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"THE BROOK"

THE MAGAZINE OF
THE HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON
SYNAGOGUE

תש"כז

SEPTEMBER 1966/5727

"The Lord is my Light"—on Rosh Hashanah
"And my Salvation"—on Yom Kippur

HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON SYNAGOGUE

BROOK GREEN, W.6.

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Synagogue Hall: Noble 5238

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EDITORIAL

This is the season for sober reflection both individually and communally. As individuals, this is purely a private and personal matter. As a community, we have our common responsibilities. More than ever before we must focus our attention on our synagogue if we are to continue as a force in the general community. It cannot be denied that our membership is steadily decreasing, and that our classes even on a regional estimation, is the lowest for many years.

We can adopt a defeatist attitude and say that things are beyond our control. On the other hand, a congregation with seventy-six years of history behind it, has developed very close ties and attachments. There is a growing consciousness that up till recently, no real effort had been made to go out to seek new members, and those who have a loyalty to the synagogue, who grew up, so to speak, within its precincts, who have a fund of nostalgic memories to think on, will not let the attitude of laissez-faire prevail.

An earnest committee has been formed to consider the best ways of grappling with the problem. They have already been at work for some time preparing the ground for a membership drive. Even if they only succeed in maintaining the present size of the congregation, that in itself will be no mean achievement. Every member of the congregation can help in a small way, by supplying us with information of non-attached residents within a mile and a half radius of the synagogue. There must be many families of whom we are unaware. Any information supplied to our Ministers or to the Secretary will immediately be followed up.

The present issue contains several articles of particular interest. One tells how an Orthodox Jewish housewife overcame domestic problems whilst resident in Malta immediately after the war, and there is also a very informative account of the manifold activities of A.J.E.X. Special attention is drawn to the proposed building of a Youth Centre for the whole of the West side of London. This is the brain-child of Mr. David H. Velleman, Chairman of our Youth Committee. The idea has had the approval of many congregations and Organisations, including the Association for Jewish Youth, and plans are steadily going ahead.

Once again, our warm thanks are due to contributors of articles, and to those who in various ways have helped us to meet the cost of publication. To them, and to all members of the congregation and their families we extend greetings for a happy, healthy, prosperous and peaceful New Year.

A MESSAGE FROM ONE OF OUR CONGREGANTS

At the age of 64, I am still as ignorant of the Hebrew Prayer-book, the language of my faith and the tenets of Judaism as at the age of 20. The fault is mine. However, during all those years, I have known that I am a Jew. Don't ask me why.

Because of this, perhaps because along the years, my two daughters married and are both much more attached to the faith than their parents, also because my grandchildren—I have been blessed with seven—are growing up in very Jewish surroundings, I have gravitated back to acknowledgment of my debt to my Jewish heritage. Because of this, also, I hurried to become a member of a Synagogue, and to support its function in our community. Somehow, I feel today, that the most satisfying thing that occurred was an invitation to renew the covenant of my subscription. Was it already so many years ago? I am delighted. I may not be a good congregant, but at least I am happy to support the Synagogue, in which I shelter, and whose officers I so highly respect.

May I invite all those members who are like myself, to adopt this attitude. Add to your subscription, your signature on a covenant. In this way, I know you will help, with me, to guide our Synagogue away from the list of "Deficit" congregations.

CHASAN TORAH AND CHASAN BERESHIS

We are very happy to announce on going to press that the Chasanim for this year will be the Rev. Samuel Forscher and Mr. George Evnine.

The Rev. Forscher is now entering his "Barmitzvah" year as Reader of our Congregation. During the period of his office, both he and his dear wife, Hella, have entered fully into the life of the Congregation and endeared themselves to all with whom they have come in contact. Samuel Forscher has enhanced the office of Chazan with his melodious voice and quiet dignity. May he be blessed to continue for many years to give delight and uplift to the members of our Community. Hella Forscher has taken a leading part in the work of the Guild as Vice-Chairman. May she be blessed with good health to carry on her manifold activities.

Mr. George Evnine has been taking an ever increasing interest in the work of the Community. He is currently a member of the Board of Management and serves on the Western Area Regional Classes Committee and the Special Membership Committee. Mrs. Evnine is a very prominent worker for WIZO and charitable causes.

We are sure that members and their families will wish to pay their respects to our worthy Chasanim and their wives by attending the usual celebrations.

Judaism in Our Day (Lectures 1966)

The inter-festival lectures in May 1966 were devoted to the "Shulchan Aruch" and its influence, in commemoration of the fourth centenary since its original publication. An illuminating insight into the scope and subject-matter of the four sections of this monumental work was given by Rabbi Schmall, who is a lecturer in the Beth Jacob Seminary in North London. Reverend Raymond Apple provided us with a colourful delineation of the character and life-work of Joseph Karo, who was the central figure of a remarkable group of Rabbinic luminaries in Safed, the spiritual centre of the Jewish world in the sixteenth century. Rabbi M. Lew delivered a very stimulating address on the application and relevance of the "Shulchan Aruch" in our own day.

During the long exile of the Jewish people and certainly with the contemporary emergence of the State of Israel, a perennial statement of the affirmations of Judaism has been a necessity. The association of Hammersmith Synagogue with Jews' College stretching back many years, will now be powerfully forged by the advent of its deputy Principal, Rabbi Dr. J. J. Ross, as our guest lecturer after the High Holydays. He will give a course of ten weekly lectures, commencing Monday, 17th October, 1966, on the challenging subject of "JUDAISM AND THE MODERN MAN."

The perplexed of our generation are thirsting for guidance on the traditional teachings of Judaism by inspired men of wisdom. Rabbi Dr. Ross is a brilliant graduate from Rhodesia and South Africa, who has pursued his Jewish and philosophical studies at the great academies of learning in Israel (Ponivizer Yeshivah and Bar Ilan University) and England (Gateshead and Etz Chaim Yeshivot).

More than ever in our own age of complexity, do we feel the need to pause and to consider the meaning and the significance of the Jewish highway through life!

Rabbi Dr. Ross will discuss many vital aspects of Jewish thought and practice including the themes of Monotheism, Revelation, Shabbat, Kashrut Prophecy, Messianism, the Universalism of Judaism and the significance of Jewish statehood.

The personality of Rabbi Dr. Ross has made a great impact on the Anglo-Jewish community. We in Hammersmith are privileged and honoured by his acceptance of our invitation to address us on this all-embracing subject. Please do not fail to take this opportunity of listening to so great a presentation by a man of such calibre.

L. FREEMAN.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

CHIEF RABBINATE

We extend a warm welcome to Rabbi Dr. Immanuel Jakobovitz on his acceptance of a call to become Chief Rabbi, and wish him well in his distinguished office.

THE SHALOM BUNGALOW

A delightful Service and ceremony took place at the Home for Aged Jews in Nightingale Lane on July 10th, when a bungalow was consecrated in the names of the parents of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Godfrey. The Service was conducted by Rev. S. Forscher and Rev. S. Venitt gave an address. The bungalow comprises 12 self-contained units. The occupants live independently, only using the main building for their meals. Tea was afterwards provided in the dining hall. Quite a number of our members attended the function.

NON-JEWISH VISITORS TO THE SYNAGOGUE

During the past few months many groups, particularly of young people, have visited the Synagogue. There seems to be a tendency towards acquainting young people with the custom and buildings of other faiths. The first-hand approach must do a great deal to improve inter-faith relationships; as testified by the many letters of warm and sincere appreciation which follow the visits. Here are extracts from letters received:

1. Quakers (who attended a Sabbath morning service). "We found your service intensely interesting and at times most moving. The older boys were very interested and the father of one of them told me this morning that his son had talked of nothing else since returning home. What impressed the boys was the very real sense of fellowship and community, the easy relationship between adult and child."

2. Hammersmith County School (Girls). "Thank you for a most interesting afternoon. To be quite honest, we expected the Synagogue to be rather dismal, but instead we found that it was one of the most beautiful places we have seen. Thank you for the interesting talk, it was most informative. We all left knowing a lot more about Judaism than we had done before the visit."

THE LATE ALDERMAN STANLEY M. ATKINS

Our heartfelt condolences are offered to Mrs. Atkins on the sad loss she and her family sustained recently through the death of her husband Alderman Stanley M. Atkins.

How well we all recall that memorable day of his religious induction into office as Mayor of Hammersmith, held in our synagogue. How proud we felt that here was a Jewish First Citizen of the Borough, the second only in fifty years, who was glad to proclaim his orthodoxy openly, and who made his declaration in Hebrew and English. So impressed were the large congregation, consisting mainly of non-Jews, by the beautiful service, that it was widely spoken of, for a long time.

Another glimpse at the type of man he was, was revealed earlier at the special meeting of the Council at which he was elected, which I was privileged to attend. In moving terms, he introduced his speech by referring to his mother, who was present.

His was a very distinguished Mayoralty. He did not spare himself, but at no time did his interest in the Shepherds Bush, Fulham and District Synagogue, of which he was President, flag.

A non-Jewish visitor to his home on a Friday evening, told me later how deeply he had been impressed by the wonderful spiritual and friendly atmosphere which pervaded it.

Only a few weeks before his death, he called in at our synagogue, looking fit and well, and full of enthusiasm. Now he is gone, leaving behind him a fine record of achievement as a loyal Jew and a trusted citizen, whose name will long be remembered.

WEST LONDON JEWISH YOUTH STUDY GROUP

After a very successful Summer Term and Summer School, West London Jewish Youth Study Group commences again on September 11th. Last term's programme was carried through very successfully, and culminated in an evening function which all the London groups attended. Our guest speakers included Rev. S. Venitt and the Co-Chairman of the Women's Zionist Organisation. Our plans for next term are not yet completed, but should prove to be better than ever.

Meetings are held on Sundays 5.15 p.m. to 7.15 p.m. in the Children's Synagogue, Herbert Samuel Hall, Back Place, W.2.

For further information please contact the Chairman, Celia Glass (ACOrn 7038), 9, Balfour Road, W.3.

Mervyn Beth.

West London Jewish Youth Centre

Approximately two years ago Mr. D. H. Velleman, the Chairman of our Youth Committee, carried out a private investigation on the leisure time needs of Jewish Youth in the West London area. As a result of this, he approached the Association of Jewish Youth to discuss what might be done to improve the situation. It was his idea that the only way in which the different youth groups in the area could be made to function really efficiently, was by building a Youth Centre somewhere in the area, large enough to embrace all kinds of groups and to cater for sports, culture, social and educational spare-time activities. There should be a paid full-time trained youth leader and several part-time youth leaders. The centre should cater for outdoor as well as indoor activities. The A.J.Y. fully agreed with these aims and a small caretaker committee was formed, comprising of a few people from other communities in the area interested in youth work. For the next 18 months they met regularly at Mr. Velleman's flat to hammer out a definite policy and plan. This culminated in a meeting which was held, early in March this year, in our Communal Hall to which most Synagogues and organisations, interested in youth work in West London, had sent delegates. Over 20 organisations were represented. The main business of the meeting was to discuss the possible establishment of a permanent Jewish Youth Centre to serve the whole of West London.

Mr. Velleman was in the chair and Lady Janner kindly agreed to speak to the prepared memorandum presented to the meeting.

The type of youth centre proposed would cost initially at least £25,000 and perhaps as much as £40,000, not including the site cost. The annual expenditure would be about £5,000. To raise this sum it is proposed to apply for capital grant to the Department of Education and Science, to be included in the Youth Service Building Programme. The Department would, if included in the programme, make a grant of up to 50% of the cost and the Local Education Authority would usually grant an additional 25%, so that only 25% of the cost has to be found by the organisers themselves. There exist also a grant aid provision towards leaders' salaries and administration costs. Nevertheless, a large sum of money will have to be raised initially and annually.

The Centre will include a gymnasium, coffee bar and kitchen, lounge, cloakrooms, toilets, ablutions and showers, both for boys and girls and also a girls' powder room, a leader's office, storage rooms, physical activity rooms, rooms for social activities, etc. Outside games area, tennis courts and perhaps a swimming pool; and, of course, a car park. To accomplish all this, a sponsoring committee was formed with representatives of all the organisations

associating themselves with this project. At a subsequent inaugural meeting, Mr. Velleman was elected Chairman, Mr. D. W. Gould, Vice-Chairman (Ealing Jewish Youth Club), Mr. Harry Beckerman, Treasurer (Chiswick Synagogue), Mrs. S. Gold, Secretary, 30 Emlyn Road, W.12. Telephone SHE 1705.

A site for this project was very magnanimously offered to the Hon. Officers of the Committee by the Trustees of the West Central Jewish Club and Settlement. This comprised of the West Central Jewish Tennis Club site at Ealing (Boston Manor), over 50,000 square feet, approximately 1.17 acres. The site is just opposite Boston Manor Underground Station on the Piccadilly Line (four stops from Hammersmith).

A three-year option was obtained for a peppercorn rent and a 40-50 years' lease is being prepared on a nominal rent.

This project, which undoubtedly will be one of the largest in the country and definitely the largest in London, is one more scheme germinated at Hammersmith Synagogue and applied to a much wider area. It is proof that our Community is still very virile in outlook and ideas. The finance sub-committee, which has been formed, will no doubt need all the help and support it can get to accomplish this outstanding idea for the good of Jewish Youth, so that they can freely mix in a Jewish club and centre during their leisure time and to find a permanent home for our many Jewish youth organisations in the area.

The Hon. Officers and Board of Management extend their Compliments and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year to all Members of the Congregation and their Families.

The Reverend and Mrs. S. Venitt and Family wish to convey their sincere wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year to the Honorary Officers, to the Board of Management, relatives, friends and members of the Synagogue.

The Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Forscher and Ruth, wish to convey their warmest greetings for the New Year to the Honorary Officers, to the Board of Management, and to all members of the Congregation and their families.

Mr. and Mrs. B. H. Busky and Daughter extend cordial greetings to all members of the Congregation and members of the Choir.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Friedmann and Family wish to convey their most cordial wishes to the Congregation for a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Mr. and Mrs. Short send their compliments to all the Congregation.

The Solomon Wolfson Jewish School Centenary

The holding of the Centenary Service at Hammersmith Synagogue on June 26th, was quite fortuitous. Bayswater Synagogue, where the idea of the School originated, was closed, and the New West End was occupied for weddings. However, apart from being the next nearest sizeable Synagogue, it may not be generally known that in some respects our links in the last quarter of a century have been virtually the closest. This applies to all relationships.

Some of our members will recall the late Rupert Winston. He was Deputy Headmaster of the School and for some years Financial Representative of the Shool. He is best remembered for his outstanding achievements in the promotion of youth activities, particularly with the West London Jewish Youth Club.

More recently, the late Aaron Shenfield, whose passing was very widely lamented, was also a Deputy Head of the School for many years and also served our Congregation well as an Honorary Officer.

His long experience in the field of education and his deeply grounded Jewish knowledge made him a most valued member of the Regional Classes Education Committee. The late Mrs. Shenfield also taught at the School for some time.

Also a member of staff for some years was our beloved recently-retired Choirmaster, Mr. Benjamin H. Busky.

Secondly, Rev. Venitt has been a manager of the School for a number of years and takes part in deliberations on school policy. He also served a term of three years as Examiner in Hebrew and Religious Knowledge.

Thirdly, the many children of our Community who were educated at the School include all the Venitts and Ruth Forscher.

Finally, Miss Pamela Venitt, B.A., is returning to her old alma mater as a teacher in September.

All this goes to show that the choice of Hammersmith Synagogue was not only a privilege but that in recent years our association has been the closest of all the Synagogues in the area.

The Choir

At a specially arranged Kiddush on June 25th, the Hammersmith Congregation said farewell to Mr. B. H. Busky, who has served our Community as Choirmaster for almost 15 years. We all wish him a long and happy retirement and good health for many years to come.

As a consequence of the departure of the Choirmaster, the Choir was about to disband. It would be regrettable to allow this to happen.

The Honorary Officers and the Board of Management feel responsible for the smooth running of affairs and also, in present circumstances, to keep up the standards of the Service in the Synagogue, a standard that has been set ever since the Shool was erected over 75 years ago.

The possibility of forming a Boys' Choir has been considered and is very much favoured by everybody.

The youth of our Community have proved their eagerness to help in many ways and are also willing to join the proposed choir. However, the training of such a choir produces problems which have yet to be solved.

The number of boys who might qualify to be choristers is not large. They have to be taught the fundamentals of synagogal-music and instructed how to read it. To learn the art of choir-singing requires considerable effort and time. In addition, a chorister should know the Service of every Sabbath and Festival of the year and also the translation of the text and its meaning.

These are difficulties, which, with some effort and perseverance, can be overcome.

In the meantime, our choristers, who have served the Community so loyally and responsibly with much goodwill and devotion, have kindly agreed to continue with their good services.

They deserve the appreciation of the whole Community.

(REV.) S. FORSCHER.

MR. & MRS. L. W. SHORT

We extend a hearty welcome to our new caretaker and his wife and family, who have recently taken up residence. We wish them every happiness and good health to carry on this most essential service to the Synagogue.

Road Signs

This is the time of the year when we should stop on the road and ask ourselves the questions: Who are we? What are we? Where are we going? Judaism has posted three road signs to help us.

The signs read TESHUVA, TEFILLAH, U'TZEDAKAH which we translate in a general sense as Repentance, Prayer and Charity. In the older texts three small words accompany them. TESHUVA is interpreted as TZOM; TEFILLAH as KOL; TZEDAKAH as MOMON.

TESHUVA as TZOM (fasting) is necessarily a personal matter. Personal in the sense that it affects no one but the one who fasts. No other person benefits by it, no other person is harmed because of it. An individual may even be able to get on the right wavelength with his soul, because of it. But he alone knows it. He alone benefits.

TEFILLAH involves an element of KOL (voice). The prayers and petitions are directed towards the Almighty. No other human being is involved in Tefillah except the petitioner. But there is a partnership in a sense. Man prays, Gods hears.

TZEDAKAH is essentially an experience in human relations. There must be a giver and a receiver and there must be the Momon, the wherewithal. There must be the willingness to share. To follow the three road signs therefore requires personal involvement, G-dly commitment and an utterly unselfish approach, which really sum up the ideas underlying TESHUVAH, TEFILLAH and TZEDAKAH.

SYNAGOGUE NOTICES

Despite repeated notices in 'The Brook' it still happens from time to time that meetings of different **local societies and committees** have been arranged independently to take place on the same date. As a number of people are on more than one committee it is obviously desirable that clashing should be avoided. The Synagogue Secretary maintains a central diary of dates of meetings **which are notified to him** and Secretaries of local organisations are sincerely requested to remember this and to advise the Synagogue Secretary of all meeting dates as far in advance as possible.

A **Yahrzeit Register** is kept in the Synagogue Office. Rev. Forscher is prepared to record entries at your request and to send you a reminder each year.

Looking Back

As Malta comes high on the list of places in the Sterling Area in which to spend a holiday next summer, my thoughts go back to 1946 and the enforced two years spent on this island, which was once described by the late George Bernard Shaw as one of "Yells, Bells and Smells."

To be a Jewish housewife in Malta immediately after the war taxed the ingenuity of even the most resourceful, and memories of conditions then inevitably come to my mind.

My husband was Medical Officer to a Regiment there, and on May 1st, 1946, I flew out to join him. I was very young, very inexperienced in all the arts of housekeeping and needed then all the modern aids of today, but alas, they were just not available. No gas, no electricity, only a container of Calor Gas, delivered daily to cook by, and a primitive Primus stove.

Somehow I managed very well, once I got used to the fact that it would take at least two and a half hours to roast potatoes in my portable oven on top of a single burner. We had the most glorious Maltese lace table mats, but how the food would arrive at table, was always very questionable. I remember only too well making my first steamed sponge pudding, and on turning it out, saw to my horror, dozens of weavels rearing their repulsive heads, having tried, in vain, to escape from their incarceration. That flour must have been years old!

There were only about eight Jewish families on the island then, and to keep kashrut was a real feat of endurance. There was no kosher butcher's shop where I could go and choose at leisure the cut of meat that we fancied; no one I could ask to advise me even on how to cook it, just a gory carcass lying in the middle of the floor of a room, in the house of the man who was the minister cum chazan cum shochet to the community. It was terrifying! I just shut my eyes, pointed a finger, and said, "I'll have that." Somehow we always managed to eat. Once, I got sweetbreads, and as usual, with no "Florence Greenberg" to guide me, I just had to guess what to do. I boiled them, and eventually, when I took off the lid to drain them, all that remained was a pan of muddy water full of bits!

We did, however, have some wonderful accompaniments, which, if I had been able to cook, would have culminated in

Cordon Bleu meals—glorious huge fresh capers and blueberries delivered daily. Most times we existed on the accompaniments!

The fruit was wonderful, too, but there was an acute shortage of water on the island, and so to avoid persistent bouts of tummy upsets, everything had to be soaked in a horrible water sterilising fluid, which at times overshadowed the taste of the fruit. However, there was no shortage of sunshine or mosquitoes. Both of which we endured continuously, from May to October, until the weather became cooler.

Like most women, as each Pesach approaches, I begin to show all the signs of an anxiety neurosis. Will I be finished all the cleaning and the washing of the Pesach pots and pans in time, as well as the huge amount of cooking involved, to feed a house full of people? Now I think back, I didn't worry one jot in those days. I only had to change over for the two of us, and there was so little available to buy for Pesach that I could not have over-worked myself if I'd tried. The matzo we received came from Tunisia. It was so hard that I am sure it must have been baked on the sands of the desert. I, who have the digestion of an ox, really suffered affliction—from chronic indigestion. Each piece was grey, and I can only say had the look and the texture of interlaced paving stones. It was virtually impossible to spread with butter—it just fell through the huge holes. The only matzo meal we had was by grinding these pieces of sculpture which required the chisel of a Michaelangelo. Those eight days seemed to us as long as the years that our ancestors had wandered in the wilderness.

As I sit in my comfortable seat in Shool on Yom Kippur, my thoughts sometimes wander to the Yom Kippur I spent in Malta 20 years ago. I remember very little about it now, except the terrific heat and how difficult I found it to keep awake in the humidity. The speed of the davening, in order that the whole congregation could have a break between the Mussaf and Mincha services—what a joy it was to go out and walk in the fresh air along the harbour wall outside the Shool. It seemed to revive everybody and each and everyone came back refreshed, with renewed energy and vigour to daven for the remainder of the day.

As to the problems I encountered when I gave birth to a son there—these would make another story.

We who live in close knit communities with all the "amenities" of Judaism on our doorstep, should give a thought, particularly at this time and season, to those scattered small communities like that one in Malta, who struggle, no matter what the difficulties, to keep their Faith, their religion and their identity. What better example do we need this Rosh Hoshana?

JEAN H. CAPLAN.

Why A.J.E.X.—In 1966?

There may well be some of the Community who, out of ignorance or wishful thinking, pose the question—what is the point of the continued existence of The Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women 21 years after the cessation of hostilities, with political anti-semitism in Britain at a very low ebb, and with a welfare state to care for the disabled and their dependants? It is my hope that the following paragraphs, which must of necessity be in the nature of a mere summary, will go some way to help readers of "The Brook" to understand why A.J.E.X. is of vital necessity to the Community today, and why the spirit of A.J.E.X. must continue to inspire the younger members of the Community, whom we earnestly pray will never have to be ex-servicemen themselves.

A.J.E.X., through its National Headquarters, has 25 branches in London and the Home Counties and 30 branches in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and in the closest co-operation with the Board of Deputies, maintains an unceasing watch upon the enemies of our Community. We recognise that the forces of political extremism and anti-semitism are at present small and in utter disarray, but we also know full well that manifestations of colour prejudice are but the scum at the top of the poisoned well, and that prejudice is indivisible. We are also fully conscious of the dangers that lie in a contracting economy and the way in which the frustrations of unemployment lead the frustrated to seek the nearest available scapegoat. Not only the history of hundreds of years in the Diaspora, but the events of our own lifetime, have surely taught us the fate of a defenceless minority at the hands of agitators and mob orators who seek to come to political power over the bodies of their victims.

A.J.E.X., then, by means of organised, dignified, disciplined and responsible action, endeavours in a multitude of ways, to secure the recognition of our non-Jewish fellow citizens, that the Jewish Community, while retaining the individuality which follows from our adherence to our ancient faith, is nevertheless a worthy part of the integrated general community, playing not less than its fair share in discharging the responsibilities of citizenship both in peace and war.

At national level, some indication of the regard in which A.J.E.X. is held by the community at large may be noted from the list of Inspecting Officers at the Jewish National Remembrance Service and Parade held annually at the Cenotaph. This list includes not only Prince Philip, but also the greatest and most illustrious names in recent British history, such as Montgomery, Alexander,

Alanbrooke, Mountbatten and many others of similar renown. In this coming year, not only will the Inspecting Officer be Marshal of the R.A.F. Lord Portal, but the guest speaker at the reunion will be Mr. Speaker (Dr. Horace King), the "first commoner of the Land," whose appearance at public functions is traditionally rare, but who considers that the A.J.E.X. reunion is of sufficient significance and importance to justify this rare and signal honour.

At local level, A.J.E.X. branches, by their close liaison with British Legion branches, their readiness to be of service to good causes nominated by local mayors, their organisation of volunteer groups to release hospital staff at Christmas, their sponsoring of blood donor groups, and in a hundred different ways, play their part in ensuring good relations between Jews and their non-Jewish neighbours. To take an example near home, the Hammersmith branch of A.J.E.X., knowing of the splendid work done by the Star and Garter Homes at Richmond for disabled ex-servicemen, through the visits which the Branch Welfare Officer pays to Jewish disabled at the Home, was able to persuade the Hammersmith Borough Council that half of the proceeds of the Mayor's Annual Charity Ball should be earmarked for the Star and Garter Homes. This happy result did not come about by accident, but was the direct result of the high regard which the borough has for your local branch, which has for many years co-operated in civic welfare projects.

In addition to its manifold tasks in the field of inter-group relationships, A.J.E.X. has undertaken heavy responsibilities on behalf of disabled ex-servicemen of the Jewish faith, and their dependants, in fields where wide and lamentable gaps exist in the framework of the state welfare services. In the past 17 years, no less than £45,000 has been spent at Headquarters on its welfare activities, apart from local branch welfare. Special efforts are made to ensure that the disabled, whose numbers grow as the victims grow older, are able to celebrate the Festivals in the traditional way, and that everything possible is done to ease the problems of the Jewish disabled in matters of housing, education of the children, etc. State institutions are able to do very little for the chronically sick for whom there is no cure (victims of sclerosis and similar conditions) and A.J.E.X. does what it can to make their remaining years as comfortable as possible. A.J.E.X. does not regard such work as charity—we in A.J.E.X. see in this work the opportunity and the privilege of repaying in some measure the sacrifices which these men (and women) have made in order that the rest of us may live in freedom.

Nor is A.J.E.X. welfare work confined to Jewish disabled. Nationally and locally, annual outings are arranged for disabled of all faiths, and how are these appreciated by those who are our guests on these occasions!

So long as funds permit, A.J.E.X. welfare work will continue, and this is why local branches *must* continue to be strong in

membership and in support, since it is chiefly from the branches that welfare funds originate.

Finally, we realise that the slim and eager youth of 1939-1945 are not so slim and not so young in 1966. And this is why we are seeking, by associating ourselves with youth activities and by the formation of A.J.E.X. Youth Auxiliaries, to ensure that the spirit of A.J.E.X., embodied in the slogan "Service—not self," shall continue, and that in a world where youth is sometimes considered to be apathetic, material and self-seeking, Jewish Youth shall be a shining example of dedication to the highest ideals of social service.

Surely all this *is* worthwhile—and surely your local branch (Hammersmith and District branch of A.J.E.X.) is worthy of your support.

C. F. HYAMS, *Chairman*,
Hammersmith & District Branch.

HAMMERSMITH AND WEST KENSINGTON SYNAGOGUE COMBINED CHARITIES COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Combined Charities Committee held recently, it was decided that donations be sent to the under-mentioned charities:

Jewish Blind Society.
Kosher School Meals Service.
Jewish Welfare Board.
Mayor of Hammersmith's Appeal Fund.
Home for Aged Jews.
London Jewish Hospital Amenities Fund.
Institute of Cancer Research.
Redmans Road Talmud Torah.
Jewish Home of Rest (S.W.12).
Resident School for Jewish Deaf Children.
Home and Hospital for Jewish Incurables.
Initiation Society.

The donations were duly sent and letters of thanks and appreciation have been received.

It was also decided that a further allocation from the Combined Charities Fund be made at the earliest possible opportunity.

H. SHARPE, *Chairman*.
B. DAVIS, *Treasurer*.
J. HALFIN, *Secretary*.

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined the Synagogue in the last year, and we extend to them a hearty welcome:—

Miss H. Canter.	Mr. & Mrs. B. Lee.
Mr. & Mrs. Foley-Comer.	Mrs. H. Blitz.
Mrs. D. S. Gerrard.	Mr. & Mrs. I. Yoffey.
Mr. L. Coen.	Miss F. Yoffey.
Mrs. F. Bein.	Mr. D. E. Krantz.
Miss C. Weil.	Mr. & Mrs. M. Botchin.
Miss R. Canter.	Dr. & Mrs. D. Lovell.
Mrs. N. Coen.	Mr. & Mrs. W. Shacker.
Mrs. D. Lang.	Mr. & Mrs. D. Romain.
Mr. & Mrs. A. Lishner.	Mr. A. Beth.
Mr. & Mrs. A. Nelson.	Mr. & Mrs. A. Samson.
Mr. & Mrs. M. Kay.	

WEDDINGS

The following marriages were solemnised at this synagogue during the course of the year.

Barry Sydney Glazer to Margaret Elaine Foxman.
Edgar Robin Asher to Estelle Montanjees.
Harry Jack Green to Jessie Levene.

BARMITZVAHS

The following boys celebrated their Barmitzvah at this Synagogue during the course of the year:—

Anthony Godel.	Gary Caine.
Malcolm Venitt.	Ian Tysh.
Michael Krantz.	Steven Bondt.
David Eynine.	David Franks.
Colin Shorvon.	Glenn Hyams.

To the above, and to all members and their families who had celebrations during the year, we extend hearty congratulations.

Laughter

The Biblical narrative describing Isaac's birth, which we read on the first day of New Year, is full of laughter.

Abraham fell upon his face and laughed, Sarah laughed within herself, and long before he was born, the Divine message came to them "And thou shalt call his name Yitzchak," meaning, he will laugh.

After he was born, Sarah said, "G-d hath made laughter for me; everyone that heareth will laugh on account of me."

Man it seems is the only animal that laughs. Some indeed have thought that they detected a smile on the face of their cats, but they are probably mistaken, and it is certain, that no one has ever seen a cat, or any animal other than human, overcome by uncontrollable merriment.

One fact is clear—laughter is spontaneous. It comes like a flash, revealing unsuspected aspects of persons and things.

This spontaneity is a fundamental quality of laughter. Everyone knows how difficult it is to laugh convincingly at a joke which does not hit his sense of humour. He may produce an artificial smile, which will pass muster, but an artificial laugh rings hollow.

Nothing betrays us so surely as our laughter. It bubbles up in us before we have time to reflect, and comes from the depths within us, which are not normally under conscious control. You can tell a man very often by what he laughs at. What he is, not necessarily what he thinks, is revealed when the reins are loose, and the hidden impulses and desires take charge.

There are many different occasions which excite mirth. Some have detected in it an element of cruelty, but to generalise would be unduly cynical. There are times when we laugh at the minor misfortunes of others. There are others when we are inclined to make fun of persons and of their achievements, because we cannot bear to think they are beyond our comprehension. These are all pardonable.

It is quite different when we are tempted to laugh at goodness and innocence, because we feel that they are a standing reproach to our own lives.

The laughter of an Abraham, of a Sarah, is one thing, but the derisive laughter of an Ishmael is another.

It is when we use our humour to devalue what is noble and to reduce heroism and holiness to the level of the commonplace, that we invoke the laughter of Satan—a laughter that is bitter, envious and destructive.

NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Sincerest good wishes for the New Year are extended to the Ministers, the Honorary Officers, the Board of Management and to all Congregants, relatives and friends by:—

Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Amias and Family, 38 Barons Keep, W.14

Mr. and Mrs. J. Arram and Family, 37, Uxbridge Road, W.12.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Bayes and Family, 3, Eversfield Road, Kew.

Joy and Jeffery Brand, 73, Barons Keep, W.14.

Mrs. J. Caplan, 255, Latymer Court, W.6.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Collins, 20, Hamlet Court, W.6.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Cutler and Family, 288 Latymer Court, W.6.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Davis, 18 Palace Mansions, W.14.

Dr. and Mrs. L. Freeman and Daughter, 20, The Drive, N.W.11.

Dr. & Mrs. A. M. Filer, 3, Shepherds Bush Road, W.6.

Mr. & Mrs. H. Gelpsmann & Family, 45, Caithness Rd., W.14.

Mrs. A. Hart, 6, Argyll Mansions, W.14.

Dr. and Mrs. F. Hodes and Family, 7, Oakwood Court, W.14.

Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Levy, 212, Goldhawk Road, W.12.

Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Parker and Family, 86, Brook Green, W.6.

Mr. and Mrs. H. Sharpe, 6, Argyll Mansions, W.14.

Dr. and Mrs. E. Sommer and Family, 22, Chesterfield Road, W.4.

An Unusual Barmitzvah Party

They sat at a table aft on the main deck, fourteen girls and nine boys with the captain in the middle. The girls were in smart but simple dresses, the boys in a "uniform" of white shirts and dark trousers, and they all had their own cakes before them—simple chocolate ones with *Mazel-tov* on top and one candle.

Their *Barmitzvah* or *Batmitzvah Simcha* was on a fortnight's cruise on S.S. Theodore Herzl, in lieu (presumably) of a big family party. The boys had read *Maftir* and *Haftorah* in their own synagogues before sailing, and the girls had had a *Batmitzvah* ceremony. They had prepared for the party on odd occasions during the cruise, and finally they held it on the last clear day—*erev Shabbat* before the cruise ended on the Sunday morning.

The ship's staff had bedecked the main-deck with bunting on the spars, and flowers on the table.

All the passengers had been invited and they crowded round, those who could under the awning, and the rest in the scorching sun. One parent only was allowed to sit in a row behind the children. By common consent, mother was that privileged person. At a given signal, the children filed down from the boat's deck, led by the ship's band.

As they sat down, the photographers moved in, and a fine display appeared later on the ship's notice board. Community singing followed, and then the inevitable speeches.

The captain addressed the company, and presented each child with a certificate and a copy of the book *Yisrael Chai* to mark the occasion. Several others spoke, and one of the girls replied. Two of the girls read poems of their own on the subject of *tephilot*. They all tried to light the candle on their cakes, and failed miserably in the stiff breeze. Then they trooped up to one of the ship's rooms to cut their cakes and pieces circulated round the ship all that evening.

It was a slant on the Israel of today, a pleasant, and easy modern version of a well established custom. But this cannot be the last word, for customs are less important than people, and the final judgment must be; a nicer set of youngsters one could not wish to see.

Basil J. Benzimra.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Under the auspices of the Council of Ministers of the United Synagogue, a further **Course in Hebrew and General Jewish Knowledge** will be given by Rev. S. Venitt on **Thursday evenings commencing October 20th at 8.30 p.m.**

The **West London Zionist Society** announced that a **Film Show** has been arranged for **Tuesday, October 18th at 8.30 p.m.**, and a **Brains Trust** for **Tuesday, November 15th at 8.30 p.m.**

The **West London Young Zionist Society**, in conjunction with **West Side Haganja** and **Central Y.Z.S.**, have pleasure in announcing a **Folk Singing Concert** on **Sunday, 8th January, 1967**, at the **Royal Festival Hall**. **Compeere David Kossof**. Tickets on sale from **1st October**.

A series of **Ten Lectures on "Judaism and the Modern Man"** will be given by **Dr. J. J. Ross**, Deputy Principal of **Jews' College**, on **Monday evenings commencing 17th October**. Fee for the whole course **10s.** (including refreshments).

THE SUCCAH

will be ready for decorating on
Monday and Tuesday, 26th and 27th September.

Gifts of flowers, foliage, wine, etc., will be gratefully accepted, also donations towards the purchase of cakes.

It will be greatly appreciated if members could send their gifts on those days, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Offerings from all members of the Congregation will help to make the Succah celebrations worthy of this festival, and emulate the wonderful effort made last year.

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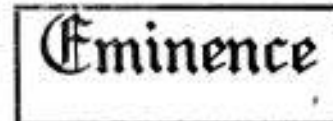
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Mr. F. J. GERTLER
wishes all his friends
a happy New Year
and well over the Fast

מר גרטלר מאחל לכל חבריו

שנה טובה ומבורכת.



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Mrs. E. F. Benzimra and Family

*Extend their Compliments and Best Wishes
for a Happy New Year*

★

50 LATIMER COURT, W.6

Mrs. Bessie Apfel

*wishes her son, daughter-in-law, grandchildren, relatives,
members of the Hammersmith Friendship Club and
Ladies' Guild and members of the Notting Hill
Friendship Club a Happy and Peaceful New Year.*

5 St. John's Court,
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ORGANISATIONS

Hammersmith Synagogue Ladies' Guild. Meets first Tuesday evening in the month in the Communal Hall. For information Tel.: EMP 4938.

Western Area Classes Parents' Association. Hon. Sec.: Mrs. S. Verby, 45 Ranelagh Gardens Mansions, S.W.6. Tel.: REN 3731.

Hammersmith Friendship Club. Meets every Wednesday in the Communal Hall. Chairman: Mrs. H. M. Levy, 212 Goldhawk Road, W.12. SHE 3276.

Hammersmith and District Women's Zionist Society. Hon. Sec.: Mrs. L. R. Longhorn, 24 Linkenholt Mansions, Stamford Brook, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.

Hammersmith, Shepherds Bush & Chelsea District Defence Committee (under the auspices of Board of Deputies of British Jews). Enquiries to Jewish Board of Deputies, Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.2.

Hammersmith and West Kensington Branch of the Norwood Charitable Trust. Hon. Sec.: Miss R. Longhorn, 24 Linkenholt Mansions, Stamford Brook, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.

Hammersmith Habonim Group—

Gedud Patishim—9-114 years, meet Sundays at Hammersmith & West Kensington Synagogue.

Tsvet Bar Kochba—124-144 years, meet on Sundays at Shepherds Bush, Fulham & District Synagogue.

West London Zionist Society. Enquiries to Hon. Sec. Miss R. Longhorn. Tel.: RIV. 8577.

West London Young Zionist Society. Enquiries to Mr. David Jacobs, 24 Arlington Road, Twickenham. Tel.: POP 5273.

West Side Haganja. Enquiries to Ernie, SHE 8729 or Marilyn ACO 3790.

Jewish Lads' Brigade—Hammersmith Coy. All enquiries to Brigade Secretary: Woburn House, Upper Woburn Place, W.C.1. Tel.: EUS. 5148.

Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women (Hammersmith and District Branch). Hon. Sec.: Councillor Norman Mann, 61 Clifford Avenue, S.W.14. Tel.: PRO 3049.

Hammersmith and West Kensington Synagogue Library. Hon. Sec. and Librarian: Miss R. Longhorn, 24 Linkenholt Mansions, W.6. Tel.: RIV 8577.

TIMES OF SERVICES

WEEKDAYS

(at present, only by arrangement)

Morning	7.30 a.m.
Evening	7.00 p.m. (Sundays and Public Holidays excepted.)

SUNDAYS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

8.30 a.m.

SABBATHS AND FESTIVALS

Evening	15 minutes after the commencement of Sabbath. During Summer Months, 7.0 p.m.
Morning	9.30 a.m.

Western Area Regional Religion Classes

(Supts.: Rev. S. Venitt, B.A. and Rev. I. L. Abrams)

Classes meet every—

Sunday	10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.
Tuesday	5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Thursday	5.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

The Secretary can be seen any Sunday morning between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and by appointment.

The Ministers can be seen by appointment.

Rev. S. VENITT, B.A., 69, Brook Green, W.6.
EMP. 4938.

Rev. S. FORSCHER, 70, Brook Green, W.6.
EMP. 8565.