



ALONIM

עלונים

אש השנה

High Holy Days Issue

September,
October,
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2015

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Newsletter of the Bristol & West
Progressive Jewish Congregation



The NLPS Trust
for Progressive Judaism

liberal  judaism

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ALONIM Contributions & Editorial Policy.

The editorial policy is to encourage contributions from all Synagogue members and  **ALONIM** readers, concerning any aspects of communal and Jewish life, including cultural and communal reviews, information concerning synagogue activities, letters and feedback, and articles of Jewish cultural and religious interest. Typically, contributions of approximately **500 words** are preferred, and PC format submission by e-mail is particularly appreciated.

The editor will NOT print anonymous or unattributed articles. Contributors are asked to be aware of the need to protect the copyright of others. Opinions expressed in  **ALONIM** do not necessarily reflect those of the synagogue Council or the Editors.

Contributions and communications can be sent directly to the **Editor** at alonim@bwpjc.org. For postal contributions please contact the editor on **0117 907 8922**. Copy date deadline for submissions is notified above. Submissions after this date cannot be guaranteed to appear in the next issue. If you are intending to send in unsolicited material please let the editor know ahead of the deadline.

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Editorial

Sheila Brill, Editor



It was such a pleasure to slave over hot pancakes last week! As I cooked, I listened to the lively banter of my son Asher and his friends who'd recently returned from LJY Machaneh Kadimah near Salisbury. These were some of the young people who went from Bristol and how lovely it was to see how they've connected with each other. You can read about their experiences on pages 23-25.

It's not just our young people who connect through events. Take a look at the photos from this year's community weekend in Deanfield.

As you can see, I've been trying out a new style for our front cover. Please let me know what you think of it. All 'constructive' feedback is welcome!

Shanah tova!

Membership News

Sheila Wilson,
Membership Secretary



Becky Eastley

Although not a large community our members live over a wide area so our Community News helps us to stay in touch and share the joyful and the sad events in our lives. Please let us know if you would like to share any news and our apologies if we have missed something for this issue.

We give our condolences and wish a long life to:

The Harris family on the death of Philip Jacobs, father of Miranda and grandpa of Mia and Jacob, and on the death of Terry Parsons, husband of Denise, stepfather of Ruth Squire and Steve Harris and grandpa of Daniel, Alex, Mia and Jacob.

David Dwek and his partner Oona Goldsworthy on the death of Oona's sister, Sally Goldsworthy,

Valerie Russell-Emmott on the death of her niece, Sophia

Russell

Sheila Yeger and her partner, Roger Stennett, on the death of Roger's mother, Elizabeth Stennett.

We are delighted to welcome Michael Picardie, the Conway Family, Vicky and Rose Bailey, the Horne family, Jack and Lucien Wolf and Elizabeth and Celyn Williams on becoming members of the community.

Mazeltov to Michael and Effie Romain on the engagement of their daughter Rachel to Stephen Kosmin.

Mazeltov to Richard and Sharon Buckley on their 40th wedding anniversary in June and to Peter and Sheila Brill on their 25th wedding anniversary in May.

Several of our younger members were working very hard last term for their exams and we wish them every success in the next phase of their lives.

We're really sad to say that Jack and Madsy Paulson have left Bristol to go back to Los Angeles. Alicia's work is keeping her here till the end of the year. We'll miss them all.

Shanah tova u'metukah

Letter from the Chair

Ben Weinberger



It would seem that things have been relatively quiet over the past few weeks. As we reach the end of summer and prepare for Rosh Hashanah, people have returned from summer holidays and the kids are preparing to return to school. Though the synagogue may not have seemed as busy for some without the noise of cheder in session, it certainly did not lack activity and I think everyone will agree that it has been improved significantly.

After a successful DIY session that spanned two weekends, work got underway to update and repair. Though we're not quite done – and will soon advertise another DIY day for some finishing touches – I would like to say thanks not just to those who helped in various different capacities, but, especially to Steve Harris for his continued overall stewardship of the building

and to my friend Kalev Amit Israel for his hard work and dedication – he put a lot of time and effort into getting the work completed.

In addition to having removed the old wood chip, addressing the damp spots, and plastering and repainting the walls, a variety of other items have been updated to improve the aesthetics. Additionally, we've installed a full CCTV security system with cameras around the building to help enhance safety. Over the coming weeks, we'll continue with various other improvements to the property.

For now, I'm looking forward to another busy year of activities and simchas. We've had a variety of new members join over the past few months, have several upcoming B'nei Mitzvot, and various activities are busy being planned, including our now annual winter community weekend at Ammerdown. We're also still looking for someone to take-over the organization of the

summer weekend at Dean Field, so, if you're interested in helping out, please get in touch. As it's all been planned before, it really only requires someone to coordinate people as Ruth will gladly pass along all of her notes and schedules from the past few years. Also, if you have not yet attended either the summer or winter retreats, I'd highly recommend the experience – they're both great fun and great opportunities to get to know members of the community in a more relaxed atmosphere, away from the regular weekend routines.

And, lastly, I'd like to wish everyone a Shanna Tovah!

Dancing to the Beat of a Jewish Heart

Rabbi Monique Mayer



In my younger days, the most common question people would ask each other in the lead up to *Rosh Hashanah* was “What are you going to wear on the High Holy Days?” Usually it was followed by, “Where are you shopping?” or “Have you done your shopping yet?” These questions seemed bizarrely fixated on the external when the main thrust of the Days of Awe is clearly meant to be internal. I remember walking into one New Year’s service and the people were decked out in their finest designer clothes for the occasion. It was quite the fashion show.

What a blessing to be serving a congregation that is appreciative of people being present rather than concentrating on their clothes.

That’s not to say that people in our congregation don’t make an effort in how they dress, but their first response is not to look you up and down when you first walk in, judging you on what you’re wearing. And yet, we should not underestimate the power of what we wear. Particularly at this time of year, clothing can help us to focus and remind us of the very reason we are standing in synagogue at High Holy Days.

Rosh Hashanah means head of the year, but the other name for *Rosh Hashanah* is *Yom ha-Din*, the Day of Judgement. On this day we are judged (by God or ourselves) for our sins over the past year. And although *Rosh Hashanah* is clearly a day of solemnity, the custom is to wear something new and prepare hearty, festive meals as on all other holidays. Normally when a person is being judged, they wear black clothing and they appear contrite, as their sole concern is their fate and whether the decision will be favourable. However for us, on

Rosh Hashanah, it is different. We wear new clothes to reflect coming into a new year. We celebrate our opportunity to begin again.

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a more sombre occasion. In Isaiah 1:18, we read, "If your sins prove to be like crimson, they will become white as snow." Keeping this passage in mind, it is customary to wear white on this most holy day. There are many reasons for wearing white. White symbolises the level of purity we hope to reach after our sins have been forgiven and made "white as snow". A white piece of paper is like the blank slate that we begin with and commit to adding only positive deeds (and words) in the coming year. In wearing a white shirt, dress, blouse, or perhaps even a *kittel* (robe), we become like angels, which we aspire to be on *Yom Kippur*. And, white is also symbolic of our final days: standing together in prayer on the Day of Atonement, we go

through a ritual death of our old self and the birth of a newer, more enlightened self. Indeed, we pray in white for the gift of life. Jews in more orthodox communities commonly dress in white on *Yom Kippur*, but the tradition has been spreading in recent years to Progressive communities as a way of connecting to the message of *Yom Kippur*. I have stood in a few congregations where everyone wears white, and it is tremendously moving. The sea of white becomes an equalising force, connecting us with each other. Wearing white, we are all one and can see each other. Our clothing keeps us connected to the true meaning of the Day of Atonement.

There are two other aspects of dress which can help us "tune into" *Yom Kippur*. Besides abstention from eating or drinking, washing, anointing, or having marital relations, (*Mishnah Yoma* 8:1), it is customary to not wear leather shoes. You may have seen

people at a Yom Kippur service wearing canvas trainers or Crocs, which is not merely in anticipation of standing in synagogue for a long time and wanting to be comfortable (although that is a good reason!). Leather garments, shoes and belts were in the past considered a luxury. In a modern context, leather goods are readily available and have lost some of their value. We no longer have the same appreciation for the origins of leather that our ancestors had, being far removed from the process of slaughter and tanning; however, it might seem a bit hypocritical to pray on the Day of Atonement asking for renewal of life while standing in shoes that another creature gave its life for.

According to custom we also refrain from wearing gold jewellery, not only because it is luxurious, but because the colour gold is a reminder of the sin of the Golden Calf. Asking forgiveness for recent sins, we avoid bringing any connection to that ancient one into the fore.

Visualise – if you will – the following scenario: you arrive on *Yom Kippur*. You enter the synagogue, which is awash with people in various shades of white. Now imagine standing in that ocean of white as *Kol Nidrei* is chanted... singing *Avinu Malkeinu*... hearing the special cantillation of the *Torah*...remembering loved ones during *Yizkor*...and then – at the conclusion of Yom Kippur – standing together for the final extended blast of the shofar – the *teki'ah gedolah*. We are Progressive Jews and, yes, we are free to make our own choice about what we wear. But, what would it be like for each of us to become a drop in that prayerful sea of white and light?

Wishing you all a *Shanah tovah u'metukah* – a good and sweet year – and *g'mar chatimah tovah* – may you be sealed for good in the Book of Life.

Minyan in the synagogue

Note from the Editor:

Ruth Weinberger recently drew my attention to a discussion in the online JC about whether someone should be able to use Skype to form a virtual minyan:

I have a very small, scattered family and do not know many Jews locally. If we have a shivah and lack a minyan, could we ask relatives and friends to Skype in and form a virtual minyan?

<http://www.thejc.com/judaism/rabbi-i-have-a-problem/138565/can-i-use-skype-form-a-virtual-minyan>

Alix Pirani sent me her thoughts on this subject:

I'm absolutely against anything which gives the illusion of reality... where does it end? A minyan of selfies? I don't 'do' Skype... though I know it's appreciated by individual families... that's different. When in doubt, don't reach for a gadget...

On minyan



David Jewell

With apologies to the readers who already know more on this subject than I do, a *minyan* is, by tradition, an assembly of ten adult men required to say the *kaddish*, *kedushah*, *bar'chu*, priestly blessing and Torah service. The word is derived from מִנְיָן to count. The word appears in Ps 90: 'So teach us to number our days' and is linked to the Aramaic 'mene' that appears in the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's Feast: 'God has numbered the days of your kingdom ...'

It's one of those quaint bits of traditional Judaism that as progressive Jews we have abandoned. We all know what the word means, but we don't think it's important so why bother to write, or for that matter, read about it. The reasons that are given for its inclusion in the ritual are less than convincing. The Talmud quotes some biblical texts that emphasise the existence of a congregation, such as Lev 19:2

‘Speak to the whole community of Israel and say to them’; or Lev 22:32 ‘... that I may be sanctified in the midst of the Israelite people ...’ In his book *Entering Jewish Prayer*, Reuven Hammer cites Prov 14:28 ‘In the multitude of the nation is the glory of the king.’ These all seem to underline the traditional view that the *shekhinah* only comes into an assembly when a *minyan* is formed. However that is hardly compatible with contemporary ideas of God. We would surely all agree that God can be experienced as much when we are on our own as when we are part of a congregation. Hammer points out that Jacob’s most powerful encounters with God occur in the Torah when he is alone; to which I would add Moses’ contacts with God at the burning bush and on the mountain; and Elijah feeling the power of the still small voice.

As for ten men, the sources are equally unconvincing. The official explanation relates to the story of the group sent to spy out the Promised Land (Numbers 14:27). Ten of the twelve (not counting Joshua & Caleb) are deemed to have sinned by bringing back a terrified report.

They are referred to as an *eidah*, or congregation. The Jerusalem Talmud (Meg 4,4) links it to the ten brothers of Joseph who went down to Egypt to get food during a famine. More convincing is the idea that ten men might have been required at a political assembly to represent ten different families. It harks back to the part in Yitro where Moses imposes some kind of administrative structure by appointing heads of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens (Ex 18:25). The maths doesn’t quite work, but it is possible to see how in less developed societies a political imperative may have become a religious obligation.

Judaism emphasises the importance of collective prayer. One of the ways that we differ dramatically from Christianity is that there is no tradition or admiration for the solitary contemplative life. We are allowed to pray alone, but the other side of the coin of the importance of being in the world is the importance of collective prayer. The language of the siddur is relentlessly in the first person *plural*. For instance the traditional prayer reads ‘What are we? What is our life and

what our piety, what our goodness and what our strength?’ (page 123 in Siddur Lev Chadash) I’ve only recently worked out that my fascination with the Psalms comes from the contrast that many of them are written in the first person singular. The striking illustration of that is the way we say the *tefillah*. It opens with a verse from Ps 51 ‘Eternal God, open up my lips ...’ and closes with one from Ps 19 ‘May the words of my mouth ...’; between these two comes a series of blessings in the plural ‘God of our ancestors ...’ You might think that the prayers are written in plural form because there always was a *minyan* present, but it’s obvious that becomes a circular argument. Why are the prayers said in the plural? Because there is always a *minyan* present. Why is there always a *minyan* present? Because all the prayers are said in the plural.

Here are my thoughts. First, and most important, I like the idea of collective worship. My own Judaism goes deep enough for me to believe that the purpose of my life can only be defined by the effect on the people around me – family, friends, fellow

congregants of BWPJC, work colleagues, patients, and anyone else that I come across in my life. Praying in a group is a public affirmation of that. In turn it reflects what I take to be the biological truth, that we evolved to be social animals living in groups, and praying in a group reaffirms that reality.

Assuming that we start by expanding the qualification to include women and praying children, I can see that maintaining the formal requirement of a *minyan* could have two virtues. First it would impose an obligation on members of the community to attend regular prayer, in order to enable those who want to pray the restricted prayers and parts of the service to do so. I have led plenty of services where there have been fewer than ten people present. The last thing I want is the synagogal equivalent of the press gang resulting in a large but surly (and mutinous) congregation. However if more people had attended, even partly out of a sense of obligation to make up the numbers, the service would have been more uplifting for all of us, though I accept that is utterly irrational.

Second, there is something about all being equal in the sight of God. Rabbi Monique has left a book out to record services, and we are asked to count souls – souls, not people. There is a lovely Yiddish saying I came across preparing this piece, that nine rabbis cannot make a *minyan*, but ten shoemakers can. To make up the *minyan*, as in everything else, we all count. Also, as one former member pointed out some years ago, there is a practical advantage that once you get up to ten praying together you cannot hear individual voices. Above ten we become a community, a *kehillah kedoshah* – a holy community. Finally, it is as well to remember that the word *tefillah* derives from the reflexive form of the verb to judge, so that when we pray we are supposed to be examining ourselves. If we did this on our own, it would be easy for it quickly to descend into despising and hating ourselves. The requirement to pray together may protect us from that. We are among friends who share the same doubts and fears, and we all know that their judgement of us will not be as harsh as our own.

These thoughts come from being asked by the editor to respond to a question in the JC. In the ‘Ask the rabbi’ feature, someone wrote in about organising a *shivah* and wondered if they could make up a virtual *minyan* via Skype. In a way this is a Jewish version of today’s questions about social media. What is the status of one’s Facebook friends? Does a digital *minyan* count? Both of the responding rabbis felt that only by being there in person could one be counted as part of the congregation. Naftali Brawer quoted the Talmud where it stipulates that the *minyan* must all be in the room together or at a pinch in two adjoining rooms with the leader between them. Jonathan Romain pointed out that as a community we are there to support each other, and for that a physical presence is essential. I responded to Sheila because earlier this year I had been staying with my sister in Cornwall and we had followed on her laptop the streamed service from her synagogue in London. It felt disconnected from the community. This was not a Skype contact so nothing was transmitted back to the service, but even if it had been I doubt that my presence would

have been represented to those back in London by a disembodied voice. I agree with Jonathan Romain's answer to the specific question that digital media are invaluable for connecting those who cannot attend in person, but it cannot be a substitute for those who are able to attend.

At the same time, Jonathan Romain put his finger on the reason for abandoning the requirement for ten souls. If fewer than ten attend then it doesn't seem right to penalise them by forbidding them to say particular important prayers. It's right for progressive Jews not to be constrained by traditional practice that deprives them of meaningful personal observance. But I can see why it's a good idea, and a small bit of me regrets its passing.

LJY Netzer Kayitz

Dan Squire

This August I had the pleasure of leading 30 young people on Kayitz, one of the LJY-Netzer's most exciting events. Kayitz is a ten day tour of Jewish European history for 17-year-olds. The tour is organised to acknowledge the Shoah, but also look beyond it and provide deeper exploration of Jewish history in Europe since the earliest Jewish settlers reached the continent.

For the first time in 20 years we had the privilege of a new route for the tour, now moving through Sarajevo, Dubrovnik, Split and Vienna. This gave our team of five leaders a unique chance to create, write and deliver a completely different educational journey to anything that has ever been run by a Jewish youth movement.

New Kayitz covered the Balkan Sephardic tradition, the history of the Ottoman and Austrian Empires, the First and Second

World Wars, communism and nationalism in Yugoslavia, and the terrible example of genocide in our lifetimes. We encountered stories of hope and messianism, raised questions about justice, activism and fractured religious identity and saw the legacy of countries torn apart by imperial expansion and ethnic hatred. We tracked the journey of Balkan Jews from their arrival as Roman slaves in Split, to the first ships landing in Ottoman Dubrovnik in 1492, to Kristallnacht destruction in Vienna, to the Croatian Death Camp at Jasenovac, to the inspiring Jewish heroes of the Yugoslav Wars in Sarajevo.

We asked ourselves what our national, religious, political and ethnic identity as British diaspora Jews *really* means to us. We did all of this while still having incredible fun and making lifelong friends.

Kayitz was the final instalment of my life-changing, transformative years with LJY-Netzer, and I cannot recommend the movement highly enough to anyone still young enough to take part.



My working life

Philippa Gordon



Doing the Bristol dragon boat race to raise money for the Stroke Association.

I feel very lucky to be able to say that I love my job. Each day brings with it a new challenge and the privilege of meeting some amazing people.

Roll back two years and things were very different. I was working in marketing for a magazine publisher. Work was what I did to earn money. I could do my job with my eyes closed, having done it for 10 years. The hours and location suited my family life allowing me to work part time and be close to my loved ones. However, when my youngest started school and I was looking at increasing my hours

I knew that the time had come for a career change. It was time to find a job in which I was working towards a greater goal than just earning money. I took voluntary redundancy and commenced reframing my experience, making it relevant for the voluntary/health sector in which I wanted to work. I am lucky enough to have a psychology degree and some years experience of working in mental health which unlocked the first door for me as a volunteer Mental Health Advocate. It wasn't long before I was able to get a paid job as a Community Stroke Coordinator for the Stroke Association.



The Stroke Association's vision is 'We want a world where there are fewer strokes and all those touched by stroke get the help they need'. On a day to day basis I work within my power to make that vision come true. My role is split into many different parts from supporting Stroke Survivors individually, to running groups in the community, to doing talks raising awareness of stroke risk factors and how to recognise a stroke and doing blood pressure checks for the general public.

Every day I get to meet the most amazing people who are learning to live with the impact of their stroke. I offer emotional support to help people come to terms with this life changing event. At this early stage there are so many questions: what rehab can I get?

Am I entitled to any benefits? What adaptations do I need to my house? How do I go about getting care? What about respite for the carers? How can I get about now I can no longer drive or use public transport? Will I be able to return to work? Experience and research means I can provide answers at this traumatic time.

Four to six months after a stroke most people are reaching the end of their formal stage of rehabilitation, and visits from therapists are coming to an end. Stroke survivors are faced with a new reality. What is life going to be like with the limitations their stroke has placed on them. I spend time getting to know a person, finding out what their interests are, getting to know their personality. We then work together to find things for the

A stroke is what happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off, either through a blockage or a bleed. Without a blood supply carrying essential nutrients and oxygen brain cells can be damaged and destroyed. Every three and a half minutes someone in the UK has a stroke. It is the largest cause of complex disability in the world. There is some positive news...people are twice as likely to survive a stroke now than 20 years ago due to improved detection and treatment of stroke.

person to do, be it returning to work in a different capacity, doing voluntary work or joining social groups to name but a few. One stroke survivor I work with who has very limited speech, no use of his right arm/hand, and a very weak right leg, is a passionate chef. He now volunteers in a local café which caters for the older community of Bath, making the most delicious soups and breads.

Stroke can affect anyone at any age. I support a group of working age stroke survivors to run their own Peer Support Group. This is a fantastic bunch of people who meet regularly to plan events. No challenge is too great for them. They have recently been cycling on adapted bikes, and are looking forward to going sailing next week. Many people lose confidence after a stroke, and hanging out with people who understand first hand what you have experienced is a great way to build up your confidence.

I could go on and on for ages about the wonderful people I've met, and the amazing things they have achieved, facing the world again, and not letting their stroke define them or their future. I feel honoured that I can be part of their journey, experiencing the highs and lows with them, being there to lend a hand if needed or encouraging from the side lines. I am truly inspired by the courage and determination I see again and again.

CST Protecting our Jewish Communities



CST, Community Security Trust, is here to help ensure that our Jewish communities throughout the UK are **protected all year round and able to lead their Jewish lives with peace and dignity.**

CST's work at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur depends upon the **cooperation and participation** of all of our Jewish communities. There is no other time when the partnership is more obvious, nor more necessary, and thousands of volunteers help to make that a reality.

This year, CST will once again be working in **close cooperation with Police, synagogues, security volunteers and security rotas** at hundreds of synagogues over the chagim, but you may also see more commercial security guards working at synagogues than has previously been the case.

These additional guards are now largely paid for by government and are organised by CST and synagogues, as part of our joint security response to the tragic terrorist attacks in Paris and Copenhagen earlier this year. We regret that the additional security is necessary, but we sincerely hope that it provides a **practical and reassuring response to the current situation.**

Thank you once again for cooperating with our security teams at this busy time, and thank you for playing your part in our joint security efforts. **Shana Tovah and well over the fast to all of our community, and to all of our volunteers and their families, to whom we all owe a special thanks.**

Yours, CST.



In an emergency contact the Police on 999, then contact CST,
London: 0800 032 3263 Manchester: 0800 980 0668

In a non-emergency, please call the Police on 101, then contact CST,
London: 020 8457 9999 Manchester: 0161 792 6666

www.cst.org.uk

 @CST_UK

 Community Security Trust

Community Security Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (1042391) and Scotland (SC043612)

Deanfield: the community weekend



Hi Ruth

As first-timers to Dean Field we weren't sure what to expect, but very soon after our arrival we all felt completely at home. All 7 of us had an absolutely brilliant day yesterday with the community and the 5 Londoners really appreciated the warm welcome they were given. It was just perfect and everything went so smoothly thanks to your amazing organisation.

Thank you for all you did to make it the success it clearly was. For the 3 generations of our family it was a very positive experience - there is already talk of coming back again next year!

Have a well-earned rest, Ruth, and we are sure someone will come forward to take up the reins for next year because this type of community event is a great bonding experience where people have time to stop and really talk with one another.

I hope you have a more restful week and we look forward to catching up with you soon.

Linda and Robert xx

plus Jonny, Nadia, Zac, Josh and Yasmina





Hi Ruth,
 Thank you so much for organising another great community summer weekend. It was a joy to see the children playing so well all together and as always, it's lovely to have the chance for longer chats and getting to know each other better.

I hope someone steps forward to take up the baton from you for next year - you deserve a rest.

Best wishes,
 Ted, Becky and Caleb x

Creative thinking!

While standing on top of the Ecocentre, the children accidentally threw a rope onto the roof. In an effort to resolve the issue of how to retrieve it, they came up with many creative solutions, the most memorable of which was this: Get a sheep. Cover it with superglue. Throw sheep food over the rope. Tie a rope around the sheep. Lower it down to the roof. As the sheep eats the food, the rope on the roof will stick to it. Bring the sheep back up.



Cha
 and

Deanfield: the community weekend



Hi Ruth

Ted, Becky and Caleb beat me to it so I just want to add my thanks. It was a truly great weekend for me and I know everyone else enjoyed it as much. I am sure that none of this would have been as enjoyable without all the hard work and organisation you put in beforehand. It always so nice to see all the children play and one of the best parts is the opportunity to have a proper chat and get to know people better.

Viviane x



LJY Kadimah 5775



The young people's stories...

Sylvie Horne

Kadimah #5775 was great! I enjoyed every second of it, this was my third year of Machaneh Kadimah and it gets better every year! Each year on camp we have camp surprise and this year it was an amazing foam fight. It was like a bouncy castle but filled with foam bubbles. It was fabulous!! I love Kadimah soooooo much it's almost like a second home and each time it gets more fun.

Bruno Horne

When I went on Machaneh Kadimah it was completely different to what I expected,

there were bits I liked and bits I disliked. I didn't enjoy that in my Shikvah (year group) Ananim, there were lots of pula (educational sessions). But I liked the foam party and the trip to Adventure Wonderland.

Daisy Horne

After my third year on Machaneh Kadimah, I can honestly say it gets even better each year. This time we had the largest group of people from Bristol so far, on camp. There were 12 of us and it made it even more fun on camp. This was because there was so many of us, and when we were around the site and we saw each other we had a close family-like bond that made you automatically really happy.

This year on Kadimah in our Shikvah (year group) we were able to participate in events that we were previously too young for. Firstly there was Yamim night which was a fun disco and activities night run by the madrichim (leaders) for our Shikvah and the oldest Shikvah. It was a super fun ship wrecked theme where we played

volleyball, drank fruit juice cocktails and danced a lot, this was one of the highlights of camp for me! Also our Shikvah got to go on Tiyul (trip), which is a hike, and this year it just happened to take place in Bristol. It was a seriously weird feeling being so close to home with LJY after being away for so long.

Finally, it was definitely the saddest ending to camp this year so far as I had to say goodbye to the Chalutzim Shikvah (the year above). I was really really close to that group, and as it was their last year on camp as Chanuchim it made it very emotional. And that's why I would say the only thing I don't enjoy about Kadimah is the closing service as it is so sad, and there are a lot of tears and the prospect of not seeing your best friends/ second family for another year!!

Matthew Weinberger

I like camp because it was fun doing everything. My favourite part of camp was on the last night, we stayed up all night long. This was my first year of camp, on the first few days it

was a little scary but then I got used to it. I was only home sick on the last few days before coming home. My Madrachim were very nice and helped make camp not be scary.

We learnt a small amount of Jewish stuff, about the five main prayers. The Sh'ma, the Amidah, the Aleinu, the Kadish, and the Barachu.

I really want to go to camp again. I made quite a few friends and hope to see them.

Marcus Weinberger

Kadima is a fun and friendly place where you know everyone and experience a blend of education, activities, fun and friends. Apart from all the chanichim (children) on camp, all of the Madrachim (adults'ish as they're still kids at heart) are also some of the friendliest and coolest people I've ever met. There are tons of things to look forward to such as: the last night disco, chalutzim night, the surprise and Shabbat dinner. I would definitely recommend going on Kadima, it's the thing I most look forward to every year!

I wanted to write about one session that we had, but I couldn't pick one so I'm writing about a few; the first and second are LGBTQ+ and Mental Health, I found them both very interesting and everyone was free to ask questions and voice their opinions. I learned loads. Also, I'd like to write about Shabbat, during the whole two weeks of camp, we had two Shabbat. I liked both of them as it felt like the whole of Kadima came together as one big family and it was overall very nice. We did Kabbalat Shabbat where we sang songs and said prayers, then we had a special Shabbat Dinner. That was on Friday night. On Saturday, as it was Shabbat, the whole day was very laid back and relaxing. I can't wait for next year!

Asher Brill

This year on Kadimah, being 15, I was in Chalutzim. Our group camped a distance away from the main site so we had our own time. We occasionally got to see the others but it was great to have time with friends your own age. The camping part wasn't too amazing (slugs and flooding

everywhere) but this was cancelled out by the keif (fun)! So many awesome sessions and lots of free time!

Eating separately was also part of the Chalutzim experience. However, if you have an allergy DO NOT rely on your friends to remember YOUR food. On the other hand, the chefs do a great job! Kadimah is definitely something that will affect you after it has ended. Whether it be singing birkat or camp songs, after you leave Kadimah is very much part of you – why leaving is so difficult.



And of course, the people. The leaders and my friends are some of the nicest people I have ever met. They are all amazing and I can't wait to see some of them on Israel Tour!

GO ON KADIMAH!

Continued on page 33

The WIZO Commitments Awards Ceremony 2015

Westminster Synagogue,
Kent House, Knightsbridge

Helen Vegoda



Martin Vegoda, between the Chair for the evening and one of the WIZO award judges.

At the start of our visit to the WIZO Awards Ceremony on 6th July, we were invited to a tour of the impressive and very moving Czech Memorial Scrolls Museum, housed on the top floor of Kent House, Knightsbridge. On display, are a remnant of the 1,564 scrolls rescued in 1964, and brought to this country, before being distributed around the world. They symbolise the renewal of hope for the Jewish people after the Shoah.

It was particularly poignant therefore that the award presented to Martin Vegoda on behalf of Salaam Shalom was sponsored by The Czech Memorial Scrolls Trust, in recognition of Salaam Shalom's work, and Martin's personal contribution, in the field of Diversity and Tolerance, one of the six categories designated for the Awards.

One of the Awards sponsors, Dr Nissim Levy, took up the theme of recognition for 'outstanding people and organisations who have put their efforts into improving lives'. Citing the work of WIZO in Israel, he presented a picture of inequality and deprivation amongst Israeli society that is often hidden from wider view. Dr Levy emphasised that organisations like WIZO, and the kind of individuals who were honoured with awards on Monday night, make a huge difference in combating and challenging inequality for Jews and other groups across the world.

During the evening we were

given snapshots of both the sponsoring organisations and the individuals and groups whom they had selected. The contribution to society ranged from the impressive sixteen year old, Orli, who works with disadvantaged young people and raises funds for charity, to Avi, whose company based in Israel, educates children and their parents in water conservation.

Salaam Shalom, established in 2005, was singled out as being unique in working to strengthen the ties between Jews and Muslims, and through their programme in schools to create greater understanding between diverse ethnic and religious groups. It was very gratifying to hear the promotion of the Bristol Jewish community as the place where such an initiative was started, and the due praise given both to Martin and to Salaam Shalom for dedicated commitment to this field.

In addition to an impressive plaque presented to each winner, a tour of WIZO projects is being planned for the six finalists next year, which will give them an opportunity to see the work being done in Israel but also link with others in a similar field to their own, and thus establish valuable links for mutual benefit.

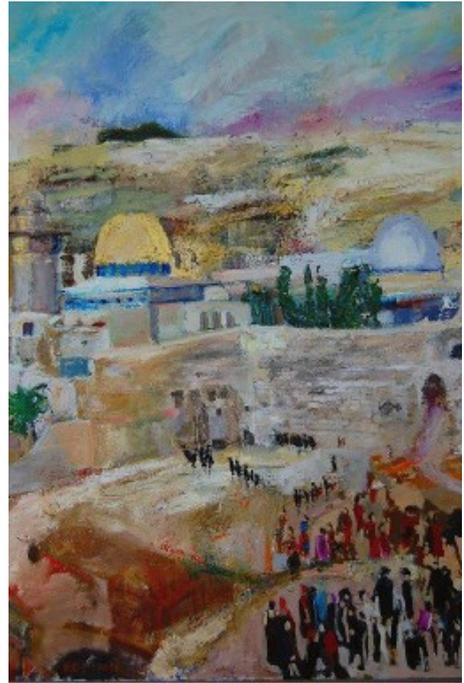
My creative life

Effie Romain



So my art is the art of enjoying landscapes and flowers with no purpose other than to enjoy them. Others have seen these landscapes more coherently, more inventively, more inspirationally and though it grieves me - more accurately too. Part of the enjoyment of

I have painted all my life and, though I enjoy painting, I am not sure I am 'creative'. Maybe creative in the way making a sponge cake is creative but though worthy and even tasty, that is low down on the scale of creativity. At the top of that scale is being able to help people visualise, accept or understand the world in a different way. Hopefully a better way. Certainly art can harness the immediacy of showing people saying one thing and doing another. Think of cartoons. Think of theatre. Words are much more heavy-handed in explaining hypocrisy but graphics can bring punchy connections to a 'light bulb' moment. Great art has always done that. Think of Rembrandt's 'The Night Watch' which is full of political significance.



The Kottel

painting at my level is learning all the time about other artists and about how they used tone, composition and line to better effect. Also trying to review

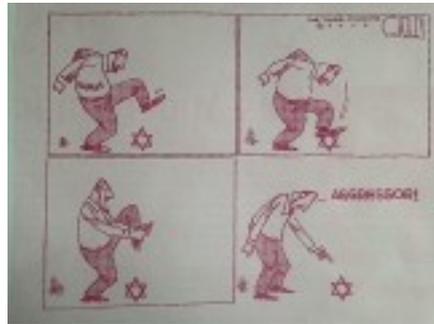
how I do paint and refine 'touch' and brush mark, palette and materials.

At Deanfield last year quite a few of us tried a well-known art class exercise that involves painting with your left hand assuming of course you are right handed. (Jacob Harris threw out all my plans immediately by being left handed but he did some great drawings with his right hand.) The idea is that by being discombobulated like this you struggle with mark making rather than letting your brain tell you what you should be drawing on the basis of the brain's own private gallery of what it thinks is 'correct' art. Instead of creating a response to the world around you which is what real art is you are copying what you think is real art. Now clever people link this to the functions of the left brain and the right brain. A book called 'Painting from the Left side of the Brain' was published in the 90s and I think every person I know who dabbles in art has a copy but I

have never yet met anyone who finished reading it.

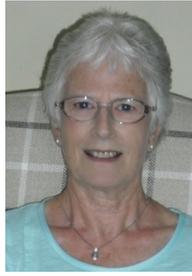
So art is about seeing afresh. Sharing that experience with others. Entertaining others. All manner of wonderful things.

If you want to see my paintings please come to 7 College Fields BS8 3HP during the West Bristol Arts Trail on the 17/18th October this year between 11-5pm. Or look at my website www.effieromain.co.uk.



55+ years of volunteering

Linda Hurst



My first paid job was at the London School of Economics working for five lecturers and professors in the Law Faculty as a PA. However, prior to that as a teenager I became involved in voluntary work. It all began when I saw how much my parents were involved in volunteering in their different capacities. I grew up firmly believing that by volunteering I was demonstrating a commitment to a particular area of society. This has never left me.

In my mid-teens as a leader at the Cambridge & Hackney youth club in the East End of London I learned a lot about communicating with younger people, mostly girls, who were inquiring and inquisitive about growing up as a teenager. Assuming I had all the answers,

they continually asked me questions. For some reason, one of the more senior organisers felt it was a good idea to show a film illustrating the birth of a baby. We all sat there horror-struck and said unanimously 'No way, not ever!' Despite this, I continued my weekly visits there with discussions, debates, shows, sport and we all had plenty of fun.

Having married and moved to Solihull in 1965, I decided I wanted to continue volunteering, so, whilst working again as a PA, I had a deep think about becoming a listening volunteer for the Samaritans. It is not something I did on the spur of the moment, I thought long and hard and finally found the courage to pick up the phone - at the time I was more concerned about blocking the line of an incoming caller in distress. I had an in-depth interview with training spread over several weeks. When I received the letter of acceptance, I was very pleased as I had learned a lot about myself, as well as others in the

training group, had put so much into the course and really felt strongly about my commitment to the organisation.

For several years I worked different shifts, mostly daytime to fit in with the school day, family and work commitments, but in addition there were *compulsory* night shifts. This meant answering the phone to people in distress at the Centre all through the night. The training we had was invaluable. We listened to and built up trust with a caller, either over the phone or face-to-face, all the time being non-judgmental, giving the caller a safe space in which to talk about the deepest of fears and feelings. Apart from committing to giving several hours each week to the organisation, it was compulsory to have ongoing training each year.

All during this time we as a family were involved in Synagogue life and took on roles to enable our community in Solihull to grow and flourish.

Moving to Bristol in 1984 meant I had to leave behind my earlier volunteering and start afresh, but it took a few years to find my feet whilst learning to run a new and challenging business. I remember one day wondering if the Bristol Samaritans wanted volunteers. Encouraged by Robert, I applied and was accepted. Over the time I was involved with the Bristol branch I took on various roles with greater responsibility and for several years was branch Director - a huge privilege and a greatly fulfilling role. This meant overseeing and supporting, with my chosen team, over 200 volunteers which sometimes presented more challenges than the callers themselves.

Some 25 years later, with many hours of shifts behind me and having made life-long very special friends with other

volunteers I decided that there were plenty of younger people to keep the branch going and I finally hung up the phone and retired. In 2013, I was greatly humbled to be made an honorary life member.

Not long after we arrived in Bristol we were asked if our business would like to represent the local community by joining the governing body of local, inner-city multi-cultural Rosemary Nursery school. It was a complete joy to be involved with this unique school which is situated on the ground floor of a block of flats in St Jude's. It is unusual for a nursery to be incorporated into a housing development and it has since developed to become Rosemary Early Years Centre. We sold our business in 2004 and in November 2005 I stood down as a governor as I was no longer 'local'.

Moving from Easton-in-Gordano in 2003 to more central Westbury-on-Trym gave me an opportunity to re-think my voluntary work. A little while later I took on the role of membership secretary at BWPJC. As I enjoy connecting with people, I felt quite at home with this role for five years.

For the past nine years I have been regularly volunteering at St Peter's Day Hospice, being part of a team welcoming patients and helping them enjoy their day, whilst the professional staff see to their medical and more urgent needs. Losing our grand-daughter, Bronwyn, in 2004 I became aware that, despite going through a time of huge personal loss and sadness, a hospice can be a very special and positive place. We live adjacent to St Peter's and to me it seemed absolutely the right place to volunteer. Recently, I have extended my hospice work by training to become a bereavement support volunteer.

Now that I am beyond 'three-score-years-and-ten', I do not wish to alter the momentum of voluntary work in my life, but to continue as long as I am able. If anyone reading this is contemplating a volunteering role anywhere, go ahead, give it a go and you will find that you will gain so much in ways you did not think possible, whatever your age! From my own personal experience, I can say it has given me an insight into life away from the professional and business world and has been hugely and unexpectedly rewarding and fulfilling.



Rosh Hashanah card by Mimi Colman-Deveney

Kadimah stories

Continued from page 25

My name is **Jacob Kinsella Freshwater** and these are my experiences on Kadimah 5775.

I really enjoyed Machenah Kadimah for so many reasons. Our year, Yamim, has been the best year of LJY for me as I made so many long lasting friendships and was able to continue my previous ones as well, from last year, which was a great experience.

This year we had so many fun and educational activities, including Tiyul, the the field trip that Yamim go on. The destination for this special trip being our very own city of Bristol!

Again the leaders were amazing, helping us embrace the fun and joy of Kadimah. The food, although being vegetarian, was delicious, helping us all to see why being vegetarian can really help the environment.

And that is why I think Kadimah is the place to be every summer!



Message from the President

Jonathan Arkush



This is my first Rosh Hashanah as President of the Board following my election in May and I have much to do in order to continue the fine work we have been doing over the past 12 months.

It is a year which we can look back to with some pride in our accomplishments. We have worked closely with the Government to ensure that our community is protected against the evil of antisemitism. The good relations we have fostered led to Home Secretary Theresa May and Communities and Local Government Secretary Eric Pickles attending our monthly Board meeting to reassure our community in the wake of the terrorist attacks against Jews in Paris in January.

This trustful relationship proved its worth in July when a small anti-semitic group on the far right threatened to rally in Golders Green. We felt that the whole community should demonstrate its united resolve against bigotry and the Board, in partnership with the London Jewish Forum and anti-fascist organisation HOPE not Hate, together with the support of the Community Security Trust, formed Golders Green Together to turn a hateful occasion into a positive outcome for our community. The result was that all races and faiths in Golders Green came together to celebrate both their unity and diversity while behind-the-scenes work with the Government and police led to the rally being moved to central London – well away from the Jewish community that the racists were hoping to intimidate. The long-term work of the Board in building alliances and deepening mutual respect and understanding often goes unsung, but this episode demonstrates the benefits that it brings to our

communities all over the UK needing pastoral and social care, networking and advocacy support from the mainstream of the community.

In 5776 we will be pushing ahead with our new, dynamic team of Honorary Officers, dedicated Deputies and professional staff. Jewish core beliefs and practices are not currently threatened in the UK and that is the way we want to keep things - we must retain our ability to continue to practise brit milah and shechitah and there should be an understanding of the importance of these traditions. Our relationship with the Muslim communities of the UK will be a priority. Jews have an important role to play in showing to them and other faiths that it is not only possible but admirable to combine British values with adherence to religious tradition, and that these two things are not mutually exclusive.

We will be working with the Government to safeguard the security of our community and the continuation of that productive relationship is a priority, particularly in light of the shocking rise in antisemitism. The fact that the Government has pledged millions of pounds to enable effective security to be provided outside schools, synagogues and other institutions is welcome but cannot hide the grotesque fact that such vigilance is still required because hatred of our community remains in some, albeit very limited, corners in our society.

I hope that 5776 is a peaceful one for members of our community. We will continue to represent your interests as only a democratically elected body can. May this New Year bring you and your families health and strength, and may it be peaceful for Am Yisrael.

<http://ww.bod.org.uk>

Bristol & West Progressive Jewish Congregation



Bristol & West Progressive Jewish Congregation

Yom Kippur Appeal 2015

This year, Council is recommending three different charities for the Yom Kippur Appeal. These are:

- Our own synagogue
- The Julian Trust Night Shelter in St Paul's Bristol
- Hand in Hand in Israel.

You can read more about each of them via the links below. Details of how to send your donation are on page 38.

If you are unable to make a monetary donation, please consider how you might otherwise volunteer to help either in our community or for any other charitable organisation.

As you are aware BWPJC is having a big fundraising drive through the Giving Tree at the moment to try to address our operating deficit. The theme of the Giving Tree is *l'dor vador* – from generation to generation. Its aim is to inspire each of us to make our community more sustainable. It makes us think about what type of community we want to pass to our children. While a number of members have been generous, we still have some way to go towards closing the deficit.

<http://bwpjc.org/>

Julian Trust Night Shelter

The shelter aims to help those in Bristol with no-one else to help them. Facilities includes 26 beds, dining area and bathrooms with toilets and showers. The shelter is open five nights a week throughout the year serving a hot meal to 80 to 100 homeless guests. Those who stay overnight are also served breakfast and a

laundry service is provided. Health screening and flu vaccinations are also provided. Julian Trust Night Shelter costs more than £1,500 per week to run, which at £16 per bed space per night, represents good value for money. As well as welcoming donations from our community, the Trust would welcome volunteers.

<http://juliantrust.org.uk/>

Hand in Hand

A centre for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel, Hand in Hand brings together thousands of Jews and Arabs in five schools and communities. Hand in Hand's mission is to create a strong, inclusive, shared society in Israel through a network of Jewish-Arab integrated bilingual schools and organized communities. They currently operate integrated schools and communities in five locations with 1,100 Jewish and Arab students and more than 3,000 community members. Over the next ten years, they aim to create a network of 10-15 schools, supported and

enhanced by community activities, altogether involving more than 20,000 Jewish and Arab Israeli citizens. Jews and Arabs - learning together, living together - and inspiring broad support for social inclusion and civic equality in Israel. As their website says, "Current events threaten to pull Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel apart. Fear, anger and violence are undermining shared living. But this is not the case at Hand in Hand. Our schools and community activity continue unabated. As we begin 2015, and as our network of bilingual schools and communities expands, so does our message to Israeli society: THERE IS ANOTHER WAY." With so much negativity on all sides, it seems a perfect choice to support a group that are educating Israel's young from both communities **together** and working to improve the attitudes and understanding of the next generation, aligning perfectly with our own l'dor vador theme.

<https://www.handinhandk12.org/>

L'dor vador - from generation to generation

Karen Warren
Synagogue Treasurer

We are delighted that members are continuing to donate to the shul - thank you! With your support, we can pass a more financially secure community to the next generation.

Below is a table which shows donations from **May to July**. Where it isn't clear how long a standing order has been set up for, we've made the assumption that this is for twelve months.

Some people have chosen to donate through the Giving Tree (either online or by sending the treasurer a cheque) and others have chosen to pay a little bit more with their subscription.

In both cases some people have chosen to make a one-off payment and others have chosen to commit to paying each month.

Some of the smaller donations have come from members who are not at all well off and their donations are appreciated just as much as the larger donations from those who can afford more.

To send donations to BWPJC, please contact Karen via email to treasurer@looseleigh.plus.com

Donations to BWPJC	May	June	July
one off donation	£100.00	£30.00	£100.00
	£90.00		£50.00
	£5,000.00		
	£50.00		
standing order (total donation estimated)	£240.00	£360.00	
	£30.00	£100.00	
	£90.00	£250.00	

Editorial	<i>Sheila Brill (Editor)</i>
and	<i>Judy Goldsmith (Proofreader)</i>
Production	<i>Bristol Business Centre (printer)</i>
Team	

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Raise funds for BWPJC www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bwpjc

