



EtzChaim

The movement for
REFORM JUDAISM

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Issue 3

Autumn 2012
5773



L'Shanah Tovah from the Havdallah Club



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Thanet & District Reform Synagogue, 293A Margate Rd, Ramsgate, CT12 6TE
Tel. 01843 851164

A constituent member of the Movement for Reform Judaism

Shabbat and festivals at the Thanet & District Reform Synagogue

We hold services every Friday evening at 7.30pm, the first and third Saturday mornings at 10.30am and for festivals (at 7pm & relaxed with familiar prayers using We use both Hebrew and English transliterated. Kiddush and There couldn't be a better way to – no strings attached! (However, in case of a change of times.)



10am). The atmosphere is traditional and modern melodies. and the Hebrew is also refreshments follow each service. connect with your Jewish heritage phone the synagogue beforehand

Sun 16 Sep – Fri 28 Dec 2012, Elul 29 5772 – Tevet 15 5773



SEPTEMBER

Sun 16 Sep, Elul 29 5772, 7pm
Erev Rosh Hashanah

Mon 17 Sep, Tishri 1, 5773, 10am
Rosh Hashanah

Fri 21 Sep, Tishri 5, 7.30pm

Tue 25 Sep, Tishri 9, 7pm
Kol Nidre
Fast Commences 6.29pm

Wed 26 Sep, Tishri 10, 10am
Yom Kippur
Fast ends 7.33pm

Fri 28 Sep, Tishri 12, 7.30pm

Sun 30 Sep, Tishri 14, 7pm
Erev Sukkot

OCTOBER

Mon 1 Oct, Tishri 15, 10am
Sukkot

Fri 5 Oct, 19 Tishri, 7.30pm
Sat 6 Oct, 20 Tishri, 10.30am

Sun 7 Oct, Tishri 21, 7pm
Erev Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah
Service and celebration

Mon 8 Oct, Tishri 22, 10am
Simchat Torah service

Fri 12 Oct, Tishri 26, 7.30pm
Fri 19 Oct, Cheshvan 5, 7.30pm

Sat 20 Oct, Cheshvan 6, 10.30am
Fri 26 Oct, Cheshvan 10, 7.30pm

NOVEMBER

Fri 2 Nov, 17 Cheshvan, 7.30pm
Sat 3 Nov, 18 Cheshvan, 10.30am

Fri 9 Nov, Cheshvan 24, 7.30pm

Fri 16 Nov, Kislev 2, 7.30pm
Sat 17 Nov, Kislev 3, 10.30am

Fri 23 Nov, Kislev 9
Shabbat Supper, 6.30pm for 6.45pm
Followed by a short service at 8pm

Fri 30 Nov, Kislev 16, 7.30pm

DECEMBER

Sat 1 Dec, Kislev 17
Torah Breakfast, 9.15am
Service 10.30am

Fri 7 Dec, Kislev 23, 7.30pm

Sat 8 Dec, No service
Chanukah light first candle

Fri 14 Dec, Tevet 1, 7.30pm
Sat 15 Dec, Tevet 2, 10.30am

Sat 15 Dec, Tevet 2, 3.30pm
Chanukah Party

Fri 21 Dec, Tevet 8, 7.30pm

Fri 28 Dec, Tevet 15, 7.30pm

High Holy Day Service Tickets

This year we will as usual be holding a full programme of High Holy Day services. Tickets will be issued shortly and these will entitle members and children under 18 to attend services. In common with other synagogues, if you are not a member, or have adult or student children, relatives or friends wanting to attend our services, all are welcome but you must contact the synagogue office in advance for a ticket. **Entry to services will strictly be by ticket only, so make sure this is carried with you to avoid disappointment.**

NB if you have student or young adult (18-30) relatives away from home wishing to attend a local service, please contact the MRJ on 020 8349 5640 or email alyson.joseph@reformjudaism.org.uk. For reasons of security, deadlines are in place and under no circumstances can tickets be issued after them.



**Shalom and welcome to Etz Chaim,
Rosh Hashanah 2012**

Message from Chairman, Ian Smiler

Hello everyone

As I prepared to write this introduction, I realised it is already a year since the re-launch of our newsletter and I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has submitted articles and features for inclusion over the past year. Your contributions have made the newsletter what is it, an interesting, informative, sometimes humorous, but always entertaining, read. Please do continue with submissions, they really are much loved. I want to make a special thank you to our editor Alison, who has worked very hard in producing this community voice peace and done so very well.

I hope you enjoy reading this bumper Rosh Hashanah edition. I wish you all Shanah Tovah and well over the fast.

And see page 14.

Best wishes, Ian

Message from Editor, Alison R Noyes

Along with most of the country I have been just wild about the Olympics and Paralympics while never ever having expected to be!



And I was so heartened, indeed relieved, by Danny Boyle's celebration highlighting this country's great freedoms, right across the board. Forever may that last! Shanah Tovah

The deadline for the next issue is Friday 17th November 2012.

The editor reserves the right to edit, refuse, or postpone any material submitted for publication.

The articles, letters, advertising, and content do not necessarily reflect the views of the TDRS or the Movement for Reform Judaism.

Please write to Alison R Noyes at alisonlondon@aol.com or c/o 293A Margate Road. Ramsgate, CT12 6TE
Tel. 01843 851164

High Holydays – forgive me for saying so but ...

I have always had a problem with the liturgy for the High Holydays. With all the self-deprecating repetition of how utterly inadequate we are, and what a disappointment we must be to God, a feeling of doom and gloom pervades the festival and it all gets very depressing. This is not just a matter of style, it is about the very meaning of what we are and what we could be.

As I see it, the whole point of the concept of Teshuvah is to remind you that **you are someone whom God finds it possible to forgive**. This, for me, is not some incidental idea that deserves to be buried in several 100 pages of guilt and regret. On the contrary it is **the** point, the essential, central, defining teaching, without which the whole period becomes empty nonsense. We should be shouting it aloud every few minutes, to ensure that we don't lose sight of it. Instead, we make it very hard to find.

One result is that for many Jews the High Holydays do not change us. Certainly we go to shul, we go through the motions of participating in services, we might even find that somewhere along the way a little sincerity struggles to the surface and, for a brief while, we have some good intentions about the future. However, the liturgy neither encourages nor supports us and, once the shofar sounds the end of Yom Kippur, our lives return to what they were.

But **you are someone whom God finds it possible to forgive**. God can forgive you – why can't you? Can't you see the wonderful uniqueness in yourself? You have a contribution to make that absolutely nobody else can provide, and the world needs it, so why

are you wallowing in your inadequacy or guilt? How will you love your neighbour as yourself if you love yourself so little?

I do not say we are perfect or that there is nothing to forgive. But I believe with great passion that the High Holyday challenge is not God's forgiveness but forgiving ourselves. For me the High Holydays are not about repentance, they are about growth. We grow by accepting what we are as a basis for moving forward but the acceptance of what we are has to include the positive and the potential, the building blocks for what we will become.

Do not bother searching the liturgy for these ideas, the liturgy has condemned them to obscurity. Just try reminding yourself, every time your mind starts to wander, of the crucial fact, the only fact that matters:

You are someone whom God finds it possible to forgive!

Rabbi Cliff Cohen, Ellul 5772



Havdallah Club

At Havdallah Club we are looking forward to a new year filled with fun, learning and thinking about our Judasim. The service that our children produced in July showed just how beautifully they are all maturing. We had innovation, with the eating of chocolate during the service to remind us of the sweetness of Shabbat; National Pride, with a special Jubilee Prayer for the Royal Family and a D'var Torah that was truly inspirational. The service is available to read on the

Havdallah Club notice board - well worth the time.

A thank you has to go, again, to Benjy and Zak Cohen. They give up their time to develop thought-provoking and fun sessions for our children. Benjy also put the service together this year, and led it beautifully.

So, here's to the next year, and L'Shanah Tovah from us all.

Hélène Cohen



Israel experience

My Israel experience was a truly incredible month. As a Jew I believed it important for me to go to Israel as so much of my heritage is centred round it - and I think I gained a better experience by going with LJY Netzer than simply by going on holiday.

In particular Yad Vashem had a large impact on me; the way the guide explained every picture really made me realise that behind every picture in the museum there is a horrible personal story. The children's memorial in the museum also really affected me because I thought the way it was done was incredibly well thought out and effective. I saw millions of candles in a darkened room, with the names of children reverberating around it. Then when it was explained that it was actually the use of mirrors with only five candles, and this was to show the loss of potential life as well as the dead, it really hit home just how big a crime the holocaust was.

As well as the Jewish side, the political side of Israel was also extremely interesting, with loads of talks about the issues going on in Israel, both from

Jews and Arabs. In particular I found helping out at a day care centre for Jewish and Arab children an unforgettable experience because to me it was almost surreal to think that the parents of these children won't mix because of the cultural differences between them and yet here the children were playing, laughing and singing together. As well as that, the talks we had from the Arab-Israeli children our own age were unusual and illuminating. The fact that people the same age as me have to deal with acceptance issues in the country they were born in made me put my problems into perspective.



I found the actual landscape of the country was also incredible: the Golan heights were stunning to hike through, as well as the view

of the sunrise from the top of Mt Masada, not to mention the desert at night - absolutely amazing! Kibbutz Lotan was also a high point for me, particularly the eco campus; in fact it was so interesting that I hope to go there for a few months in my gap year. I found it amazing to think that a solid structure for someone to live in could be made from clay, straw, sand and water.

The whole feel of Israel was completely different from what I was used to. Having to haggle to buy something, for example, was not something I was familiar with. The heat was obviously far more extreme than in the UK and even things such as the size of insects reminded me that it was a very different place from the one I was used to.

Overall I would say that my Israel experience was a personally unique experience because no two first impressions of Israel are the same. I love the country and I can easily see myself returning someday. It's incredibly difficult to sum up such a life-changing experience in less than 600 words because you do so much over the course of the month, meet so many people, travel to so many

important places and see so many amazing things that to say how I felt about each bit would take weeks, so instead I will say that I think the Israel Experience programme is a very good way to get the most out of the country and I'm glad I did it.

Isaac (Zak) Cohen



Ben Rich' High Holydays Message

Perhaps foolishly, in January this year I declared my "New Year Resolutions". The risk of marking the secular New Year in this way is that alcohol-fuelled bravado clouds one's judgement. Maybe that's why we Jews save our resolutions for the Days of Awe and seal them with a fast. Indeed, this is the right moment to take stock and seize the opportunity to repent our sins and commit ourselves afresh to the challenge. **So how are we progressing with those original resolutions?**



1. Complete and start to implement the Movement's Strategic Review

The Movement's Strategic Review was completed in June with the unanimous approval of the 2013-15 plan by the AGM. Cleverly, this has given us six months to whip the organisation into shape before the hard work of meeting the 54 SMART deliverables by the end of 5773. We've made headway but there's much more to do.

2. Launch a Reform Haggadah in time for this year's Pesach

I am delighted to say this is not the case for our second resolution. The first ever Movement-wide *Haggadah-Haggadateinu* was published just in time for Pesach 5772. Over 1,000 copies of the pilot were distributed and used at about a dozen communal *sederarim* and a score of family ones. While inevitably there is more work to be done before the final version goes on sale next year, feedback was positive and the fact of publication after almost 25 years' wait was universally welcomed.

3. Develop the profile of Reform Judaism with our new Movement Rabbi

What a delight it is to work with Rabbi Laura! She is a vibrant, intelligent and compassionate voice not just for Judaism but for many with and without faith in this country. I find the weeks when I don't hear Laura on the radio, see her on television or read her thoughts in the JC are rare exceptions, while a mere eight months into her post there are only a handful of our communities that she has yet to visit.

4. Continue to grow our youth movement

At the turn of the year, I said that the measure of success for RSY-Netzer would be more Reform youngsters attending more Reform camps and tours in 2012. Our Israel Tour numbers are indeed up again, from 178 in 2011 to 187 in 2012 as we continue to deliver a positive experience for the participants and a reassuring one for their parents. Despite being hit by the double-whammy of recession and the Olympics, we are now running day camps - introduced in 2010 for 5-11 year olds - in London and Manchester, with an 81% increase in numbers from the previous year.

5. Support our young adults and students

Implementation of our young adults and students programme was delayed by the departure in March of Youth Director, Jude Williams, to become Chief Executive of Tzedek. However, in May, we hosted our first Student Life seminar to help would-be students plan for university. In June we appointed Libby Burkeman, graduate of RSY-Netzer, as our first Informal Education Director and, together with our new Jeneration Fieldworker, Deborah Blausten, an exciting programme is being made for 2012 freshers. Meantime we have run a number of seminars and events for mixed-faith couples and are looking to do more over the next six months. So I believe we are on track and hope to have more to report by the end of the calendar year.

6. Take seriously cross-communal organisations like the Board of Deputies

What could be more serious than electing the first Reform Vice-President of the Board for more than a decade and securing around a third of all the places on the Reform divisional committees for progressively-minded deputies? A major success.

7. Be effective advocates for Progressive Zionism

It is always challenging to speak up for Israel with one progressive voice - but we have not allowed our voice to be muted whether in celebrating the Supreme Court decision to allow state funding for non-Orthodox rabbis or challenging those who would seek to present Israel as cast in the image of Avigdor Lieberman.

8. Make a difference in the wider community

This should be a defining characteristic of Progressive Judaism. We celebrate the work of communities in the past year, such as Finchley and Wimbledon in hosting homeless shelters or West London in supporting refugees. The responsibility of the Movement in this respect is to share best practice and up-skill our communities to deliver change effectively. For this reason I believe our decision in July to jointly appoint, together with the Liberals and Masorti, a Community Organiser to work with Jewish communities is amongst the most important of 2012 so far. The post-holder will work with synagogues to help them achieve real change both within their own communities and in the world beyond.

9. Remember why the MRJ exists

By my New Year resolution, that every Reform community be represented at Chagigah 2012, we failed. Yet it's hard to consider a failure the largest biennial conference for a decade attended by representatives of 75% of our communities. Moreover the conference approved a strategic plan placing communities at the heart of all we do – and the MRJ will re-focus its resources to help communities develop and thrive. We've made a good start albeit there's more to do.

10. Remember for whom we toil

It is telling that the most popular sessions at Chagigah were those that piloted our new education programme, L'Chaim, designed to help members explore Reform Jewish values. You will be relieved to know that I don't expect to resolve the challenges of progressive *halachah* or conclude the search for God in 2012, but nor shall we desist from the journey.

I wish you all *shana tovah*.



Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner ***Movement Rabbi***

I love the least popular moment of the High Holydays.

In the stillness of the afternoon on Yom Kippur during the Mussaf prayer many people take time out to go home to feed their children, or just rest before the emotions of Yizkor, the Memorial Service and the drama of Neilah, the closure of the day.



Synagogues are quiet and the atmosphere is reflective. And then it comes: an unusual re-enactment - the Temple Service.

Our High Holyday prayer book, the *machzor*, leads us superbly through the sacred drama where we re-interpret the Temple Service. It is an inspiring moment, encapsulating the central theological ideas of Reform Judaism. We confront elements of our history that could easily be rejected as anachronistic and instead incorporate the powerful ritual of the High Priest asking for forgiveness on behalf of the whole people into our service.

Leading a community with the actions and words of the High Priest is the strongest moment of my Yom Kippur. I start by explaining that as rabbis we are certainly not in any way priests, or high priests, conduits of holiness. We are all "*Mamlechet Cohanim*" - a Kingdom of Priests - and as such I invite all who might wish to join me as I prostrate three times on the raised platform of the *bimah* in the manner of the High Priest. It certainly feels bizarre to lie down in front of others in front of the Ark

but it is also humbling, jolting me out of my normal patterns, which above all is the point of this most challenging day of the year.

Reform Judaism takes the elements of the Temple Service using its symbolism to make strong value statements: "Since the Temple was destroyed no High Priest comes to serve our people ... Each one of us is now a priest in the Kingdom of Priests, confessing our sins but asking for mercy for all". Everyone is now part of the process rather than relying on someone else to atone for us. The liturgy reminds us that we now confess because we are normal - just mortal and fallible – and it is out of our awareness of our mortality and fallibility that we confess and ask for mercy.

The Service continues:

"You who now hear this ancient ritual, consider it and ponder it in your innermost heart. Turn it, turn it for your life is in it. But though bullocks, temple and priest have gone, purity, sin and sacrifice remain, and they shape our life and transform our destiny ... we read an unfamiliar language of lost symbols and seek the purpose of our life in this world."

After prostrating and sharing the community's confession, it is reciting the Yom Kippur prayer of the High Priest which resonates most with me as I stand, dressed in white, focused on the joys and pain of last year and the possibilities and anxieties of the incoming year. It is a prayer that places physical needs alongside our spiritual needs - all our needs bound together, a soul-filled melody of needs and aspirations:

"May it be Your will this year to bring us all good things that come from You, dew, rain and warmth. Let it be a year of ripening fruits, a year of atonement for our sins, a year in which You bless our food and drink, a year of commerce, a year of plenty, a year of joy, a year in which You bless the fruit of the womb and the fruit of the land, a year in which You bless our comings and our goings, a year in which You show us Your compassion, a year of peace and tranquility, a year in which Your people Israel will not require support from one another or from other people, the work of their hands being fully blessed by You."

However, it is due to the appendix to the prayer of the High Priest that I love this moment most: it gives the hardest truth; one which sadly still resonates as we look at Israel and the possibility of conflict with Iran. When all the practical and spiritual needs have been addressed, the High Priest's prayer rises to its all-too-poignant crescendo:

"And for those who lived in the region of the Sharon, in danger of sudden earthquakes, he said a special prayer: "Lord our God and God of our fathers, do not let their homes become their graves."

In prayer and in deed we do not shy away from confronting the terrifying possibilities, alongside the high hopes and our basic aspirations. So as we enter 5773 I pray that our primary physical needs for joy, livelihood, and sustenance are fulfilled, and that our deepest concerns and fears are assuaged.

Shanah tovah

Aspects of nature in the Book of Jonah

A talk given by Alison R Noyes to New North London Synagogue on Yom Kippur 2007

When asked to speak about this topic I was of course tempted to take the first ship to Tarshish and avoid the duty!



However, here I am to ask you to consider the question of nature in the Book of Jonah. What are nature and the natural elements doing there? Why has the writer plunged his human protagonist right into the sea and land, particularly the sea with its storm and tempest, and into the great fish? The story could have been told without the sea and so on, perhaps by making Jonah break out in boils for example when he is disobedient. But the sea and so on are not accidental. We are thrown, with Jonah, into the natural elements, back to the beginning of Genesis; we are deep in creation. We are in close relationship to God.

So is Jonah though he will not at first accept this. Not only must he learn the obvious and key lesson about repentance and redemption, he must also learn that he is in the world created by God and not by him.

The natural elements are carefully chosen and God really stirs them up! Wind, sea, storm, tempest, seaweeds and the great fish. Then, more calmly, dry land, mountains, the bower that Jonah makes, the plant – let us not forget the plant o Best Beloved – the worm that eats the plant, the sun, and cattle. The Book shows that it is God who has chosen the natural elements. God is shown explicitly making the storm, the great fish and the plant and uses all three in his lesson to the unruly Jonah. And God actually tells Jonah that He, God has made and nurtured Nineveh and its people and cattle.

As to repentance, the Ninevites simply get on with repenting, apparently after just one proclamation by Jonah: “Yet 40 days and Nineveh shall be overthrown” he says. But Jonah needs to run, be caught, thrown overboard, swallowed, spit out, shaded, uncovered, have his bad temper, and be talked to, before he will fully listen to God.

But he does listen and just as importantly he speaks. He uses words to help the Ninevites. He enters into dialogue with God. The Book therefore shows the key element of man: language, concept, the consciousness of relationship. Yet set in nature. Jonah prays “out of the belly of the fish” and God answers his prayer, also in words, by speaking to the fish. It is notable that God too listens, speaks and in fact repents in this Book: “And God repented of the evil which He said He would do unto “the Ninevites ... and he did it not”.

And let us not forget the comedy. My first proper knowledge of Jonah was in fact in the mediaeval poem, *Patience*. The title of the poem is of course telling. As also the comedy the poet finds in Jonah’s encounter with God, showing how gloriously human Jonah is, for example amplifying Jonah’s bad mood with the loss of the plant.

But God explains to Jonah God’s feelings for Nineveh and Jonah eventually lets God speak without arguing back and Jonah calms down.

Therefore, if we stop running away from our duties, stop arguing, listen with patience, respond profoundly to God’s language and all the natural world, we will turn anew towards God, enter more deeply into a dialogue and relationship with God, find our proper place in the world, and be able to learn.

Chagigah 2012

Four of us went to the Chagigah 2012: Ian Smiler, Janine Chilley, Michael and me. We arrived in good time and found our rooms to be spacious. Ours was on the ground floor with a door leading out to the golf course. After unpacking I went to the choir practice led by Zoe Jacobs which turned out to be a three-part choir as there were no tenors.

This led straight into the Kabbalat Shabbat service with Cantor Zoe Jacobs, Rabbis Yuval Keren and Celia Surget. The service was very nice but we weren't used to three people playing guitar music. This was followed by a Kiddush. We then went into dinner and met more people who were interested in our synagogue. Michael met a friend from Australia who was visiting England.

On Saturday I went again to choir practice with Zoe Jacobs and we ended up singing as if we'd been together for longer than an hour. For the Torah Service there were six large tables at the back of the room each with a Torah Scroll and we all had to go round one of them. All the scrolls were lifted simultaneously in time to the music. We returned to our seats to continue the service, taken by Rabbis Colin Eimer, Golan Ben-Chorin, Laura Janner-Klausner and Danny Smith, and Cantor Zoe Jacobs.

After lunch I went to the Shira, a music session with Rabbi Sybil Sheridan. We looked at the new *Shirei Ha-T'fillot* book, the first to be produced in the UK for nearly 100 years. We considered the music it contains, how to introduce new music and how music can enhance our experience of prayer. I stayed for the next Shira taken by Zoe Jacobs and we sang a few of the songs in the book.

After dinner Rabbi Lionel Blue stood and told jokes for a while. The highlight of the evening was *the quiz everyone can*

answer. We did really well and so strong that our table held up all the others. In other words we came bottom.

Sunday morning we had some free time so went to the book shop and I bought some children's books about the festivals. I then went over to Rabbi Lionel Blue who was selling and signing his books. I mentioned we had to be out of our rooms by 11am so he sent his

partner to pack for him. He asked me to sit with him and sell the books. I sold a lot and found him to be



such a lovely man. Before I left he gave me a book and signed it for me.

We all went to hear Rabbi Julia Neuberger of West London Synagogue on *Tikkun Olam*. She urged us to be brave, unapologetically ideological, and make the world a better place to live in.

After such a hectic time Janine and I went for a swim and Jacuzzi. We all then went home but not before Ian showed us where the Olympics were to be held in London. In all we found it a very productive weekend. **Sally Roth**



From Janine Chilley

I was fortunate enough to be present at Rabbi Lionel Blue's afternoon. We shared his humour and inspirational stories of a remarkable man and his colourful life, wit and wisdom. Although not blessed with good health, his warmth and optimism shone through. Thank you Lionel for being you.

Two pages of hilarity!

Blurry glasses preserve modesty!

A start-up company in Jerusalem is selling glasses with blurred lenses to charedi men to stop wearers looking at immodestly dressed women in public.



The blurry lenses obscure the vision and stop men seeing more than three metres away. Or blurry stickers are available for existing glasses. However, there are perforations at the bottom so wearers can still see where they're putting their feet.

Here are some comments on this novel invention:

The Torah says that you should not put a stumbling block in front of a blind person.

Wonderful. It also means I can cross the road without looking since, if I can't see the cars, they can't hit me!

Actually, this is good. Add a set of ear plugs and they can serve in the army.

Oh, now they're going to bump into women instead of seeing them. Yup, now they can feel their way around. This could lead to mixed dancing.



And now ... kosher nappies!

Some wise souls decided that using the tape on the tabs to attach two halves of the nappy is related to sewing, one of the 39 categories of

work used to build the Temple and therefore forbidden on Shabbat. Or, heavens above, one might have to tear the tabs apart, another forbidden task.

So they came up with the idea of Velcro tabs. These can be stuck together and separated again and again without violating any Shabbat laws. No doubt they're sold with kosher pacifiers and toilet seats.



In the beginning

In ancient Israel it came to pass that a Jewish trader by the name of Abraham Com did take unto himself a young wife by the name of Dot. Now Dot Com was a comely woman, broad of shoulder and long of leg. Indeed, she was often called Amazon Dot Com.

And she said unto Abraham, her husband "Why dost thou travel so far from town to town with thy goods when thou canst trade without ever leaving thy tent?"

And Abraham did look at her as though she were several saddle bags short of a camel load but simply said "How dear?"

And Dot replied "I will place drums in all the towns and drums in between to send messages saying what you have for sale and they will reply telling you who hath the best price. And delivery made by Uriah's Pony Stable (UPS)." Abraham thought long and decided he would let Dot have her way with the

drums - and they were an immediate success. Abraham sold all the goods he had at the top price without ever having to move from his tent. To prevent neighbouring countries from overhearing what the drums were saying Dot devised a system that only she and the drummers knew. It was known as Must Send Drum Over Sound (MSDOS), and she also developed a language to transmit ideas and pictures, Hebrew To The People (HTTP).

And the young men did take to Dot Com's trading as doth the greedy horsefly take to dung. They were called Nomadic Ecclesiastical Rich Dominican Sybarites, or NERDS.

And lo the land was so feverish with joy at the new riches and the deafening sound of drums that no-one noticed that the real riches were going to that enterprising drum dealer, Brother William of Gates, who bought off every drum maker in the land. And indeed did insist on drums to be made that would work only with Brother Gates' drumheads and drumsticks.

And Dot did say "Oh Abraham, what we have started is being taken over by others." And Abraham looked out over the Bay of Ezekiel, or eBay as it came to be known. He said "We need a name that reflects what we are." And Dot replied "Young Ambitious Hebrew Owner Operators." "YAHOO," said Abraham. And because it was Dot's idea they named it YAHOO Dot Com.

Abraham's cousin, Joshua, being the young Gregarious Energetic Educated Kid (GEEK) that he was, soon started using Dot's drums to locate things around the countryside. This soon

became known as God's Own Official Guide to Locating Everything (GOOGLE).

That is how it all began (whatever anyone else may tell you).

John Prominent Entertainment Guru (JPEG)



BRITAIN'S first publicly gay rabbi, Rabbi Lionel Blue, won support from Radio 4 listeners in March after telling a witty tale about same-sex marriage, moments after Cardinal Keith O'Brien had called the idea "grotesque".

Rabbi Blue read out his Thought for the Day in which he told the following joke "loving couples" walking in London in the springtime - *"A gay couple arm-in-arm walk behind a young man and his girl. Suddenly the boy and girl have a flaming row and one of the gay couple remarks sadly to his partner 'That's what comes of mixed marriage.'"*

Within an hour Rabbi Blue was trending on Twitter with tweeters praising him for "restoring sanity". One wrote that "he counters bigotry with a gentle dignity you just can't beat" while another said "I may be Catholic but I'd rather go to heaven with Rabbi Lionel Blue than Cardinal Keith."

Lionel Blue had previously admitted to attempting suicide when he first realised he was homosexual as a student at Oxford. But, as he says, "Humour is the unofficial scripture of Jewish life. It takes away the anger and bitterness and replaces it with kindness and charity.

Live and let live! Ed.

It's that Volunteer again!



In the last edition of the newsletter I wrote about my forthcoming role as a London 2012 Games Maker Volunteer. This is how I fared. We all know how well the games went, both on and off the field of play but did the Games Maker experience exceed expectations too?

In a word, YES! Looking back to my initial application in summer 2010 I wasn't sure what to expect. A total of 240,000 people applied, 100,000 were interviewed, and 70,000 taken on. At interview I made it clear I was open to any role, so was very pleased to be offered a role in the Transport Team, working at the Bloomsbury Media Hub in Russell Square. Yes, I know what you're thinking, what had this to do with the Olympics? Well, it transpired that the world's media were to be housed in hotels and university student accommodation (vacant in the summer holidays) found in this part of London and a temporary bus station was to be set up to transport them to the Olympic Park or any other Olympic venue. My role was to man one of the bus stops, ensuring the media caught the correct bus to their chosen destination and back. In total I worked 12 shifts spanning a three week period. Most days I commuted from Margate although as five shifts were on consecutive days I stayed in London for these. For me, a desk-bound accountant, this was a big change - on my feet and outdoors all day!

There were a few surprises on the way, much to my delight. I was invited to attend a rehearsal of the Opening Ceremony! There was so much detail

all around us and the acoustics in the stadium were fantastic; everyone was jumping with joy by the end of the evening. On the day of the Ceremony itself I was sent to a hotel in Greenwich to ensure the press staying there got to Stratford in time. After my shift I went to Stratford myself and watched the Ceremony on a big screen. I saw the helicopter from which the Queen was supposed to have jumped, and marvelled at the fireworks at the end of the evening. What a wonderful night! Another surprise was an opportunity to visit the Olympic Park. I was able to see all the sporting venues (from the outside) and the rest of the Park. It was packed - I've never seen so many people enjoying themselves so much.

To conclude, I am so pleased to have volunteered for London 2012. I enjoyed what I did enormously. I met many interesting people and there was a great camaraderie among the Volunteers. It was a once in a lifetime experience, well worth the effort. I even received a gift from LOCOG - an engraved baton, regulation size/weight for use by relay runners!



Ian Smiler



**What TDRS members do
outside the shul**

**We really want to hear what you do,
so please write to the Editor. Notes
will do as the Editor can write your
story from these. Please include a
photo, by email if possible!**

Condolences

We send our condolences and prayers to those who have lost loved ones since publication of our last newsletter

To the Dwek family on the sad loss of their mother Eugenie

*Zichronam livrachah
May her memory be for a blessing*



A really big Thank You to our member, Mick Vanbrook for the donation of a wheelchair to the synagogue



This is the certificate for the Big Bagel event in June in the shul. We raised a total of £335



L'Shanah Tovah!

Rabbi Cliff, Hélène, Sam, Joe Benjy and Zak wish everyone a happy and healthy new year, with greetings too from the following members and friends:

M Bendon

Pam Brown

Diana, Anthony, Marcus and Edward Da Costa

Esther & Erwin David

Rivka and Tom Dodds

Hazel, Godfrey & Jonathan Fischer and Rachel and Gordon Fox

Betty Gee

Barbara and Ian Smiler

Muriel Gillis

Thelma Leapman

Jen Leigh

Kira and Summer Hilton

Jon and Anne Leigh

Marc, Hilary, Joshua and Hannah

Barbara Markham

David and Jacquie Mirsky

Daniel, Benna-Jayne, Nathan and Yoni Goldman

Jamie, Kelly, Reuben and Xander Mirsky

Alison R Noyes

Lily and Cedric Rebeck

Jacqueline Rose

Sally and Michael Roth, with Daniel, Leah, Leigh, Martha and Elsa, Natasha, Scott and Georgie

Esther Solomon

Henry and Helene Jacobs and family Jeffrey and Sarah Jacobs and family

Syb Stubbs



Rabbi Cliff, Hélène, Sam, Joe, Benjy and Zak invite you to our home, 60 Margate Road, Ramsgate, on Sunday 7th October, any time from 10am until midnight, to make a b'racha in our Succah and sample our hospitality. There is no need to let us know, just turn up! As it is also Erev Simchat Torah, Cliff will obviously be in shul for the evening service.

Shanah Tovah.



Dear Friends

I am delighted that at the beginning of the New Year and start of the new triennium we have a new team of Honorary Officers all enthusiastic about their portfolios who have hit the ground running. I look forward to working with them during the next three years to face the challenges confronting us. One can also only be enormously heartened by the unprecedented interest the community has shown in the Board during the election period. In addition to a host of new synagogues and organisations represented on the Board, we had more Deputies standing for Divisional elections than ever before and are privileged to have elected Deputies of an extremely high calibre.

Our mission is to promote the welfare and vitality of the community and our increasing dynamism over the last few decades has confounded the prophets of gloom. With record numbers of pupils at Jewish schools, institutions such as Limmud, the Jewish Film Festival, Book Week and Jewish Music Institute etc, the community is an example to others in the Diaspora of how to integrate into one's host community while retaining one's own identity and vitality.

At the same time we face increasing challenges and our mission is also to lead the defence of the community on these. Living as we do in a pluralistic and tolerant democracy, our rights to carry out our religious practices should never be in doubt.

However, in the last few years threats have emerged both in the UK and Europe against in particular Shechita and Brit Milah. It is not fair to attribute these (necessarily) to anti-Semitism but even so their effect could severely jeopardise our way of life. The latest

attack comes from Germany on Brit Milah. We are at the heart of a cross-continental initiative approaching German ambassadors and lobbying parliamentarians while trying to ensure that in the UK the community speaks with one, cogent and rational voice. I am pleased to say our representations have been well received and we have been able to punch beyond our weight. If at some future date we need a grass roots campaign, the Board will look to the community to play its part, lobbying MPs or engaging in the media debate.

Above all we have to face the continual attacks on Israel from the media, the unions, academia and the churches, the latest being the decision of the Church of England Synod to endorse EAPPI, a grossly unbalanced programme taking people to the West Bank without showing them the Israeli point of view. However, not all critics of Israel are anti-Semites. On the contrary many senior churchmen regard themselves as firm, albeit critical, friends of both Jewry and Israel and are often unaware of the anti-Semitic overtones of the debate. Our task is to confront and expose anti-Semitism, and ensure Israel's case is made effectively. Again this is something that must be done in a calm and rational manner. It falls to all of us to engage with our Christian neighbours. With the support of the community the Board will be ideally equipped to do this in the year ahead. We don't know how successful we will be but it won't be for want of trying.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy New Year, warm wishes,

Vivian Wineman, President, The Board of Deputies of British Jews, 6 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2LP
t 020 7543 5400, f 020 7543 0101, e info@bod.org.uk, w www.bod.org.uk



CST: working together with Jewish communities

CST is the Community Security Trust, a charity providing security for Jewish communities throughout Britain; ensuring that we are all able to lead the Jewish life of our choice.

CST is also available - 24 hours a day - for those of us unfortunate enough to suffer, or witness, anti-Semitism.

CST is part and parcel of our communities, drawing on a long and proud tradition of British Jewish self-defence. Security can only be done with the help, co-operation and participation of the members of our community, its leaders and institutions.

We need to share responsibility. This means contacting your local CST and asking what role you can play with our local security teams. It means understanding why we do security and cooperating with our local teams. It means contacting CST if you happen to have information that you think may be of use to us, or to the Police.

Sharing responsibility also means trying to keep a healthy balance between keeping calm and being aware of the physical threats that unfortunately do exist.

Since last Rosh Hashanah three separate terrorist plots against British Jews have been revealed. One concerned Golders Green and Stamford Hill, two Jewish neighbourhoods in London; one

concerned Broughton Park, a Jewish neighbourhood in Greater Manchester; and the third concerned two British synagogues. Then we have the dreadful shootings at a Jewish school in Toulouse; and from Iran appalling state-sponsored anti-Semitism and terrorism against both Jews and Israelis.

Our enemies do not distinguish one type of Jew from another and they are targeting both large and small communities. CST's work is therefore sadly necessary but we should be determined to keep a sense of perspective about the situation.

Today, our community is largely able to express its Jewishness in whatever way it wishes. That can be religious, cultural, political, charitable, sporting or whatever sort of Jewish life you do, or do not, wish to have. Our community is on the whole successful and well integrated into the rest of society. We have come a very long way indeed since the newly arrived immigrant generations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Anti-Semitism and the threat of terrorism most certainly do not define our lives as British Jews. At CST we want to keep it that way. This is why we work so closely with synagogues from across our Jewish communities; and it is why the Police and Government encourage our efforts.

CST can, however, only be as strong as the communities we serve. We need you to play your part: by reporting suspicious and anti-Semitic activities to us; and by joining our local teams or helping to fund our work.

Thank you and *Shanah Tovah*.

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Full Page Advert	£50.00 per annum
Half Page Advert	£30.00 per annum
Quarter Page Advert	£20.00 per annum

Prices are for four editions a year, colour or B&W. Please contact editor *Alison* for more details or to place an advert.



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