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Volume 26  
Issue 4

# *Etz Chaim*

Reform  
Judaism  
The Movement for Reform Judaism

December 2008  
Kislev 5769

## *Havdallah Club In Action*



Rabbi Emeritus:  
Community Rabbi:  
Chairman:  
Vice Chairman/Treasurer:  
Honorary Secretary:

Rabbi Sonny Herman  
Rabbi Cliff Cohen  
Godfrey Fischer  
Ian Smiler  
Eleanor Miller

Council Members: Brian Abraham, H el ene Cohen, Esther Solomon,  
David Fox, Simon Wolfe, Janine Chilley

Thanet & District Reform Synagogue, 293A Margate Rd, Ramsgate, CT12 6TE  
TEL: 01843 851164 - A constituent member of the Movement for Reform Judaism

**Shabbat services and Festivals Calendar**  
**Saturday 6th December – Tuesday 10th March 2009**

**Kislev 9 – Adar 14, 5769**

*Kabbalat Shabbat services are held every Friday at 7.30pm (except the Shabbat Suppers – 6.45pm.)*

*Saturday services are on the first and third Saturday of each month at 10.30am.*

*Torah breakfasts start at 9.15am, followed by a shorter service at 10.30am. (NB Festival times vary – see below)*

*As the calendar is prepared in advance, details shown may be subject to amendment. Call 01843 851164 to check.*

**DECEMBER 2008**

Sat 6 Dec, Kislev 9

**Torah breakfast 9.15am**

Shabbat service 1030am

Sat 20 Dec, Kislev 23, 1030am

**Blessing for Tevet, Vayeshev**

Sun 21 Dec, Kislev 24

**Erev Chanukah 1st candle**

**Jewish Kent Chanukah Event at Chatham Memorial Synagogue – 2.30pm**

Fri 26 Dec, Kislev 29

**Chanukah 6th Candle**

**Shabbat Buffet, 6.30pm**

Followed by a short service, 7.30pm

Sun 28 Dec, Tevet 1, 3pm

**Chanukah service & party 8th candle**

**JANUARY 2009**

Sat 3 Jan, Tevet 7, 1030am

Vayyigash

Sat 17 Jan, Tevet 21, 1030am

Shemot

Fri 23 Jan, Tevet 27

**Shabbat Supper, 6.45pm**

Followed by a short service, 7.30pm

Tue 27 Jan

**National Holocaust Memorial Day**

Commemorative events to be advised

**FEBRUARY**

Sat 7 Feb, Shevat 13

**Torah breakfast 9.15am**

Shabbat service 1030am

**Shabbat Shirah, Beshallah**

Sun 8 Feb, Shevat 14, 3pm

**Erev Tu B 'shvat seder**

Sat 21 Feb, Shevat 27, 1030am

**Shabbat Shekalim, Blessing for Adar**

Mishpatim

**MARCH**

Sat 7 Mar, Adar 11, 1030am

**Shabbat Zachor, Tetzavveh**

Mon 9 Mar, Adar 13, 7pm

**Erev Purim service & party**

Tue 10 Mar, Adar 14, 10am

**Purim**

*A small selection from Pinsky's extensive menu:*

**MORNING SPECIALS & SMOKED SALMON**

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Toast & Preserves or Pinsky's Homemade Marmalade - £1.50

Buttered Bagel with Scrambled Egg - £3.50

Buttered Bagel with Smoked Salmon - £4.50

Buttered Bagel with Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheese - £4.90

Smoked Salmon with Scrambled Eggs served with Toasted Bagel - £4.50

Smoked Salmon with Mixed Salad, Brown Bread & Lemon - £4.50

Smoked Salmon Sandwich - Danish or Brown - £5.20

Smoked Salmon Sandwich with Cream Cheese - Danish or Brown - £5.60

**SANDWICHES & BAGELS**

*Bagel, Danish & Wholemeal Rye extra 20p (all with Tomor or Butter)*

Salt Beef Bagel with New Green Cucumber & Choice of Mustard - £4.50

Roast Turkey with Cranberry Sauce - Sandwich - £5.50

Pastrami with Choice of Pickle & Mustard - Sandwich - £4.75

Pinsky's Homemade Meatball (Lamb) - Sandwich - £4.80

Schnitzel (Turkey) & Salad - Sandwich - £5.50

Wurst (Salami) with Salad - Sandwich - £4.50

Tuna with Mayo, Sweetcorn, Paprika & Lemon - Sandwich - £4.25

Cheese, Pickle & Salad - Sandwich - £4.25

Bagel and Cream Cheese - £3.50

Egg 'n Onion or Mayo & Cress - Sandwich or Bagel - £3.75

Smoked Salmon with Avocado - Sandwich - £5.50

**SOUPS**

Borscht Traditional Beetroot Soup - £2.25

Soup of the Day - please ask - £2.25

**SIDE ORDERS, DIPS & EXTRA FILLINGS**

Potato Salad £1.20; Pinsky's Recipe Coleslaw £1.20 Latke Potato Fritter £1.20

Pickled Cucumber - New Green, Sweet 'n Sour or Heimishe - £0.30

Roll Mops Herrings - 2 rolls - £1.20



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## Shalom and Welcome to Etz Chaim

Tragically, the late breaking news as we go to press is of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai, which at this time are still ongoing. To date, the news reports are of at least 140 dead. It appears that the terrorists targeted hotels and locations that would be frequented by tourists. They also laid siege to a Chabad Lubavitch community centre. Current reports indicate that at least five Israelis are dead, including the Rabbi and his wife.

It is not clear at this time which terrorist group the attackers belonged to, but all of the theories quoted so far refer to different groups of Fundamentalist Islamists. I must admit to having a great problem in using the

word Islam, or Muslim in connection with any such terrorist groups that exist. I once heard a wonderful quote about the Taliban by Johannes van de Ven, which I think applies to any terror group using the name of Islam as an excuse:

“The Taliban, therefore, are no more representative of Islam than the Ku Klux Klan is of Christianity”.

In addition to the horrific loss of life, the casualties and the terror inflicted on the inhabitants of and visitors to Mumbai, the cause of peace in the troubled areas of the World has, once again, been badly undermined.

Our thoughts and prayers go to everyone who has been affected by the attacks. May the end to this situation come swiftly and easily, and with no further injury or loss of life.




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The Editors reserve the right to edit or refuse any material accepted for publication.

The deadline for the next issue is 14th February 2009.

All correspondence or articles to:

Etz Chaim News, 11 Watchester Lane, Minster, Ramsgate CT12 4DA or email [eleanor@buyjewishstuff.biz](mailto:eleanor@buyjewishstuff.biz).

Tel: 01843 822550.

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The articles, letters, advertising and content in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the Thanet and District Reform Synagogue or of the Movement for Reform Judaism.

*Front Cover: Ben and Jon from the Reform Synagogues Youth Group RSY Netzer, visiting our Havdallah Club.*



## A Word Or Two

I had a call on the synagogue number from a young lady in a local newspaper asking if we would like to participate in a special Christmas feature in which we could advertise details of our Christmas services. I asked her to verify the place of worship she was calling and, yes, it was us. I explained as tactfully and as friendly as I could that we actually didn't celebrate Christmas. She genuinely did not know this and was most apologetic. So I asked her to ensure nobody tried to persuade her to call the event "Winter Festival". I explained that whilst I do not subscribe to doctrines of Christianity, I do happen to enjoy the way others enjoy Christmas.

After I put the 'phone down I avoided going into the golden oldie rant of "don't they teach anything at schools these days!" However, it got me thinking about how important our interfaith groups are in dispelling the misconceptions we might have about the way others worship, and their beliefs. As much as one thinks one knows, there is always more to learn. I have found the talks organised by the Thanet Interfaith Council (and it's forerunner) most interesting and informative. I do hope you will be able to support the TIC by attending the talks. You may even consider becoming a TIC member for the nominal annual fee of £5. This is just to cover postage and stationery. Rather like us, everyone's a volunteer.

My visit to the Havdalah Club in November found the floor of the Harold Ruback room covered with an outline map of Israel made from loose black tape. Inside the outline were strategically placed photos without captions plus a selection of herbs. The reason for this was a visit by Jon Littman, the RSY-Netzer (Reform Synagogues Youth Group) Youth Worker. He, with shaliach Ben Jardine, from Israel, was helping the children complete a quiz sheet based on places in Israel. From this they all gained their 'passports' to travel. You'll find more information about this day, and the opportunities for the children to join the wider Reform Movement youth activities, elsewhere in this issue. There was, as always, a lovely atmosphere under the guidance of H el ene and her able assistant, Benjy. Each session concludes with the Havdalah ceremony, at around 5pm in winter, that ends Shabbat and starts the week in a most delightful way. It matters not if you have any children at our cheder. Do come along to the Havdalah ceremony at the end – you will not be disappointed.

We are in the most satisfactory situation of not having to find money for the purchase of the synagogue's stock of new siddurim. (I think I have mentioned this before, but it's worth repeating!) In addition to all our members who have purchased their own copies of the siddur, a sufficient number of commemorative copies have been donated by our members. It is the minhag (tradition)



([www.reformjudaism.org](http://www.reformjudaism.org))

## Chanukkah

### Definition:

In Jewish tradition, Chanukkah is a minor festival, but it has grown in importance over recent years.

The historical story of Chanukkah, recounted in the Books of the Maccabees, in the Apocrypha, tells of the victory of those Jews who resisted the call to assimilation by the Syrian Greeks who wanted to replace Judaism with their own religion and culture. It was essentially a military victory won by a small group of guerrilla fighters, as the majority were attracted by at least some elements of the new way of life. The victory resulted in the reclaiming and rededication of the Jewish temple which had been desecrated. The word 'Chanukkah' means dedication, and probably the original 8 day festival of (re)dedication of the Temple was modelled on the festival of Succot, which, because of the fighting, was not able to be celebrated.

Later on, during a Talmudic discussion about candles, it becomes clear that Chanukkah was not widely known. This may have been partly because of the embarrassment the rabbis felt about celebrating a military victory. Therefore, in one place only, we have the account of the legend of the oil required for the dedication. According to the story, there was only enough for one day, but, miraculously, it lasted for eight.

So, Chanukkah had its place in the Jewish calendar, with the lighting of candles for eight days, Chanukkah gelt (money) was given to the children, but it was a relatively minor one. Different factors have come together to make it appear that Chanukkah is almost a major festival in status.

One is its timing, and it is felt that one way of dealing with the problems presented by Christmas, is to make the observance of Chanukkah much more major. Clearly festivals of light are important in many traditions at this darkest time of the year. Bigger gifts are now given, and indeed exchanged for all ages, and there is much more emphasis on different ways of celebrating. This is good in one way, but there is a certain paradox in that a festival that had its origins in a victory against assimilation, has expanded because of pressures to assimilate.

There are additions to the synagogue liturgy for Chanukkah, and celebrations will be held there. However, the focus should be the lighting of the Chanukkah each night, and the blessings are found on page of the Siddur of the Movement for ReformJudaism, beginning on page 374. The legend of the oil has led to doughnuts and latkes, (potato pancakes) being a particular feature of the festival. There is also a tradition of playing with a small spinning top, known as a dreidel or sevivon.

4. I want to be seated (Indicate order of priority)

- On the aisle
- Near the exit
- Near the window
- In Bournemouth
- Near the bathroom
- Near my in-laws
- As far away from my in-laws as possible
- As far away from my ex in-laws as possible
- Near the bimah
- Near the Kiddush table (except on Yom Kippur of course)
- Near single men
- Near available women
- Near anyone who's available - I'm just not particular
- Where no one on the bimah can see/hear me talking during services
- Where no one will notice me sleeping during services
- Where I can sleep during the rabbi's sermon (Additional Charge)

5. Orthodox only - I would like a seat where:

- I can see my spouse over the mechitza
- I cannot see my spouse over the mechitza
- I can see my friend's spouse over the mechitza
- My spouse cannot see me looking at my friend's spouse over the mechitza

6. Please do not place me anywhere near the following people: (limit of six: if you require more space, you may wish to consider joining another congregation)

Your name; \_\_\_\_\_

Building fund pledge: \_\_\_\_\_

for those who make donations to do so anonymously. Therefore, on behalf of the community, may I thank those concerned. (Of course, you can always look at the silver block inscriptions on the cover of the siddurim, but I didn't say so!). If all goes well, the silver blocking will be completed this month so that we can dispense with the draft siddur. It has taken longer than expected because of the problem of finding a suitable specialist to do the work. Our plea went to the Sternberg Centre, to no avail. Would you believe, it's being done in Canterbury by a specialist bookbinder, a dieing breed, indeed!

On the subject of 'thank you's', the Faith in Art exhibition happened, thanks to the marshallers, general helpers and refreshments people, again all volunteers, who made it possible. I would especially like to thank Arthur Weinberg of CANDIFA (Canterbury & District Interfaith Action) for arranging the selection of pictures, and to Sam Holden who took on the task of co-ordinating it all as Hazel and I were away that week. Locally, exhibitions of this kind do not generate a mass attendance. However, details of the exhibition went to all East Kent schools, libraries and Visitor Information Centres, the BBC and local press and a very extensive emailing list of interested parties and other religious bodies. In this way we continue to promote our community as the face of Judaism in East Kent.

With my Warden's hat on, I am now putting together the list of mitzvot for

the 2009 Shabbat services. I do this in advance as, frankly, it's a lot easier each month to refer to the advance list prior to each Shabbat. Those who have participated know that the dates are not set in stone and that if you are away on the Shabbat in question it does not present a problem. However, it does ensure that everyone who wishes to participate is included. If you have not yet been one of those members who opens the ark curtains, reads a prayer in English, carries the scroll or has a call-up, and would like to join in, please let me know. There is no mystique with a mitzvah. And if you are not sure about what to do when, I am more than happy to spend time with you in advance to go over any questions of routine you may have.

Chanukah is upon us – do join us in the festivities.

Hag Sameach Chanukah

Godfrey Fischer



Apologies for a misprint in the last issue - Betty Gee's brother is Manny Ceen. New glasses needed here I think...

L'Shanah Tovah to the community from Joy Spigel-Sinclair and Dana Nathan, whose New Year greetings were missed out. And many apologies from the editors. If we missed anyone else out, please let us know - there were so many greetings some of you may have fallen off the end of the page...

## Was Dick Whittington Jewish?

Most unlikely, but we'll leave that question to the tongue-in-cheek column "How Jewish is ...," in the Jewish Chronicle. However, the newly elected Lord Mayor of London is, and a Reform Jew, to boot!

Ian Luder, a member of West London Synagogue is the ninth Jewish Lord Mayor of London. Rabbi Tony Bayfield, Chief Executive of the Movement for Reform Judaism has been appointed his chaplain. A special service was held at West London Synagogue on the evening of 7th November and a unique Shacharit service was held in Guildhall on 8th November after which Rabbi Bayfield accompanied the Lord Mayor on the Lord Mayor's procession.

Another West London Synagogue member to be honoured is High Court Judge Sir Terence Etherton who has been made a Lord Justice of the Court of Appeal – the second highest court in England and Wales. He was promoted partly in recognition of his work as chairman of the Law Commission for England, Wales and Ireland, in addition to his service in the High Court.

## Rabbi about Town

Rabbi Cliff Cohen's cover for maternity leave at the North London Progressive Community comes to its conclusion at the end of December. He has now been asked to look after the Wimbledon & District Reform Synagogue for six months from January, to cover the sabbatical leave of Rabbis Sybil Sheridan and Sylvia Rothschild.

The Wimbledon community has sufficient members to take care of conducting services, so we will again have the pleasure of his company for Shabbat. However, the work of education, pastoral care and rabbinical administration will take place during the week.

May I please ask for your patience if you wish to talk to Rabbi Cohen on any personal matter. My suggestion is that you first telephone or email him to make an appointment.

Godfrey Fischer, Chairman



## High Holidays Synagogue Seating Request Form

During the last holiday season, many individuals expressed concern over the seating arrangements in the synagogue. In order for us to place you in a seat which will best suit you, we ask you to complete the following questionnaire and return it to the synagogue secretary as soon as possible.

1. I would prefer to sit in the ... (Check one)

- Talking section
- No talking section

2. If talking, which category do you prefer? (indicate order of interest)

- Stock market /credit crunch
- Sport
- Medicine
- General gossip
- Specific gossip (choose)
  - The Rabbi
  - The Cantor
  - The Cantor's wife
  - The Cantor's wife's voice
  - The Rabbi's wife/husband
  - The Rabbi's 'secretary'
  - Fashion news
  - What others are wearing
  - Why they look awful
  - Your neighbours
  - Your neighbour's relatives
  - Gordon Brown
  - Sex (Preference: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - Who's cheating on/having an affair with whom
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which of the following would you like to be near for free professional advice?

- Doctor
- Dentist
- Nutritionist
- Psychiatrist
- Child psychiatrist
- Mother-in-law
- Podiatrist
- Chiropractor
- Stockbroker
- Accountant
- Lawyer: criminal
- Lawyer: civil
- Estate agent
- Architect
- Plumber (as if!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)
- Buyer (Specify shop: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Sex therapist
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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At the moment, we have limited stock listed on our eBay shop and our shop on eBid ([uk.ebid.net](http://uk.ebid.net), search for BuyJewishStuff) but the best way to view our wares is in Shul on the Judaica table.

BuyJewishStuff is currently having the website redeveloped Please email [eleanor@buyjewishstuff.biz](mailto:eleanor@buyjewishstuff.biz), or phone 01843 822550 for any Judaica requirements or further details.

### **A Day In The Life!**

*Here is the next of our regular features, showing the day to day realities of life for those who hold a position of significance within our community. This time, we gain an insight into the chaos that is life with three children as an Hon Sec and Newsletter Editor:*

I work full time, and so most days get up at six, get ready for work, make breakfast for all five of us, make school lunches for Toby and Reuben and a packed lunch for myself, and leave the house in plenty of time for the early train.

Well, that's the theory and some weeks I even manage two days like this. Back in the real world, I usually fall out of bed exhausted some time between when the alarm goes off at six, and about seven thirty, at which point I know that if I run like a lunatic I may catch the late train into work, and be able to grab a pasty for breakfast from the 'Sandwich Lady'.

Once in work, I am a Business Analyst for a firm that provides software to Lloyds Names and Syndicates, among others. This work is actually so dull to most people that I can get Graham and all three children off to sleep just by describing my day, so I won't bore you with it here.

After my day at work, I get home around six, help Graham to get dinner for the older two and feed Isaac, and then put them all to bed. By the time that's finished and we've eaten as well, it's around half past eight if I'm lucky, and that's when my other job begins.

First I check my three email accounts. Modern technology is a marvellous thing, and a lot of Council business of all kinds is done via email. In my inboxes over the course of a month I usually find articles for the newsletter, pictures for the newsletter, updates from Reform Judaism and the Board of Deputies, news about the members of our community, and replies to emails that I've sent out. Today for instance, in my inbox are corrections to the last set of minutes from the Council Meeting from Godfrey Fischer, an email from Ian Smiler about stamps and Synagogue stationery, some emails forwarded from Godfrey about what Magen David Adom are intending to do in India in the light of the terrorist attacks, and some photos from Helene Cohen of the last Havdallah Club meeting. And of course the usual variety of personal emails, spam, funny pictures of animals and special offers from Tesco.

I answer my emails as best I can,

and save anything that will end up in the newsletter. I may return phone calls that have come in during the day, and if any letters need to be written on behalf of the Shul, I write them and send them for proof-reading.

Then if there's still any time left before I fall asleep on the sofa, I do some work on the newsletter. Once I have the material at hand it's not usually too long a job to get the first draft out. This goes to Godfrey and Rabbi Cliff for proof-reading and once any amendments have been agreed, the final version goes to Cliff for printing and sending off.

During quiet periods for shul, I use this time for running the business (BuyJewishStuff) and studying for my Open University degree (Maths and Statistics - I'm less than half way through and it will take me at least another five years to finish, but I'll get there in the end). Occasionally I even go out and socialise!

Then it's time to wash and sterilise Isaac's bottles, and go to bed, ready to start the next day bright and early, or blearily and late, depending.

You will have noticed in all of this that there's no mention of housework, shopping, school runs

or paperwork. That's because Graham does all of that, and in between times sorts out my IT problems, listens to my rants about late newsletter submissions and is also beginning to set up the Shul website. Like quite a few other members I suspect, my other half, whilst not being Jewish and not being a member of the Synagogue, is nevertheless very much a part of our community, and a supportive and valued part at that.

So that's a Day in My Life. I'm told that as the boys grow up it'll get easier, and in fact, Toby is now quite old enough to run errands and help out. We'll be sending him out up the chimneys shortly. Meanwhile, chaotic and exhausting though it is, I wouldn't change a thing. Although, if the Big Boss up there is listening, a Premium Bond win wouldn't go amiss...



Many thanks from Janine Chilly, who would like to thank everyone for a wonderful birthday, and a most enjoyable party. And Janine would also like to thank everyone for their kind thoughts, good wishes and Mazel Tovs on the birth of her grandson Sebastian.

Our calendar still reflects a time when we lived in harmony with nature. We celebrate the new moon and our holidays are harvest festivals. But our ties to the land were broken when we were dispersed across the world.

So why should we start worrying about the environment now? After all, we are a tiny fraction of the world's population, what impact could we have on the problems?

The truth is, concern for the environment is a longstanding Jewish tradition.

In the very first chapter of the Bible, God entrusts the earth to Adam and commands him to "till and tend it". Judaism has always recognised that the capacity to exploit the world comes with the responsibility to look after it. In the Talmud, we read of some of the earliest laws regulating hazardous waste and establishing green belt breathing spaces around cities.

Today, the environmental dangers are far more serious than those envisaged by our Sages which makes this Midrash, written over 1500 years ago, remarkable for its insight:

When God created the first man, He warned him, saying: See My works how beautiful and balanced they are. And all I created, I created for you. But be careful that you don't damage or destroy My world for if you ruin it there will be no one to repair it after you.

Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:13

*And the same website has the following ideas for how to be greener (aimed at children but mostly suitable for adults as well):*

At Tu B'Shevat, plant a tree in your garden or that of a friend.

If you can't manage a tree (and even if you can), plant parsley seeds in a pot. They should have grown just in time for you to use at your Pesach Seder.

Plant a little patch of winter wheat so you can use it to count the Omer between Pesach and Shavuot.

Check out the seven species mentioned in Deuteronomy (8:8): wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates— then find a recipe that uses them (perhaps not all at the same time!) and try cooking them.

Grow something to eat in your garden or a window box.

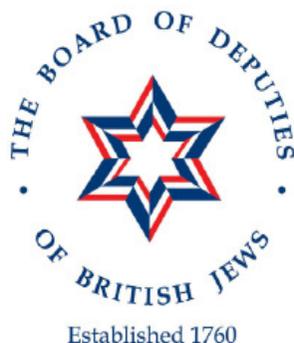
Make Autumn wax rubbings on thin paper using leaves or bark (leave the bark on the tree!).

Raise money for your favourite eco-charity by running a bake sale at school or for your family and friends.

Build a model Sukkah. You can give this to younger brothers or sisters to use as a doll's house.

Next Hanukkah, replace one light bulb in your house with a low-energy one on each night of the festival. Start with your own bedroom.

Ask your cheder or Jewish day school to include Jewish environmental education on the curriculum, if they don't already do so.



[www.boardofdeputies.org.uk](http://www.boardofdeputies.org.uk)

## Community in Shock over Terror in Mumbai

British Jewry shares the horror of the entire world at the appalling attacks this week in Mumbai India, where terrorists have committed indiscriminate acts of murder, kidnap and destruction.

President of the Board, Henry Grunwald QC has written to the Indian High Commissioner in London, Shiv Shankar Mukherjee, to express on behalf of the community, our deep grief and sorrow for all of those who have been killed and injured.

In addition to the other buildings targeted, there is a particular resonance with Jewish communities worldwide because of the attack on the Nariman Chabad House. The thoughts and prayers of the whole community are with the victims and their families at this extremely difficult time.

The following is taken from The Big Green Jewish Website, a joint venture by The Noah Project and The Board of Deputies of British Jews. The article is followed by a quick test about how green your home is, and some very good advice on how to make your home and actions more green, and also incidentally, more economical. To take the test, go to the website below and follow the link at the top right:

[www.biggreenjewish.org](http://www.biggreenjewish.org)

## How Green Is Your Jewish Home?

A friend once joked about the world's shortest running radio programme - "Jewish Gardeners' Question Time". Just one person phoned in to ask "How much should I pay my gardener?"

Jews and nature don't always seem to be natural partners. In general, we prefer the city to the country. We are not renowned for our love of camping. Given a common garden plant or shrub, the chance of a synagogue of Jews identifying it is close to zero.

But it wasn't always this way.

## Mainstream Judaism is not Fundamentalist Judaism

*An editorial, with the above heading, was recently published in Manna, the journal of Reform Judaism, and is worth repeating. It follows on the steps taken by the Reform, Liberal and Masorti movements to put some action into stalled discussions of cross-communal co-operation and understanding between them and the United Synagogue. It certainly bears repeating here.*

THE Statement of collaboration published last month by the Liberal, Masorti and Reform Movements represents a watershed in British Jewish history. The Jewish Chronicle recognised that and was generous in its coverage.

HOWEVER, even the Jewish Chronicle got it wrong in two aspects. First, it described the Liberal, Reform and Masorti movements as non-orthodox. That is a major error. The Masorti Movement, led by Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg is orthodox. Although Rabbi Wittenberg is his own person, he is unequivocal that the Movement's founder, Rabbi Dr Louis Jacobs was not only the greatest scholar British Jewry has ever produced but was also the greatest Chief Rabbi the British Jewish community never had. Masorti Judaism considers itself to be the heir to Minhag Anglia. It stands where the United Synagogue would have stood had it not fallen victim to the worldwide epidemic of fundamentalism.

SECOND, successive editorials in the Jewish Chronicle represented the Statement as a political challenge to the Chief Rabbi, Sir Jonathan Sacks and to the United Synagogue. It is nothing of the sort. It represents a challenge of

a theological kind but it is not a political challenge. Liberal, Masorti and Reform would welcome United Synagogue collaboration but neither count on it nor feel that the urgency of the situation allows the luxury of extended discussion or deliberation.

IT IS already six years since Sir Jonathan, undoubtedly the finest philosopher ever to grace the office of Chief Rabbi, published his important and admirable book *The Dignity of Difference*. He ruffled Jewish fundamentalist feathers by granting other faiths their dignity and their perceptions of God. He seemed to suggest that the Torah might not be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. He withdrew the book and made changes.

WHAT IS less well remembered is that the first major change was to delete a long paragraph accepting evolutionary theory. Evolution was endorsed back in 1930 by Sacks' predecessor Chief Rabbi Hertz in an essay still available for all to read in the current edition of the Hertz chumash.

THE SACKS paragraph of 2002 was deleted in deference to creationism and the new militant fundamentalism. This is in no way an attack on Chief Rabbi Sacks. Many would have taken the same view that he did, namely that to remove a paragraph not central to the main thrust of his argument and thus maintain a highly articulate and persuasive contribution to the national debate on religion and society, was prudent and worthwhile.

WHAT WAS so significant was that the charedi rabbis both inside and outside the United Synagogue could compel their own Chief Rabbi, in full glare of the national, public attention, to recant.

IT IS IN that process of charedi-ism, the inexorable rise and rise of the influence of fundamentalists within the United Synagogue that is decisive and presents the United Synagogue with a challenge, not the collaboration of Liberal, Masorti and Reform.

PROFESSOR Geoffrey Alderman, also writing in the Jewish Chronicle, suggests that the Statement of Collaboration is akin to the formation of the United Reformed Church, the coming together of non-conformist churches outside the Church of England thirty years ago. It is yet another illustration of what a lobbies the Alderman is. But it is, once again, wide of the mark. Whatever the URC appeal, the Church of England remains a broad church representing the majority of Christians in the UK. Fundamentalist Judaism, with which the United Synagogue is preoccupied and to which it is in thrall, creationism included, cannot possibly appeal to more than a small section of the British Jewish community. To say 20% would be generous

THE BRITISH Jewish community is melting away at a faster rate than our ice caps. The melt is masked by the birth rate of charedim but even that is beginning to fall, certainly in Israel, in the face of economic and social realities.

THE ONLY movements who can reach the overwhelming majority of British Jewry are the Liberal, Masorti and Reform Movements. Even then, only if they recognise both in the depths of the theological being and in their urgent strategic action, that there are many ways of talking the Jewish talk and no one route will work for everyone and

no-one has the monopoly on truth and principles. Moreover, they have to recognise that their synagogues, however broad and outreaching they are, cannot meet the needs of everyone and that collaboration on projects beyond the synagogue is essential. The watchword has to be engaging with people where they are, prompting and facilitating their particular Jewish journey. In fact, we would argue that, as we enter 5769, there are three initiatives that are even more important than the Statement itself.

JENERATION – the initiative dedicated to reaching out to the 18-35s – makes available on its cutting edge website the details of all programmes available to young Jewish women and men within the community, regardless of affiliation. It is limited only to the extent that the programmes must come from sources which respect pluralism and practice the respect that pluralism demands.

THE APPOINTMENT of highly talented Abigail Morris to head ResponsAbility, the community's new cutting edge ethical initiative, which promises an exciting and challenging launch within the next three months.

THE JEWISH Communal Secondary School is on target to open in 2010, embodying the values of the Statement of Collaboration – pluralism, respect, a non-fundamentalist, non-coercive approach to Jewish education for the community and by the community.

REMARKABLY, despite the economic gloom, the outlook for British Jewry is bright. British Jewry will be on the forefront of religious thinking and social action in the decades ahead. It will not retreat into fundamentalist irrelevance.

## Yenta's Corner

*We're hoping that Yenta's Corner will become another one of our regular features, so please send in any recipes, hints and tips, anecdotes from the Old Country, or gossip and moral judgements on your fellow members (ok, we're kidding about the last bit!)*

This time, Helene Cohen (also known as Mrs Rabbi) is kind enough to give us her Challah recipe and a family recipe for Latkes...

### Hélène's Challah Recipe

Ingredients:

- ✧ 1 sachet dry active yeast
- ✧ 500g strong white bread flour
- ✧ 100g malt cob flour – from the Sarre Windmill
- ✧ 4 tbl spoons sugar
- ✧ 1 teaspoon salt
- ✧ 2 eggs, mixed with 6 tablespoons olive oil, water added to make 400 ml fluid

Method:

Either cheat, like I usually do, and use a bread maker to mix the dough and rest it for the first proving, or:

- ✧ mix the dry ingredients together
- ✧ make a well in middle
- ✧ add liquid to well and draw in slowly with fork or spoon
- ✧ Knead thoroughly, cover and leave to prove

- ✧ Knead again once doubled in size
- ✧ Plait using 3 or 4 strand options – pictures available from 'Jewish Catalogue'
- ✧ Leave to rise again
- ✧ Brush with mixture of water, oil and sugar, then sprinkle with poppy seeds
- ✧ Bake in hot oven until browned and the base is hollow to tap.

### Nana's Latkes

Ingredients:

- ✧ 4 large potatoes
- ✧ Large onion – or more according to taste
- ✧ 1 large or 2 small eggs
- ✧ Approx. 4 tablespoons S.R. flour
- ✧ Salt and pepper to taste
- ✧ Oil to deep fry

Method:

- ✧ Grate potato and onion together.
- ✧ Add beaten egg and first 2 tablespoons of flour.
- ✧ Season to taste.
- ✧ Use 2 tablespoons to loosely shape into rounds as you dollop them into the hot oil.
- ✧ Cook till golden, remove and drain thoroughly on kitchen paper.
- ✧ Watch them disappear as fast as you cook them!

*Pictures on display at the Synagogue during the Faith In Art Exhibition*



*We send our condolences and prayers to Anthony Da Costa and family following the sad loss of father, George Da Costa, elder of the Ramsgate Sephardi community.*

And also to the family of Felix Rozmaryn, member of the Margate Hebrew Congregation who had many friends in our community.

Zichronam livrachah,  
May their memory be for a blessing

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# Havdallah Club



Israel comes to Thanet - Ben and Jon from RSY-Netzer map out Israel in the Harold Ruback Room.

## Havdallah Club This Year Has Been A Lot Of Fun - Benjy Cohen

Last week Havdallah Club was once again a Havdallah Club as for the first time in ages we had Havdallah.

Havdallah club so far this year has been a lot a fun, a lot of planning, but a lot of fun. Recently, Mum came up with the idea of a Havdallah club book with all the prayers that the children have written, in it. This book will hopefully be on sale at

the Synagogue to raise money for the community.

This year took off when the kids learnt about Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, they created shape poems and acrostics all about Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, which will all be in the Havdallah club book. Later they decorated the notice board to create a welcoming image. They put pictures of apples and honey on the board and the big friendly letters reading "Shanna Tova". Last week I planed a lesson all about Shabbat while Mum took the other

children one by one to make a challah. The activities were some acrostic poems of the word Shabbat and there was also a sheet that started... "Thank you, God, for Shabbat because..." and also some fill in the blanks for the Shabbat prayers (candles, wine and challah.) Hebrew and English.

So it's a lot of fun Havdallah club for both the Children and the Adults, and it is really great for everyone to have a children's table at the Chanukah and Purim parties.

## Shabbat Poem

When I go to shul  
On the 7th day from school  
I go and rest  
Then I'll be blessed  
On my day off from school

On the 7th day we rest  
To stop us feeling stressed  
We try to relax  
From the weeks attacks  
And now we're not depressed

Shabbat shalom to Jews  
Shabbat shalom to who?  
As we say our prayer  
For the queen and mayor  
Shabbat shalom to you

We say a prayer for Brown  
We say a prayer for the crown  
We pray a lot  
And I almost forgot  
We pray for God's renown

Zak Cohen

## Is It Kosher?

Seen in Sainsbury's Broadstairs but likely to be on sale at other branches – for those of you trying to reduce your fat content and stay cheesy kosher, Sheese.

Smoked cheddar style, 100% dairy free and certified by the London Beth Din.

And if you are looking for the kosher chiller food in the above-said Sainsbury's, this is the time of year when everything is moved around to accommodate the Christmas fare. At time of writing the semi-perishables were to be found on the top shelf of the chiller section in aisle one. If it's not there, then a member of staff will only be too happy to guide you.



*From Betty Gee:*

I wish to thank the Synagogue so much for the lovely special Kiddush which they arranged for my 90th birthday. It was quite unexpected and therefore, all the more enjoyable to be with such good friends. The framed printed "Eshet Chayil" given to me was just the icing on the cake and much appreciated!