

November 2021 – Chanukah 5782 www.bromleyshul.org.uk



Chanukah at BRS: a season of renewal and rededication

Coming back to “live” events in the past couple of months, and looking at the list of new initiatives already taking place, or scheduled to do so, at BRS really does bring to mind the theme of Chanukah, rededication. For Chanukah itself, we have the **CHANUKAH FAIR** on **21 November**, an annual treat that we had to forego last year. Do come to the Shul between 12.30 and 3.00 and see how our valiant Hooray Cheder team has managed to put together a covid-safe event. There will be food, stalls, food, games, food and entertainment from our BRS Klezmer band at 2pm.

Once the festival begins, we’ll have **candle lightings** as usual but, in view of the ongoing need for caution, two of them will be on-line only and two partly **out of doors**. All are welcome to join in subject to some simple precautions. Details on page 4. Then there’s the very exciting arts project – details on p. 9 – also on the theme of renewal, which aims to bring us together to celebrate creativity and think about our Jewish identities.

Sadly, we said farewell to Rabbi Mati at the end of October, and the search for his successor continues. In the meantime, we’re delighted that not only Student Rabbi DY Stern (see page 3) but a number of other guest preachers have agreed to lead Shabbat services. Rabbis Sylvia Rothschild, Larry Becker and Nathan Godleman are already standing by, so please watch e-Light for their exact dates. But don’t forget our dedicated and talented band of lay leaders and readers who are all set to see us into the new secular year. In fact, some of them are so talented that they are in demand to do several things at once. So, if you are able to give a few hours every couple of months to help with security or Kiddush, or any role in front of or behind the streaming camera, to help them out, please contact the chair or the office – details on the back page. Meanwhile, a happy, healthy and safe Chanukah to all our readers at BRS and beyond.

Distinction for BRS’s Chai School Head Frankie



Frankie, who graduated with in distinction in Leo Baeck College’s MA in Jewish Educational Leadership earlier this year, also won the Ludwig Finklestein prize for practical application. She’s been invited to run a course based on her research dissertation on Wrestling with God in the Cheder Classroom, starting on 24 November. Details of this and other courses on page 4. She is pictured above being presented with a special MA postgraduate tallit and kippah by college chairman Professor Stephen Herman. Frankie said she truly treasured coming back to Chai School and receiving special mazal tov cards from the pupils, and flowers from BRS and the teaching team.

IN THIS ISSUE

1. Celebrations and Renewal
2. From The Chair
3. Message from Student Rabbi DY, and Simchat Torah memories
- 4-5. Chai School, Adult Education and Chanukah gatherings
- 6-8. In Our Community, including remembering Pauline
- 9-10. Features of the month: Help for Refugees; Arts Project; Sadeh
11. Pauline contd and Board of Deputies report
12. Contacts

View from the Chair



As Chanukah approaches and we think about lighting our eight candles, I think about the light in our community and at BRS.

My first candle goes to all the loved ones we have lost. Many of us have experienced the pain of loss this year, and most recently there was the death of Pauline Jeffree. However their love, goodness and kindness will be with us forever.

Candle two is for Rabbi Mati as we say goodbye and good luck for the future. At the same time, a big welcome to student rabbi David-Yehuda Stern who has joined us for his final year of training. He has already proved a big hit with the b'nei mitzvah children and parents at the first of a series of b'nei mitzvah breakfasts. As well as D-Y we also have guest rabbis joining us to lead Shabbat services. So, look out for Rabbi Nathan Godleman, Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild and Rabbi Larry Becker, and give them a big BRS welcome. While our student and guest rabbis are with us the rabbi recruitment group will continue the search for our next permanent Rabbi.

Candle number three is for the Chanukah Fair, which is scheduled for Sunday 21 November at 12.30pm. Thanks to Sonia Hyams this popular shul-wide event will see the return of traditional bagels, donuts, Judaica and the klezmer band. Please come and support this wonderful event.

Candle four is for the synagogue itself. The happiness and joy of being back in the sanctuary for services. The noise and learning

going on every Sunday at cheder. Life is slowly but surely returning to our building. There are covid guidelines in place and there will be for the foreseeable future. As things seem to change at speed please look out for updates in your weekly e-Light.

Candle five is for all the exciting things we have planned. I know the Education Committee is organising some fantastic talks and events. Some feature in this HighLight but because of the planning that is needed not all details are available. Please check your e-Lights for everything that will be taking place.

Our new member Mandy Wax is leading one event I would like to mention. The Arts Project will showcase a series of creative workshops and endeavours that will take place over the coming eight months. They will include photography, creative writing, music and cookery and bring our community together. By virtue of its being a BRS project, the theme will strongly involve our Jewish identity. The culmination of this project will be a one day event in the Synagogue on Sunday 10 July 2022. *More details on page 9.*

Candle six is for the volunteers at BRS who just make everything happen. Do you wonder how you receive HighLight and e-Light, who does the security and Kiddush for Shabbat services and security at cheder? Who leads our Caring Community, who keeps the building running, who arranges events, talks, cooking, cleaning? Volunteers too numerous to name, you are all magnificent. However



we need more of you, so if you can help with security or a bit of washing up or social events just email me and I will point you in the right direction.

Candle seven is for the children of our community. It is so exciting to see you return to cheder and to see the b'nei mitzvah students at Shabbat services. Our new B'nei Mitzvah Co-ordinator, Judy Taylor, tells me we have more than a dozen children preparing for their b'nei mitvah in the next 12 months!

Candle eight is for Chanukah itself. This festival of lights brings light, joy and warmth to our homes and communities as we celebrate with candles, food, family and friends.

Happy Chanukah. I wish you all peace and light during this holiday season.

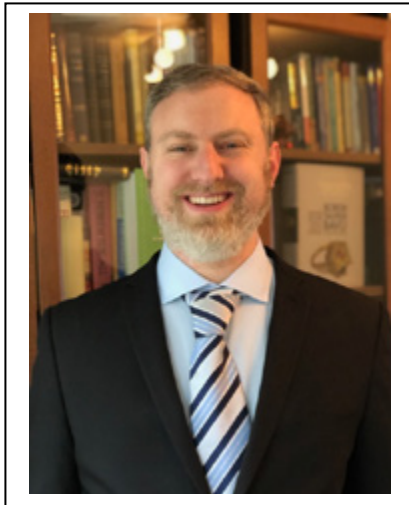
Michelle Brooks Evans

chair@bromleyshul.org.uk

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Michelle has mentioned services led by our student and guest rabbis. We're also looking forward to being led on Shabbat mornings by Chai School teachers and the new cohort of b'nei mitzvah, starting with Sam on 8 January. What a lovely way to start 2022. Please look out for dates and details in e-Light. You can join us in person or online but do please continue to check for covid precautions in place on any given date and come prepared!

How good and how beautiful it is when people live together in unity.” (Psalm 133)



Student Rabbi David-Yehuda ('DY') Stern writes:

In my short time at BRS I have already observed how the community thrives by carefully balancing two important things: diversity and unity. This is no easy task and it is all too easy for each of us to become wedded to our own way of thinking - our own unique gaze in the mirror - easily forgetting that others' reflections appear quite different.

At my first in-person Shabbat Shacharit (service) at Bromley I stood on the bimah and saw a room filled with tremendous diversity - people at different life stages holding differing perspectives on the world - yet brought together in faith and mutual support for one another. This is something embedded into the core of BRS; a divine spark that goes beyond any single person.

Kol Ha'Kavod ('with all due respect!')

I have the privilege of spending the next eight months with you and hope to interact with as many aspects of the community as possible. Whilst I will be visiting the shul at least once a month to lead services, a primary focus of mine is to support B-

Mitzvah families as their child develops into a 'Jewish adult'. At the start of October we held our first B-Mitzvah Breakfast Club; a space for those approaching the age of 13 to form strong bonds with their peers whilst enjoying yummy food and exploring the richness and relevance of Judaism.

Chanukah begins on Sunday evening, 28 November. Colloquially known as 'The Festival of Lights', it is a time for us to gather round the chanukiah - the nine-branched candelabrum - and light candles; thus reminding each of us that we have the ability to make the world a little brighter.

As we move into the winter months, I hope you are able to see your own divine spark, as well as that of others, for the powerful beacons of illumination that they truly are!

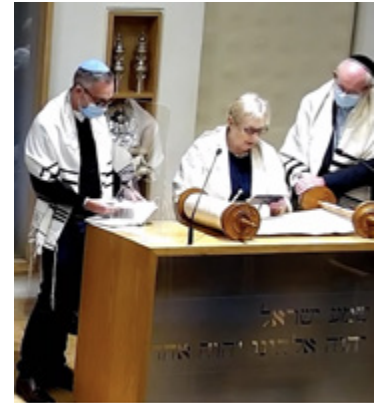
A letter from Rabbi Mati

Dear BRS members,

As most of you know, I left BRS at the end of October. Sadly, my entire time with you coincided with the global pandemic. As you can imagine, this posed unprecedented challenges in my role as your rabbi; challenges that limited my chances to get to know you as well as I would have liked. Nevertheless, I have profoundly enjoyed serving as BRS's rabbi. It is because BRS is such an inspiring, supportive and welcoming community. I am proud to have started my rabbinic career at BRS; your synagogue will always have a special place in my heart. I wish every member of BRS and the community as a whole all the best for the future.

**B'shalom
Rabbi Mati**

Socially distanced we might have been, but Simchat Torah 5782 was an opportunity to honour two dedicated members



Our Kallat Torah was **Janet Posner** who, as well as having ensured that BRS was able to acquire burial plots at Kemnal Park in the very recent past, has spent much of the past two years behind the scenes as one of our vital Zoom/streaming wardens, enabling people to watch our Shabbat and festival services every week and attend other events online.



Over a similar period **Jon Woolf**, our Chatan Bereishit, has been providing invaluable support to our Senior Warden, and, since we've been back "live" on Shabbat, has become the go-to Streaming Warden, second only to Kieron in understanding the mysteries of the new cameras in the sanctuary. Both Janet and Jon were supported by Dan and John Posner (pictured either side of Janet, above).

Screen shots courtesy Bob Symonds

EDUCATION & CHANUKAH NEWS

Bringing the light towards Chanukah

Heading towards Mitzvah Day on 21 November, from the outset we've been collecting weekly tzedakah for Deaf Plus; for our younger kittot there will be a session that aims to build awareness of the communication barriers faced by British Sign Language users and consider the literal and plain meaning of the ancient Jewish precept of "not cursing the deaf or putting a stumbling block before the blind" (Leviticus 19:14). Is there a tendency to be impatient with, or inconsiderate towards, individuals with disabilities?

The second half of term starts with a look at the issue of individuality and how we may, in our unguarded moments, judge others, through exploring Rabbinical and our own judgements about Jacob and Esau. It will culminate with our whole cheder Chanukah party session on 5 December at Chai School's regular time. The following week our Morim Team will be taking part in the Shabbat morning service before their planning meeting for our Aviv (Spring) Term that starts on 9 January 2022.

COVID MEASURES FOR THE REMAINDER OF TERM

As we enter the winter months, and in the face of a rising number of COVID cases, aside from typical seasonal illnesses, we will be guided by the same values that have accompanied us through the past year. As we continue to strive for simcha shel mitzvah (the joy of Jewish life) in all we do at Chai School, we also remember the values of ahavat ha-briyot (a

loving concern for others). At this time, parents are asked to wear masks and sanitise hands on arrival and while in the building at drop off and pick up times.

No cheder-end assembly for now

Upon careful review, and to protect vulnerable staff and members of all ages, we will not be running our whole cheder-end assemblies. This will be a disappointment, I know, for the many parents who love our show and kvell space, but the risks at this time remain too high. In line with our belief that kol yisrael areivim zeh ba-zeh (all Israel are responsible for one another) Chai School is doing all it can to ensure that those unable to return to in-person activities on health grounds remain part of our provision and plans. If this applies to you please do contact Frankie at cheder@bromleyshul.org.uk

Frankie is among the lecturers for Leo Baeck College's autumn "Lehrhaus" online courses.

TOPICS INCLUDE

- ✧ Classical Greek
- ✧ Modern and Biblical Hebrew
- ✧ Maimonides on Evil, Providence and the Book of Job
- ✧ Encountering the Religious Other : Modern Jewish Thinkers on Interfaith Dialogue
- ✧ Jews and Music
- ✧ David Becomes King
- ✧ Jewish Family in Europe after 1945: History and Memory
- ✧ How to Make Sense of Israeli Politics
- ✧ Teacher Training for Jewish Supplementary School Teachers and Assistants AND Frankie's
- ✧ Wrestling with God in the Cheder Classroom.

Full details of courses, dates and lecturers are at the Lehrhaus tab at <https://lbc.ac.uk>

Ways to join other BRS members to light Chanukah candles



This year, we have candle-lighting gatherings in person and online to which everyone is invited. While we usually we ask that, as a courtesy, you let your host(s) know if you plan to attend, this year it is essential. Please do get in touch to find out where to go and what to do, bring and wear.

☺ First night, **Sunday 28 November**, from 7pm, Zoom only, hosted by Judi. Please bring your own chanukiot and plenty of food.

Sixth night, **Friday 3 December**, 7pm, Zoom only, combined with Shabbat candles, hosted by Michelle. ☺☺☺☺☺☺

Address for both Zoom gatherings: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/578441665>

☺☺ Seventh night, **Saturday 4 December**, 5pm, hosted by Linda and Matthew in **Blackheath** ☺☺☺☺☺☺ details and directions: Matthew, 07711 599488 or matthew.delange@metaforepartners.com Please take a lateral flow test in advance, call to say you are going and bring warm clothes for open doors and windows and possible use of the garden.

Eighth night, **Sunday 5 December**, 4.30-6pm, hosted by Tom in **Bellingham** in the socially distanced but very well equipped facility at his allotment. Food will be provided but additional contributions will be welcome. Bring warm clothes, chanukiot and candles and let's have a great last night! Details and directions from judishef@aol.com ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺

If will be fantastic if more members can organise **additional lightings in other areas.** If you do, and would like yours publicised in e-Light, please contact comms@bromleyshul.org.uk by the preceding Sunday at the latest.

CHAI SCHOOL NEWS



From Zoom small screen to 3D Jewish Learning

Head Teacher Frankie writes

Our first half term back as Chai School came to a successful close with an exploration of Chag HaSigd, an Ethiopian Jewish festival. Thanks to Morah Janvier Palmer (Limmudim) and Heidi Small (Gan), there was freshly baked “dabo” honey and spice bread; in the Garden room, masinko music played while older kittot considered the similarities between our local minhagim and the colourful umbrellas that shade the Torah Scrolls on this festival’s parades to mountain tops. Pupils were encouraged to reflect upon themselves as part of a multi-cultural mosaic of a global Jewish peoplehood.

Returning to the building for Sukkot was a joyous and much welcomed event. Shaking our lulavim and decorating the Sukkah with recycled materials as part of our Bal Taschit commitment together seemed slightly surreal after so long apart. Seeing smiles on the faces of our lovely pupils entering and leaving each week was so precious. Before term started, our wonderful Morim team met, rehearsed, and prepped for a huge B'ruchim Haba'im for our pupils.

Rabbi Mati led one of our experiential learning activities for Simchat Torah week – seen above with our three senior kittot. Their arms ached a little from holding up the parchment but seeing one of our Sefer Torah scrolls in its full was one of our kochav (star) moments of this first term. Not to be left out, younger kittot unrolled a mini scroll and sung a especially composed Torah song and Hey celebrated the festival by making sweet Torah scrolls (right) and giving these out to pupils in other kittot.

Having been helpers for a number of years, Aimee Ashmore and Helena Burchill stepped up to become teachers of Gimmel/Dalet; and Gal Wilson-Chen and Caroline Receptor Jones returned to run crafts, share stories and Aleph Bet Yoga with their kittah. As part of the Noach themed week, Robert Cohen and Hannah Beckman led their kittah over the rainbow, with a class yonim (dove) mobile, while exploring various midrash including one where the Rabbis considered where the poop in the ark was stored; and, like older kittot, looked at what we can learn about climate change and natural disasters from the building of the ark.



Shalom Uv'racha Plus Following nearly two years on-line, Chai School is running a Hebrew Recovery Plan to help ensure we can rebuild pupils' confidence, fluency and B-Mitzvah readiness; kittot are learning and exploring key blessings and singing kiddush. Special Hebrew sessions take place each week, guided by our highly proficient Hebrew Lead Teachers, Rachael Ashmore and Joe Parks, and there's now more flexibility to help develop reading on a 1-1 basis. Together with any help parents can provide at home or as Hebrew volunteers during Chai School, we hope to revitalise this area of study and create even more budding Hebrew scholars.

Doing Jewishly – living our values Chai School is about doing Jewishly, as well as learning things we might need to know about being Jewish, so here's Gimmel/Dalet promoting our local food bank drive. Please remember we are a part of a national RSY campaign which runs until Mitzvah Day. At the end of the half term we had had 115 items donated out of a target of 613. Donations from all members are welcome.



IN OUR COMMUNITY

Page Contact:
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Social and Personal

Deaths:

We are very sad to report the death on Saturday, 16 October (Shabbat Lech Lecha) of our greatly loved member, **Pauline Jeffree** at the age of 82. Pauline had no close family, but Janet Posner was with her at the Princess Royal University Hospital when she passed away. Tributes to and memories of Pauline begin on page 8 of this *HighLight*.

We are also very sad to report the death in Nightingale House on 27 September, at the age of 89, of our member, **David Franklin**, father of Judith French and Rachel Franklin, and grandfather to Joe and Joshua Parks and Raphael Brown, to all of whom we offer our deepest condolences.

Bereavements – Sincere condolences to **James Small** and his family on the sad loss of his father, **Peter Small**, in Brisbane, Australia, after a long illness, and to **Judi Sheffrin** and her family on the loss of her uncle, **David Wise**, brother of the late Hilda Horn, in Canberra, Australia.

May the names of all our loved ones be for a blessing.

Correction: Many apologies to **Elisabeth Megitt** and her family on the rather garbled notice we gave in the last Highlight on the loss of her grandfather, **Eddie Andresier**. We omitted to include among the mourners his daughter and synagogue member **Deanne Beevers** and her three daughters, as well as misspelling Elisabeth's first name.

Welcome to New Member:

Mr. Benjamin Ross of Beckenham, husband of Mary Callanan and father of Will, Kit, Jessie and Jack.

New Homes: We wish every happiness in their new homes to **Sylvia Harris**, **Hilda Lask** and **Danielle Woodward** and family, all of whom have moved house recently.

Knitters, Natterers and Stitchers:



Pauline (left) with her friend Karen Powell during a meeting of the group at Park Court.

Barbara Kurtz writes:

The group is currently mourning the death of its dear friend and founder, **Pauline Jeffree**. Pauline was a truly selfless and caring person and the first to sense a need in others. So it was that, when she felt **Jackie Alfred z'l** needed help after her husband died, she invited her to teach members of the Social Centre how to crochet – and so it began. This informal session quickly grew into our current group and we were soon knitting and stitching for King's College Hospital Premature Baby Unit. We met in the lounge of her home, Park Court, where every available surface would be covered with knitted items as we rushed to fill the stocking and bags with blankets, cardigans and toys ready for the mums and babies at Christmas.

Sadly, Covid put an end to our meetings there and King's is currently unable to accept our offerings. However, Pauline soon sourced other outlets for our efforts and our knitting continued. We caught up with each other on Zoom and are now meeting at my home as Pauline's lounge is not open to non-residents. This has

meant that most of the group have not seen Pauline for some time, but she was always there in the background, full of encouragement and ideas. We will miss her so much, but will continue to knit, natter and stitch in her memory.

The group's friend Karen Powell collected completed items for various charities at the end of October, and we are still knitting. I welcome any suggestions as to where we might send our efforts in the future, though we hope King's will once again be able to receive them, covid permitting. Our next meeting will be in my home on Friday, 26 November. Details: barbarakurtz42@gmail.com

Social Centre News

The Social Centre continues to meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month in the Garden Room. It is lovely to be back with our friends again in a convivial atmosphere, enjoying a good chat, games, exercises and a delicious lunch.

Dates for the future are:

Wednesday, 10 November;
Wednesday 24 November, when we will be joined by **Amelia Kyazze**, who will be talking about her book *"Into the Mouth of the Lion"*. She will also talk about her work as an editor helping people write and publish their memoirs. (See p.7 for more about Amelia)

Wednesday, 8 December will be our **Chanukah Party**, when we shall be entertained by our old friends David Coronel and Tom Shiels, and the last meeting of the year will be on **Wednesday, 22 December**. All meetings start at 10.30am. Double vaccination and prior booking with me are a must.

Barbara Kurtz
(barbarakurtz42@gmail.com)

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Page Contact:
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comms@bromleyshul.org

Caring Community

Tracy Frankel writes:

I am not sure about you, but with the country returning to the new normal I find myself spinning on the spot and then charging off in different directions only to retreat again with another family member down with Covid (I even think the dog has caught it!). Sometimes I find myself wishing for just one day a week in lockdown to gather my thoughts, catch up on admin and errands and just breathe. On a train journey this week I was browsing through unread messages on my 'phone and I stumbled across a poem with such a profound message:

Take Time

Take time to Work, it is the price of success.
Take time to Think, it is the source of power.
Take time to Laugh, it is the music of the soul.
Take time to Read, it is the foundation of wisdom.
Take time to Give, it is too short a day to be selfish.
Take time to Pray, it is the greatest power on earth.
Take time to Play, it is the secret of perpetual youth.
Take time to be Friendly, it is the road to happiness.
Take time to love and be loved, it is a gift from God.

These words made me think of **Pauline Jeffree**, the founder of our Caring Community in its current form, who was so passionate and dedicated to the care of everyone in our BRS community, and always took the time to call, send a message or email, and coordinate the various Caring Community projects. Despite her own battles with ill health and pain, Pauline was the BRS 'mama' who always made sure that every one of us felt loved and nurtured by her care and support, taking the time to laugh, talk and play with us, and putting others before herself.

I will miss her guidance and I know our committee is already feeling the huge loss of her energy and passion. While we can never fill Pauline's shoes, we hope to follow her legacy and be available for anyone who needs us in any way. Please remember to get in touch at 6frankels@gmail.com or call me, Tracy, on 07944 424347. I hope you all stay safe and well.

Tracy Frankel

BRS BOOK CLUB will go *Into the Mouth of the Lion* when this lively group meets on **Thursday 18 November** at 8pm

at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82889410024> to discuss the debut novel of very own Amelia Kyazze (see right) who will be with us to talk about the background to her novel, which is set in a part of Africa that she knows well. Do join us even if you haven't been before, and if you need further information please contact Judy Woolfe at 07989 091066 or jwoolfe@ntlworld.com

Jewish Renaissance in South London revives memories of Chanukahs past

Our Chair, Michelle, was recently interviewed by Rebecca Taylor, editor of Jewish Renaissance magazine, for a piece she was preparing comparing the south London Jewish community of her youth with that of today.

The finished article evokes many happy memories, not least of Rebecca's own batmitzah at BRS; the irreverent home-grown 1970s musicals, such as the one in which the Clan MacAbee saved the day at Chanukah; and year when the rabbi's Yom Kippur sermon caused a walkout. You can find it at <https://www.jewishrenaissance.org.uk/current-issue>

Thank you, Michelle, for the link, and Rebecca for keeping in touch.



British-American writer and photographer Amelia Kyazze, a member of BRS for a number of years and a very active Chai School parent, published her debut novel in May under the name A.B. Kyazze.

Into the Mouth of the Lion is a fast-paced mystery about a young photographer looking for her missing sister in the final days of Angola's civil war. It is also a love story that crosses from Lisbon in the 1960s to London in the 1980s, to Angola in 2002. You can hear more on Zoom at the Book Club on **18 November** (see left) and/or in person at the Social Centre on **24 November**, when Amelia will talk about her writing and her work as an editor helping people publish their memoirs. *Into the Mouth of the Lion* can be ordered from all good bookshops or online and Amelia will bring some copies with her to the Social Centre.

BRS is fortunate to have new and longer-standing members such as Amelia, above, and Mandy on page 9 expanding the scope of our activities thanks to their wide range of interests, as well as former members such as Rebecca bringing theirs to us. We hope to start an occasional "Where are they now?" feature. If you'd like to nominate (or write about!) somebody please email: comms@bromleyshul.org.uk

A PAGE FOR PAULINE

Hesped by John Posner, interspersed with comments received by Janet Posner following news of Pauline's death last month

Remembering Pauline Jeffree, 1939-2021

Pauline was an exceptional person. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. We all have the ability to do good and sometimes not so good but Pauline was on a different level. She was quite simply the kindest person that I and most, if not all, of you have ever encountered.

"I considered Pauline to be extended family and she treated me with such affection that I always felt like I had a confidante, especially after I lost Mum. She always seemed to know just what to say and will be dearly missed."

Her outstanding qualities as a human being are even more remarkable when we recognise that she had to overcome the most awful deprivation in her childhood. She didn't talk much about it but from the little she said and wrote, the first years of her life were pretty dreadful. Her mother arrived in England as a refugee in 1939 but we don't know from which country. As a baby, Pauline was made a ward of court and sent to live with a family in Middlesbrough. She was housed with various families; she was abandoned and spent time in various children's care homes; she was very lonely. At the age of 7, she was fostered out to a family in Bromley and then had intermittent contact with her mother. Her mother told her she was Jewish and that one day she would understand what that meant.

"As you know, she was a good friend to me and we shared fun times as well as sad ones. She is not someone I will forget ..."

"...I'm hoping her light is not extinguished but passed on in myriad fragments to the many people whose lives she touched."

Pauline started school late but passed her 11+ and went to secondary school. It was clear that she was bright and also sporty; she was a good hockey player. She went to Bromley Technical College, which she really enjoyed, and subsequently got an office job. However, she needed to find somewhere to live and at the age of 19 decided to train as a nurse at the London Hospital, mainly because that would enable her to live in the nurse's accommodation. She was apparently quite mischievous and got into trouble with matron now and again but it was clear that Pauline was going to be a good nurse.

"The Shul was her life and she worked so hard for it in so many capacities even with fading health. She taught my grandchildren for their Bnei Mitzvah in a kind but highly knowledgeable way."

And so began her long career as a nurse, acquiring experience and qualifications in hospital, as a midwife, a midwife teacher, nursing management and sister tutor. For many years she worked as a midwife in general practice and also as a practice nurse. She decided to study for post-graduate qualifications, while continuing to earn a living, and undertook an MSc at the University of Surrey, qualifying in 1984. Her research project was on the training of midwives working in the community.

"I feel privileged to belong to a community where being alone is not a punishment nor a social disease, but just the way it is. Long life to the community who loved and sheltered her."

Though she was so modest, her reputation spread far and wide. She was commissioned to write a textbook for nurse training, which was published, as was a curriculum for a new profession within nursing, 'practice nursing'. Into the 1990s, and she took on studying for a PhD at Surrey. The subject of her thesis was 'The education and training needs of practice nurses'. After qualifying in 1996, Dr Jeffree became a lecturer. She was so modest, never made any fuss about these high level qualifications and she never called herself Dr Jeffree. To everyone she was just Pauline.

About that time, she underwent conversion to Judaism (even if she was actually Jewish by birth) and became a member of Bromley Reform Shul. She learned Hebrew and very quickly became a teacher in the cheder and later took on teaching children studying for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. She continued to work as a nurse and I remember her driving down to Guildford once or twice a week, so as to tutor post-graduate nursing students.

"I feel empty. I have just lost a very good friend. Pauline was so kind and caring, always helping people and never expected or wanted to be thanked. I feel Pauline has made me a better person, making me more caring."

Her willingness to serve others went above and beyond. For a while she had her sick mother to live with her so she could look after her. Subsequently, a past foster parent suffered a stroke and she moved in with them to provide care. Wherever she lived, she provided support for people.

Eventually Pauline retired from paid work but her contribution to the shul grew. She became Chair of the Caring Community and all of you will be familiar with aspects of her work, whether it was sending get-well cards and cards to older people celebrating birthdays, supporting people during illness or other difficult times, listening and offering wise counsel. Pauline was always on the phone helping people, providing considered advice and support. She started the production of clothes and bedding for babies at King's College Hospital and, most importantly, for babies who had died before or during childbirth, via the Knit and Natter group. She initiated the recording of *High-Light* for those whose vision was too poor for them to read. She ran Tea Parties for those who were alone, organised all sorts of charitable do's and became the key organiser of social activities at her sheltered accommodation at Park Court. She continued to provide help to children with learning difficulties, and so much more.

"What an impact this will have on our community, as Pauline touched everyone's lives."

"...she was so humble and never mentioned her achievements, nor how much pain she was in more recently..." cont. on p. 11

FEATURES OF THE MONTH

Helping refugees, helping with Tikkun Olam and helping members explore their creativity



Shul joins forces with others to help refugees. Can we do yet more?

Howard Binysh explains: As part of the Bromley 3 Faiths Group's (B3FG) ongoing support for refugee families from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan now living in Lewisham, we have been providing Welcome Hampers. These contain key staple foods, such as oil and rice, and a message of welcome from the B3FG. Each hamper costs approximately £100, and our Synagogue has donated 1/3 of the monies to date. Feedback received via the Refugee Council has been universally positive, both in terms of the practical support but also in terms of knowing that people care. Lewisham council is committed to supporting more refugees, hoping to welcome up to 15 more before the year end, 11 in November alone. This will be a huge financial challenge and we can't guarantee the Synagogue will be able to continue providing the same level of support. If you would like to make a financial contribution, funds can be sent to the Bromley 3 Faiths Group bank account: sort code 204545 account number 63523179. Please contact Howard Binysh (07715 527911) if you would like any more information or to get involved. Howard reports that the first four hampers have been delivered, and much appreciated, while more information about Lewisham's support can be found at <https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/community-support/refugees>

Since Howard wrote the above, he has reported that four hampers were delivered to the Refugee Council in Lewisham on October 19, so when the first family (2 adults and 5 children) arrived in the afternoon their hamper was ready and waiting.

BRS Arts Event 2022 "Reflection and Renewal"

Under the expert and enthusiastic guidance of new member Mandy Wax, a small group of volunteers has begun planning a one-day event at the synagogue, on 10 July 2022, to showcase some of the talent within our community, whether already known about or waiting to be uncovered during the project.

A series of creative workshops will take place, provisionally on the first or second Sunday of each month from January to July 2022, at which members will be invited to share their skills or learn new ones.

Suggestions so far for the event include:

- a static exhibition of visual work (could stay up for a week or two)
- live readings of written material
- a musical performance, perhaps but not necessarily by BRS Klezmer Group
- food and drink

People expressed lively interest in participating in or facilitating

- Writing about our lives, personal histories and stories
- Creating photography, art and collage around our identities and stories
- Baking, cooking and eating as an expression of our histories and stories

This will be a lovely way to bring our community together and invite other communities to meet us.

By virtue of this being a BRS project, the theme will strongly involve our Jewish identities.

This is just for starters. If you have an **idea** for the event, would like to **help** others express themselves in their favourite medium, or want to **participate** in ANY way, in advance or on the day (as our Chair says elsewhere, washers-up are vital and always welcome), please contact mandywaxart@btinternet.com

Most importantly, watch future e-Lights and HighLights for details so you don't miss the opportunity to join fellow BRS members of all ages in this much needed uplifting project over the coming months.

FEATURES OF THE MONTH *contd.*

Holiday a Million Miles from Home... in Orpington

And another very different holiday

Many BRS members will have responded over the years to appeals from **Summer Hype**, founded by BRS's Emma Mittelman and her friend Manya, who now run it with a team built up over its seven years.

Emma writes:

"Thank you so much for your donations and support over the last 7 years. This year was the best camp yet and it would not have happened without your help.

We had 31 participants split across year 8s and year 11s with a total of 15 incredible leaders.

The year 8s spent the week learning about "My Hackney" and were able to push themselves both physically and mentally in site activities, big issues sessions and masterclasses. They discussed everything from COVID-19 vaccines and the gender pay gap to what they would like to see from their community and how they could be part of that change.

The year 11s started their leadership training writing, planning and leading 4 sessions for the year 8s. We were very proud of them; their sessions were some of the most engaging and unique sessions we have ever put on and they became real role models for the younger participants, taking their first step on this journey with great enthusiasm. We're very confident in our plans for next year, having the year 11s back as junior leaders with committed older leaders there to help guide.

It has been a privilege to see our year 11s grow and mature so much over the past 7 years and we cannot wait to be able to say the same for our new cohort from year 8 too. You can see photos of the week and more at

<https://summerhypecamp.weebly.com>

We often hear of Sadeh in the context of cheder outings.

Jo Biggin had a rather different experience . . .

As I keep a broadly kosher home, eating vegetarian out while my (non-Jewish) husband eats bacon at every opportunity, Europe's first kosher eco hotel 20 minutes from my house wasn't immediately tempting. However, when my frum brother and his family said they'd booked a stay at Sadeh Farm, I was excited to arrange to visit them in Orpington and look around.

However, looking into how my family might visit just for a meal turned into being offered an incredible discount on a last-minute room, so we ended up staying overnight and enjoying just some of the activities Sadeh has to offer at Skeet Farm.

We asked for a 'double room' so that my baby and toddler could keep each other awake instead of ruining our night's sleep and – being a kosher hotel – it was perfect for a family with six kids who not only need a dorm room of bunk beds, but plenty of space for 'stuff' too. The room was huge, clean and light and had everything we needed, including en-suite bathrooms. Naomi, who had been coordinating everything with me by email, was incredibly welcoming, even though we turned up halfway through Shabbat in our car and very definitely with our phones on in our pockets. There was no judgement from her or the other guests, who were all extremely friendly. It was like walking straight into a mini Jewish camp, where all the guests either happened to know each other already or had become friends over Shabbat. We were all keen to share the incredible, fresh and beautifully prepared meals, and to join together for Havdalah because we wanted to, rather than because there was any pressure to do so.

The focus throughout the hotel and farm is on sustainability and living according to Jewish ethics, and we weren't disappointed on our Farm Tour on the Sunday as we saw how and where all the vegetables were grown – with just a little detour via the zipwire for the children – and had some extremely happy kids picking and eating courgettes straight off the ground and apples and pears direct from the trees.

I don't suppose anyone who is a member of BRS needs a place to holiday in Orpington, but Sadeh had such a lovely vibe and friendly feel to it that I would happily pay full price to stay there again and enjoy time to relax with my strictly kosher family without having to worry about what they're going to eat. We took our own drinks (unopened for the purposes of kashrut) but didn't need *any* additional food – Naomi even arranged to provide our Sunday lunch in picnic form so we could enjoy it on a day out.

This isn't a 'hotel' in the traditional sense; if you like room service and restaurants this place probably isn't for you. But if you like relaxed, family friendly, Jewish settings and even an indoor pool (I can't believe I got this far without mentioning that!), where you can learn about environmental sustainability and how it's relevant to us as Jews, all while eating excellent food – especially breakfast! – then I really recommend you get some friends together and take a break to Sadeh Farm to hang out with the chickens and enjoy a game of tennis or perhaps even a pickling workshop!

You can see more of what's available at: <https://sadehfarm.co.uk/holidays>

Joanna Biggin

The powerful and determined personality that had enabled her to overcome the terrible adversity of her childhood years became apparent to all of us in her attitude to her own ill health. She had an inflammatory condition that not only caused arthritis but led to her spine crumbling, resulting in terrible instability of her neck and back. From walking sticks, she progressed to crutches and eventually to the wheel chair. She had a lovely first floor flat in Shortlands but there was no lift and she became trapped as she was unable to get downstairs. It was clear that she needed to move to a ground-floor flat, which led to her move to Park Court in Wickham Road some 8 years ago.

There were spells in hospital but she came through them and kept fighting. She cherished life and would not give up. After years of deterioration and hospital outpatient appointments, she visited the surgeons at Stanmore Orthopaedic Hospital. I well remember discussing with her the pros and cons of going ahead with risky surgery. She was cool, rational and considered. Eventually, it was agreed to go ahead with stabilisation of her neck which prevented her from becoming paralysed. The plan was then to operate on her lower back but that never happened. So she suffered from the most terrible pain in her legs and back but she swallowed her medication and kept going – a level of stoicism that was absolutely extraordinary.

Out of respect for all her outstanding support and good work for others, the Board of BRS honoured her by making her a vice president. A few of us also proposed her for an OBE some 3 or 4 years ago. She didn't get an OBE but did receive a British Empire Medal. It was a bit frustrating that she was awarded a lesser honour but it was wonderful to be there for the ceremony at the Tower of London. What I learned that day was that all of those honoured with BE medals had done wonderful work in their communities. Pauline was one of those most outstanding, kind and generous individuals awarded that day.

Pauline loved life and would never give up. People in our shul have called her an angel, a shining light. Perhaps I can add in yiddish 'a gitte neshuma', a good soul'. She was indeed all of those things; a wonderful exemplar of how our Torah tells us all to behave. The loss of Pauline to each of us and to the community as a whole is enormous but we should take comfort from the fact that her work lives on in all of us who have benefited from her kindness, her generosity, her wisdom, her ability to help others when they most needed it; her humanity in making our lives better. Pauline was tough; she was determined, she made things happen for the good of individuals, families, charities and all with whom she came into contact. Of one thing we can be sure: her memory really will be for a blessing.

John Posner

BOARD OF DEPUTIES : OUR BRS DEPUTY'S EYEVUE

It's some five months since I resumed my role as your deputy, so it's about time I updated you on what I and the progressive wing of the organisation have been doing to promote our interests.

On the plus side, the progressive movement within the Board has made great strides, especially on help for other persecuted minorities, interfaith work and the environment.

For instance, the Board has been at the forefront of highlighting the plight of the **Uighur Muslim** minority in China. Their treatment, especially the scenes of thousands being transported by train to what can be only described as concentration camps has hit home. President Marie van der Zyl and members of the professional staff have been pushing the government to condition any trade deal with the Beijing regime on an improvement in the country's human rights record. So far, there has been some success.

Helping the Uyghurs has increased the Board's standing with the Muslim community, but it also works with many **inter-faith organisations** and is strengthening and deepening its relationships with Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Muslim, Sikh, Zoroastrian and other communities.

On the **environment**, the Board as teamed with Eco-Synagogue, which asks each community to conduct a comprehensive environmental survey of how it engages with the environment in our places of worship. In an almost unprecedented move, the Board voted by 85% to 15%, to adopt a resolution calling for the Board to take "appropriate actions alongside Eco-Synagogues and other partners" to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. However, unfortunately, there are still persistent issues that could do with a lot of improvement, in my opinion.

On **Israel**, the Board leadership still appears to do whatever the Israeli embassy asks it to do. However, recently, it issued a statement condemning a Knesset Member's frankly racist speech against the country's Palestinian Israeli minority.

On **antisemitism**, too, there is still a tendency to keep quiet about Jew-hate comments coming from the Conservative Party, while being vociferous in condemning that which comes from within Labour. It seems to me that not all antisemitisms are equal.

All in all, during the first stages of Marie's second term, the **progressive** wing has made some strides and I hope will continue to do so. I look forward to serving Bromley for the next three years.

If you would like me to raise any issues at the Board or with the Honorary Officers, please do not hesitate to **contact** me via my email, which is available through Janet in the office.

Joe Millis

So, what is Chanukah?

Hanukkah (Heb: "Dedication") has many spellings and names. It can be called the Feast of Dedication, Festival of Lights or Feast of the Maccabees, and begins on 25 Kislev (usually in December, according to the Gregorian calendar). Celebrated for eight days, it reaffirms the ideals of Judaism and commemorates in particular the rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem by the lighting of candles on each day of the festival.

Although not mentioned in the Tanakh, Chanukah came to be widely celebrated and remains one of the most popular Jewish religious observances. The most important of all its traditions is the lighting of the candles every night, in a candelabrum - known as a menorah or chanukiah - with eight branches plus a holder for the shamash ("servant") candle that is used to light the other eight candles.

There are also a number of nonreligious customs associated with the festival including songs, games and gifts to children. Potato pancakes (latkes), doughnuts (sufganiyot), and other treats fried in oil, which recall the miracle of the oil, are popular. Children receive presents and money (Chanukah gelt), which often comes in the form of chocolate coins wrapped in gold foil. Card playing is common, as is dreidel, a game with a four-sided top called a dreidel (Heb: sevivon), which bears the letters nun, gimel, hay and shin, the initials of the words in the phrase "nes gadol haya sham," "a great miracle happened there." In modern Israel the shin has been changed for a peh, so as to read "A great miracle happened here," "nes gadol haya po."

Chanukah runs from 29 November to 6 December; **first night, Sunday 28 November, last night, with all eight candles alight, 5 December.**

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Student Minister: DY Stern (studentrabbi@bromleyshul.org.uk)

USEFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

Reform Judaism Our umbrella organisation offers a wealth of information, training, courses and resources, such as the invaluable flipping books we have been using for online services, seders etc.: www.reformjudaism.org.uk

JW3 – Jewish Cultural Centre Events in person and online including talks, films, musical events, courses, health and fitness: www.jw3.org.uk/whats-on

Community Security Trust Trains people to undertake security duties and acts as a community watchdog, reporting antisemitic incidents and recording issues of concern: www.cst.org.uk

Limmud Originally a once-a-year conference, now a year-round series of educational events of varying lengths at different venues around the country and, of course, online: www.limmud.org

The Jewish Museum Permanent and temporary exhibitions, real and virtual tours: www.jewishmuseum.org.uk

Jewish Music Institute Organises events and summer schools in music, particularly klezmer, and Yiddish: www.jmi.org.uk

A MODERN CHANUKAH CUSTOM:

Maccabi Tzair began annual Chanukah Torch Relays in 1944. Young Maccabim carry the Torch from an impressive lighting ceremony at the ancient Modi'in site of the tombs of the Hasmonean Dynasty across the country. The Torch is welcomed at ceremonies in Jerusalem at the Knesset and the President's Residence, and carried to celebrations, events and activities in IDF bases, immigrant absorption centres, development towns and elsewhere.

With the single exception of 1948, midpoint of Israel's War of Liberation, when many battles took place in the Maccabee heartland, the relay has run every Chanukah. Teams of Maccabi Tzair Israel counsellors and graduates carry the Torch internationally to Chanukah celebrations and activities in Jewish schools, old age homes, Maccabi clubs, and other Jewish community institutions.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT HIGHLIGHT should be sent to comms@bromleyshul.org.uk by 15 December 2021

While we love our regular contributors, we are always keen to showcase **less regularly covered aspects of the community, and of people's lives**, so if you have an idea for a regular or one-off feature, or a skill that you can bring to the production of HighLight or its online weekly companion e-Light, please let us know at the same address. *Meanwhile, happy Chanukah to all our readers.*