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קהלתנו

THE ALEI TZION MAGAZINE
CHANUKAH 5775/2014



חנוכה שמח

RABBI DANIEL AND NA'AMAH ROSELAAR
DEVORAH, ELISHEVA, NETANEL AND CHANANYA
WISH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY A חנוכה שמח

Michelle, Eli and Liora Bauernfreund

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Our Aliyah So Far

Miriam & Alan Levenson

We arrived just before Sukkot which we highly recommend (especially if you have family to make Yom Tov meals for you!) because the atmosphere over Chag was inspiring and more than sufficient to carry us through the daily challenges that began after Simchat Torah. In truth the bureaucracy has not been as bad as we feared and the most frustrating moments are rarely when dealing with government offices (although they certainly have their moments!) and more often when we don't know how to do the simple things in life, like which flour to buy in the supermarket.

After a wonderful six weeks in Jerusalem we moved to Modi'in due to a combination of its convenient location midway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv (where we have both been fortunate to find work) and its great sense of community. Complete strangers have done wonderful things ranging from giving us lifts to Jerusalem to coming shopping with us to show us the ropes. In particular we felt very much at home when we walked into Shul to find several families we know from Alei Zion and Hebrew adaptations of the songs we all know from the children's service!

Other highlights have included playing in concerts up and down the country including at the remarkable bird festival in Agmon HaChula (Miriam), teaching a weekly Chabura at Yeshiva (Alan), waving and chatting to Israelis on buses and trains (Gila), and the inaugural Olei Zion Tiyul on Chol Hamoed.

Classic Israeli moments have included arriving at the doctor on first day Chol Hamoed to discover that it was closed for the whole of Sukkot, being paid for work with a cheque dated into the future, and being yelled at by a new neighbour on the day that we moved in for not agreeing to pay the Va'ad Bayit debts of the people who lived here before us!

Finally here's some advice for the benefit of those considering joining us:

- Try to avoid starting work straight away to allow time to deal with the post Aliyah paperwork
- Seek advice from friends or fellow Olei Zion as a preference to institutions that claim to provide assistance to Olim
- Treat your first trip to any new place as a trial run expecting to have to come back a second time
- Never take your baby out without socks in November even if it is an Indian Summer by British standards (unless you enjoy being told by Israeli strangers that you're not fit to be a parent!)

Start planning now – it's never too soon and things often take longer than you think at both ends!

Chanukah Sameach!
Miriam, Alan & Gila Levenson



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on an illustration by
Yolanda Rosalki

Yolanda Rosalki is an artist and illustrator. For more information on how her designs can enhance your simcha, or if you wish to purchase the original of the front cover artwork, email: yolros@googlemail.com

The editorial team would like to thank all those who contributed to this edition.

Contents

- 4 **Message from the Rav**
Rabbi Daniel Roselaar
- 5 **Message from the Chair & Vice Chair**
Michelle Bauernfreund & Robin Minsky
- 6 **Events Roundup**
Dina Goldberg, Michael Goldberg, Naomi Ostroff
- 11 **Fighting Talk**
Abigail Hoyland
- 12 **The Teeth of Beasts**
Ben Vos
- 13 **Life In the Classic Lane**
Seth Kennedy
- 14 **Going the Extra Mile: Marathon Members**
Aviva Braunold, Daniel Lightstone, Gidon Rosalki
- 17 **Making Waves**
David Schneider
- 18 **The Responsa of the Acharonim**
Rabbi Daniel Roselaar
- 19 **Learning at Alei Zion**
- 20 **The Essence of Chanukah: Insights into the Rambam**
Daniel Bollag
- 21 **Three Levels of Lighting Candles**
Ben Freedman
- 22 **70 Days for 70 Years: Remember The Past To Build The Future**
Rabbi Andrew Shaw
- 23 **Kol Nidrei Appeal Update**
- 24 **Alei Zion Mazal Tovs**
- 26 **Our Aliyah So Far**
Miriam & Alan Levenson
- 28 **Board of Management**

Kehillateinu is a publication of the Alei Zion Community. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Rav, community or editors. Schaller House, 44a Albert Road, Hendon, London NW4 2SJ | kehillateinu@aleitzion.co.uk

Message from the Rav

It is very exciting to think that Alei Tzion has reached its tenth anniversary milestone. We have grown from a small minyan with Shabbat services, into a vibrant kehillah with tefillot throughout the week and a host of other activities. It is hard to anticipate what the next ten years will bring and I don't know whether the founders of Alei Tzion ever envisaged the community being what it is today, but I think that the achievements of our first decade are something that everyone who has been involved should be very proud of.

I am proud to be the Rav of our kehillah for many reasons, but the community's commitment to Aliyah is something that particularly inspires me – 2014 saw eleven families leave Alei Tzion for Israel! If we were to count up the Olei Tzion from the past ten years, and then work out what our current membership might be, we could be forgiven for believing that our community could have been so much bigger and stronger with greater resources than we presently have. But I think that much of our strength lies in the fact that our members have such idealism and that so many of them accept the challenge of aliyah with such enthusiasm. The fact that we are so often saying goodbye to members might mean that we don't make as much of an impact on the local Jewish scene as might otherwise be the case. However, I truly believe that the olim from our shul are making a massively important impact on the future of Am Yisrael and Medinat Yisrael.

On Chanukah we follow the view of Bet Hillel that we light an increasing number of lights each night. The Talmud describes this as *Mosif Ve'holech* – continually progressing. Baruch Hashem our kehillah has had a decade of inspirational growth and I hope that the Almighty will enable us to be *Mosif Ve'holech* – to continue going and growing from strength to strength.

Rabbi Daniel Roselaar



ENGAGEMENTS

Shelley Hershcovitch & Simon Cohen
Miriam Sharman & Richard Lamb
Stephanie Freedman & Leon Waltz

SEMICHOT

Rabbi Gideon Schulman

MARRIAGES

Debra Sherman & Ronen Gordon
Alana Jacobs & Marc Simonsson
Gabriella Lebrecht & Gideon Glass
Danielle Sheer & Mordechai Gedalla
Samantha Herskine & Gidon Aarons
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David Danciger & Pamela Kandil
Ben Freedman & Raisel Sanger
Avromi Goodman & Nicole Gold
Yehudah Lanning & Rochel Cohen



Ben & Suzy Vos



Ben & Raisel Freedman

ALIYOT

Dina and Doron Luder and family
Davina and Josh Lipman and family
Eli and Miriam Lopian and family
Josh and Yudit Samad and family
Chana and Ben Kanter and family
Gaby and Guv Lebens and family
Hannah, Yossi and Gilad Hanstater
Sarah and Sam Blank and family
Miriam, Alan and Gila Levenson
Daniel and Miriam Livshin
Shoshi, Aryeh and Yair Grossman



Olei Tzion Chol Hamoed tiyul

ALEI TZION MAZAL TOVS

BIRTHS

Mazal Tov to...

Miriam & Alan Levenson on the birth of Gila
Lucinda and Martin Glasser on the birth of Ashira
Hadassah and Sam Fromson on the birth of Arielle
Melanie & Hillel Mirvis on the birth of Joshua
Michelle & Ben Mitchell on the birth of Libby
Tamar and Richard Hyman on the birth of Elana
Shoshi and Aryeh Grossman on the birth of Yair
Talya and Eli Ganz on the birth of Gidon
Clare and Jake Pater on the birth of Ava
Susan and Laurence Kogan on the birth of Talia
Rachel & Danny Baigel on the birth of Shoshana
Saranne and Neil Maurice on the birth of Eliav
Tal and Judith Cohen on the birth of Aviyah
Gabrielle and Simon Stern on the birth of Netanel
Melvin and Nicole Smulovitch on the birth of Liora
Ben and Ayala Savery on the birth of Yehoshua
Elliot and Rachel Cohen on the birth of Ayelet
Aryeh and Esty Sopher on the birth of Amichai
Debra and David Blackston on the birth Avishai
Alastair and Gemma Goldrein on the birth of Lucy
Robin and Gabriella Landy on the birth of Jacob



Arielle Fromson



Gila Levenson



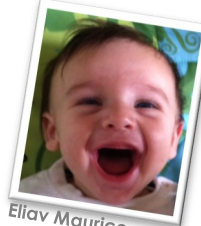
Gidon Ganz



Libby Mitchell



Ayelet Cohen



Eliav Maurice



Shoshana Baigel

BAR/BATMITZVAHS

Mazal Tov to family Rosalki on the occasion of Gidon's Bar Mitzvah

Message from the Chair & Vice Chair

It's been a busy year at Alei Tzion. Since the last edition of Kehillateinu, highlights have included a visit from Elana Stein Hain, then Community Scholar at Lincoln Square synagogue in New York, our Israel Season which included a visit from the Israeli Ambassador and a series of seudot on Israel-related topics, plus our children's Seuda Shlishit and Purim party.

The largest highlight of all has been the start of Alei Tzion's 10th Anniversary year. The community has grown enormously since its beginnings in September 2004 and we will be using this year to celebrate the growth and launch projects for the future.

The year kicked off with a superb Selichot service and community learning evening and since then, we've held Shabbat UK and Mitzvah Day events which have enabled us to both welcome in, and give back to, the wider community. We'll soon be launching our Haggadah project and also publicising details of our Celebratory Gala Dinner which will take place in 2015.

We're thrilled to be leading the community at such an exciting time and we would love to involve as many people as possible in the upcoming events, so if you'd like to get involved, please be in touch.

On behalf of the Board of Management, we wish the Kehilla a Chanukah Sameach!

Michelle Bauernfreund
Chair



Robin Minsky
Vice-Chair



Events Roundup

Naomi Ostroff

As a community we have had an array of events over the past year with the intention of appealing to all our members whatever their demographic may be!

Last winter we had two Friday Night Dinners. In December, we were back at our old Hendon haunt, Beit Hamadras, for an evening of Indian food along with what has become tradition - a good old game - thanks to Yolanda Rosalki, Ben Vos and Ben Freedman. They had everyone up trading commodities with other tables in order to gain the requisite ingredients for the designated Indian recipes. It was definitely a fun evening with the chance to have a good natter and catch up with friends too.

In February, we had a meal with a difference, the first one of its kind at Alei - the Safari Friday Night Dinner - masterminded by Sandy Tapnack. With four hosting homes and around 40 guests, we spent each course at a different host and indeed country, as we moved from one West Hendon destination to another. Cuisines included Chinese, Moroccan, Mexican and Indian – featuring delectable duck pancakes, spring rolls, Moroccan shwarma, tortillas, and a fabulous mango ice cream to name just a few dishes. The hosts went to a lot of effort not only with the menu but in creating the theme of their respective countries with decor around the room specific to their country. As we moved between continents we met others walking to and fro and shared each course with a different set of people. Much creativity and organisation had been considered, from the fun boarding passes and map each guest received to the strict timings we all adhered to which ensured we landed in each country on time for each course!

Another popular event last winter was the Whisky Tasting Evening organised by Avi Gillis and Danny Saltman. Fear not if you missed it then, as it will be back in January 2015!

During Purim this year, Alei Tzion collaborated with Netzach Yisrael for a joint shul party on Purim night, organised by Stuart Izon and Ben Freedman, while the kids had their own event on Purim day with thanks to Emma Abramson.

Other events during the year included the Yom Haatzmaut BBQ kindly hosted by the Rabbi and his family and the Yom Yerushalayim Dinner at Sami's restaurant. Alei Tzion also had a screening of a documentary featuring Gilad Shalit, which gave viewers a chance to connect with our Israeli brethren in a different context.

Over Succot, we had the children's succah decorating activity and the shul Succah Crawl. On Simchat Torah night many people stayed on after hakofot for a festive buffet meal, while on Simchat Torah day the chattanim and neshei chayil provided a packed shul with a delicious Yom Tov lunch which was a great success.

More recently we participated in community wide projects - Shabbat UK and Mitzvah Day, more details of which you will find across the page and overleaf.

Keep a look-out at your emails for upcoming events!

Kol Nidrei Appeal Update

AMIT Tefillin Fund



Many thanks to all of you who have given generously to the Kol Nidrei Appeal. All donations, large and small are greatly appreciated by the organizations Alei Tzion supported this year - the Alei Tzion gemach, the United Synagogue and the AMIT Tefillin Fund in Israel.

Karen Americus, Donor Relations Coordinator at AMIT, tells us a little more about the charity and how our money has been used.

The AMIT Tefillin Fund provides a pair of tefillin for Bar Mitzvah boys who cannot afford to purchase their own. To date, AMIT has purchased 12 pairs of tefillin in the 2014-2015 school year for boys who wished to fulfill this mitzvah but whose families were simply unable to afford it.

Founded in 1925, AMIT operates a network of 110 schools, youth villages, surrogate family residences and other programs in Israel. Hundreds of boys enrolled at AMIT schools and facilities throughout Israel celebrate their Bar Mitzvahs each year. Unfortunately, many of their families struggle to pay rent and put food on the table, and there simply is no money left for any extras. Even the simplest pair of tefillin is often beyond the financial reach of many AMIT students who come from impoverished, immigrant families. Thanks to the support of the Alei Tzion membership, £900 will be used to buy tefillin for additional boys who are in need.

Thank you for your generous support. Together, we are building Israel...one child at a time.

(Continued from page 22)

worldwide as we collectively learn and remember during the 70 days. With our interactive 70 Days website at the heart of the project, we believe it will enhance your connection to the concepts and ideas you are reading and discussing. It will also allow you to learn more about the person in whose memory you are learning.

70 years ago, a nation rose up to gather us together to destroy us. 70 years on, we are gathering together to learn in memory of those who were murdered and to learn for our future. These 70 days should be used as a time of commemoration for the person in whose memory you are learning and for the town in which they lived: people who had similar dreams, hopes, aspirations, until their lives were tragically cut short. Let us reclaim their lives from the Holocaust; let us, as Rabbi Sacks says, "give them a living memorial."

The message of the 70 Days project is the engagement with our heritage, to remind ourselves what being Jewish is all about. For 70 days I urge you to get involved. Not just for a Jewish life that never had the chance, but also for us, Jews in 2015, who are the guardians of our 3,000-year-old heritage. Be a part of one of the most ambitious and inspiring concepts ever attempted in the Jewish world.

70 Days for 70 Years Remember The Past To Build The Future



On 25 January 2015, the 70 Days for 70 Years project will begin worldwide, marking the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, engaging hundreds of thousands of Jews in an uplifting educational and memorial programme. As a US member you will receive your free copy of the 70 Days for 70 Years book in the post. The publication contains 70 inspirational essays written by internationally renowned educators, historians and scholars - to be read, one a day. In addition, each participant will receive a memorial card giving the details of one victim of the Holocaust who they will learn in memory of (information provided by Yad Vashem).

During these 70 Days and beyond there will be a variety of events and activities to further engage and empower participants both within communities and online to strengthening their own Jewish identity and build the future. **Rabbi Andrew Shaw** provides some insight and background into the project.

In 1985, Rabbi Shapira attended the commemoration of Thereisenstadt concentration camp, forty years after its liberation. Two thoughts struck him. First, could anything positive be taken from such a tragedy? The second thought was more worrying. He, an orphan of the Holocaust, could personally remember the dark years of 1939–1945, but what about his children and their children. How would they remember? He returned to Israel and contacted Yad Vashem. They supplied the names of thirty children who died in the Holocaust. He gave these names to thirty children in his home city of Netanya and asked each of them to learn in memory of one Holocaust victim. It was this idea that inspired me to embark on the project "50 Days for 50 Years" when working for the Union of Jewish Students in 1995.

Five thousand Jewish students across the United Kingdom received the name of a victim of student age and were asked to learn in their memory for 50 days: a chance to remember the past to build the future. Along with the name, students also received a pocket book containing fifty questions and ideas about various aspects of Judaism chosen by students from across the country. The answers were provided by scholars, rabbis, and professors from around the world. Ten years on, in 2005, the "60 Days for 60 Years" project became an even greater success with over 100,000 participants worldwide, each receiving a book of essays and a memorial card to learn for one victim of the Shoah. Communities across the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia, Canada, Israel, and the USA were engaged in a global project to remember the past to build the future.

Another ten years have now passed since that project. However, the idea remains as alive and relevant today as it was back in 1995. Then we remembered five thousand, ten years on we remembered hundreds of thousands. Today we hope to remember millions. With the advent of social media, we will be providing abilities for global interaction through Twitter and Facebook. We hope to link people →

Shabbat UK Michael Goldberg



In October, Alei Tzion had an inspiring and busy Shabbat UK. To kick start the Chief Rabbi's initiative, we invited local Israelis to join us for a traditional Friday night Dinner. We mingled and chatted in (broken!) Hebrew and enjoyed challah and chicken with our new friends. An impressive 50 people took part in what was a great way to include others in celebrating Shabbat, something which for our kehillah is second nature.

Rabbi Roselaar not only gave a fantastic D'var Torah in Ivrit at dinner, but also five mini shiurim over the whole Shabbat on specific relevant melachot. We learnt about the correct way to play scrabble, applying make-up, heating up oily cholent (yum!) and what to do with annoying fridge lights on Shabbat.

In anticipation for Shabbat UK, many people from our Kehilla joined up with the wider London community in the 'Challah Make'. Hundreds of people filled Allianz Park to prepare and 'take' challah. It was definitely an uplifting and delicious experience for all those who attended.

We hope that everyone who took part enjoyed participating and was inspired to take on something extra to enhance their Shabbat experience.



Mitzvah Day

Dina Goldberg



Mitzvah day this year had lots on offer, making its mark once again on the Alei Tzion calendar, with three opportunities with which to get involved.

Our main event saw 10 members – and some babies – visit **Clore Manor** old age home. They spent time chatting with the residents and helping the carers serve tea. We even had a lovely volunteer play piano. It was a really great way of giving back to our local community, some of whom we wouldn't normally have any contact with. We had great feedback from the event and are hoping to continue visiting Clore Manor – so please watch the space.



Alei Tzion also joined together to support the **AJEX Parade** at the Cenotaph. The AJEX Parade honours Jewish servicemen and women who fought in the world wars. Marking 100 years since the onset of World War One, it was an important event to show how thankful we are for how these veterans fought and served our country to ensure our future safety.

Joint with LSJS we held a collection for glasses, toys and shoes. The glasses have already been sent to **Vision Aid Overseas**, a charity that helps the 10% of the world's population who are disadvantaged due to little access to eye care. Our donation will supply spectacles to those with poor vision, greatly enhancing their lives, as some are almost blind without glasses. Secondly, we collected toys for **Camp Simcha**. These toys will be delivered to children with cancer or other life threatening conditions, to brighten up their Chanukah whilst they are sadly in hospital. The box for **Step Up** was overflowing with shoes which will be distributed by Gift to needy families in our community.

Thank you so much to everyone who got involved and gave up their time. Although Mitzvah Day only comes around once a year, we hope it has served as inspiration for you to continue volunteering throughout the year. If you're interested in being involved in volunteering opportunities or have an initiative you would like us to start with you, please email dinaminsky@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Three Levels of Lighting Candles

Ben Freedman

The Gemarah in Masechet Shabbat 21b establishes three levels of observing the Mitzvah of Chanukah. The most basic requirement is "*Ner Ish ubeito – a candle in each person's house*" meaning that to fulfil the requirement a person only needs to ensure that one candle is alight in their home. The Gemarah goes on to explain that the *mehadrin*, preferable way of fulfilling the mitzvah is *ner lekol echad vechad – a candle for each person*. Each person within every household lights their own candle each night. The ideal of performance the mitzvah (*Mehadrin Min Hamhadrin*) is for there to be an alteration of the number of candles that are lit each night. Here there is a dispute between Beit Shamai and Beit Hillel. Beit Shamai suggests that one should light eight on the first night and reducing the number until there is only one candle on the final night. Beit Hillel suggests that the number of candles lit should ascend from one on the first night until there are eight on the final night.

Rav Kook in his commentary on this gemarah explains that these three levels of observing the mitzvah is a metaphor for understanding how a person might relate to their Jewish heritage and to the Torah. At the most basic level the Torah obtains its initial spark of life in the home. The home is the place where people first learn Torah and experience Jewish life. Moreover a person's Jewish identity is obtained first and foremost through being a part of a Jewish family and growing up in a Jewish home. This endurance of Jewish faith is symbolised by single candle alight in each house.

For many people growing up in a Jewish home is the extent of the Jewish experience however this is not the limit of our aspiration. It is not enough to only relate to Torah through being a member of the family without having any personal individual attachment to Torah. Therefore a preferable option is for each person to develop their own understanding and connection with Torah in their own way. A person is likely to have a much stronger attachment to Torah if they have experienced and grappled with it personally. This preference is expressed by each person lighting their own candle.

Finally the best option is to recognise and express the idea that a person's relationship with Torah should not be static but rather should be constantly developing throughout a person's life. One needs to integrate and assimilate their experiences and harness them towards growing in Torah. However there are two conflicting approaches about how this can be fulfilled. Beit Shamai takes the view that as we go through life we should try and filter our experiences. Our exposure to diverse ideas and cultures needs to be constantly filtered and refined until we are left with the simple and universal truth that is Torah. This refinement of Torah is symbolised through the subtraction of candles until there is only one candle on the final night representing the purity and unity of Torah. For Beit Hillel the dynamism of our relationship to the Torah works in the opposite direction. Our understanding of and attachment to Torah starts off on a simple level. Through our encounter with diverse ideas and cultures we need to be able to assimilate and integrate this diversity to build a stronger and broader perspective of Torah. This is reflected through the addition of candles each night.

The Essence of Chanukah: Insights into the Rambam

Daniel Bollag



In the Rambam's Mishne Torah (his Magnum Opus on Halacha) the final two chapters of Sefer Zmanim are dedicated to Chanukah. There are two particularly unusual things in these chapters which perhaps can shed light on the Rambam's perspective on Chanukah.

The Rambam (3:1-2) precedes the laws of Chanukah by describing the background history: the Greek's decree to prevent any Jewish practice and desecration of the Temple, how the chashmonaim overcame them and returned malchus yisrael, and the miracle of the oil. Why did the Rambam feel it necessary to give a historic introduction which he does not do elsewhere in Mishne Torah?

The Rambam continues that we have eight days of "Yemei simcha v'Hallel" and starts to talk about the laws of candle lighting. Unexpectedly, just a few lines later (in 3:5) he talks about the mitzvah of Hallel on Chanukah and goes on a complete tangent to teach all the general laws of Hallel (3:5-14) before returning (in 4:1) to the laws of candle lighting. Is there a specific reason the Rambam chose Chanukah particularly to teach about general Hilchos Hallel? Moreover, why the need to interrupt the Halachot of the candles when it could have been taught after?

It is very plausible that for the Rambam the key theme of Chanukah is to give praise, thanks and hallel for the miracles that occurred. The Rambam preludes with the story of Chanukah so we know what for and why we give thanks. Hallel in our tefilla is a central element of Chanukah and perhaps the laws of Hallel were interjected into those of candle lighting to allude that the candle lighting is not only a 'pirsum neis' but itself a form of Hallel in a more demonstrative way. What better way to give praise and hallel for our religious freedom than to light candles, just like in the Temple, in front of our family homes. As if to show that everything the Greeks tried to abolish was in vain, as we live on, strong 2000 years later as proud observant Jews.

To conclude the Rambam ends on this very idea in 4:12 "The mitzvah of Chanukah lights is very very precious and a person must be careful in observing it. This is in order to show the miracle and increase in praise for G-d and to thank him for the miracles that he did for us".

ALEI TZION WHISKY TASTING



Thursday 29th January 2015 – 8:00-10:00pm

Alei Tzion, Schaller House, 44a Albert Road, Hendon, London NW4 2SJ

£25pp – very limited space available

RSVP to avi@aleitzion.co.uk

Sponsorship Packages Available:

£50 – sponsor a bottle

£150 – sponsor a 3-bottle round





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Nazi atrocities.

Orthodoxy's relationship with non-Orthodox Judaism was a matter of concern for the twentieth century poskim. Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled that a child with a non-Jewish father should not be accepted into a Jewish school, though the Seridei Eish wrote that the non-Jewish child of a Jewish father can be accepted into a Jewish school with a goal of conversion (even if the mother is not planning to convert!). Rav Moshe Feinstein also addressed the status of Reform and civil marriage (ruling that neither has the status of kiddushin) and Dayan Weiss discussed whether one is allowed to teach in a non-Orthodox school.

Technological issues addressed by the poskim that we studied included transplant surgery, tevillat kelim for toasters and bishul akum with canned foods.

The methodology used as well as the conclusions reached made each shiur an exciting survey of a wide range of halachic questions. The next series of shiurim, starting in January, will be a continuation of the theme *The Responsa of the Acharonim* with a focus on Medinat Yisrael and the teshuvot of the Chief Rabbis of Israel including Rabbi Kook, Herzog, Uziel, Ovadia Yosef and Yisrael Meir Lau.

LEARNING AT ALEI TZION

MD Spitzer's Gemara Shiur: Currently learning the 7th Perek of Masechet Yoma, this shiur takes place every **Monday evening in the shul from 8.45pm**. This in-depth shiur does not require preparation and is aimed at people both with and without prior experience of learning gemara.

Rabbi Roselaar's Tuesday shiur: Rabbi Roselaar explores the responsa literature in the Acharonim covering the most important halachists of the past two-hundred-and-fifty years from the Chatam Sofer to Rav Moshe Feinstein. **Every Tuesday evening at 9pm.**

Shabbat Afternoon Shiur: Every Shabbat Afternoon between Mincha and Maariv, Rabbi Roselaar delivers an Iyun shiur covering an issue from that week's Daf Yomi.

Tenth Anniversary Shiurim: Join us in celebrating our 10th anniversary by dedicating an evening to learning something new. During this year different members of our community are hosting shiurim given by the Rav in various topics. The next shiur will take place at on the 23rd of December at the home of Eve and Stuart Brooks on the subject of reheating food on Shabbat.

Breakfast Shiurim: Look out for our monthly Sunday morning breakfast shiurim from 9 to 9.30 in the shul. Enjoy Coffee and Croissants whilst listening to divrei torah for different members of the Kehilla. If you would like to be involved giving Divrei Torah please email chinuch@aleitzion.org.uk.

Scholars-in-Residence: This year we have been privileged to have hosted a number of prominent scholars. Highlights from the past year have included Elana Stein-Hain, Rabbi Reuven Zeigler, and Rabanit Henkin. Look out for more guest speakers coming up soon!

The Responsa of the Acharonim

Rabbi Daniel Roselaar

Since the chagim the Tuesday evening shiur has been studying the responsa literature of the past 250 years, from R' Yechezkel Landau, the Noda Biyhudah of Prague, through to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and the Tzitz Eliezer (R' Eliezer Waldenberg) who lived in Jerusalem at the end of the twentieth century. It has been fascinating to see how they have dealt with the sociological and technological changes that they encountered, and to identify the issues that were specific to their particular generation on the one hand, as well as those issues that recurred time and again over the years.

In the eighteenth century the main challenges specific to the day were changes in social norms and the emerging Chassidic and (Lehavdil) Haskalah movements, rather than the plethora of technological advances that were addressed two hundred years later. It is true that the Noda Biyhudah discussed the permissibility of autopsies (which he forbade unless the results would be of immediate benefit) and the use of umbrellas on Shabbat (which he also forbade, but was challenged a generation later by the Chatam Sofer who disputed almost all of his proofs). But he also responded sharply to what was a new practise of reciting Kabbalistic meditations prior to various mitzvot and the Chatam Sofer voiced his opposition to shuls which had the bimah at the front rather than in the middle. The Chatam Sofer also addressed what appears to be something of an epidemic of loose morals – including the case of a chazan whose fiancé gave birth to his child, to the case of another chazan who admitted an affair with his sister-in-law only to subsequently deny it with the claim that he was trying to get himself released from his communal responsibilities. Besides informing us of the halachic ramifications of such situations, he also informs us of what he thinks about chazanim in general.

The concerns of the eastern-European poskim in the eighteenth century when Orthodoxy was still strong were clearly very different to the concerns of the German poskim in the nineteenth century when Reform had squeezed Orthodoxy into a tight corner, and the concerns of the twentieth century poskim in America and Israel were different yet again. A question addressed by all three groups was the status of non-observant Jews, particularly with regard to inclusion of a Mechalel Shabbat in a minyan. R' Akiva Eiger suggested that if there were not ten observant Jews who were witness to a person's Shabbat desecration then such people don't have the status of being Mechalel Shabbat. The German poskim introduced the concept of tinok shenishba (essentially, someone who knows no better) and also suggested that a person who goes to shul and makes kiddush on Shabbat cannot be dismissed as someone who denies G-d's role in the creation of the world. Dayan Weiss, who was Av Bet Din in Manchester at the time, was hesitant about including such people in a minyan but did suggest that even if it is well-known that they break Shabbat, if they would make sure not to do so in front of a rabbi they are not be considered as public Shabbat desecrators.

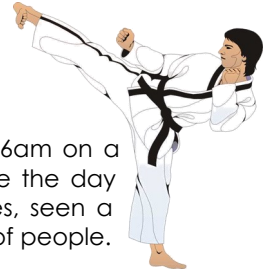
Several teshuvot provided a sobering reminder of the dark years of the Holocaust. R' Chaim Ozer Grodzinski and the Seridei Eish addressed pre-war threats against shechita, and Dayan Weiss addressed many cases involving agunot whose husbands went missing in the Shoah, as well as some of the moral dilemmas faced by survivors of the

WHAT ARE OUR MEMBERS UP TO?

In the following pages, find out about the work, hobbies and activities of some of our members.

Fighting Talk

Abigail Hoyland



Six weeks ago I found myself driving up to Birmingham at 6am on a Sunday morning for the most intense day of my life. Before the day was over I had been punched in the face numerous times, seen a man knocked unconscious, and cried in front of a room full of people. Sometimes I do have to question my own sanity.

The story is this: When I was thirteen, my dad decided my two younger brothers needed to toughen up, so he signed them up for karate. Now every good parent knows that if you're getting two kids out the house you might as well get rid of the third too, so I went along.

A good tip for all suffering teachers at Jewish schools: drop detentions and give out press ups instead. My brothers lasted about three weeks before the strain of having to drop and do 20 every time they misbehaved got the better of them. And so here I am, 13 years later, at my black belt grading with my dad skulking at the back of the room ready to pounce on anyone who comes near me. The actual exam was probably one of the most physically and emotionally tiring things I've ever done in my life. I destroyed my voice from yelling, and burst into tears as soon as it was over. Very tough I know. And to top it all - I didn't even pass! I passed the first two sections but I failed the fight - mainly for flinching every time I got hit in the face (which was lots). Come to think of it maybe I should work on my blocking too.

On the plus side I didn't get knocked unconscious like one of the other guys...

I know, I know, I'm making it sound awful. You're probably thinking that it sounds like the worst hobby imaginable and you'd rather spend your Wednesday evenings washing lettuce or scraping ice off the car. But there's an amazing camaraderie about pushing yourself to the absolute limit with people you would never otherwise meet.

I've learnt so much from my training and a lot of it is nothing to do with fighting. It's about dedication, self-control and absolute focus. You can't get distracted wondering what's for dinner or you'll find yourself on the floor. My class is an eclectic mix of every age, shape and size and we all push each other to be better, faster and stronger every week.

So when I take the exam again in February, maybe I'll block a few more of those punches and land a few of my own. Wish me luck!

The Teeth of Beasts

Ben Vos

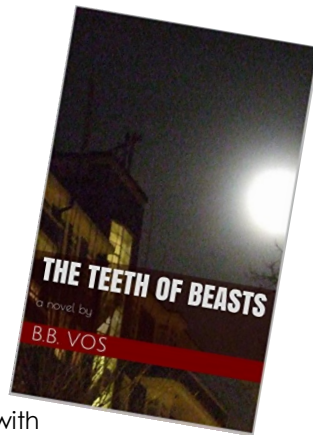
Ben Vos recently self-published his first novel. 'The Teeth of Beasts' is a violent tale of 1930s criminality and turpitude pitching East End villains against their social superiors in Maida Vale. We asked Ben to justify writing about 'bad Jews' on the wrong side of halachah, English law and common morality.

Two of my main characters are crooks who are also kosher butchers: there is, I think, great narrative and comic potential in this. Besides, the 1930s abounded with *hechshered* tradesmen who pleaded noble motives while illegally misleading their customers. Worse, protection rackets and even gang murders, whilst far from prevalent, were present in the Jewish community, as in other unintegrated immigrant societies. What happened in real life, I think, theoretically allows me to expand on real-life Jewish misdeeds. Bad things did happen. And it's not really *mesirah*...

Factual justification might not be reason enough though, to bring to light and dwell on Jewish activities which are truly evil. But at the risk of fighting a historiographical battle that's already been won, I fancied taking a tilt at the old Anglo-Jewish reticence to confront the tougher, dodgier underside of our immigrant experience. You only need to search for 'Jew' on the Old Bailey website to find hundreds of fascinating stories of Jews doing dreadful things, as far back as 1684 (Domingo de-la-Sarda, who only escaped a bigamy conviction by virtue of not being Christian). I do not suggest, *chas v'shalom*, that we should take pride in Jewish criminality, or view it nostalgically just because even the wickedest villain benefits from the sanitising veil of antiquity. But Anglo-Jewish history was never all Rothschilds and Montefiores, and for the sake of truth and a spirit of humbleness, we should avoid sanitising the past.

The Teeth of Beasts also features some uninspiring middle-class characters, some of whom live in Maida Vale. Similarly, at the end of the 1800s, Julia Frankau's 'Dr. Phillips: A Maida Vale Idyll' (1887) as well as Amy Levy's 'Reuben Sachs' (1888), included fairly vicious characterisation of vulgar, card-playing parvenu Jews, also from W9. But Frankau and Levy were so nasty about other Jews that they surely must have intended to disassociate themselves from such Jews, perhaps even Jews generally.¹ 'The Teeth of Beasts' is no such book, I want to make clear; there is no self-hatred here! And to prove it, I am happy to put on record here not only my current middle-class status (*b"ah*) but also that that status is due in part to the money-making exertions of one particular ancestor, Aaron Cohen, who appeared, for instance, in the Old Bailey on 10th January 1828 on a charge of receiving stolen goods...

¹Todd M. Endelman, 'Towards a Social History of Ordinary Jews' (2010)



Making Waves

David Schneider

There's an adage that says the best visual effects in a movie are the ones you don't notice. This is certainly true, but those effects probably aren't the most fun to create. For the past couple of years I've been working as a visual effects artist at one of the larger studios in Soho. My colleagues and I run simulations to create visuals that would be too difficult or time consuming to animate by hand. This mostly involves using powerful software to create virtual fire, water and smoke, although we're also called on to destroy buildings or other structures that would be too difficult, expensive or illegal to blow up for real. Our work relies heavily on real-world physics and we spend a lot of time staring at reference footage of forest fires, tidal waves and collapsing glaciers trying to ensure our effects are indistinguishable from the real thing.

Some of the more high profile effects I've worked on include a high-tech metal mask that folds itself neatly behind the wearer's ear in *Guardians of the Galaxy*, a tribe of Native American warriors on horseback falling under gunfire in *The Lone Ranger*, and most recently the waves of the Red Sea closing in on the fleeing Egyptian army in *Exodus*.

The work is interesting though often stressful. There are many, many moving parts to a movie production and we often find ourselves going back to the drawing board in order to help the director find the exact look he or she has in mind. As movie release dates are often fixed over a year in advance, this can lead to long hours and late nights in order to hit deadlines. Regardless, I can't complain about a job that lets me solve interesting problems and create awesome pictures all day long.



Scene from *Exodus: Gods and Kings*

the inspiring work that the staff do every day in facilitating each person to fulfil their potential in becoming as independent as possible. So after someone waved the first cheque of sponsorship money in my face, I decided to sign up. Only afterwards did the flashbacks return to taunt me - of walking 26.2 miles in the pouring rain in a denim skirt whilst spectators shouted out words of encouragement to others but yelled at me with questions such as 'why are you wearing a skirt?'

The two things that kept me going throughout were the incredible words of encouragement that went along with the very generous donations that people gave towards the cause, including the people we support, who movingly presented me with a collection of sponsorship money they had harassed the staff for, and the good luck wishes before the event.

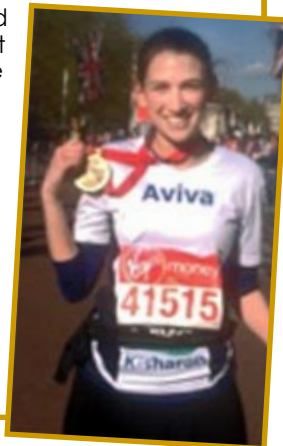
Training included going for 5.30am jogs to Archway and back before work and walking from Kings Cross to Edgware and Hendon to keep fit. The fact that someone caused almost £2,000 of damage going into my car three weeks before the marathon gave the added advantage of extra training slots - running between boroughs with a rucksack of paperwork whilst it was being fixed - and turned out to be a real blessing in disguise.

Friends came to a carbohydrate-filled seuda the day before to prepare and distracted me from my butterflies for the forthcoming day. Although feeling slightly under the weather for a couple of weeks beforehand, I was extremely grateful to wake up feeling good in the morning and, deciding it was mind over matter, I began to be excited about the event. It was a beautiful sunny day; the crowd was incredible at encouraging every person who went past them, offering sweets and motivating words, as did each person taking part to one another. My most-often-said phrase along the route had to be 'no, Aviva's my name, not the company I work for!'

The most amazing thing was seeing people in costumes or running with names in memory of others. The people we support at work were my inspiration to get to the end of the route - if people I work with can overcome challenges each day, then the least I could do was complete a walk.

None of this could have also been done without the support of my family, friends and colleagues along the route with their messages and calls and especially those who took time out of their busy Pesach cleaning schedules to come down to the event and practically run the route alongside me to make sure I didn't give up. I was happy I managed to beat the walking time from the previous marathon by half an hour and will always be thankful to every person who supported Kisharon through their donations and kinds words.

The experience itself was completely humbling in so many ways and I recommend everyone to add it to their bucket list. Seeing the sheer dedication of others was inspirational. The good-spirited nature of everyone there was truly great and it was, above all, so much fun. If that doesn't persuade you, the one remaining factor that topped it off was that I got out of Pesach cleaning. If that doesn't make you sign up, nothing will!



Life In the Classic Lane

Seth Kennedy

Cars have always played a big part in my life ever since I was a small child, racing matchbox toys around the patterned carpet in the hallway at home. As I grew older my taste in cars went back in time and I have continually owned and driven classic cars as my prime mode of transport since the age of 18. My first car, in 1993, was a 1959 Austin A35 which was written off by a careless driver in the car behind me some 18 months later.

This was soon replaced by a 1970 Morris Oxford which I still own. After many years in daily use (I once covered 18,000 miles in it in one 12 month period) it had got to a point where it was no longer roadworthy and yet held too much sentimental value to part with. It's the car that saw me through university, in which Katie accepted my proposal, in which we drove away from our wedding and in which Isabel came home from hospital after her birth. So after some time deteriorating even further on the drive, I finally found some space undercover to rent and after a lot of welding and reconditioning of mechanical components it is finally starting to come together.

The two other cars that currently make up the family fleet are a 1968 Hillman Minx Estate and a 1970 Triumph Herald. I'm only the second owner of the Hillman (the first owned it for over 40 years) and I re-built the original engine a couple of years ago, tuning it using some old fashioned engineering to add about 50% more power. That increase has made it much more capable of towing our 1970s era trailer-tent and it has since taken us on holiday to Paris in 2012, Alsace in 2013 and to the Netherlands last year.

Katie and I bought the Herald together as a joint venture before we were married. It is the quicker car (much to Katie's enjoyment), since after going through several Triumph engines I swapped in the engine and gearbox from a 1990s Mazda MX5 sports car. With its rather tired and patinated bodywork the Herald is rather quicker than other people expect and a lot of fun! I even made the engine installation appear older than it is which has caused many a scratched head at classic car shows.

Other cars have come and gone including a '61 Sunbeam Rapier, '72 Saab 95, '63 Herald Estate, a '72 Morris camper van and an MGB. Modern cars hold no interest in me at all and there is a great deal of joy to be had piloting a piece of motoring heritage around, with good reliability (due to careful maintenance), free road tax, cheap insurance and of course no depreciation or monthly payment plan to worry about.



Morris Oxford



Hillman Minx



Triumph Herald

Going the Extra Mile: Marathon Members

Did you know that several members of our community have taken part in marathons, bike rides and triathlons? While many of us practise sports of one kind or another – football, cricket, running, or going to the gym, completing a marathon is another story! The dedication and commitment to training is something to be admired, as well as the large sums of money being raised for charity at the same time. Events have included the London Marathon, London to Brighton and London to Paris bike rides. Below we hear first-hand about the experiences of some of those who have taken part.

GIDON ROSALKI

I took part in the Hatch End Junior Triathlon on 11 May 2014. I've actually now done it 5 years in a row. When I was nine, one of my school friends asked if I wanted to do the triathlon. I said yes; it seemed like a challenge and a few other friends had agreed to do it too. Meanwhile, they all stopped after one year!



I moved up an age category this year, 13-14s, and only having just turned 13 I was one of the youngest. The distances were: swim 306m, cycle 4km and run 2.4km. It doesn't sound like much but it's pretty hard when you do them all at once! And it was the coldest, wettest most miserable weather that day!!

I had to spend quite a bit of time training for the event. I did a lot of swimming and worked particularly on increasing my speed. I spent time cycling and running outdoors too, with the occasional run in the gym to help track my timings.

The Triathlon was really exhilarating though arduous at the same time, not to mention the mud and rain on the day. My total time this year was 45 mins and 32 seconds. I was pretty exhausted afterwards but really glad I had taken part. I hope to do it faster next year being a year older and in the middle of the age group.

This year I raised £2500 for Shaare Zedek new Children's Hospital in Jerusalem. The money bought two wheelchairs and a pulse oxymeter for the neo natal intensive care unit. We went on a tour of the hospital when we were in Israel this past August.

I would definitely recommend others to take part in a Triathlon. It is hard work but the feeling of achievement upon completion is extremely gratifying.

DANIEL LIGHTSTONE

On 13th April 2014, I ran the London Marathon for the first time. The charity I ran for was Gift, which provides food for 100s of needy families in London. I took part as I got offered the place by the company I work for, and I mistakenly said yes, which meant I had to do the marathon!

I started training this time last year, in the December cold. I ran four days a week and on Sundays I used to run for around three hours.

The experience of running the marathon was amazing as you are running with thousands of people, with bystanders cheering you on the entire time. I actually started the marathon in the VIP section, so I met Ed Balls (the Shadow Chancellor), Michael Owen, (ex-Liverpool footballer) and Michel Roux Jr (celebrity chef).

I completed the marathon in four and a half hours. All in all, it was a great achievement and I'm glad I took part.

It is possible for anyone to run the marathon, as long as one is committed.



AVIVA BRAUNOLD

April 13th 2014 was a memorable day for many people. The weeks and even months of planning, the endless queuing for correct food items, the purchasing of appropriate paraphernalia for that looming deadline, the gathering of many people together to achieve one goal: yes, it was Erev Pesach.

But for 36,000 people of varying levels of fitness, walking 20 minutes to reach that fateful start line, it was the day of the London marathon.

Thinking about the 26.2 miles, the anticipation, excitement, adrenaline and nervousness had built to a climax as the countdown ensued and the bleeps could be heard as each person's tracker crossed the starting point.

As a child, I watched the London marathon on television and was always impressed by the number of people taking part and the fun-looking atmosphere.

After four years of working at Kisharon, an organisation that supports children and adults with learning disabilities, I wanted to do something to raise money for the charity that would be relatively simple, and combine it with fulfilling a life ambition of completing the London marathon. As a non-runner (read: completely unfit to the extent that exercise included walking to the car and back) I increased my time in the gym and decided I would walk the marathon to avoid severe injury. On the day, however, my shoe lace came undone so many times during the course, it was eventually tied up so tightly that I ended up with a nice stress fracture on my foot as well as a medal for finishing at the same time as someone almost 4 times my age.

Roll on 8 years and the fundraising team at Kisharon decided to persuade me to undertake the challenge again. Having spent more time in the organisation, I realised the importance of raising money for this particular charity, watching