

HIGHLight

Bromley Reform Synagogue newsletter



John and Janet Posner (3rd and 4th from left in the back row) surrounded by members of their extended family following the kiddush celebrating their golden wedding anniversary on 31 August, at which they were presented with a golden rose by synagogue Chair, Michelle Brooks Evans.

Hooray Cheder PTA Fundraising Auction

As part of the Chanukah Fair we are aiming to raise funds for the Cheder. This year we are holding an auction hopefully with some fantastic items. So if you can donate an item, a skill, vouchers, a promise of babysitting, gardening, a pilates class or any such service, please let me know so we can include it in the auction.



Please email **Michelle** at chair@bromleyshul.org.uk

Sukkot - תּוֹסֵפוּ Come and dwell in a tabernacle at Bromley Shul!

We will celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) on Sunday, 13 and Monday, 14 October.

The Sukkah will be decorated* on Sunday morning and services will be held on

- **Sunday, 13 October at 6.30 pm.**
- **Monday, 14 October at 10.30 am.**

Come and celebrate and fulfil the commandment to dwell in a tent for a spell. Shake a lulav, sniff an etrog and learn about their significance,

After the services, weather permitting, we will be in the Sukkah. You have to eat something at least the size of an olive in the Sukkah to fulfil the commandment. After the service on Sunday there will be hot drinks and nibbles for adults and children can bring a picnic. On Monday, bread and cheese snacks will be available. So come and join in!

* We will be decorating the Sukkah on Sunday morning, 13 October during Cheder. Please bring greenery and unripe fruit and veg. Greenery etc. can be left in advance or brought along on the morning, but no prickly or thorny branches please!

Go to page 5 for details of our very special celebration for Simchat Torah 5780.

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Autumnal October - View from the Chair

As the seasons change and autumn draws in I think about how the seasonal calendar is a reflection of the spiritual calendar. The environmental conditions of the world are landmarks for the spiritual growth we should be experiencing during that season. Specific times of the year are predisposed to hardship and other times are associated to renewal and joy. We might refer to this as “spiritual weather”. The Hebrew word for time is *zman*, which means “prepared”. You could say that each moment in time is already prepared and predestined for a specific type of growth. In addition the Hebrew word for year is *shana*, which means to repeat. So every year contains the same basic elements of the previous year, but with new opportunities for growth.

Is there a spiritual message in autumn and the falling of leaves? Why do leaves transform into beautiful colours just before they loosen from the tree and float to the ground? Well, this is the time of year when Jews are meant to be introspective and evaluate the state of their life. This time and these actions can be difficult for some. I like to imagine that God does not want us to be spiritually downtrodden, so we are sent the magnificent autumn leaves. The leaves fall and the tree remains bare to show that we must start to build new and better deeds in the coming year and so the process is repeated year after year. As I write these words all I can think of is the Disney film “The Lion King” and Mufasa holding the Simba and the song “The Circle of Life”!

The news often carries stories about environmental issues and disasters that have arisen out of climate change. Jewish tradition teaches us to care for our planet in order to preserve the world that God created. We are taught to preserve our natural resources and generate new one for future generations. We are faced with many challenges to resource development and our daily habits. To try and address this requires us to learn how to live within the ecological limits of the earth so that we will not compromise the ecological or economic security of those that come after us.

The Torah commands, “Justice, justice shall you pursue” (Deuteronomy 16:20) and so our energy policy must be fair and just. Countries responsible for climate change should awaken to their responsibility for finding a solution to the problem. As we

have an obligation to improve the world for future generations we should encourage our families and communities to reduce their waste and make smart consumer choices.

Recently I was introduced to the “Eco Synagogue”, a ground breaking cross-communal initiative to enable synagogues to become more environmentally sustainable. They operate an online survey, which assesses synagogues’ activities, for example, how energy efficient their buildings are, how they recycle, and what energy providers they use. They also encourage ecological principles to be reinforced in teaching and in other opportunities within the cycle of the Jewish year, especially how members themselves can become more environmentally responsible. I would encourage you all to look them up and see what changes you could make at home.

What a success “**The Big BRS Quiz 2019**” was last month. Thank you to all who came along to support this enjoyable evening and congratulations to the winning team “**The Rabble**” headed up by Joe Millis and Rosanne Posner. I would like to thank **Lisa Williams** and the Social Group for arranging and running the evening and a give special thanks to Lisa, who was the quiz mistress for the evening. It is really quite exciting to see new initiatives like the Social Group, Book Club, Cheder Klezmer Band and Cheder parents Whatsapp group take off.

Autumnal best wishes,

Michelle Brooks Evans, Chair

Being Jewish Today

a new book by Rabbi Professor Tony Bayfield CBE

‘*Being Jewish Today – Confronting the Real Issues*’ is a new book by former Head and President of Reform Judaism, **Rabbi Professor Tony Bayfield CBE**. The book gives an account of both the journey of a particular British Jew and the journey of millions of women and men through today’s perplexing and difficult world.

The book can be purchased online (<https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/being-jewish-today-9781472962089/>) with a special discount of 30% - enter the code BJT2019 to apply the reduced price.

It is also available as an ebook.

Calling everyone interested in crafts and being creative!

We are hoping to start a

Creative Workshop

to be held in the Shul, approximately six-weekly. Sessions could be in the mornings 10-12 am, or afternoons – 2-4 pm, dictated to a degree by parking restrictions. We would welcome your views on this point.

Are you interested in learning something new? No experience necessary. Or do you have a skill you would like to share?

We have come up with some possible topics:

Creative writing, poetry or play reading

Drawing, painting, glass or china decorating

Jewellery making

Knitting, crochet, embroidery

Music, singing

We would very much like to hear from you and, subject to response, are planning to hold an introductory meeting after the High Holydays. Refreshments will, of course, be served.

Please contact **Pauline, Ann** or **Barbara** through the synagogue: 020 8460 5460

SE10 and Beyond

The rescheduled evening with **Damien Egan**, Mayor of Lewisham, will be on **Wednesday, 16 October at 7 pm** at the Shul.

He will be talking about politics and antisemitism within the Labour Party and sharing his experiences and thoughts on the subject. All are invited, members, non-members, locals to SE10 and, of course, beyond!

Please contact Michelle for further details.

Michelle Brooks Evans
chair@bromleyshul.org.uk
Tel. 020 8460 5460

Cheder News

Hello, Parents and Friends of Cheder, here's our Cheder News:

- 1) A big thank you to **Amanda Penn** and **Sonia Hyams** of our Cheder PTA *Hooray Cheder*, who organised the **Welcome Coffee Morning** for our parents on the first day of term. And thanks to **Vicki Ashmore, Janvier Palmer** and everyone else who is helping to organise our **Later Cheder dinner on Erev Rosh Hashana** on 29 September.
- 2) A massive thank you also goes out to **Rachael Ashmore, Sonia Hyams, Amanda Penn** and **Sue Bowyer** for organising our High Holiday children's services this year. We hope to continue the celebrations with a break time in the sukkah for Sukkot.
- 3) Kittah Aleph teacher **Rachael Ashmore**, along with **Seb Farmar**, will run **Youth Club** once a month after Cheder and Rachael has some exciting things planned! If you have a child in Kittah Zayin (Year 7) or over, please contact her directly: rachael.freida.ashmore@gmail.com
- 4) This term, your children's **Tzedakah** money will go to support the charity Jewish Child's Day. This charity benefits Jewish children who suffer from physical and emotional disabilities, neglect, abuse and financial hardship. Please send in your spare change to support this very worthy cause. Speaking of *tzedakah*, the Cheder donated £150 to Cancer Research UK on Sunday, 15 September.
- 5) **Mitzvah Day is Sunday 17 November** and children's author **Helen Peters** will be visiting us. Helen's new novel *Anna At War*, tells the story of a German Jewish refugee who comes to England on the Kindertransport. She will be leading a special assembly and signing copies of her books to buy on the day. We will also be organising food and clothing donations to help refugees in Kent, so if you are having a clear-out, please save your clothes until then!
- 6) Don't forget that the **Chanukah Fair** will be on **Sunday 8 December** after Cheder. Please contact **Amanda Penn** if you can help out on a stall during the fair: a_penn@yahoo.com. **Joe Parks** and our Cheder Klezmer



band will also be playing for your entertainment.

- 7) The **Chanukah Party will be on Sunday 22 December** with **Gilbert Giggles** to entertain us, along with doughnuts and latkes galore. More info regarding times TBC.
- 8) Last but not least, please check the security rota below to see if we are expecting you to show up and help Lizzy on the door. Any problems, please contact **Katia Pisetzky** on: pisetzky@gmail.com

L'Shalom,

Danielle, Cheder Headteacher

Cheder Security Rota – Sukkot Term

Sundays	Name
October 6	Caroline Receptor-Jones and Laurence Jones
October 13	Michelle Brooks Evans and Bill Evans
October 20	Cheder Half Term
October 27	Cheder Half Term
November 3	Rachel Kamhi
November 10	Amelia and Kanatta Kyazze
November 17	Judy and David Taylor
November 24	Tony Miller
December 1	Harriet and Dan Posner
December 8	to be confirmed
December 15	Elizabeth and Dan Megitt – Cheder Term ends
December 22	Chanukah Party – security to be arranged

Social Centre News

The Social Centre wishes everyone a very healthy and happy new year and sends a reminder that the second Wednesday in October (9 October) is Yom Kippur so there will not be a meeting on that day.

Once again it was a real pleasure to welcome **David and Tom's** musical entertainment at our last meeting. Their programme is always so varied and interesting - we always leave wanting to hear more. If there's an obscure piece of music you'd like to learn more about or hear again David is the person to ask. He'd be delighted to help. They'll both be here again on **13 November**, so mark the date in your diaries.

On **23 October** we are hoping to hear about **Rachel Lucking's** experiences working with the charity *Lifting Hands International* helping Yazidi refugees from Iraq. Having read about some of her experiences I am sure you'll find this talk really interesting and moving.

We were sad to hear about Zelda's accident and all wish her well soon.

October programme:

Wednesday 9 October (Yom Kippur) **No meeting**
 Wednesday 23 October - talk by Rachel Lucking

Bromley WIZO Eretz Upcoming Events

Tuesday, 19 November

(please note the change of date):
Afternoon tea when you are invited to meet **Rabbi Chava Koster**. She is familiar with WIZO from when she lived in Amsterdam. 2.30 pm at the home of **Marilyn Burchell**. Donation £7.50. Contact Marilyn 020 8658 4776.

Sunday, 1 December at 2.30 pm:

Our ever popular **Bridge and Games afternoon**, hosted by Marilyn and Joe. Please contact **Barbara Fizzon** to book your place: 020 3685 0945 or bafizz@virginmedia.com. Donation £10.

Please 'phone **Marilyn Burchell** on 0208 658 4776 for more information if you wish to join us and we look forward to seeing you.

Meet the Kallot



This year's Kallat Torah is Dianne Mathews (above). Who is she and why was she chosen for this honour?

Dianne? Everybody knows Dianne. She's everywhere – cherished friend to all in BR5&6 and well beyond; valued choir colleague and co-ordinator; Social Centre stalwart; devoted mother and grandmother; staunch supporter and helper of all in need; all-round good egg and expert in the workings of the shul kitchen, cook, gardener and dog lover, whose smile lights up a room. While her dedication to BRS for 50+ years has not gone unnoticed -- she has been a Vice-President for some time -- surprisingly, Dianne has never received this particular honour before.

So, everybody knows her and values her friendship - but do we really know Dianne at all? Where does she come from? What motivates her? What does she enjoy doing outside of BRS? We asked her for a potted biography and, obliging as ever, that is exactly what she supplied. She writes:

"I was born in Wanstead, but moved south of the river with my family in 1951. I was brought up as a non-practising orthodox



Jew and married in Brixton shul. I had worked as an architect's PA before my marriage and continued to do so until the birth of my first son. I then worked in the Mathews' family business for 20 years until its closure, after which I had a variety of jobs including working in the food hall at BHS and managing a card and gift shop in Bromley High Street. After being made redundant, I returned to office work. My final job was as part of the team overseeing the building of the Second Severn crossing. I suppose my strong point is that I am very adaptable but prefer 'hands-on' work. My hobbies have been, and some still are, dog walking for over 30 years, gardening, DIY, reading and cooking."

Our Kallat Bereshit is Marilyn McKeever. As Cilla Black used to say, "**Same question to you no.2**"

Marilyn is now in her 20th year as a teacher at BRS Cheder, where all her children have also taught. However, she is most visible at Purim, when, over the years, she has been seen in a weird and wonderful variety of costumes. One of our many magnificent



Unrolling the Torah scroll in 5779

Simchat Torah

שמחת תורה

Come and rejoice with the Torah at Bromley Reform Synagogue!

We will be celebrating the reading of the end of the present cycle of Torah readings and the beginning of the new one.

We will be taking the scrolls out of the ark and celebrating with them. This year we will reprise our joyful unrolling of a scroll all round the Sanctuary. Do come and join us! The celebrations will include live music.

Sunday 20 October

- 5.30 pm veggie hot dogs, hot soup and drinks in the Garden Room
- 6.30 pm service start. Live music, unrolling the Torah scroll right round the Sanctuary

Monday 21 October

- Service in Sanctuary 10.30 am
- Please come and be a part of this joyous event!*

Mancunian members, she boasts both brain and brawn, (in her own words "born to be a lawyer and a keen gym bunny") with a big heart: devoted daughter, beloved friend, respected colleague and firm but fair judge. Like Dianne, she is a proud mother and besotted grandmother, keen cook and voracious reader. She explains how she feels about Cheder and the honour - and challenge - of having been invited to be *Kallat Bereshit*:

"It's a refreshing change from the day job to come and work with the children and help them to learn more about their heritage, and it's rewarding when they come up with a thoughtful insight, take great care in producing a lovely illustration of a Bible story or come up with an idea for doing one of the good deeds we have been looking at. As to being a *Kallah*, I feel very honoured and slightly (or not so slightly) scared. I have never read from the Torah before, but want to have a go and know I will be supported by our lovely community."

We look forward to being there to support you. Thank you both for using your skills and abilities to the shul's advantage and mazal tov to each of you on this well deserved honour.



The Rabble were the winning team in the great synagogue quiz held on 14 September

The Book Group Judy Woolfe reports

At our second session of the book group 11 of us enjoyed a really good discussion about the book 'All who go do not return' by **Shulem Deen**, touching on the practices of some orthodox sects, the position of women in those communities and the problems that fundamentalist views pose, wherever they are, for individuals and the wider society.

Our next session will be on Thursday, 7 November 7.45 pm at the shul, when we will be discussing **Howard Jacobson's** 2010 Booker Prize winner 'The Finkler Question'.

Everyone is welcome

Judy Woolfe: 020 8464 8909;
Mobile: 07989 091 066
jwoolfe@ntlworld.com

Visit to Cheshunt

We are arranging a visit to the Jewish cemetery at Cheshunt on **Thursday, 3 October**.

We will be leaving from the synagogue at 9:15 am, travelling in a minibus and will spend 1-2 hours at the cemetery.

Rabbi Koster will accompany the group and lead prayers at Cheshunt. There will be a stop at a nearby pub for light refreshments after the visit to the grounds.

The return journey will start at 2:30 pm and we will arrive at Highland Road at about 4:30 pm.

There will be a nominal charge for the journey.

Please inform **Pauline Jeffree** via 020 8460 5460 as soon as possible if you wish to join the visit, so that we can finalise transport and other arrangements.

The Torah and the Earth

Our first Torah portion of the year begins with the creation of nature and the cosmos and then climaxes with the creation of humanity to fill the earth and master it; then to rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on Earth.

Here, claim environmental philosophers, is the root of the problem, the species-centric idea that the whole planet is merely to be used and exploited by human beings. According to this reading of the Bible, God gives us the run of the place as a birthday present, saying *Do what you want with it*.

There are several problems with this selective way of lifting a Biblical verse out of its context, one historical and a second literary. The historical problem is that the Biblical people express a strong sense of solidarity with the Earth. In fact, the Bible speaks of God's brit - God's covenant with the Earth. The Earth itself is repelled by the human sin and acts as God's messenger in warning when the toll of careless living climbs too high, as in the flood narrative of Noah.

The truth is that religious Jews lived in significant harmony with the Earth, allowing for sabbatical and jubilee years for their fields to rest, as well as weekly *Shabbatot* for their livestock and pets. All of this changed not because of religion, but when religious conflicts waned and the industrial age took over, based on secular philosophy and technological advance.

Even beyond being a historical lie, the idea that the Torah is anti-environmental is refuted a few short verses later, when God placed Adam as a steward in the Garden of Eden, to till it and to tend it. There the Torah is explicit about what our relationship with nature is meant to be.

Humanity is to act as God's steward, to care for the Earth and to nurture life on God's behalf. Biblical men and women knew that they were to sustain and enhance all life for the God who created it in the first place. An accurate sense of the spirit of this fundamental human value is found in the Talmud, in tractate *Ta'anit*, and involves the ancient magician, Honi.

One day, as Honi was walking down the road, he saw a man planting a carob tree, and said to him, *Since a carob tree gives fruit only after 70 years, do you think you will really live long enough to eat the fruit of this tree you are planting?*

The man replied, *I found the world provided with carob trees since my ancestors planted them for my descendants.*

A moment later, Honi sat down, had his meal, and fell asleep. While he slept, plants grew up around him so that he was hidden and he slept for 70 years! On awakening, he saw a man gathering carobs from the same tree and eating them. Honi asked, *Do you know who planted this tree?*

The man replied, *My grandfather.*

This grandfather knew his Torah and he therefore knew that, as humanity, we are called into a covenant with the Earth. We tend and till it so that others, our children, our grandchildren and all living things continue to thrive. In the upcoming year, I should like us as a community to have a frank discussion about climate change, and how we as a *kehillah kedoshah* can do more together by greening our shul building and garden and reduce our collective carbon footprint.

Rabbi Chava Koster

Into the Mouth of the Lion by A.B. Kyazze – Crowdfunding now!



BRS member **Amelia B. Kyazze**, local writer and photographer, has the backing of Unbound, a creative independent publisher, for her debut novel.

The story is about Lena, a struggling photographer, who flies from London to the war-torn highlands of Angola, after hearing the news of a suspicious explosion.

She tries to piece together the reasons behind the disappearance of her sister, but she gets entangled in the country's conflict for minerals and power.

The book is written, we just need your support in a crowdfunding campaign to bring it to print. In return, you can get some great prizes and gifts and your name in the first edition as a supporter of new fiction. Please join us!

<https://unbound.com/books/into-the-mouth-of-the-lion/>

Social and Personal

BIRTH - A hearty mazal tov to **Daniel Harris** and **Hayley Kaye** and to the proud grandparents, **Graham** and **Hannah Harris**, on the birth of George Daniel, on 6 July

DEATH - We are very sad to report the death of our member **Michael Harris** last month in Eastbourne and extend our deepest condolences to his widow Lynda and her family.

GET WELL SOON

Pauline Jeffree writes: We are thinking of members of our community and others known to us who are ill and we wish them well. Our thoughts are also with all who are attending hospital, receiving and recovering from treatment and awaiting investigation results.

Do please contact the Caring Community if we can give any support or practical help.

Thanks to the Congregation – Pauline Jeffree writes

Dear each and everyone and absent friends,

Thank you for the wonderful way in which you celebrated my birthday and recognised my award. The Kiddush you prepared looked so attractive and was absolutely delicious, wonderful cake! I am very aware of all the time and hard work you put into preparing everything. Thank you!

It was lovely to share my special day with Tina and Neil's special anniversary - mazal tov to them both.

My beautiful rose tree has found a good spot in my garden and is so suitable for my patio.

I have received so many very generous birthday greetings and kind good wishes and I thank you for them all.

Thank you Rabbi Koster for the beautiful moving service and challenging prayer. B'Shalom,

Affectionately, Pauline

Janet and John Posner write:

A massive 'Thank You'

We just want to say how overwhelmed we were with your good wishes for our Golden Wedding anniversary. So many cards, so many of you at the shabbat service and kiddush, such kind words; we couldn't have wished for a greater celebration. The golden rose looks happy too. Thank you all. Janet and John.

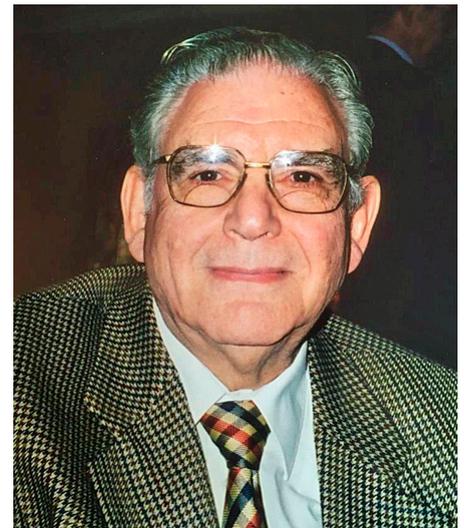
Happily Married



Two couples recently celebrated significant wedding anniversaries in the synagogue on successive shabbatot. Janet and John Posner (left) celebrated their golden wedding on 31 August, while Tina and Neil Higgins celebrated their ruby wedding on 7 September. We wish both couples many more happy years together.



Neil and Tina, top right, shared a festive kiddush with Pauline Jeffree, above, who was honoured by the synagogue in recognition of receiving the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.



On a sadder note, we recorded the passing on 27 August of our much-loved member, Lionel Cohen. Please turn to the next page for the hesped delivered by his son, Robert, at Lionel's funeral.

Bromley Knitters, Stitchers and Natterers

The group will be meeting at Pauline's on **Thursday, 10 October** from 10.00 am until midday.

Pauline Jeffree
via 020 8460 5460

לשנה טובה

Joy Goldberg sends greetings to everyone for a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Remembering Lionel F. Cohen, 30 May 1926 - 27 August 2019 (Hesped given by Lionel's son Robert)

Our father Lionel Cohen was born in South London on 30 May 1926, the fifth child and youngest son of Pearl and Harry Cohen.

As the last son at home he enjoyed more time with his mother than any of his brothers had. She taught him to cook, chicken soup and chopped liver becoming his specialties. I like to think that both these recipes learnt from his mother Pearl contributed to his long and healthy life. And when Pearl was embroidering challah cloths, Lionel would trace the outlines of candlesticks or menorahs to guide his mother's sewing.

I always knew that Lionel was close to his brother Alfred. It was Alfred, rather than his mum or dad, who would take him up to London to visit the science museum. Alfred, ten years older than Lionel, became his affectionate second father. I suspect those trips to Kensington may have been the origins of his interest in how things in the material world worked and fitted together.

Talking to my cousins this week and discovering photos I'd never seen, I've learnt more about our Dad's fondness for his brother David, five years his elder. While my father was typically earnest and reserved, David was outgoing and fun-loving. David came back from the war with a shrapnel wound to the head. Later he developed a brain tumour which he died from while still in his 30s. When I was growing up, my Dad said little about David even when I asked him to. Now I understand that this wasn't because he had nothing to say about David but because he had too much to say and didn't know where to start or what would happen if he did.

My father began training as an apprentice engineer during the Second World War while his older brothers were all on active service. He went to night school in the evenings to gain his qualifications and kept all his old school books - full of trigonometry - long enough to show, and rather intimidate, his own children 30 years later.

Only later did it occur to me how proud he was of having worked every day at the local engineering firm, Elliot Brothers, and then how he had to study all night too. And if you ever missed a week, he used to tell us, "it was impossible to ever catch up".

I loved his stories of being an apprentice. My favourite was when he was told, by a grinning foreman, to go down to the

storeroom and ask the storeroom manager for a 'LONG WEIGHT'. "Just sit there in the corner young man", said the storeroom manager, "and I'll let you know when it's ready." It was of course, a long wait.

In his 20s and 30s Lionel won his stripes and rose up the ranks of the Jewish Lads Brigade. He would recount stories of taking hundreds of boys from South London to summer camp at Deal on the Kent coast. That community spirit and commitment stayed with him as both he and our mother, Valerie, became active in the life of Bromley Reform Synagogue and with B'nei B'rith for many years. Lionel and Valerie married in 1961, Suzy was born a year later and I arrived in 1965.

Lionel enjoyed his work, especially the sales trips he made to Eastern Europe including to the Gdańsk shipyards in Poland. It was on one of these trips that he also visited Auschwitz, long before it became the busy tourist attraction it is today. It wasn't until 2015 that he gave me a full account of what he saw and heard that day.

Lionel's first employer, Elliot Brothers, became Elliot Automation, which was in turn bought by GEC. Lionel ended his engineering career as the manager director of a GEC factory in Dartford in the late 1970s.

After being made redundant in his early 50s, Lionel set up a high street printing business with his brother Jack and sister-in-law Lenora on the Old Kent Road. That's how he also became my first boss, teaching me how to serve customers and fix paper jams in photocopiers.

At around the same time, Lionel became a consultant for the government's Small Business Advisory Service, helping younger entrepreneurs overcome everyday business difficulties. Passing on his knowledge and experience was work that gave him immense satisfaction, perhaps the most satisfaction of all the work he did.

When Suzy and I were talking about our father the night before the funeral, we found ourselves sharing the same words and some of the same memories. Kind, patient, pragmatic and calm. Correct, polite and diplomatic. These were the words we both agreed on immediately. He also had a strong sense of responsibility and fairness. We both remembered his patience when helping us with our homework at the dining

room table.

There was no shortage of the ways in which Lionel showed kindness. The kindness in how he looked after our grandmother Elsie in her final years. And in his own last years, the kindness with which he cared for our mother, which he always described as an "enormous privilege".

There are other memories too. He was a good swimmer. He would take my sister and me to West Wickham swimming baths on a Sunday when we were little and I could climb on his back in the shallow end, after which he would swim the length of the pool right to the deep end. I was safe and he was strong. The best feeling a six year old son could ever have.

Later, when Suzy became particular about the shoes she wore, our mother delegated those stressful shopping trips to our father, who had the patience to tour around every one of Bromley's shoe shops until Suzy found exactly what she wanted.

It was our father who read us bedtime stories. One story which Suzy and I asked for time and time again was David Kossoff's re-telling of David and Goliath, with the young giant slayer - too skinny to wear any armour. It was a story of the weak triumphing over the strong when God was on your side - a strand of Jewish ethics that has stayed with me ever since.

Much, much later, there was the Passover Seder at Suzy and Jonathan's, the first for our eldest daughter Rosie. We all watched as Rosie, sitting on her grandfather's lap, slowly drifted to sleep as his warm, lilting voice recounted the strange rabbinical mathematics of the Haggadah which turns ten plagues into 300. Lionel was enjoying the medieval sums by the Red Sea too much to notice what was happening right in front of him.

Lionel was a private person. He rarely showed his emotions or vulnerability. This was the flip side of all that calmness and pragmatism. But it could at times drive our mother crazy! The politeness and kindness were there right to the end. From hospital consultants to cab drivers, Lionel treated everyone with respect and thoughtfulness. "Thank you for coming", "thank you for helping"

In later years when I would visit them for a night, after a work meeting in London,

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I'd sit with my dad at that same dining room table where he'd helped us with our maths and physics. Except now I'd turn the conversation to my own preferred subjects: Jewish history and politics. He would listen attentively about my concerns as to the place where I feared things were heading. I would remind him about how he'd read us the story of David and Goliath and try and blame him for sowing the seeds of my dissident Jewish opinions. Most important for me was not that he agreed with anything I said but that that he was willing to listen.

Judaism has many thoughts about what happens to us after death. You can find scripture for just about every possibility. But mostly Judaism is silent on the matter. It's a sort of theological humility. We don't know and we don't need to know. Judaism, we are taught, is much more bothered by the here and now and even expects mourners to behave that way.

But wherever Lionel is right now, I hope he finds his brothers there, all of them who have gone before him. Sam, Alfred, Jack and David, all looking as tall, strong and utterly indestructible as they did in the 40s and 50s in the photos Suzy and I have been looking through in the last few days.

I hope Alfred is there to show him around the place as he showed my father around the Science Museum eighty years ago. And I hope David is there too, the fun-loving brother who died too soon.

The Friday before last was the final time I saw our father alive. I held his hand. I stroked his white hair and I kissed his cheek. I thought it would probably be our last goodbye. "Thank you for coming," he whispered. The politeness was still there, right at the very end. And then the words he would say to me whenever we parted: "You're a splendid fellow!" I whispered back into his ear. "No, you're a splendid fellow!"

Lionel, Daddy, Grandpa, Great-grandpa. Thank you for coming. You were here with us for 93 years and you were always a splendid fellow.

May the One whose name is magnified and sanctified cradle you as you once cradled us. May your soul find eternal rest and peace. And may your name be a blessed memory to all who have known and loved you. Amen.

Lionel survived by his wife Valerie, children Suzy and Robert, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

SERVICES

October 2019 – Tishri/Cheshvan 5780

Friday evening services will resume next month

Saturdays at 10.30 am, unless otherwise stated

Friday 4 October	
Saturday 5 October	Shuvah (6 Tishri)
Tuesday 8 October	Kol Nidre - service at 7.30 pm at Crofton Halls, Orpington
Wednesday 9 October	Yom Kippur - services from 10.30 am at Crofton Halls, Orpington
Friday 11 October	
Saturday 12 October	Ha'azinu (13 Tishri)
Sunday 13 October	Erev Sukkot - service at 6.30 pm in the synagogue (Kiddush in the sukkah!)
Monday 14 October	SUKKOT - service at 10.30 am in the synagogue
Friday 18 October	
Saturday 19 October	Chol Hamoed Sukkot (20 Tishri)
Sunday 20 October	Erev Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah - service at 6.30 pm in the synagogue, preceded by refreshments at 5.30 pm
Monday 21 October	SHEMINI ATZERET-SIMCHAT TORAH - service at 10.30 am in the synagogue
Friday 25 October	
Saturday 26 October	Bereshit (27 Tishri)
Wednesday 30 October	Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan

Council of Christians and Jews
South East London Branch

Rabbi Chava Koster, who grew up in the Netherlands, will speak on.

"Growing up in the country of Anne Frank"

Tuesday 5 November
8.00 pm at the Synagogue
Refreshments from 7.45 pm

The life story of Anne Frank has continued to grow in significance over the years. How has Anne Frank impacted the way the Dutch in general, and Dutch Christians and Jews, in particular, see themselves and the world?

For further details, contact **Stephen Weil** via the synagogue:
020 8460 5460

BRS Education Committee
Dates for your diary
Introduction to Judaism

A new session of classes is under way in the synagogue during Cheder, starting at 10 am on the following dates:

3 November – t.b.a.

24 November – t.b.a.

15 December – on Chanukah.

Further details from Barbara –
a.bkurtz@talktalk.net

There will be a small charge for non-members. Please contact the office to register your interest: admin@bromleyshul.org.uk

Shabbat Study Sessions

These sessions will resume after the High Holydays.

Dates for Your Diary

October

T	1	
W	2	
Th	3	Visit to Cheshunt - leave the synagogue at 9.15 am
F	4	
S	5	Shuvah
S	6	Erecting the Sukkah during Cheder
M	7	
T	8	Kol Nidre - service at 7.30 pm at the Crofton Halls, Orpington
W	9	YOM KIPPUR - services from 10.30 am at the Crofton Halls, Orpington
Th	10	
F	11	
S	12	Ha'azinu
S	13	Decorating the Sukkah during Cheder Erev Sukkot - service at 6.30 pm in the synagogue
M	14	SUKKOT - service at 10.30 am in the synagogue
T	15	
W	16	Rescheduled evening with Damien Egan , Mayor of Lewisham -7 pm at the Shul
Th	17	
F	18	
S	19	Chol Hamoed Sukkot
S	20	Erev Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah - service at 6.30 pm in the synagogue, preceded by 5.30 pm refreshments! Cheder Half Term
M	21	SHEMINI ATZERET-SIMCHAT TORAH - service at 10.30 am in the synagogue
T	22	
W	23	Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul - talk by Rachel Lucking
Th	24	
F	25	
S	26	Bereshit
S	27	Cheder Half Term
M	28	
T	29	
W	30	Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan
Th	31	

November

F	1	
S	2	Noach
S	3	Introduction to Judaism - 10 am at the Shul
M	4	
T	5	CCJ meeting - talk by Rabbi Chava Koster - 7.45 for 8 pm at the Shul
W	6	
Th	7	Meeting of the Book Group - 7.45 pm at the Shul
F	8	
S	9	Lech Lecha
S	10	
M	11	
T	12	
W	13	Social Centre - Musical entertainment by David and Tom
Th	14	
F	15	
S	16	Vayera
S	17	Mitzvah Day - visit to the Cheder by children's author Helen Peters
M	18	
T	19	
W	20	
Th	21	
F	22	
S	23	Chayei Sarah
S	24	Introduction to Judaism - 10 am at the Shul
M	25	
T	26	
W	27	Social Centre - 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	28	
F	29	Rosh Chodesh Kislev
S	30	Toledot

Ben Uri Gallery - Boundary Road, London NW8.
Looking and Experiencing: A Tribute to Leon Kossoff (1926-2019)

A retrospective of work by Leon Kossoff, who sadly passed away in July 2019. Born in Islington to first generation Russian Jewish immigrants, Kossoff was raised in London's East End, where his parents ran a bakery. He is best known for his figurative portraits, life drawings and cityscapes.
ends 18 October



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