

# A Rabbi's Word



Harrow & Wembley Progressive Synagogue

July / August 2011

Like many of you, it will take some time for me to absorb it all. How many of you managed all the events on 11 – 12 June?

On Shabbat morning, we articulated our firm hopes for the future and the truly historic nature of what we are achieving in our cohabitation with Middlesex New Synagogue. Our final service in Preston Road was an emotional and rather sad event for many of those present. Our only surviving founder member, 95-year-old Milcie Dobson opened the Ark together with our oldest member 101-year-old Feo Kahn. Many children of those founding families were there and were called up to the Bimah. Sue Schindler, speaking on their behalf, paid tribute to the influence of Max Salter and explained how growing up in this synagogue had shaped their lives and created friendships which still endure. A splendid Kiddush sent us off with a flourish.

emotional disposition or physical health. If one looks at other Jewish journeys throughout our history, there was far more to endure, both in changed circumstances and in suffering. Two to three miles up the road? Getting our asking price on the sale of our building? We're privileged.

Personally, I am particularly looking forward to working with my colleague Rabbi Kathleen de Magtige-Middleton to take our communal collaboration further forward.

We have been so graciously welcomed to our new home on Bessborough Road in "beautiful downtown Harrow". The Rabbi as well as the machers and members of MNS, have already proved to be a joy to work with. Our joint religion school has flourished for nearly a whole academic year and other combined social and educational activities offer much promise. Remember our joint communal Seder that went so well? Next year there will be even more spirit when we sing the songs as we grow beyond mere politeness, towards a more familiar friendship.

Mere survival isn't sufficient. There must be a sense of future promise, a positive vision. We are embarking on a historically significant enterprise where we will maintain the past elements of our communal identity and work

creatively with another community. Differences, as well as similarities, will be honoured and even celebrated. It is my hope that the model that we will develop of working together and working separately will be recognised as a helpful approach by others in the Jewish world and by those of other faiths. Eventually, perhaps, other Jewish communities will choose to participate in our particular endeavour. We will enrich each other. We have made a rational assessment of a difficult situation and we have decided that what is most important is to try to preserve and enlarge what we do in our community, socially, educationally and in terms of worship. All of these activities are about making us better people, emotionally and spiritually as we share and learn together and as we support and help each other.

We have come a long way together over the last 60-70 years (the typical life span of a synagogue community in this country) and now we have an opportunity for renewal. May we, as a community, continue in new, creative and exciting ways. Remember, a building is only a shell for what we do with and for each other. "The Promised Land" is a place in your heart. Moving we have chosen life, friendship and mutual support.



**'Welcome to Bessborough Road'**

On Sunday morning, Freedom Passes in hand, we boarded our Routemaster bus and made the journey to our new home, where we were so warmly welcomed by a large congregation of members of MNS. Our Torah Scrolls were received in a regal procession under the chupah as we moved to a service specially written for the occasion. Chairman Harry Grant's speech was terrific where he stressed, emotionally, his love for his uncle Mike Guter and his childhood memories of Wembley. We were treated to a splendid buffet lunch created by the MNS catering team.

Sunday evening saw our Farewell Dinner. A group of dedicated people worked so hard to bring together former members of the synagogue and many friends including rabbis who had served our community. Many on this committee grew up in the famous youth group started by Max Salter. Their efforts represent a small token of their gratitude and are further evidence of friendships dating back 40, 50 even 60 years.

I want to say that all of you – members and friends – should come to our services and activities in the next few weeks and months. Show your support for these huge changes and bear witness to our success. Not everyone has a great capacity for change, whether because of

## CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS

The move to Bessborough Road does not mean that you have lost your familiar well loved interest groups. They are all continuing, and in addition you have access to all activities organized by MNS.

The **Stanley Marks Art Workshop** starts up again on Thursday 30 June

**Food for Fun** meets on Thursday 14 July

The **Book Group** will gather on Wednesday 3 August.

For details of these and any other groups contact the various leaders whose names and numbers appear on the reverse side of the monthly calendar.

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### Middlesex New Synagogue

activities include Learning Circle, Film Evenings, Scrabble Club, Friendship Club, Pilates and many more.

For information on all these contact the MNS Office

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On Wednesday 13 July MNS Learning Circle presents **an Evening with Rabbi Kathleen Middleton and Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith**. Come and learn about some of the Reform and Liberal attitudes to such questions as matrilineality / patrilineality, burial, intermarriage and more practical issues such as "Why do Reform parade the scrolls and Liberals don't?".

A great opportunity to find out not only about our differences but, more important, about what we share. The session will start at 8:00pm and will include refreshments.

Contact Linda Holman or e-mail [admin@mns.org.uk](mailto:admin@mns.org.uk) for further information.

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Sunday 24 July at 10.30 am  
a **Jewish Walk** led by

Blue Badge Guide, Steve Levinson. 'Jews in Strange Places' lasts about 1½ hours. You will 'discover 1000 years of London Jewry and meet everyone from Moses to Maxwell'.

The walk is limited to 20 places at £10pp. Contact Jane Prentice or e-mail [admin@mns.org.uk](mailto:admin@mns.org.uk) to book your place.

## NEW MEMBERS



Some of you old-timers may recognise the gentleman in the photo, though you would have known him as a child as he worked his way up Wembley Liberal's cheder through Bar Mitzvah to Kabbalat Torah. Mark Bennister is the son of our own Stella Bennister who is absolutely thrilled that her granddaughter Bea has decided to learn about her Jewish heritage and to study for her Bat Mitzvah. Mark is a lecturer in Politics at Canterbury Christ Church University. Wife Lindsey is Chief Executive of Sarcoma UK, a cancer charity, and is very supportive of the direction the family is taking. Bea, the impetus for the family's decision to join the shul, loves swimming, synchronised swimming, playing piano and spending as much time as possible with her many friends. Bea has just started at cheder and is looking forward to her Bat Mitzvah on 29 October 2011. Please put that date in your diaries to come and support Bea and to watch the family, especially Stella, kvell!

*Potential new members should contact Lindsey Cohen*

## HIGH HOLY DAYS CELEBRATIONS

will be in  
Kenton!

Easy access and masses of parking.  
Full details with September Hakol

## HWPS e-TREE

*Funeral and Shiva eMail Notification Service*

HWPS are pleased to announce a new branch to the Council's Telephone Tree. This is an opt-in email service for all members who wish to be informed of funeral and shiva details.

If you would like to receive these notifications, please email:

[hwps-e-tree@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hwps-e-tree@hotmail.co.uk)

Please include your name and telephone number. We will then send you a test email to confirm your registration.

Alan Et Brenda Hunt

## About our Members

### Condolences to

Caroline Wren and family on the death of her husband Mark  
The family of Sonia Leapman

### Welcome to New Members

Marion Grant  
The Bennister family

### Mazeltov to

Judith and Clive Dexter on the birth of twin grandchildren, Madeleine Rose Yvonne and Isaac Lewis

Daniel Benson on achieving the highest mark in his entire school for German Studies



### APPEAL FOR LIFTS

We are keen to set up a list of names of members who are able to offer lifts to synagogue. Although transport connections to Bessborough Road are good, we have some members who find the journey difficult and who would welcome the occasional lift. If you can help please contact Barbara Liff in the Office on 8864 5323 or e-mail [admin@hwps.org](mailto:admin@hwps.org)

## The next biennial conference of the EUROPEAN UNION FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

will take place in the fine new synagogue in Amsterdam between 15 and 18 March 2012. Put the date in your diary now. Full details will be available shortly on the EUPJ website [www.eupj.org](http://www.eupj.org), or you can contact our member Paul Zatz

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# That Special Weekend



*l-r: Rabbis Kathleen de Magtige-Middleton, Stephen Howard, Ariel Friedlander, Danny Rich, Frank Dabba Smith, Harry Jacobi, Alan Mann*



*Farewell Preston Road*

Seven Rabbis, all with close connections with HWPS, were amongst the 134 guests attending the hugely enjoyable Farewell Dinner which brought together many whose involvement in the synagogue dates from its earliest days. Following a wonderful meal, Guest Speaker Rosita Rosenberg, former Executive Director of the ULPS (now Liberal Judaism), whose association with us stretches back 50 years, regaled us with a sometimes hilarious, sometimes nostalgic talk recalling her memories of the Synagogue and its personalities over the years.



*Chairman Adrian Cohen receives the keys to our premises from Chairman Harry Grant.*



*Sam Rozewicz sounds a triumphal blast on the Shofar.*

**Send us your memories**

At the farewell dinner a book was passed around in which guests wrote down their memories and thoughts. If you would like to contribute please send your memories to Vera [redacted].

The size of the paper should be no bigger than 14cm by 21cm.

**KIEV KOPPERS UPDATE**



This month I have received a most generous donation from a non-member. A cheque for £180 was given to round up our total to £13,000. A million thanks to the donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

I have also received many jars and bags of coppers which I am busily counting. Thank you to all of you and please keep on collecting over the summer months. Just empty the coppers from your pockets and purses at the end of each day. It means very little to you but such a lot to our friends in Kiev.

Barbara Liff has kindly offered to receive your bags of coppers in the new office at Bessborough Road. If you can't get there just phone me and I will pick them up.

As always....

**KEEP THE KOPPERS KOMING...**

Rita Asbury

# HWPS Lottery

**Our monthly Lottery is going Great Guns!**

Congratulations to the latest lucky winners of £100

**Michelle Latchman**

For just £5.00 per month you too can be entered into the monthly draw and win £100.00!!

Pay £60 either by cheque or monthly standing order.

To join, ring the Synagogue office or email Michelle Latchman at [michellelatchman@btinternet.com](mailto:michellelatchman@btinternet.com)

**RONALD SPIEGEL**

**CHARTERED  
ACCOUNTANT**

5 Ledway Drive, Wembley, Middx HA9 9TH

Email: [ron1943.spiegel@gmail.com](mailto:ron1943.spiegel@gmail.com)

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## HARROW & WEMBLEY PROGRESSIVE SYNAGOGUE

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[www.hwps.org](http://www.hwps.org) Registered Charity No. 251172

MINISTER **Rabbi Frank Dabba Smith** 8864 5408  
Please contact Rabbi Smith if you feel he may be able to help you

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR **Barbara Liff** 8864 5323  
The Synagogue Office is open Tuesday to Friday 9.30am to 1pm  
When the office is closed please leave a clear message on the answerphone or e-mail: [admin@hwps.org](mailto:admin@hwps.org)

ACCOUNTS MANAGER **Alan Lester** 8864 5323  
Alan is in the Office Tuesday to Thursday 10am to 1pm

FUNERAL ADMINISTRATOR **Harold Sanderson**  
If you have a bereavement to report please contact our Funeral Directors ( M M Board & Son)

CHAIRMAN **Adrian Cohen**

CARE GROUP **Joy Katz**

RITES & PRACTICES **Hana Schlesinger**

SECURITY **Ashley Winston** 8864 5323

ל ק ו ה HAKOL EDITOR **Mary Vulkan**

Contributions for Hakol should be sent to the Synagogue Office or preferably via e-mail to [hwps\\_hakol@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hwps_hakol@hotmail.co.uk)

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