person), washed and dried
1 oz caster sugar
2 tbsp lemon juice
butter or margarine
4 oz mixed dried fruit
4 tbsp honey (warmed)

Heat oven to Reg. Mark 4, 180°C.

With a small sharp knife cut a thin slice from the base of each apple and cut out the cores. Score through the skin of each apple around the circumference and place in a shallow roasting tin.

Sprinkle over with caster sugar and lemon juice and dot with butter or margarine.

Cover with a lid or foil and bake for 30 minutes.

Uncover and spoon mixed dried fruit into the centre of each apple. Drizzle with warmed honey and return to the oven for a further 20/25 minutes until the apples are tender.

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“Scientific Israel”

It is always a pleasure to visit Israel - there is so much to see. As well as personal visits, I have visited Israel many times with the JIA/United Jewish Israel Appeal, the Zionist Federation and the United Synagogue and each group sheds light on different aspects of Israel.

I was therefore delighted when Ida Symons phoned me to tell me that Technion was taking a trip to Israel in March - with the opportunity to see “Scientific Israel”!

Our visit to Technion exceeded my expectations. As well as meeting several scientists, we were present at a ceremony held to award Professor Tal Dvir with the Juludan prize for stem cell tissue research to repair damaged heart tissue or nerve tissue - all generated from a patient's own cells to avoid rejection. This prestigious award was donated some years ago by three families, who were represented by a member of our group.

Technion is Israel's high-tech and oldest University and is responsible for most of the high-tech industry. It is in Haifa on top of Mount Carmel and we had a tour of the campus, met students and professors and visited a laboratory. Technion itself is a huge campus, more like a village with accommodation for students and a bus route!

After our tour of Technion, we visited a Druze Village, where we were welcomed by Amir, and had an excellent vegetarian supper during which we met several Druze students who were studying at Technion. All spoke excellent English.

Amir told me that there were many Druze youth attending Technion college. As with all Israeli students, they have to pass a stiff examination to get into Technion and need to work very hard. We spoke to some of the students, who were enjoying their time at Technion. The Druze have a unique relationship with Israel and are fully integrated into Israeli society. They are not Jewish but practice their own religion - there are both secular and religious Druze. They have representatives in the Government and in the IDF cabinet as well.

They have their own Druze flag, and they enter the army for National Service.

Our group visited a number of other places in Israel including the brand new Steinhardt Museum of Natural History in Tel Aviv which is well worth a visit, and had lunch with the [then] British Ambassador to Israel, H.E. David Quarrey.

We visited the Carmel Market in Tel Aviv - not the usual market tour, but a walking and tasting tour. Accompanied by Inbal from Delicious Israel, we visited various shops and sampled different local dishes. At one of the little shops, we drank Turkish coffee and were entertained by the owner, who sang a selection of songs, including “My Way”, ending up with Adon Olom - in which we all joined! In another shop we tasted freshly made bread, and found time to purchase spices at another shop! An excellent way to experience the taste of Israel!

We went to the Agam Museum which has recently opened in Rishon LeZion. It invites you to enjoy an amazing multi-sensory experience with works created by the Israeli International Artist, Yaacov Agam - the father of the Kinetic movement and one of the most important modern artists in the world today. The museum displays sixty years of artworks created by Yaacov Agam, whose central theme is the perception of Jewish reality, which is expressed through his use of movement and perpetual change in his works. It is an extraordinary visual experience and well worth a visit.

Whilst in the Haifa area, we visited the Tishbi Winery, where we sampled some of the red wine - and were encouraged to sample a different type of chocolate with each glass of wine. A novel experience, which I think I might take up at home!

However, the visit to Technion was, for me, the highlight of the trip and I hope to pay another visit in the not too distant future. My thanks to Technion's CEO Alan Aziz and to Ida Symonds for arranging the tour.

Philippa Stanton



The Technion University
Top of Mount Carmel - Haifa

Synagogue Visits in Europe

By Sam Blitz

When Jewish people go on holiday abroad, despite perhaps not attending a synagogue where they live, they always want to visit a local synagogue. We are no different in that respect.

Over the years we have managed to visit many Synagogues including those within the ghetto in Venice, The Old Synagogue in Dubrovnik, The Jewish Synagogue in Corfu, all of which were open to visitors. Unfortunately the Sinagoga di Verona is not open to visitors without a prior arrangement, but we were still able to see the exterior. This year we have managed to visit a further two synagogues whilst being on holiday.



The first synagogue we visited this year was whilst we were on holiday in Porto, Portugal. It is situated in the northern district of the city of Porto and is the largest synagogue within the Iberian Peninsula and recognised by the Rabbanut Harashit of Israel.

The construction of the Synagogue commenced in 1929 and concluded in 1937. It was inaugurated in 1938 and is called the Kadoorie-Mekor Haim Synagogue because of the funds donated by the children of the Kadoorie family who wanted to honour their mother, Laura Kadoorie; contributions were also received from the Spanish – Portuguese Jewish community in London.

During the Second World War the Synagogue was able to help hundreds of refugees escape to the United States.

Although a Sephardic Synagogue it has two Rabbis, one of whom is Askenazi and the other one is Sephardi. The Porto Jewish community includes three hundred Jews originally from over thirty countries, so that after more than five hundred years since the Expulsion, the Porto Jewish community is flourishing. The synagogue is able to provide the Jewish community with kosher food.

We were extremely lucky to have been given a guided tour of the beautiful interior of the synagogue by the secretary, who invited us to join the members of the Porto Jewish community and several American and

Canadian tourists to eat drink and listen to the shul choir sing and dance to Israeli music and to celebrate L'ag B'Omer in the shul's grounds. There is also a tour of the new community mikvah, which was inaugurated in 2015, available upon request.

If you are visiting Porto in the future and wish to visit the Synagogue then we would suggest that you contact them in advance on: info@comunidade-israelita-porto.org and also remember to take some form of identification such as a passport with you when you visit.

The second Synagogue that we were able to visit was the medieval Scolanova Synagogue, in Trani, Puglia, Italy. It was built around 1244 which means that it is one of the oldest Synagogues in Europe and is one of the four original Synagogues that were built in the Jewish Quarter of Trani.

Unfortunately by the end of 1400 this Synagogue together with all of the others had been converted into churches and the Jewish community of the city were forced to convert to Christianity.

When converted to a church, the Scolanova Sinagoga was called the Church of Santa Maria in Scolanova, but in 2006 after standing empty and disused for over fifty years, it was deconsecrated by the Church and returned to the Jewish community, even though there are only about six Jews living in Trani. The reopening ceremony took place on 3rd March 2015.

We were fortunate to be in Trani on a Sunday, which is one of the days that you are allowed into the Sinagoga, and we were able to hear from the shul guide about the history of the Sinagoga and that of the Jewish Quarter in general. She told us that when it was returned to the Jewish community, it had been used as a church for over five hundred years and that many alterations had been made to the interior of the building which could not be altered as it is a protected historic site.

A wall mural of St Mary could not be removed so an image of a Menorah has been placed in front of it. Likewise, the empty font could not be removed so it is currently used to store kippot. There is still a niche on the altar which would have held the Sefer Torah. We were also told that the current floor of the Synagogue is much lower than it was in 1244.

The building next door to the Synagogue was originally the women's gallery and the guide pointed out the stairs that once led to the pool of the medieval Mikvah, which survives.

We would recommend the Guided Tour which cost three euro and which takes place on Monday, Wednesday and Friday between 10.30 and 12.30 and on Sunday between 11.00am and 1.00pm.

Reservations can be made by phone on 0039 347 1077486 or: info@incantoapuliatravel.com

Another side to our Rabbi Classical Pianist!

Torah scholar - Yes / Classical pianist - Who knew?

But on one afternoon in June, Rabbi Dansky showed us just how talented he is. He took us through works by Chopin, Debussy, Liszt and (my new favourite) Einaudi, someone I had never heard of and judging from other people's murmurs in the audience, not a well known composer. But also a favourite of the Rabbi, watching how he got involved in the music. He also played one of his own compositions.

In between the pieces, Rabbi Dansky told us a little about how the music was put together and of difficulties in playing them.

At the end of his concert he answered questions from the audience. Yes, he had studied music at university, doing two years of a Bachelor of Music degree and then majoring in both music and psychology. Yes, he had thought of playing professionally, but had decided he was not quite good enough in certain areas of performing. No, he doesn't get much time to play with all the other duties he has and yes, we would like to hear him give another recital. Rabbi Dansky said in that case he would try to arrange another one and if you want to give yourself a treat, I suggest you go along. You will not be disappointed.

Ruth Lyndon

Social and Personal

We would like to wish Mazel Tov to all those who have celebrated an Anniversary, Birth, Bar Mitzvah, Bat Mitzvah, Special Birthday or other Simcha.

We offer our condolences to all those who have suffered a bereavement this year. Our thoughts are with you at this time of sorrow.

Due to the recent merger, we regret we are unable to give an itemised list on this occasion.

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Michael Darwin

Chatan Bereshit

Having been chosen as Chatan Bereshit for this year I have been asked to pen a few words about myself for the Synagogue newsletter. If you come along on Shabbos, you will know that I share the duties of Shamas with Victor Shafier and prior to the merger I was the Shamas at Beehive Lane for a few years.

I was born in Hackney and before getting married went to the Yavneh Federation Synagogue in Ainsworth Road; after marriage I became a member at Romford United Synagogue and on moving into this area joined Beehive Lane Synagogue in the late 1970's.

My wife and I have been members of Beehive Lane since then. We have three children and six grandchildren and have had the pleasure of seeing our daughter married at Beehive Lane six years ago. I have been on the synagogue board for over twenty years and have performed numerous tasks on it.

I had the pleasure of being Chatan Bereshit 17 years ago when Dr Morris Schwartz was Chatan Torah. I am grateful to the wardens for offering me the honour of sharing with Victor in being the first Chatan Bereshit of Cranbrook United Synagogue.

Victor Shafier

Chatan Torah

I am honoured to be chosen as Chatan Torah this year and to celebrate with my Shamas partner Michael.

Previous to the merger of Redbridge & Ilford Synagogues I was assistant Shamas at Redbridge, my main duty was to welcome members and guests into our synagogue.

Now as Shamas and sharing the duties with Michael on alternate Shabbats I still enjoy welcoming you and your guests every day, not only Shabbat

We have services every morning and evening with exception of Sunday evening.

I enjoy helping those members who attend weekday mornings who have not put on tephillin since the year dot, who might be celebrating a Yahrseot. We have spare sets of Tephillin and we have no intention of embarrassing you and I am happy to quietly assist you putting them on.

Fortunately we have a fairly good turnout but are eager for more members to attend.

The services are held in the Beit Hamidrash which is the most comfortable place to enjoy any service.

Each Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday we have a light breakfast (Delicious Croissants) in the Library upstairs and discuss worldly events, yes even Brexit!! I like to think of it as the Minyan Club. It is extremely friendly and so many of you miss out on the most enjoyable way to start your day. Services begin around 7 am and we finish before 8 am.

Monthly on a Sunday closest to Rosh Chodesh we have a sumptuous cooked breakfast + beigals, rolls, smoked salmon and other tasty dishes.

On behalf of my family I would like to take this opportunity to wish the community a Healthy, Happy New Year and well over the Fast and look forward to welcoming you to join myself and Michael celebrating Simchat Torah.

Victor Shafier

Delivery of Magazine

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who spent their Sunday morning putting the Shalom Magazine and many other items into envelopes ready for mailing.

Many thanks also to all our 'Post Persons' who regularly hand deliver our Synagogue envelopes.

Your time is greatly appreciated.

If you feel that you can help with the magazine deliveries in the future please contact the Synagogue office. The deliveries are close to where you live.

The Magazine Team

Shalom - Our Magazine

Many thanks to all our contributors. Once again we have some excellent articles from our shul members. The next edition of the Shalom Magazine will be at Pesach 5780 edition. If you have any interesting or amusing articles with a Jewish content which you would like to be included in the Pesach edition email Philippa Stanton: stanton.philippa@gmail.com

All articles must be received by 1st February 2020 at the latest

People Matter

I learnt at a very early age that a Synagogue was not a building or a venue, but was about people - it was the people who belonged to the Shul who were important. I have been a member of four Synagogues to date, and have found this to be so in all cases.

I first joined the United Synagogue in my own right back in the 1960's when I became a member of Hemel Hempstead Affiliated Synagogue. The services were held in the Jewish Care homes in Hemel, and most of the congregation were retired members of other synagogues. I got to know a number of elderly people, who were very caring about each other. I recall that one Succot while following the Reading of the Law, the elderly lady sitting next to me whispered that she was very worried about Morry "who has not spoken to anyone for three days". When Morry, aged well over 80, was called up to the Bimah we found out why he had not spoken - he was conserving his voice to produce an excellent Haftorah, much to the delight of the congregation.

One Rosh Hashanah, Harry, well into his 90's, was called up for an Alyah, and finding it difficult to walk my brother Michael - then in his early 30's - went to help him. With a lot of support, Harry shuffled up to the stairs and was almost lifted on to the Bimah, where he proceeded to say the Baruchas in a very weak voice. After being 'lifted' down from the Bimah, he refused to return immediately to his seat, but with help 'walked' round the whole of the men's section shaking hands with everyone. There was an expression of exultation on his face when he eventually was helped to his seat, which was wonderful to see.

In 1983 I moved to Newbury Park, transferred to the Newbury Park Synagogue, and two years later attended a meeting at the Shul which resulted in my joining a small

Volunteer Group to raise funds for the JIA and Israel by 'door to door' canvassing in our area. I met a lot of people both in the Shul and in the Ilford area and became more involved with Synagogue matters, attending Shabbatons, Melava malkas etc - even becoming a Board Member when the US decided to admit ladies to the Synagogues' Board of Management. In 1993 I became involved with the Shul's Magazine and in February 1995 became Magazine Editor - producing over 60 Magazines in-house!

I was Vice-Chairman of Newbury Park Synagogue when it was decided we would merge with Clayhall Synagogue to become Redbridge United Synagogue. It was a very exciting time for us all - most of my friends and colleagues from Newbury Park came, together with our Minister, Gary Newman, and we were made very welcome by Rabbi Nissan Wilson and everyone at the Synagogue. I was also delighted to be asked to join the News Magazine Team as Joint-Editor.

I was sorry when Rabbi Wilson left for pastures new, but our Committee "went fishing" and "caught" Rabbi Steven Dansky who, together with his wife Siobhan and children Maya and Talia have proved to be an excellent "catch" (if you'll excuse the expression!).

Now I am with my fourth Synagogue. I made a lot of friends at Redbridge US, most of whom have again moved with me, and I expect to make more friends now that we have merged with Ilford Synagogue to become Cranbrook United Synagogue.

As I mentioned before, it is the people who make the Shul and I am sure with the help of our Ministers, we will all work together to make a vibrant community.

Philippa Stanton

Jan, with her dad Monty, who is living with dementia



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Chief Rabbi's Shabbat

1st & 2nd March 2019

There was a full programme of activity on Shabbat at Redbridge United Synagogue. Before the week-end all local Jewish children had been invited to contribute to an Art Competition in which Shabbat was the theme, with prizes for the best entries.

On Friday night, Mincha was followed by a sing-along and Kabbalah Shabbat. The evening was aimed at young families and forty-five people attended the communal dinner.

On Shabbat morning, after Shacharit, there was a full series of activities for both adults and children. This began with a Kiddush in honour of the contributors to the Art Project, when prizes were awarded. The entries were displayed round the dining room - I was amazed at the variety of talent on display.

For the adults, Rabbi Steven Dansky gave a talk on "Judaism & Mindfulness" which highlighted the special meaning of Shabbat, such as rest, relaxation and prayer.

The children had their own program: a workshop by our guest speaker, Emma Shevah called "True/Not True/so Not True", about her life and strange general knowledge!

This was followed by an excellent lunch attended by seventy-five people, after which Emma Shevah gave an interesting and amusing talk about the highlights of her life.

We were all given a booklet of Shabbat prayers with pictures of some of the entries to the art Exhibition. A very good souvenir of a most enjoyable week-end.

A huge vote of thanks goes to all those who helped to make it such a successful weekend.

Linda Stanton

