



*Our children and grandchildren say a
final goodbye to Bessborough Road and
now we're all looking forward
to Stanmore*

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MOSAIC LIBERAL

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Mimi Rotbart
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MOSAIC MASORTI

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Traci Spivack

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Ruth & Rabbi David Soetendorp on their 50th wedding anniversary

Next issue

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Wednesday 4th August

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Send your articles, pictures,
letters etc to
newsdesk@choosemosaic.org

Thanks to all the participants in the photos and to Barbara Grant for creating the montage on the front cover

Tisha b'av and Tu b'av

by Rachel Benjamin & Kathleen de Magtige-Middleton

For most of the Jewish year, on Shabbat morning we read a *Haftarah* (selection from the Prophets and, in Liberal communities, a selection taken from either the Prophets or the Writings)



nachamu ammi, 'comfort, oh comfort My people,' says your God.

The cycle of the Jewish year is remarkable in its ability to guide us through the gamut of human emotions, to connect us with the

that is thematically linked to the Torah portion. For ten weeks in the summer, though, we read *Haftarah* portions that are linked to historical experiences at that time of year.

First there are three prophetic readings of admonition and warnings to Israel about the consequences of sin for the three weeks preceding *Tisha b'Av*, the Ninth of Av, the date on which we commemorate the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians, the Second Temple by the Romans, and other catastrophes in Jewish history. The *Haftarot* are from the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, dealing with the destruction of the First Temple and the exile of the Jewish people. These are known in Aramaic as the *tlat d'puranuta*, 'the three of calamity'. Following *Tisha b'Av*, we read seven *Haftarot* from the prophet Isaiah, known as the *shivah d'nechemata*, 'the seven of comfort', each one with a message of hope, consolation and the promise of a renewed relationship with God. The Shabbat after *Tisha b'Av* is named after the first *Haftarah*, from Isaiah chapter 40, which begins *nachamu*

cycle of nature, and our Jewish historical experiences. This period of the year leads us to the profound sorrow and mourning of *Tisha b'Av*, to the comfort of *Shabbat Nachamu*, the following week, through more weeks of consolation, to the New Year. Part of the genius of Judaism is the way it expresses and offers hope, even in the darkest of times.

It is impossible to over-emphasise the calamity that the destruction of Jerusalem, and exile, represented for the Jewish people at the time, and the three-week period before *Tisha b'Av* is known as *bein ha-meitzarim*, 'between the straits', from the verse, 'all her oppressors have overtaken her between the straits', in the Book of Lamentations (1:3).

Six days after *Tisha b'Av*, the saddest day in the Jewish calendar, comes *Tu b'Av* (Fifteenth of Av), one of the happiest days. A little-known or recognised holiday in the Diaspora, in modern-day Israel it is celebrated as a holiday of love, *Chag Ha-Ahavah*, similar to Valentine's Day. According to the *Mishnah*, *Tu b'Av* was a joyous

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holiday in Temple days, marking the beginning of the grape harvest. It was a day on which young people would go out dancing in the vineyards to find romance. Whereas *Tisha b'Av* commemorates destruction and exile from the land, *Tu b'Av* is a joyous celebration of the land and the return to it.

Tradition links the two dates through the sin of the Spies, which we find in Numbers 13-14 who disheartened the Israelites from conquering the *Eretz Yisrael* and as a punishment the people were doomed to remain in the wilderness for 40 years until that generation had died out. This punishment finally ended on *Tu b'Av*.

According to tradition *Tu b'Av* also marked the end of two Biblical limitations on marrying certain tribes' men or women. The first one refers to the case of the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 36) which stipulated that daughters were allowed to inherit land from their father if there were no male heirs. However, as heiresses they were not allowed to marry outside their own tribe. The other, many years later, prohibited any of the other 11 tribes marrying anyone from the tribe of Benjamin, after the Benjaminite's abusive role in the story of the Concubine of Giv'ah (Judges 19-21) (A very shocking story of abuse indeed!)

Each of these prohibitions was lifted on *Tu b'Av*, as it was realised that strict adherence to these rules might eventually threaten the survival of the tribes, which might only be guaranteed when the tribes would forget old grudges, and forgive old pains, and when tribal lands would be shared as the 12 tribes would allow themselves to merge into one

people – which was cause for rejoicing. Unity – instead of division; love – instead of hatred.

In contrast, the Talmud answers the question: 'Why was the First Temple destroyed?' as follows: 'Because of three things that prevailed, idolatry, immorality and bloodshed... But why was the Second Temple destroyed?... Because groundless hatred (*sin'at chinam*) prevailed there...' (BT *Yoma* 9b).

Based on what the media reports, and what can be seen on social media, we too appear to be afflicted by *sin'at chinam*, groundless hatred, in our society, an impatience and intolerance of other people's views, if they do not agree with our own. It is easy to relate such intolerance and impatience to the uncertainty and the restrictions with which we have had to live for the past year and a half, which has made us feel on edge. But our own unhappiness must never be used as an excuse for allowing *sin'at chinam* to destroy what is good and important in our lives.

Just as *Tisha b'Av* serves as a warning as to what may happen when we allow our own unhappiness to spill out into intolerance and hatred, so *Tu b'Av* teaches us to strive for a better, kinder, more tolerant future for us and our children.

What is Tisha b'Av Today...



Traditionally, Tisha b'Av commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem, and other calamitous events to strike the Jewish community.

What does the festival mean to us today?

With Rabbis Rachel Benjamin and Kathleen Middleton in conjunction with Rabbi Dr. Eli Levin with his congregation Darchei Noam, Ramat Hasharon, Israel
Havdalah followed by presentation and discussion

Saturday 17th July 2021, 6.00 pm

Zoom details will be available in the weekly notices

Tu b'Av: Love Means ...

Tu b'Av is the Jewish festival of love



Join Rabbis Rachel, Kathleen and Rabbi Dr. Eli Levin and his congregation Darchei Noam (Ramat Hasharon)

To discuss the meaning of love

Saturday 24th July, 6.00 pm

Zoom details will be given in the weekly notices
Please do bring your favourite quote and/or song on the subject of love to share



Mosaic Reform Synagogue ("the Company")

In view of the covid-19 pandemic and the government's measures and recommendations in relation to public gatherings currently in force whilst it is not possible to hold the company's agm in its usual format the meeting should be held using 'zoom'.

Notice is hereby given that the 2021 Annual General Meetings of Mosaic Reform Synagogue and of Congregant Members of Mosaic Reform Synagogue will be held remotely by Zoom on Wednesday 21 July 2021 at 8.00 p.m.

At the meeting, the following business will be transacted.

1. To consider and, if thought fit, pass the following ordinary resolution:

THAT the Annual General Meetings of the Company and of Congregant Members of Mosaic Reform Synagogue be combined as one meeting.

2. To review the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 8 September 2020.

3. To receive reports from the Chairman, Committees and associated bodies.

4. To receive the Honorary Treasurer's Report.

5. To receive the annual accounts and report of the Company and the auditor's report on those accounts and reports for the financial year ended 31 December 2020.

6. To elect the following:

To hold office:

a. the Auditor;

b. the Honorary Solicitor;

c. The following Council members:

- Chairman

- Vice-Chairman

- The Honorary Secretary

- The Honorary Treasurer

- Representative on the Mosaic Jewish Community Board

- Five members of Council

- President

- Senior Warden

- Chair of Ritual

- in the case of the Chairman and President for a term of years permitted by Article 12.5 of the Articles of Association of the Company;

- in the case of the other Council members, from the conclusion of this meeting until the conclusion of the next annual general meeting of the Company.

To consider any other general business.

By order of the board of Mosaic Reform Synagogue

Caroline Chadwick

Honorary Secretary

Registered office: 2 Field End Road, Pinner HA5 2QL. 16th June 2021

Who likes to dig and de-weed? (Not me!)

by Edwin Lucas

Now that lockdown is easing, I was encouraged to go to garden centres and also to gardens to see amazing displays. I asked what the benefit would be, as there are lovely gardens in the community. I am told Harry and Barbara Grant have a beautiful garden and Henry Rockwell's is just amazing. I



have mastered the skill and I wonder how many other Mosaicers have the skill and wherewithal to follow their example.

I saw a friend in Manchester who has tried to follow their example but she has not succeeded in the same way at all. The

Pinkus tree has branched out sensibly and has not spread too far. The roots are tight and do not spread and in addition the tree does not steal nutrients from other items in the garden. I was told that tree roots need

then went driving around, delivering the last edition of Kehila and I looked at trees, as I was driving along. Strange you may think but alas no, as I found a beautiful tree in Robert and Anne Pinkus's garden. It was special and it was unique. It grew like a vine, in a strange place and it was the tallest tree in the neighbourhood. It was and still is, tall and slim and looks very strong and fetching. It is unique in every sense of the word. Well Robert and Anne are unique, so why should I be surprised at seeing their manicured tree? Anne was a teacher and Robert was a Probation Officer, so both are interested in training and ensuring they get good results. What is the difference between a tree and a human? Both need nurturing and both need feeding and watering and both need looking after. Anne and Robert

to be kept warm, so the tree does not catch cold and I can see that Robert and Anne have followed this to the letter. Their tree is so special that when I now pass by their street, I have to take a trip down Memory Lane, to refresh my memory and check that the tree is growing and blossoming. It is sadly not the season to blossom but gives me something to look forward to in 2022. We do however have Sukkot coming up, in 3 months' time, and I think that this live Sukkah, where you can see the stars, is ideal and one can stay in the comfort of one's home. Will this catch on? Definitely yes and coming up in Home and Gardens soon. My question is, what fruit will grow and how do we harvest the fruit? I can understand hot chestnuts but hot apples and pears is not quite right, Continued on following page >>

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unless they are stewed. Enjoy walking the walk and looking for unusual trees in unusual places. You will probably find that these are

normal and those of us who do not support chimney trees are abnormal. Welcome to the Pinkus horticulturalists.

What a load of rubbish

by Kevin Ziants

During the Shabbat morning service on 24th April Rabbi Rachel gave a sermon based on the theme reading for this service of Conservation. It was a reality check on what has gone so badly wrong with our environment. Rather



Someone must have been looking down on us in a positive light on the day, as we were blessed with glorious sunshine during this soggy May. 9 members of The Mosaic Community turned up and it was great seeing some of our members 'in real life' for the first time in ages.

than giving us a feeling of hopelessness we had an open discussion on what we as individual gestures can do to help protect our environment. For example not leaving the tap running when cleaning your teeth. Ironically, the next day Olivia and I were attending a litter pick event at our local park in Canons Park. This proved to be productive as well as welcome exercise. This inspired me as a Mosaic Community Mitzvah day to carry out a litter pick at one of my favourite areas for a walk, Stanmore Common. This is of course just down the road from our new building.

The agreed date was 30th May. I was fortunate that the head warden there, Simon Braidman, is a personal friend. Also Harrow Council was very co-operative in providing litter pickers, bags and gloves

Simon promoted this event to passers-by the week before and cajoled three members of the public to participate. Two other park wardens joined in and were so grateful for our initiative.

While our work was satisfying, there was immense frustration on what was thrown away on the ground even next to a bin. To keep me going, I was imagining stories behind each litter trail, even the used condom. There also appeared to be old remains of a car that between us we found a way of disposing of into our bags.

The photo gives an indication of our achievement. As individuals we cannot resolve underlying issues of the world. However, like with this event, we can chip away with small acts of kindness that will go a long way in trying to make the world a better place.



100 Years Young!

by Alan Solomon



1921 saw the declaration of the Irish Free State, the opening of Southwark Bridge by King George V, and the birth of a lady who has been for many years a very prominent member, and a Vice-President, of Mosaic Liberal Synagogue.

Cynthia Green, who celebrated her 100th birthday on 7th May, was the older sister to her three brothers, two of whom became doctors and the other a dentist. The family lived above their knitwear shop in Poplar. In an interview at the time of her 99th birthday, she recalled what life was like in those early days. Their father did the cutting, their mother the knitting, the finished goods were sold, and Cynthia remembered that her job, at the age of four or five, was to ask the customers what they would like to take (a packet of pins?) instead of the farthing change from their purchase of 2/11¾d (just under 15p). There was no television of course in those days, but they had a radiogram and played games such as snakes and ladders, ludo and monopoly. Cynthia became a draughtswoman during the war, one of only two girls in the workshop, and worked in a company that manufactured switchgear. She later went to work for her father's ladies' and children's wear business, "Peter Pan", starting at the bottom which included sweeping the floor. She was taught bookkeeping by her father and loved the work, describing it as "great



fun", but later, with changes in that type of business, the shops they had opened were gradually sold. In 1987 Cynthia bought a hosiery business with the son of a friend of hers, and worked there until she was 92!

She was married to Sidney, who had been a prisoner-of-war, for 51 years, and they learned to play

bridge, which became very important to them. Cynthia has devoted much of her considerable energy to the old Wembley Liberal Synagogue, which she joined around 1950, now of course Mosaic Liberal. She was Vice-Chairman for a time, and was very active over many years in fund-raising, particularly for Israel, helping with the annual bazaar, etc. Much of her social life was centred around the Synagogue and the building we occupied at 326 Preston Road, and she met and became close friends with many people younger than herself, a number of whom took part in a Zoomed get-together to mark her 100th birthday. Work and synagogue had come together when she was asked by her shul Chairman, who had many business and other interests, to become his PA, a job she greatly enjoyed.

Cynthia unfortunately now suffers from failing eyesight but remains as mentally alert as she always has been. She has a wide circle of friends from all walks of her life, keeps in touch with everyone, and continues to take an interest in everything that goes on around her. Long may she continue to do so!

Counting to Our Beraichis D Day

by Edwin Lucas



Being a child comes to mind. Every day is the same. Counting is key. Is this right?

I am so excited about the future and our new building that I am counting down to D Day. This D is not the same as the D everyone who is older than me, remembers. This D stands for Dedication Day, when we will be dedicating the new Stanmore Hill Building to the future of our community's ideals and faith. This is so exciting. As I write this, I am reckoning on 300 days. Counting is not my forte and Lawrence would say that in building a building, one needs to have a flexible attitude to counting. There is so much to think about and that is where we all come in. We need to engage our minds in counting on lots of different fronts. I was thinking of days but one has to think of good weather days and roofing days and handover day and fit-out days and dedication service day. So, what count do we wish to use? I like to think of moving in day but hand over shell day might well be 50 days earlier. Whatever we think, we need to embrace newness and need to think of the new life in the new home with new members in a new beginning. New thinking to embrace all this newness is key, from us all, as the word new has 3 letters, making it one letter per part of Mosaic – Liberal, Masorti, Reform. I was thinking of the word New and what each letter could stand for in our future thoughts. I have made:-

- **N** Novel as we are introducing a novel religious-based experience in the UK
- **E** Exceptional relating to exceptional thinking, to promote a new beginning in all our lives
- **W** Welcome being what we will all be doing in Stanmore Hill. MM members will know that the Shehechyonu brocha is my favourite of all brochas. I wonder how many shehechyonus will be recited in the new building, within the first month of holding services and events. I wonder if there should be a sweepstake on the topic and whilst we cannot gamble we could have a shehechyonu board, naming all shehechyonists and honouring their attendance and participation for a new tomorrow.

Tomorrow is our new Beraishis and it will not be long till 300 days becomes 200 days. We all need to plan for the new Beraichis and there is so much to think about in a short time.

Medals and meaning in a troubled time

by Michael Marx

At the time of writing (Tuesday 25th May - Friday 4th June 2021), I am conflicted about the happenings of the last fortnight. I am delighted and proud



for my father, Kurt Marx, who, having been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) by the UK Government, received the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany from the German Ambassador at his residence in central London a week ago at the age of 95. (And, in case you were interested, the Ambassador did not serve Ferrero Rocher.) The medal is awarded by the President of the Federal Republic "...for achievements that served the rebuilding of the country in the fields of political, socioeconomic and intellectual activity, and is intended to mean an award of all those whose work contributes to the peaceful rise of the Federal Republic of Germany." In this particular instance, the award was for services to Holocaust education. But I am dismayed that for him (and also for me as a Second Generationer), events may have come full circle. In November 1938, when he was just 13, Kurt Marx woke up on the morning of Thursday 10th and prepared to leave for school on his bicycle. He witnessed

scenes of widespread damage to businesses and religious institutions owned by Jews. The night before had been Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass. On arriving, he was met at the gates by a teacher who informed him that there would be no school that day. He should go home. Three months later he left Germany by train on a Kindertransport. His life was to change dramatically. He never saw his parents again: they were transported to Maly Trostenets, a Nazi extermination site just outside Minsk in Belarus, where they were murdered. Kurt received basic schooling in Bedford, until he was 15 years old, at which point he was required to leave (like all the other Kinder at the school) and go out to work: as he puts it, "if you don't work, you don't eat." He lived the typical life of a survivor or a refugee from the Nazi depredations. These people tended to fall into two distinct groups - those who talked incessantly about their experiences and those who stayed silent. Kurt fell into the second group, not least because his wife was an Auschwitz survivor who was also unwilling to speak about her ordeal. By an incredible coincidence, her father had also been taken to Maly Trostenets, where he met the same fate as Kurt's parents. They enjoyed a long marriage, though towards its end, when my mother died, Kurt became her full-time carer, throughout her slow decline due to Parkinson's

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disease. They had one child - me. During my childhood and subsequently, my factual knowledge of their experiences

during the war was minimal, though much was transmitted through a kind of ritual absorption of their trauma with compulsory viewing of television programmes like *The World At War*, always in a darkened room, with tears streaming down my mother's face as she made herself relive what she went through. We went to Germany only once, in 1991, when we attended a reunion for the former pupils of the Jawne school in Köln, that my father went to before Kristallnacht. Other than that, I had no significant direct contact with the family or its grim history. Only after my mother died did my father become more communicative: in a way, he became a man with a mission, trying to make up for lost time. He started to make contact with other former Kinder, through the Association of Jewish Refugees (AJR). Then came a major turning point in his journey. A journalist from Cologne (the city of Kurt's birth), who wanted to write about the life of a local Kind, was put in touch with him via the AJR. She wrote her story and they became good friends - to this day. Suddenly, Kurt became "hot property". He visited Maly Trostenets as a guest of a German Christian organisation that was involved in the development of a new memorial to the thousands of people murdered there by the Nazis. He was invited to tell his story to an audience from Germany and Belarus, including local dignitaries and visiting ones including the German President. He



has since spoken to children in schools in the UK and Germany and has been involved in video testimony projects with the AJR,

German media and the National Holocaust Centre in Nottingham. But...we now live in a time when Holocaust survivors and refugees are coming to the end of their lives. Within a few years, the Shoah will no longer be within living memory. There is much discussion in educational circles about how Holocaust education will be delivered after that point. It is already the case that, despite the efforts of many organisations like the AJR, the Wiener Library, the Holocaust Educational Trust, etc., for current generations of schoolchildren and students, the Shoah is just another historical event, far distant from personal experience and current concerns. For the last five years, anti-Semitism has not only become acceptable in mainstream discourse, in particular because of its conflation with anti-Zionism, that has served as a convenient fig leaf for Jew-hatred. The investigation by the EHRC into institutionalised anti-Semitism in Corbyn's Labour Party condemned its enabling of this agenda, and its failure to adequately address it. Post Corbyn, the same leading exponents of anti-Semitism are still there, continuing to drip their poison despite their new leader vowing to "...tear out anti-Semitism (in the party) by the roots." And now, even though we felt we had dodged the proverbial bullet in 2019, the constant anti-Zionist/anti-Semitic agenda has been amplified around the world, to the point that we are now seeing that agenda being

accompanied by bullying in schools and violence on the streets. And while our political leaders have spoken words of condemnation, action there has been none. The perpetrators think they can act with impunity (because, at this moment) they can. My father is facing a hugely contradictory moment, as am I. For him, it's another "It could never happen here" moment. The kind of attitude (and consequent actions) towards Jews around the world, within living memory of the Holocaust, indicates that societies have learned nothing from history, and have the means to swiftly disseminate

their prejudice, hatred and lies about us to millions of ignorant, naive and impressionable people using social media, so easy in this "post-truth" era. I can only contemplate the (English?) irony of my father, within a matter of days of each other, receiving a medal from the nation who murdered his family, then seeing scenes on the streets of UK cities and around the world that closely resemble 1930s Germany in the run-up to Kristallnacht. Mazal Tov and Kol Hakovod to Kurt. And God help us all.

A Jewish Approach to Meditation

by Esther Aronsfeld

During the past year when our world turned upside down and anxiety levels shot through the roof, many people turned to meditation in search of inner peace and meaning. But if your idea of meditation is sitting cross legged in a lotus position, chanting 'om' in a trance like state - think again.



seekers like me had to look outside our tradition to learn a meditative practice. However, the good news is that meditation along with other spiritual practices are finding their way into mainstream Judaism.

What then is meditation and what makes it Jewish?

Meditation is often associated with eastern traditions, particularly Buddhism. So it might surprise you to learn that Judaism has a long history of meditation stretching back centuries. Scholars suggest that it was even present in the Torah. Until recently however the existence of meditation was barely known outside the Chasidic world. As a result

Put simply, meditation is a contemplative practice found within the Jewish tradition. It is a specific kind of activity that involves directing the mind for a set period of time using techniques that are different from ordinary thinking and day dreaming.

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The Hebrew term associated with meditation *hitbodedut*, self-isolation, reminds us how important it is to take time out from the demands and distractions of daily life to sit quietly and pay attention to what is going on inside us.

Silence may be anathema to many Jews. As people of The Book, we are more used to discussing, debating and disagreeing. But it is only through silence, through stillness and through paying attention to the 'still small voice' within that we learn to connect with our true nature, and with God, the divine source that flows within and around us. When we sit in meditation we come to appreciate that divinity is in each and every person, place and thing in the world.

Like many people you probably don't pay much attention to this inner silence as you rush from one thing to the next, juggling responsibilities and meeting deadlines. Often we are so wrapped up in our thoughts we lose sight of who we are and what is important in life. But just as a musical instrument can't be tuned while it is being played, so we can't attune to or experience the silence while we are rushing around.

What distinguishes Jewish meditation from other religious traditions is its Jewish context, its purpose and its content. Jewish meditation uses words, symbols and images that come from the Jewish tradition. The meditations themselves and the teachings that go along with them reflect Jewish principles and values. You don't need to be religious or have advanced knowledge of Hebrew or Judaism to enjoy the benefits. And you certainly don't need to sit cross legged for hours!

There are different kinds of Jewish meditation

practices. Some focus on the flow of the breath, some on the repetition of a Hebrew word, phrase or biblical verse, some focus on a Jewish symbol or the letters of God's name (*yod heh vav heh*), some on opening the heart to experience divine love and peace and some on increasing our awareness of the world around us. Other more advanced forms suitable only for experienced meditators use techniques to enter a state of emptiness or no thought. Each one has a specific Jewish goal. All offer a deeper connection to the spiritual, loving side of Judaism and to greater self-awareness.

One form of meditation that has helped people manage stress during the pandemic is mindfulness. In Hebrew 'mindfulness' translates as *yishuv hadaat* meaning a settled and calm state of mind. Mindfulness meditation enables us to observe our thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations as they arise without being pulled along or overwhelmed by them. We are able to look at our lives through a lens of non-judgement, loving kindness, compassion and love. In doing so we learn to free ourselves from the mental habits that undermine our capacity to be fully present to ourselves, to others and to the sparks of holiness that exist in all life.

In our special taster session 'Be still and know' on Sunday 4th July you will have a chance to experience two of the core Jewish meditation practices which can support us as we emerge from lockdown.

Be Still and *Know*

An experience of Jewish meditation

Sunday 4th July, 2.00-3.00 pm



with Esther Aronsfeld

Meditation lies at the heart of the Jewish spiritual experience.

Come and experience some of the core Jewish meditation practices and how to apply them in your daily life.

Suitable for beginners, you won't need to get into a full lotus position to benefit from this ancient spiritual practice which offers a path to a deeper connection with the spiritual side of Judaism and to greater self-awareness.

We will be in silence for part of the time.

This session will be held on Zoom and the details will appear in the weekly notices.

Bits and pieces

by bernard fisherman



There are cures and treatments for
conditions galore

Pills and lotions more and more
A new heart, a lung, perhaps a leg or an arm
New knees and hips work like a charm
New teeth to enjoy salt beef and chips

And those Kosher delights that enhance the
hips

Hip hip hooray for the medical world
Their experiments are seriously bold
But as good as they are it has to be said
They still can't cure the common cold

Michael Barnet ("z'l")

by Jemma & Robert Vincent

Jemma and I always knew there was more to Michael than we could ever know, and since his passing on April 24th, much like so many others, we have gone through a rollercoaster of emotions as we've listened to the many memories, facts, tales and anecdotes that people have kindly shared about their own relationships and experiences with him.



We learned of his love for particular novelists and the stage, his sense of humour and devilishly funny and contagious laugh, the sad story of his childhood pet dog, the incredible role he played as Head of Akiva Jewish School, and then laughed when hearing of his requests to be dropped so far from his home in Harrow and his relentless stubbornness and refusal to accept even the smallest acts of kindness or gestures, amongst other things, all of which rang very true to form from our own experiences.

So we sat and listened intently and smiled, laughed and cried, whilst learning more and hearing of everyone's experiences and memories with the man who played such a unique and significant part in our lives and who we hold very dear. We related to much of everyone's stories and whilst we desperately wanted to contribute and share some of our own during his Shiva, unfortunately we just couldn't find the composure to hold it together long enough to do so, and so we let the opportunity pass.

Perhaps Michael is watching over us and recognised how much we so wanted to contribute, because by some amazingly good fortune it came to be that during a phone call, Ann Simon kindly asked Jemma if we would like to write an article in the forthcoming

Kehila, about Michael. And there, like a ray of sunshine, presented our chance to share with everyone, and naturally we jumped at the opportunity and feel privileged and grateful to be able to do so.

Our journey with Michael began around 2001-2002. Jemma was 22, me 23. Not long before, we had spoken in detail with the late Rabbi Simon Franses, about beginning the process for me to convert, and we had begun to formalise the process. Sadly, shortly after the plans had been laid out and agreed, Rabbi Franses became ill and he advised he had sought an alternative person with whom I would study and be taught.

Of course, we were saddened by the news of Rabbi Franses' illness and further saddened, somewhat selfishly, that I would not be able to be taught by him, such was my fondness of the Rabbi who had been so kind and welcoming to me when I contacted him years earlier to enquire about attending some services now and then with a view to converting in the future. Goodness knows what he must've thought in that first, out of the blue phone call and whether he considered I was serious or

not but, regardless, he opened his doors to Middlesex New Synagogue and the community to Jemma and me and for that we were and remain forever grateful.

And so, he introduced us to Michael Barnett, as my teacher. Being somewhat younger and carefree at the time, I cannot

recall the first time we met Michael officially, no doubt at Shul prior to a service; what I do remember is that we'd been attending services for at least a couple of years by that time, and owing largely to my less than forthcoming nature, we had never met or shaken hands with Michael. In fact we really didn't know anything of him or his standing within the Shul, only that he was always part of the choir.

Anyhow, the introduction was made and we eventually discussed a suitable time and day with Michael where I would come to his flat for an hour once a week for Jewish studies, Bible readings, learning to read Hebrew and to prepare me for my conversion exam and life in Judaism. We settled on Thursdays, 8-9pm at Appin Court and there for the next 2 years my Thursday nights were spent.

I would arrive and be greeted by Michael, always smartly dressed and rounded off beautifully with a pair of smart, suede-looking slippers, welcomed into his beautifully presented, immaculate home. We would enter his living room and at the table were presented with what looked like the most delicate China crockery consisting a pot of freshly brewed tea and a plate holding an ensemble of biscuits. And this became our ritual for 2 years.

If I am being brutally honest, I had thought at first it would be somewhat of a chore

"I would arrive and be greeted by Michael, always smartly dressed... welcomed into his beautifully presented, immaculate home"

spending my Thursday nights learning about religion, I mean Thursdays were the new Friday back then and I was keen to join my friends in Harrow for a pint.

What transpired, was a genuine fondness as I very quickly began to look forward to my Thursday evenings learning with Michael, to the extent it

always felt more social than learning. His incredibly hospitable nature, his kindness, his way of teaching and of course the delicious cups of brewed tea, had me thoroughly looking forward to that one hour a week when I could be sure of no work or peer pressures to deal with, just a quiet hour, sipping tea, and being taught in a way in which I've never experienced, and furthermore enjoying what I was learning - something I can safely say was never the case at high school!

Those 2 years had flown by, and before we knew it, we found ourselves at the Leo Baeck College in Finchley for my conversion exam/interview, which Michael attended with Jemma and me.

To this day I've no idea whether the teacher's attendance to the exam is standard practice or not, but I do know at the time that it meant the world to me, to both of us, that Michael was with us every step, offering calmness, kind words and unwavering support, pass or no pass.

Now with a few more years (and children, and grey hair) behind me, in addition to my gratitude, I realise we were very privileged to have been able to share that experience with Michael. He was such a big part of our journey, it's clear that his teachings and our friendship was much more *Continued on following page >>*

than just learning about Judaism and reading Hebrew and attending Shul, it was also shaping me and preparing me to be the person I am fortunate to be today, a son, brother, friend, husband and father.

And it is that last one, the father I am, the parents Jemma and I are, that whenever we saw Michael whilst accompanied by any of our children, the most incredible sense of pride would wash over me every time without fail. Pride not just at what we had achieved, but also pride that Michael had played such a significant part in that too, and I always hoped, despite my not having the courage to openly say it to him, that he knew just how much it all meant to us.

We all have milestone events in our lives, some good, others less good, but moments that stay with us forever. And rewinding briefly to the day of my exam at Leo Baeck College, we had one such moment when I emerged from the examination room into a hallway where Jemma and Michael awaited me, having just been told that I had finally passed, I was officially Jewish.

Upon seeing them both standing next to each other and showing a complete lack of composure in one's emotions, I burst into tears at which point Jemma and I grabbed each other with Michael also caught in the crossfire, resulting in the three of us embraced together for a few moments. How long it was I couldn't tell you, but it was the only time I ever embraced Michael in such a way, all opportunities prior and thereafter were made simply of lovely pleasantries and a gentlemanly handshake. I suspect a few people feel the same, but I truly would've hugged Michael

every time I saw him, though I do not know he would've been entirely comfortable himself. That said, it makes that one time all the more special and adds to the memory of the occasion and moment.

Not long after my conversion, Jemma was keen to tie me down to some nuptials, and preparations for the big day were well underway. And it was an act during this time that I think sums Michael up in a way many can also relate, certainly Jemma and I both look back realising just how naive we were regarding Michael back then.

We had issued invitations to our wedding, which included a celebration at Mrs Goide's Royal Majestic Banqueting Suite. Much to our great disappointment, Michael declined. It is easy to look back now and see it after knowing everything we now know, but at that time we were genuinely heartbroken and didn't understand. We had taken for granted he would want to celebrate with us and considered him a nailed on "yes", in fact we had gone as far as discussing exactly who we would sit him with and everything. Nevertheless, it wasn't to be.

It took some time for us to get our heads around it, but we eventually understood it was nothing to do with us, it was about Michael, his nature, his privacy and his wishes. And we respect that hugely - even though we missed him that amazing afternoon.

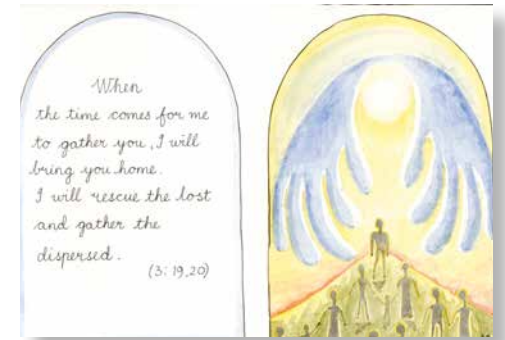
Neither Jemma nor I have ever written a piece for someone special who has passed, and it is proving difficult not only to find the right words to close with, but to close at all, as it feels somehow like our final farewell to Michael.

But here goes... we are grateful to have had the opportunity to meet, be taught and shared experiences and special moments in our lives with Michael. We're especially grateful to have been able to share our family with him, and for our children to have been able to meet him, there's no doubt we owe much to him for everything he did for us. He holds a special place in our family and our hearts and we miss him dearly.

We are not ones for the classics, but we scoured online for a quote from writers who we now know Michael enjoyed, and we found this brief quote from Charles Dickens' novel David Copperfield, which feels very fitting - "Never be mean in anything; never be false;

never be cruel. Avoid those three vices, Trot, and I can always be hopeful of you."

G-d bless you Michael Barnett x



Michael Barnett – A Memory

by Chris Broughton, Carisbrooke, Isle of Wight, May, 2021

I first met Michael when I visited Roxbourne First School, South Harrow during May, 1991, to have a 'look around' with the prospect of working there full time after the summer holidays. Michael showed me around the school in his own imitable way, gently persuading me to take the teaching position.

I was extremely fortunate to work alongside Michael until his retirement in July, 1999 and, needless to say, I learnt so much from him. It can be said he was by far, the friendliest, kindest and professional person that I'd known. We became great friends, as well as colleagues and knew one another extremely well.

I've many, many happy memories of Michael. Firstly, as is well-known, Michael was always immaculately dressed every day, rain, hail or shine, and the most well-mannered of individuals. Every morning, regardless of weather, he always kept his trilby hat on until the children arrived. If he met anyone, male or female, he immediately 'doffed his hat', with a cheery 'Good morning!' He was indeed one of the 'old school'.

I also remember all the staff photographs at the school and, as Michael and I were the only male staff members, he suggested that we both wear bow-ties for the occasion, which we did – Continued on following page >>

different ones every year.

My final recollection was during the one hour 'compulsory' staff meetings on a Monday afternoon. Michael and I called these meetings 'The Happy Hour'. They were all so tedious, and we both used to sit there with our glasses perched on the lower part of our noses, looking at one another and 'tut-tutting' and shaking our heads at everything. Over the years we became known as 'the terrible twins'.

His afternoon tea was, as usual, always immaculately presented, as though it was taken straight from the Savoy – perfectly prepared bridge rolls, cake, and biscuits, with china cups, saucers and plates.

I have so many more extremely happy memories of Michael and, on reflection, I feel so privileged to have known him for thirty years and both Brenda and I feel that, now he has passed on, there is a 'great void' in our lives. He'll never ever be forgotten.

Kyiv Koppers

by Alan Solomon



One serious effect of the pandemic has been that, with the shul building having been closed for so long, members of Mosaic Liberal have been unable to deposit their loose change in our Kyiv Koppers jar. And there will of course only be limited opportunities during the rest of this year for us to meet together until we are able to move into Stanmore Hill in early 2022, and members can then continue to donate their spare coins to help our fellow Progressive Jews in Ukraine. As Rabbi Alex Dukhovny, Chief Rabbi of the Progressive Jewish Congregations in Ukraine, told us in his interview on Zoom last December, they are so grateful for the £17,000 we have been able to collect for them since 2000 (plus many thousands more from our Yom Kippur Appeals) to help them in their valuable work.

But with the pandemic and the economic

and political problems they continue to face, our financial support is even more important. Members can continue to donate those coins they had almost forgotten about – many of us now hardly use coins at all in these days of Covid concerns – by phoning Jackie Alexander in the office on **020-8864 0133** on a Tuesday or Thursday morning, or e-mailing finance@mosaicliberal.org.uk, and asking her to arrange for someone to collect them. All contributions, large or small, will go towards helping Rabbi Alex's communities, and we know will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.



How well did you know Bessborough Road?



The following quiz was presented at the 'Farewell event to Bessborough Road' on 23rd May (Answers on page 38)

1. When you arrive, the first thing you'll be thinking about is parking. How many spaces are in the car park? 15, 17 or 20
2. Over the entrance to the door is written: "Wisdom ---- - house". Complete the missing words
3. In the Reform Synagogue there are chandeliers. How many? 4, 6 or 8? How many bulbs are there in one of the chandeliers?
4. How many windows are there around the ceiling? 48, 53 or 59?
5. And, talking about the ceiling, two of my children told me that on a long Yom Kippur afternoon they tried to work out how many tiles were in the ceiling! I can now enlighten them! How many do you think there are? Between 800 and 1000, between 1000 and 1300 or between 1300 and 16,00?
6. A collage, depicting the current building, was created to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Middlesex New Synagogue. Was that in 2008, 2009 or 2010?
7. There were 2 clocks downstairs.

What was unusual about the one in the Reform Synagogue? In whose memory was the one in the kitchen dedicated?

8. When the current building was erected there was a conscious decision not to display lots of plaques. However there are 3 exceptions.....

- When was the current building dedicated? 1970, 1974 or 1977.
- There is a plaque recording the name of the architect. Who was that?
- There is a rose tree planted outside near the front door. Planted by?

Now let's go upstairs...

9. How many doors lead off the corridor upstairs?
10. On the left-hand side of the main door into the Liberal synagogue is a photo of a distinguished looking gentleman. Who was he?
11. And just before you leave the building, when is a brick not a brick? Something replaces one of the bricks in the foyer. What is it?

(Near right) Harry Grant checking the height for hagbah (lifting the scroll) at Stanmore Hill



(Far right) Progress at Stanmore Hill, June 2021





Board Of Deputies

by Michael Reik

Board of Deputies Plenary Meeting held 9th May 2021 by Zoom

The first part of the meeting enabled the candidates for President and Vice-President to speak to the membership for ten minutes, inviting questions to themselves from the members after an initial 4-minute presentation about themselves.

Sheila Gewolb, Senior Vice-President, took this part of the meeting.

President Marie van der Zyl first spoke, relying on her record for the past three years to enable her to be re-elected. She included the fact that there has been an increase in younger members to the assembly and a queue of new organisations wishing to become members.

She was followed by Jonathan Neumann, standing for President, who explained his involvement for many years in many aspects of British Jewish organisations and included a book he had written as an analysis of current American Jewry. He referred to his wish to include deputies in a host of far-reaching programmes, taking advantage of individual skills.

We then heard from the five candidates standing for the three Vice-President positions.

First, Richard Cohen, Deputy for Loughton and Chigwell Congregation. Among his

points, he was concerned at how little Board Members hear from discussions with the Foreign Office, how little deputies are involved; and believed there should be a separation of the constitution into two sections to separate the Trustees' responsibility from Insurance for Deputies. Second, we heard from David Mendoza Wolfson, Deputy for EHRS congregation. He is in favour of a young deputy assembly. He believes each of the three subcommittees should handle a project for discussion and approval at Plenary. He wishes to work with University Councils to make Uni a safe place for Jewish Students to study. Third, we heard from Amanda Bowman, current Vice-President, Deputy for Hampstead Synagogue. She would set up a community partnership challenge. She wishes to engage with those parts of the Jewish Community not members at the Board. She stated through Defence Division she helped Jewish Students at University. She wants to involve far more deputies than are currently involved. Fourth, Stuart Macdonald, standing for Liberal Judaism, stood by his record as Treasurer for the past 6 years, believed in greater roles for women, a young deputies' council and more involvement for the regions. He also believes in skills-based ambassadors from the Board



President
Marie van der Zyl



Senior Vice-President
Gary Mond



Vice-President
David Mendoza Wolfson



Vice-President
Amanda Bowman

to talk with the outside world. He does not believe the constitution is a quick fix. Fifth, Gary Mond, deputy for the Jewish National Fund, believes he is the change candidate. He spent some time explaining the workings of the JNF in Israel. He believed that deputies should be disciplined if they cause offence while they are a deputy rather than only if they are acting in the roll of a deputy (this was in response to a question about deputies who had made disparaging remarks of the current Israeli Ambassador)

Members were able to vote from mid-day Sunday 9th to mid-day Monday 10th and the results were:

- President Marie van der Zyl
- Senior Vice-President Gary Mond
- Vice-President David Mendoza Wolfson
- Vice-President Amanda Bowman

We then had the International Committee report from Sheila Gewolb, her last in this role and as Vice-President. Two points raised to Sheila by deputies (1) The BOD should defend Israel against the Human Rights Watch report demonising Israel that came out in the last two weeks. (2) That BOD comment on 'Criminal acts' by police against Palestinians in East Jerusalem in the past two days

The Communities report was then presented by Edwin Shuker who was standing down as Vice-President. There were no questions to Edwin, just accolades on his time as Vice-President. He, however, presented the motion on Climate Change which had been postponed from the previous meeting. This was adopted and carried by 85% to 15%. Of interest is that 30 synagogues have joined Eco-Synagogues to work on Climate Change where it is relevant.

The Defence Committee report and the Treasurer's report were both presented but not discussed as the Vice-Presidents, Amanda Bowman and Stuart Macdonald, were both standing for Vice- Presidential positions in the elections.

Similarly, the President's report was presented but not discussed as Marie van der Zyl was standing for re-election

If you missed any of our events, you can catch up with them by visiting www.choosemosaic.org and clicking on "what's on" and "past events". There are more than 80 recordings to choose from!

Meet the Author, Comedian, Broadcaster David Baddiel

by Michael Reik

On Wednesday evening 14th April David was interviewed by Alex Gerlis on his new book 'Jews Don't Count', providing a quite different slant on anti-



Semitism.

174 separate zoom stations were online glued to this event.

This book has been described by Howard Jacobson, as a 'Bare knuckle fist fight of a book' and provides many examples of modern anti-Semitism. Racism does not seem to include Jews. Jews are often looked at as wealthy, privileged, etc, but not as minorities who may need protection. A major example being the cartoon/ mural that Jeremy Corbyn enjoyed, showing supposed Jewish bankers

suppressing the poor. Corbyn relates Jews to being capitalists and he is anti- Capitalist (not understanding his anti-capitalist view of wealthy Jews as anti-Semitic)

Many people do not see anti-Semitism as a form of racism, as they relate Jews to their religious side only. However, hate of Jews is not related to their religion as shown by the attacker at the Pittsburgh Synagogue who found it a convenient location, because many Jews were in a group together, to shoot at them en masse.

For a considerable time in the UK Jews have not been prepared to speak up about their Judaism or about being Jewish, having from time to time felt oppressed. David mentioned, now that these matters have been raised in his book, especially younger Jews are prepared to stand up to the parapet; In America Jews far more relate to their identity. In all aspects of business, culture (not so much sport) Americans will put their Jewishness forward. There is far less emphasis on this in the United Kingdom.

The book is about anti-Semitism mainly in the UK; However non-Jews so often bring Israel now into the equation as part of anti-Semitism, being unable to divorce the subject of Jews from the subject of Israel.

Modern technology, in particular the internet, labels Jews as oppressors because of the existence of the State of Israel

Anti-Semitism was used as a means of weaponisation by the Tory party at the last election, so said Labour.

Leonardo Da Vinci

A 15th century artist whose Concepts
& Artistic ideas anticipated 21st century
Imaging

by David Wyman



Professor Peter Abrahams gave us a most illuminating talk on the anatomical sketch books of Leonardo Da Vinci. These are now kept in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle. Leonardo originally did the sketches between about 1485 and 1515. Peter explained that earlier attempts at anatomical drawings by Avicenna 1000CE, a physician of the Islamic world, Galen a Greek, physician 129-216CE, were very primitive. The De Humani Corporis Fabrica 1545 by Andreas Vesalius, one of the most influential books on anatomy, does not have any of Leonardo's sketches. It is truly amazing that his work was totally unpublished in his lifetime.

Among Leonardo's findings were that men and women had the same number of teeth, thirty-two used for cutting and grinding. He noted that the women had smaller brains than men but more connections and thus their ability to multitask! [Continued on following page >>](#)

REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

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We were informed that Leonardo imagined the head sectioned through the middle, its layers likened to those of an onion. He correctly showed the meningeal membrane of the dura mater extending along the optic nerve to the eye.

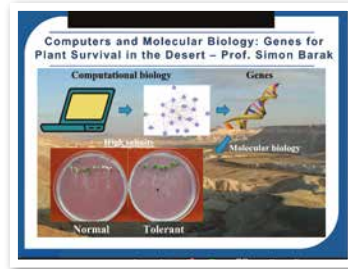
His drawings of the different muscles in the body were spot on. Peter got us to demonstrate on ourselves the contraction of the biceps muscle. It flexes our forearm at the elbow. Ashamedly I had forgotten it is also responsible for supinating (turning) it!

His anatomical drawings of the heart were accurate in showing all the valves although the heart in his illustration was probably from an ox!

His sketches of the hand were systematically treated from the inside to the outside starting with the bones and then the skeleton with the ligaments followed by the muscles and so on.

Peter juxtaposed the sketches with CT scanning imaging so the interpretation of the anatomy was facilitated even to the layman. We were reminded that Leonardo did his own 3-dimensional drawings in 2 dimensions.

As a retired medic I found the talk absolutely fascinating but I am sure the rest of the zoom audience did as well. If only CT scanning had been available when I laboriously dissected cadavers 50 years ago!



based presentation that captured our interest. Moreover, for me, because it was aimed at my 'layman's level' of understanding.

Simon briefly summarised his life-choice to make Aliyah after encountering anti-Semitism, and then a eureka moment after reading "Exodus" and "Brave New World".

Highly qualified, he publishes and conducts his research at the Sde Boker Campus of Ben Gurion University in the Negev in Israel and is a world leader in the study of plant life in harsh environments.

He talked us through the research in other areas at the University. Water Research examines desalination, water-pollution, agriculture in dry lands, and how energy can be produced in arid areas.

Solar Energy Research has meant that, rather than use conventional rooftop solar panels, there is now a far more efficient panel to produce heat and hot water, the size of a hand.

He also delved into the area of water pollution via sewers, petrol stations and farms - a major problem in the western world. Early-warning detection systems will help avoid such problems. Research has shown that organic farming methods can be more polluting than conventional slow water drip irrigation owing to the massive doses of nitrates in the former.

Meet Simon Barak

by Viv Levinson

Sunday 25th April's zoom with Professor Simon Barak, on Research and Innovation in the Negev, was a science-

Another field of research at the University, turning human waste into energy, was quite graphically illustrated! Untreated effluent in some parts of the world is no worse than our first world problems of fat-bergs and excessive use of water. A process that converts our "waste" into a "coal" and a liquid plant feed, is literally in the pipeline.

Prof. Barak explained his own particular field of research - genetically modifying plants so they can tolerate heat and salt, and thus be productive. We can also learn from nature - bugs, bacteria and crustaceans adapt to their environment.

The afternoon ended with questions and the conclusion that research such as Simon's has far-reaching effects including the advancement of medicine, while fulfilling Ben Gurion's vision: to settle the Negev, make work, and it work for us.

Meet the Author – Dr Jennifer Langer

by Rosemary

Wolfson



Jennifer is the Founding Director of Exiled Writers Ink, established to bring together migrant and refugee writers, and was interviewed by Steve Levinson on Tuesday 27th April.

She was formerly a primary school teacher in

inner London and worked with ethnic minority children. EWI has been in existence for 20 years, and the celebratory book, "Resistance" has recently been published.

Jennifer read out a moving extract of a work by Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, the famous prisoner in Iran, which she had been given by her husband, Richard.

Steve asked Jennifer if she was influenced in her work as a child of refugees from Nazi Germany and answered that there was suppressed trauma in her home, partly as a result of her parents' former German identity. Her father had been arrested on Kristallnacht and sent to Buchenwald. Amongst other horrors he witnessed hangings, starvation, and collected rainwater in his hat for drinking; he was only there for two months and didn't talk about his experiences himself to his daughter.

On a positive note, Jennifer had received the proofs of her own poetry book, "The Search", that morning. It includes works on the themes of roots, identity and the position of contemporary refugees. She read "I could have been" – her mother had considered settling in Uruguay, so Jennifer might have been either Uruguayan or indeed German!

In answer to my question at the end, about whether Jennifer would take poetry by writers whose views she did not agree with, she just said that she wouldn't accept polemics, homophobic or racist literature. Jennifer does want to develop further themes on Black Lives Matter. She has also written about anti-Semitism and is interested in how Israel treats Palestinians. Interestingly a writer from Uyghur who now lives in Malaysia, has been in touch with Jennifer.

Continued on following page >>

I felt this was a fascinating talk, partly because it challenged the audience to comprehend sometimes difficult and serious issues raised.

Meet the City Editor and Author – Alex Brummer

by David Safir



On 2nd May, listening to one journalist interviewing another not only gives you (at least) two sides of the story but the reassurance

that fact-checking has been included free-of-charge. When they've known each other - and have been illuminating the dismal science with colourful prose - for 40 years, like our host Steve "Channel 4" Levinson and guest Alex "Daily Mail" Brummer, it's entertaining too: a verbal knockabout with witty punchlines, tantalising cliff-hangers and a joyful indifference to punctuation.

In "The Great British Reboot" (his latest "soon to be best-selling" book), Alex highlights most of the opportunities and just a few of the risks facing post-Brexit Britain; but his own ability to adapt ("The Great Brummer Reboot"?) sounded just as compelling. City Editor of the post-Paul Dacre (mellow) Daily Mail? Chair a relaunched and reinvigorated

Jewish News? Re-brand the Abraham Fund as the Abraham Initiatives (without alienating American patrons)? No problem: as a journalist, economist, strategist and "fixer", Alex has always relished the challenges and found a way to overcome them.

Ibsen said that "a picture is worth a thousand words", but old habits die hard; so, for Alex and Steve it was more a masterclass in "painting by numbers". In less than 1 hour, we learned that Alex had been City Editor for 20 years (the record is 27), that a £40 face cream from Paris now costs £79 duty paid, that 74% of the UK economy is services-based, that 4 of the world's top universities are in the UK (none is in the EU); and that Astra-Zeneca is not only 96% British and the 2nd largest FTSE 100 company but pledged to supply 3 billion doses of its vaccine at \$3 (while Pfizer's costs \$40). What's more, we learned that the UK has signed 62 bilateral trade agreements, that with just 3% of world GDP Australia is its largest source of metals, that 35% of Israel's doctors and most of its pharmacists are Palestinian; and (in case you wondered) that Alex is paid nothing for chairing "Jewish News".

Asked whether Brexit was a catastrophe, Alex argued that the EU simply wasn't working (except perhaps for Germany) and reminded us that Asia-Pacific markets offered vastly more opportunities for British business. The Brexit negotiations however were less impressive: Scottish fishermen may be small fry (or possibly langoustines?) at Westminster, but delivering fresh fish overnight to the Burghers of Calais is no longer viable; the Northern Ireland protocol seemed like a great idea until it was invoked without consulting the Irish Government; and somebody clearly

forgot to tell Lord Frost that British music can't earn royalties until the touring band's convoy clears Customs in Ostend.

Mosaic was truly privileged to spend an hour with the Alex Brummer we know as one of Britain's most energetic and well-informed investigative journalists. However, let's hope before long he can join us again to reveal the other Alex Brummer (former Vice-President of the Board of Deputies and Chair of its International Division), who generously shares his time, expertise and unrivalled networking skills to make our communal organisations fit for purpose and true to their principles.

meet the dancing judge – Michael Shelton

by Marion Bloom



When I agreed to write this review I did not realise what a vast field of activity would be revealed in the course of this interview on 11th May with Michael Shelton, whose schoolboy ambition was to be a retired millionaire! In the event he became a solicitor but as soon as possible expanded

his interests in a variety of directions. He was a partner in a local firm in Harrow and he specialised in criminal defence. He told an amusing tale of how at this time he came to defend a corgi and was able to save it from a death sentence.

Chance seemed to lead him towards an interest in the theatre, starting in Stratford and progressing to the Young Vic, eventually leading to his interest in the historic Wilton's Music Hall (just off Cable Street), Sylvia Young's theatrical school and ultimately Denville Hall, a luxurious theatrical retirement home formerly inhabited by such well known people as Peggy Mount, Richard Attenborough, and so on, the Chairman being Simon Russell Beale. His great love of the theatre led to him backing over 200 shows, mainly successfully, and as a solicitor he had many clients from the theatre world. Then came further interests, the National Jazz Orchestra, the NSPCC, for whom he organised quizzes to raise funds for the charity (receiving a Certificate for services to charity for fund raising), and of course - dance. He was invited to be a judge for the World Dance Federation necessitating a short period of study. This activity took him to Florida, Japan, Russia and Blackpool, also to the World Vienna Waltz competition, in Vienna of course. He speaks French and German, albeit with a Viennese accent acquired from his mother.

Each time he became interested in any of these activities he was invited to join the Board of every one of them.

He spoke of the decision of the International Olympic Committee to include dancing as an Olympic sport. The first was break dancing

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REVIEW OF ZOOM EVENTS

Continued from previous page...

introduced by France and destined to be included in the games in Paris 2024. And, of course, he was involved in the negotiations.

Throughout his talk he mentioned people that he knew such as Roy Hudd, Stephen Sondheim, Melvyn Bragg, Jackie Dankworth, Irving Drake and Dan Fisher (song writers), Honor Blackman and Sylvia Young. An enthusiastic player of backgammon, he is number 64 in the world. He also spoke of his delight in visiting a tiny Greek Island with few inhabitants which he described as a true paradise. Now, he sits as Judge in four to five local courts where he specialises in civil and family issues such as domestic violence etc. He has specific requirements as to the Courts he attends, one of them being proximity to a good sandwich shop.

I think we were all amazed at the breadth of experience and interests of our speaker and this was echoed in the thanks expressed by Jane Prentice at the end of the talk.

Meet the Author - Keren David

by Barbara Grant



On an overcast 16th May afternoon, members of Mosaic were treated to a fascinating

interview between Keren David, an Associate

Editor at the Jewish Chronicle and Author of Young Adult Fiction, and our own Steve Levinson.

Keren's writing career started in the traditional way working her way through the journalistic ranks on both local and national papers. After a spell living abroad and now as a mother of two young sons, Keren changed track and embarked on a new challenge of writing novels for Young Adults. With 10 published books under her belt, she is now an accomplished author of novels about issues which typically affect young people. Her first book 'When I was Joe' was about a young man who witnessed a crime and was forced to live under a new identity and from this story followed books about a wide range of issues and experiences with which young people can identify. Social media, peer and parental relationships, telling lies, sibling rivalry, the law are only a few of the subjects covered in her books. Keren's latest offering 'What we're scared of' looks at the issue of anti-Semitism and how it affects young people, a challenging experience which is being played out among so many young people today. The book was commissioned by Keren's publisher and required a lot of thought and research on her part as to how to fictionalise this challenging subject. When questioned about her own views, Keren commented that this issue is undoubtedly made all the more challenging for those Jewish teenagers who attend secular schools where they feel isolated and are easy targets for this kind of social ignorance.

During her years writing in this genre, Keren has not only carved out a niche for herself but also her efforts are rewarded by the accolades she receives from young people, librarians

and other professionals in equal number.

Members of Mosaic will also be familiar with Keren David and the weekly section for which she is responsible in the Jewish Chronicle. She is proud to be the Editor of the Life section designed as an alternative read to the current challenging and often worrying issues which inevitably have a profound effect on the life of Jews in the Diaspora. Interestingly, this lively and uplifting section, which Keren regards as an antidote to the rest of the newspaper, is always relegated to the back pages of the weekly and it is her ambition to promote it to a more prominent position.

Keren is clearly a very creative individual, always looking at interesting and challenging ways to engage with her readers both in her books and journalism. As her own family moves through the different stages of life, she has her own way of shaping her career alongside with the result that she remains a tour de force in the world of writing.

60+ Years- A Celebration

by Michael Harris

With a lump in our throat and a small tear in our eyes we said our final goodbye to Bessborough Road on 23rd May in the strangely remote setting of a Zoom meeting. More than 80 members attended the event hosted by Jane Prentice and I for one came away having learned a lot about our Shul, its history and some little-



Woolf Heymann and Alex Landau

known facts about the building itself (including the number of windows and chandeliers in the Shul hall!).

The event started with a montage of photos, set to music recording for posterity all the nooks and crannies of the building, and this was followed by a charming conversation between Steve Levinson and Ann Simon whose long association with the Shul is traced back to her father who was the first chairman. She revealed that the officers had only one problem with buying the property at Bessborough Road in the 1960s: MNS had no money. That was overcome with impressive chutzpah; the officers of the day persuaded the seller to lend us the money.

Ann recalled as a child having a cupboard in her house which became the shul's first ark and spoke fondly of our first Rabbi, Lionel Blue as well as of the MNS youth group 'MINYS' which was a social hub for the area (but, as a Willesden boy, well outside my own territory at the time).

Our young member Alex Landau's interview with Woolfie Heyman elicited a wealth of information about the shul's early days and it was heart-warming to hear Woolfie tell of the incredible pioneering spirit and camaraderie of our founding fathers back in 1959.

David Pollak then treated us to a newly composed song 'It's Time to Say Goodbye'

Continued from previous page...



Shachar and Tamar Noble-Bougay

and I enjoyed participating in the communal, virtual sing-along during which, with universal muting, no wrong notes could be heard.

We heard from some of our young post-bar mitzvah members and then some moving words from Chairman, Harry Grant, and also from Adrian Cohen, Chairman of Mosaic Liberal, who described how well the sharing partnership of the two synagogues was born and developed.

There followed a reprise of last month's final Shul service witnessing the removal of the scrolls with a haunting backdrop of the melodies of Rabbis Kathleen and Rachel.

And then, with an eye to the future Lawrence Chadwick gave us an illustrated update on the progress of the new building in Stanmore.

The presentation was so well put together and indeed was very emotional. What came through was the enormous enthusiasm and dedication of so many members over the years and up to the present, that has brought us to today's Mosaic Jewish Community. I hope we can cherish the memories of our elders and peers and look to them for inspiration as we open a new chapter in our communal life.

The following are the words sung by David Pollak during this event:

[Sung to the tune of Lecha Dodi composed by Craig Taubman]

Intro:

TODAY'S, THE DAY, THAT EVERYONE MUST SAY:

Chorus:

It's time to say goodbye

It's time to break our ties

To the building we've all grown up to love

We'll take the Jew-Billy line

And we'll all be fine

In our Mosaic synagogue

Remember well, how good the times

The prayers that we read and songs that had no rhyme

The weddings and bar mitzvahs filled with joy

And classes on a Sunday for the girls and boys

Chorus

No more Council meetings or an AGM

To all of that in Bessborough Road let's say amen

The services and sermons we enjoyed so much

No matter if they're Greek or even double double Dutch

Chorus

What shows and dinners over all the years

The talent and the laughter and for some, the tears

Landmark birthdays for the young and old

A building always hot unless it was too cold

Chorus

So now we'll pull the curtain down

On everything we so enjoyed in Harrow town

This chapter's ending, with no regret

New seeds to sow, it's time to go

And yet, and yet, and yet

Chorus (x2)

Hadley Freeman - House of Glass

by Janet Solomon



On Tuesday 25th May Hadley Freeman was interviewed by Steve Levinson and it was good to see many members of the Mosaic Book Group on screen. Hadley is a Guardian journalist and this is her fourth book. It tells the story of the Glass family who moved from Poland to France to America. After the death of her grandmother Sala, Hadley discovered at the back of a closet a shoe box containing photographs, letters and a drawing signed by Pablo Picasso, together with an unpublished memoir written by her great-uncle Alex. This started a long quest to find out their haunting significance and to dig deep into the extraordinary lives of her grandmother, Sala, and her three siblings, Henri, Jacques and Alex Glass. The search took Hadley from Picasso's archives in Paris to a secret room in a farmhouse in Auvergne, to Long Island and to Auschwitz. The book covers a century of Jewish life from 1901 to 1999 and took 16 years to research.

Alex opened a salon at the age of 21 and became a friend of Chagall and other artists, and even hired a very young Christian Dior. He knew that what was happening in Germany was bad for the Jews and realised that anti-

Semitism was rife in Paris as people resented the arrival of eastern Europeans. He joined the Foreign Legion and served with de Gaulle in London. After the war he became an art dealer.

Sala (renamed Sarah) followed her brothers to Paris and became a pattern designer. She fell in love with and became engaged to a Frenchman. However, her brothers felt that she should leave Europe and introduced her to an American, Bill, claiming that he was a millionaire from Manhattan. Sala agreed to marry Bill, who in reality ran a gas station on Long Island having grown up in the poor tenements of New York but became successful and left \$1million on his death. Sala spent 15 years in Paris and 55 years in the USA, but remained French all her life, living a life of exile, scratching her true – and lost – love's face out of photographs.

Henri was an engineer and hid in Paris right through the war. He died in the mid-1980s. During the war he made a machine capable of copying documents which helped identify possession rights post-war.

Jacques left Poland to become a tailor in Paris. He was a patriot who believed France would protect him but was arrested like all Polish Jews and ended up in Auschwitz.

Fashion and design had played a big part in Hadley's family, and she wanted to show that history repeats itself. Prejudice against Jews 100 years ago is still present.

This book is a story of survival. It was the Waterstones' Non-Fiction Book of the Month for March 2021. The Telegraph reviewer called it a masterpiece. Both Amazon and Goodreads give it 4.5 stars. I have bought my own copy!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Mosaic JACS Programme

June - July - August



All JACS events will be on-line using a Zoom meeting, starting at 2:30 pm

Tuesday 29th June

How parents support a child who identifies as gay, lesbian or transgender

Jackie Briggs is the proud parent of two children who are lesbian and gay. Both are now in their 30's but about 20 years ago she began working as a volunteer for Families Together London which supports parents who are going through difficult times when they discover their child/ren comes out as LGBT. She hopes that her talk, which covers many aspects of being such a parent, is informative, enlightening and uplifting.'

Tuesday 13th July Hidden Treasures

The Board of Deputies' Hidden Treasures celebrates the archives in Britain that tell the story of Jews in

Britain. Over 50 archives, throughout the country, are part of the Hidden Treasures network. They hold material – photographs, documents, audio and video recordings – about Jews in this country, dating from the eleventh century to 2021.

Board of Deputies Archives and Heritage Manager, Dawn Waterman, will tell us more about the project and share some of her favourite images from the archives – which are sure to spark memories and comment. She'll also explain the ways in which you can be involved in this exciting project.

Tuesday 27th July Cataract surgery in the developing world

Jeremy Joseph retired as a Consultant Ophthalmologist (eye doctor) in the U.K. recently, having

worked for the NHS and privately for many years. In 1993 he started undertaking eye expeditions to perform cataract surgery in developing countries. The places he has visited include Brazil, Myanmar, Belarus, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Liberia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Haiti, Ecuador, and Bangladesh. This activity has been temporarily halted by the Covid pandemic, but he hopes to resume the expeditions soon.

Tuesday 10th August

The musician Andy Smith will sing and play a selection of different musical pieces which have shaped his repertoire....and explain why! There will be lots of well-known songs from artists such as the Beatles, Bob Dylan and Cole Porter, plus some of his own.

Tuesday 24th August – TBC

Zoom details for all the following events will be available on the weekly notices.



Sunday 27th June – 5.30 pm

Mosaic Quiz

Quizmaster, Neil Goodman, will present another entertaining on-line quiz for the Mosaic Jewish Community and friends. No winners, no prizes, just a lot of fun. Refreshments: whatever is left over from lunch!

Event dates to note:

Still to be announced

Sunday 1st August 5.30 pm	Sunday 8th August 5.30 pm
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 4th July – 5.30 pm

Did God Work Out?



Western perceptions of biblical events from the Renaissance to the

present day by Adam Green.

Adam's talk is about two of his greatest passions – art and biblical criticism – concentrating on the role of fine art (including sculpture), literature and cinema upon our perceptions of Bible texts and personalities.

Adam is an artist, illustrator and author, who

trained at St. Martins School of Art and has exhibited in the UK and overseas. His patrons include the late Duke of Devonshire and the Governments of Israel and Chile. One highpoint was designing the cover for the UK paperback edition of the novel, Billy Bathgate.

Adam lived in Israel in 1970 and then again from 2009 until 2012, and recently spent two years in Sweden. He currently divides his time between London, Oxford and southern Spain where Adam makes Moscatel wine. His first book, King Saul – The True History of the First Messiah was published to critical acclaim in 2007 and in 2014 Adam published his first novel – ARK (previously, The Sons of Kohath).

Tuesday 6th July – 2.30 pm

Meet the Athlete – Danielle Sanderson



Join us at 2.30 when Danielle Sanderson will be interviewed by Steve Levinson.

Danielle read Physics at Oxford University and joined Sema Group, a multinational software company where she worked on operational research and mathematical modelling. She moved to the Training Department, where she introduced goal setting and action planning on all training courses and decided she should practise what she was preaching. In addition

to various work-related goals, she set herself the goals of participating in the Krypton Factor on ITV and running the London Marathon.

She discovered an aptitude for running and went on to represent England and Great Britain 21 times including winning the Crete Marathon on her GB debut (see photo!) winning a European bronze medal, finishing 6th in the Commonwealth Games, winning the London to Brighton ultra-marathon and setting a world record for Women's Masters at 50km. Danielle continued applying the techniques of Action Planning and started her PhD at the age of 50. She graduated three years later and obtained a lectureship at the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL. Danielle has been married to Steven for 35 years, and they have three children, Joseph, Miriam, and Hannah.

Sunday 11th July – 5.30 pm

So you think you keep things that reflect your past?

Ralph Kley will reveal his years of collecting – you name it, he has found a place for it in his home.

He recently attended the Morris Collins talks on Eccentric Collections and thought – “hang on a minute, I've got loads of stuff” and promptly went off to produce a book through the decades of ephemera, memorabilia and more.

Memorabilia, Ephemera??? Many (including his long-suffering wife) would call it rubbish...let us know what you think. Joan Noble will help Ralph reveal his many varied interests and take us on a trip down memory lane. Find out more about his years of collecting.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 18th July – 5.30 pm **Judaica Treasures at Sotheby's:**



Highlights of Illuminated Hebrew manuscripts, Magnificent Textiles and Rare Printed Books

Sharon Liberman Mintz is the Senior Consultant for Judaica and Hebraica at Sotheby's

and specialises in the art of Hebrew illuminated manuscripts and rare printed books. For over 25 years she has appraised and catalogued rare books for Judaica auctions worldwide and has participated in the sales of several outstanding collections of Judaica and Hebraica. In addition, Ms. Mintz serves as the Curator of Jewish Art at the Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary, New York where she has curated more than 45 exhibitions and co-authored eleven exhibition catalogues focussed on the rare book treasures of the Library.

Tuesday 20th July – 2.30 pm **Meet the “Queen of Con”, Joyti Driver**



Join us at 2.30 pm when Steve Levinson will interview Joyti Driver.

Joyti has had an interesting life with ups and downs. She came from a very conventional North London background and decided to go into the world of office management, where she became a personal assistant for a senior member of the company. She rose to the top and did well. It then

went awry and her safe castle at home and in employment fell like a deck of cards. She was married with a son and her life crashed by spending a number of years in prison.

Joyti did not mope, sulk, or hide away. She is made of stronger stuff and, whilst she had made a serious error of judgement, was determined to show herself, her doctor mother and her very young son, that she had grit and determination and would build herself up again to becoming a pillar of society, working alongside Lords, Ladies and senior movers and shakers in UK companies.

Joyti has done that and is now studying law as a full-time undergraduate at the age of 50. On the way to her new life, she has worked relentlessly with charities and has shown that fundraising is not a casual pastime but is something that needs to be taken seriously by all. On one evening at the Waldorf, she raised £125,000 for a charity.



Sunday 25th July – 5.30 pm

Mosaic Quiz

Quizmaster, John Ashmele, will present another entertaining on-line quiz for the Mosaic Jewish Community and friends. No winners, no prizes, just a lot of fun. Refreshments: whatever is left over from lunch!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 3rd August – 2.30 pm **Meet Norma Brier, OBE**



Join us at 2.30 when Steve Levinson will interview Norma Brier, Social Care Services Consultant.

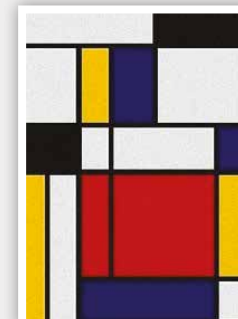
After University, having qualified as a social worker, Norma worked for the Borough of Camden at the start of a varied

and high-achieving career in social services, encompassing public, private and charity sectors. Norma was also a magistrate for 10 years in the criminal courts and a Chair at the Family Courts until 2019.

Recognition was bestowed in 2013 with the honour of an OBE for services to children and people with learning disabilities.

A major part of Norma's career spanning 30 years has been her association with Norwood Ravenswood, initially through caring for her daughter born with severe disabilities, which led to a role at the Jewish Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. JSMHC was absorbed into Ravenswood, where Norma became Executive Director and oversaw the merging of the services between Ravenswood and Norwood – where, incidentally, her husband, Sam, was CEO!

Sunday 15th August – 5.30 pm **What Comes Around, Goes Around**



Join Philip Silverton as he presents:

In the mid-19th century there was an aesthetic reaction to almost one hundred years of industrial revolution. Whilst the general population was

enjoying access to continuing development of affordable products, many were nostalgic for earlier times and crafted products.

As the 20th century progressed, it was other factors that inspired design, many of these factors grew from political movements and accelerating science and technology. My presentation tracks the ideas and causation up until the end of the 1960s but interestingly picks out where the modern world revisited the earlier parts of this design evolution.

Tuesday 17th August – 2.30 pm **The long way home, 1939 – 1948**

Rose Gartenberg's amazing story of a small girl fleeing thousands of miles to escape pursuing armies. Her first-hand account of a unique journey from Romania to Palestine, from a continent at war to the creation of Israel.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Sunday 22nd August – 5.30 pm

Mosaic Quiz

Quizmaster, John Ashmele, will present another entertaining on-line quiz for the Mosaic Jewish Community and friends. No winners, no prizes, just a lot of fun. Refreshments: whatever is left over from lunch!

Sunday 29th August – 5.30 pm

The History of English Silver

Join Adrian Cohen as he discusses how he became involved with silver and hear his interesting stories from the trade.

Adrian will 'bring along' some

unusual pieces and also give tips on polishing and valuations.

Adrian invites you to show off your silver and silver plate and he is open to random questions!



Happy Birthday in August to:

Leo Banks, 7



Answers to Quiz (page 21)



- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. SEVENTEEN | 7. 1977 | 11. REV VIVIAN SIMMONS, FIRST |
| 2. HATH BUILDED | 8. TIKO ALALOUFF | MINISTER OF WEMBLEY |
| 3. SIX. EIGHTEEN | 9. THE CHILDREN OF GAN | LIBERAL. |
| 4. FIFTY-THREE | K'TANIM PLAYGROUP | 12. COLLECTION BOX FOR |
| 5. 1,551 | 10. 7 (3 to the Liberal synagogue, | TZEDEKAH – CHARITY |
| 6. 2009 | 1 for Mosaic Room [ex | |
| Numbers are in Hebrew. Daisy | Youth Lounge], 1 for Rabbi | |
| Heymann (mother of Woolf) | Middleton, 1 library, 1 toilet) | |

MOSAIC CALENDAR

For zoom details for all the following events visit the mosaic website

<https://choosmosaic.org/whats-on/events/>

JUNE

Sat 26 th	Shabbat Balak
Sun 27 th	Fast of Tammuz
	17.30 Mosaic Quiz
Tues 29 th	14.30 JACS – Supporting & understanding young people in the LGBT community

JULY

Sat 3 rd	Shabbat Pinchas
Sun 4 th	14.00 Meditation Session
	15.00 Cameo
	17.30 Meet the Author – Adam Green
Tues 6 th	14.30 Meet the Athlete – Danielle Sanderson
Sat 10 th	Shabbat Mattot-Masei
Sun 11 th	17.30 So you think you keep things that reflect your past?
Tues 13 th	14.30 JACS – Hidden Treasures
Sat 17 th	Shabbat Devarim
	18.00 Erev Tisha b'Av discussion
Sun 18 th	Tisha b'Av
	17.30 Jewish Treasures at Sotheby's
Tues 20 th	14.30 Meet "The Queen of Con"
	Joyti Watswani
Wed 21 st	20.00 Mosaic Reform AGM
Sat 24 th	Shabbat Va'etchanan
	18.00 Reform/Liberal Erev Tu b'Av
Sun 25 th	17.30 Mosaic Quiz
Tue 27 th	14.30 JACS – Cataract surgery in the developing world
Sat 31 st	Shabbat Eikev

AUGUST

Sun 1 st	15.00 Cameo
	17.30 To be announced
Tues 3 rd	14.30 Meet Norma Brier, OBE
Wed 4 th	Kehila copy date
Sat 7 th	Shabbat Re-eh
Sun 8 th	17.30 To be announced
Tues 10 th	14.30 JACS – Under the Influence
Sat 14 th	Shabbat Shoftim
Sun 15 th	17.30 What Comes Around Goes Around
Tues 17 th	14.30 Meet Rose Gartenberg
Thur 19 th	Kehila distribution
Sat 21 st	Shabbat Ki Tetse
Sun 22 nd	17.30 Mosaic Quiz
Tues 24 th	14.30 JACS
Sat 28 th	Shabbat Ki Tavo
	20.00 Liberal Selichot service
	22.00 Reform Selichot service
Sun 29 th	17.30 The History of English Silver



The Mosaic office
opening hours are:

Monday	08.00 – 17.00
Tuesday	08.00 – 16.00
Wednesday	08.00 – 13.30
Thursday	08.00 – 17.00

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