

NEWSLETTER  
OF THE  
BUSHEY & DISTRICT SYNAGOGUE  
NUMBER 3

Our thanks to those who have contributed to the Newsletter. But this is the Newsletter of the Bushey Synagogue and it is unfortunate to have to note that the bulk of the contents comes from outside Bushey.

We print our first 'Letter to the Editor', we have a number of articles, and we have received suggestions for a name for this publication. But all this is not enough.

We know that many members of the community feel strongly on certain matters connected with shool - whether it is the duration of the services, the absence of an organised "story teller" for the young children, the time the services start etc. Why won't the people take advantage of the Newsletter to "sound off" rather than keeping their grievances to themselves.

The Newsletter costs quite a few pounds per issue - and it is, in the long run, your money because it is your Newsletter from your shool. Please make use of it, contribute to it, and help it grow. Or write in and tell us what a waste of time and money it is!

Ronald Cole - Editor  
8 Swallow Close  
Bushey  
01-950.3566

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DATES TO NOTE

Monday	27th November	Jumble Sale	
Friday	1st December	First day: Chanukah	3.30p.m.
Saturday	2nd December	Shalosh Seudot	3.30p.m.
Wednesday	6th December	1st day of Teves	
Friday	15th December	Fast of Teves	
Saturday	30th December	Shalosh Seudot	3.30p.m.
Sunday	31st December	New Year's Eve 'Disco'	
Thursday	4th January	1st day of Shevat	
Thursday	18th January	New Year for Trees	
Saturday	27th January	Shalosh Seudot	4.00p.m.
Saturday	3rd February	1st day of Adar 1	
Sunday	4th February	Dinner and Ball	

## CHRISTMAS AND YOUR CHILDREN - A CHALLENGE

By The Rev. Leslie H. Hardman, M.A., H.C.F.

The month of December impresses itself on the minds of children as a period of parties and presents. Through the mass media of the press, radio, television and children's comics, the spirit of Christmas is injected into their sensitive minds, and parents are troubled by requests for Christmas parties and to decorate the house with Christmas trees and other "seasonal" ornaments.

In many instances parents comply with their children's requests because to refuse them would, they feel, make the children unhappy; it would be depriving them of something both charming and beautiful, and it would mean cutting them off from celebrating one of Britain's folk holidays (the Christmas tree, I am told, has no religious significance). Above all, to refuse them would give them a sense of "being different" from their non-Jewish friends and school chums.

Those like myself who are most concerned about the survival of Torah Judaism cannot dismiss this problem lightly. In several homes I have encountered the situation where children ask for what their non-Jewish friends have, and where the parents are hopelessly confused as to what they should do. Only too often - with the best intentions - by granting their children's requests, parents proceed to destroy what remains of Jewish values and sentiment in the home.

The mother who insists on her child eating the proper foods, having correct table manners, talking clearly, behaving courteously, and so forth, suddenly finds herself helpless to resist the whims of her child on this occasion. Generally speaking, it would be more advantageous were parents to realise that in the continuous battle of wits between parents and children the latter are very quick to pick out the weaknesses of parental indecision, and they turn this indecisiveness, this "halting between two opinions", to their own advantage. I am sure that if children were faced with the same firm parental authority and resourcefulness in this matter as in others, they would be just as unconcerned about Christmas as they are over Christian religious observances.

To the more Orthodox parents who might find their child succumbing to what appears to be the overwhelming desire for wanting these things, I would like to suggest that they should not be unduly perturbed. They should not condemn their requests in the manner common to past generations when a child asked an epikoros question. "Don't ask such questions," the father harshly retorted, as he raised his hand to slap the child. Such methods and excitable attitudes are not to be recommended. Parents should try to understand the normalcy of the whole affair. They should constantly keep in mind that their children can and do appreciate beauty, colour and delightful decorations, and are drawn instinctively to a beautifully decorated fir-tree and multi-coloured lights.

To those who claim Christmas, in these days, is no longer a religious but a national holiday, and that school headteachers are justified in asking Jewish pupils to join in carol singing on the grounds that they are sectarian, I would reply that on the contrary, while Christmas carols have lovely melodies, their contents is undeniably Christian. Turkeys too, are as delicious in October as in December.

The all-important factor to keep in mind is the spirit in which the problem is approached. By all means let the children see how their Christian friends enjoy their festivals and festivities. But this must be done so as not to affect their own Jewish religious loyalties. However, beautiful the

Festivities of Christmas are, it does not alter the undeniable fact that in character the festival is essentially Christian, and no Jewish parent can justify its celebration in his home. To those parents who still worry lest their child be made to feel "different" should these reasonable requests not be complied with let me say at once that their troubles would be solved, their fears removed, were they to realise that we Jews are "different". We do not claim to be superior to our non-Jewish friends, but we do say that Christianity is not Judaism, and that we ought to feel happy and grateful that in this freedom-loving country we are enabled to practise our religion untrammelled and unhindered.

I concede that children do feel the need of belonging to the group, and the urge to conform to its particular pattern, but this is no excuse for parental compromise. Children learn at an early age that not all families or national groups live by the same pattern. Perhaps the more apprehensive parents might ask themselves these pertinent questions. Do they permit their boy to do everything their neighbour's child does? Would they dream of allowing their daughter to go to the cinema three times a week because the girl next door does? Of course families do things differently.

I am quite sure that Jewish parents are fully cognisant of these facts, yet when December comes they suddenly acquire the urge to conform to the pattern of their non-Jewish neighbour's way of life. I do not mean to suggest that from this one regrettable action the gravest consequences might arise, but, as our Rabbis have taught us, "just as the performance of one mitzva leads to the performance of another mitzva" might it not be that one wrong might lead to another? Reasonably minded parents - and by that I mean those who have not lost their sense of Jewish pride and dignity - will be faced with this problem almost yearly during the early infancy of their children. Such parents will face it calmly, intelligently and with perfect understanding. They will point out that as Jews we have our own religious and cultural festivities, and that however much we might enjoy watching the twinkling of the lights or the hanging up of the stocking the fact remains that Christmas is not a Jewish holiday.

This straightforward approach has the advantage of teaching the children they are Jews. It follows from this that they should be fully informed about their own Jewish holidays which are just as colourful, gay and joyful. Is it not a better way to learn they are Jews than to wait until they hear abuse from ill-mannered children at school? This approach will prevent them from feeling that their Jewishness denies them joy, gaiety, laughter and fun.

If in exchange for Christmas, they are given the opportunity of participating in the delightful festival of Chanukah both at home and elsewhere, they will not feel the slightest deprivation. If parents filled the lives of their children with the rich and colourful splendour of Jewish religious and national ceremonialism they would themselves admit that Christianity is for the Christians and Judaism for Jews. The more we make Jewish values meaningful and exciting the less we shall hear of the drift from Jewish life. Some may prefer to evade the issue, or consider it unimportant. Those, however, who value their children's happiness and the survival of our Jewish way of life will work out ways and means to keep the lamp of Judaism burning brightly, both in their own lives and in the lives of those who come after them.

## THE MEANING AND MESSAGE OF CHANUKAH

Our sages of the Talmud described the miracle of Chanukah as follows: "During the occupation of the Holy Land by the Greeks, the latter entered the Hechal (inner Sanctum of the Beis Hamikdash - Holy Temple) and defiled all the oils. When the Hasmoneans defeated them, one cruse of oil was found, which evidently had not been touched by the Greeks. It contained enough oil only for one day. The Menorah was rekindled and the oil miraculously lasted eight days, until new oil could be prepared."

From the text of the Talmud it is clear that the defilement of the oil was not accidental, but intentional and systematic. A question begs to be asked: If the purpose of the Greeks was to extinguish the light of the Menorah and prevent its rekindling, why did they merely defile the oil; they could have accomplished this more effectively by using it up or destroying it completely?

The answer is this: Our sages indicated to us the true objective of the Greeks, namely, that it was not to prevent the rekindling of the Menorah, but rather that it should be rekindled with defiled oil; hence they purposely left a supply of defiled oil in the Sanctuary to be readily available for this purpose. Herein lies the essential aspect, as well as the message of Chanukah.

The Greeks were willing to recognize the Torah, or even accept it, as a perfect and beautiful literary creation, a work of poetry, wisdom, profound philosophy etc. provided it was considered as a human creation, like their own mythology (which was a human invention, and where the deities were represented in human shapes and forms, with human characteristics, passions etc.). As such, the Torah could be, nay, ought to be, changed and modified from time to time, so as to harmonize with the character of the ruling class and the novel ideas and mores of the period, which, of course, would do away with the permanence and immutability of religious institutions such as Shabbos, circumcision etc. Thus it was not the suppression of the Torah that they aimed at, but at its acceptance as the G-d-given word, as G-d's Torah.

Similarly they were not averse to the moral and ethical values contained therein, but they prohibited the Divine "chukkin" - the so-called "supra-rational" precepts, which more than any other distinguish the Jewish way of life and make it specifically Jewish, holy and pure.

Moreover, - and this was the greatest danger posed by the Greek penetration of the "Hechal", they favored, and actually endeavored to bring about, the rekindling of the Menorah, specifically in its hallowed place in the Hechal, whence it should spread its light everywhere as before, except . . . that its light should come from oil that had the Greek "touch", the touch of a heathen that defiles the oil. The purpose behind this was not the suppression of the Torah but its defilement; it should be considered as a human creation.

Chanukah reminds us that the greatest danger to the Jewish way of life lies not in the threat of shutting out or extinguishing its light completely, but rather in the tendency to defile it by feeding unholy oil to its Menorah. This tendency expressed itself in many ways: in the worship of materialism and material success; in the presentation of certain man-made ideologies and "isms" as the panacea of all human ills; in the idolatry of science and technology and the tendency to measure everything by the yardstick of human reason. These do not necessarily rule out "religious experience", but either confine it to a narrow domain, or worse still, produce a pseudo-religiosity, where consecration and committment are sacrificed to convenience and compromise.



Chanukah teaches us that the sanctity and purity of Jewish life must be preserved at all costs. The external and material aspects of the daily life should not only be precluded from contaminating the purity and holiness of the Torah and Mitzvos, but, on the contrary, the Torah and Mitzvos should bring sanctity into the material aspects of the daily life, in accordance with the principle; "Know Him in all your ways."

Divine Providence saw to it that a cruse of oil, pure and uncontaminated, should be left with which to rekindle the Menorah, and that it should not only hold its own, but should grow and spread, free of the Greek "touch". This episode conveys another message of Chanukah:

What was true in those days is just as true in our age; and what is true of the Jewish people as a whole is true, of course, also of every individual Jew. Under the assault of environmental influences a Jew may find his "Sanctuary" - his attachment to and identification with G-d through the observance of the Torah and Mitzvot of G-d invaded and contaminated by ideas and mores which are alien to the Jewish way of life, incompatible with it and inimical to it. But in the inner sanctum of his soul there is always a "cruse of oil" that remains pure and holy - that spark of G-dliness which is his Divine soul, which is indestructable and beyond reach of defilement. The Jew had but to kindle it, and although it may seem like a tiny light at first and of brief duration, yet it is sufficient to light up one's whole being until it becomes a Perpetual Light.

However, the Jew must not think only of himself. The commandment "Love thy fellow as thyself" demands the same attitude towards one's fellow Jew. No Jew should ever be given up. It is necessary to kindle in him that pure and holy light, even if it appears to be good only for no more than one day; for even that in itself is worthwhile, and more, it will steadily grow from day to day, and gradually illuminate his whole life.

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(an excerpt from an address delivered by Rabbi M. Schneerson,  
the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Chanukah 5723.)

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#### A STORY OF BUSHEY - What's in a name!

Bushey was mentioned for the first time in the Domesday Book, compiled some nine hundred years ago shortly after the Norman Conquest. It was then called 'Bissei'. It was during the course of the next two centuries that the name developed to 'Bisse', 'Bisshé' and 'Bisheya' (as well as Byshey).

The derivation and meaning of the word 'Bissei' is uncertain. However the more widely accepted theory is that it is a compound of the Old French "boisseie" or Old English "bysie", meaning "place covered with wood".

During the fourteenth century the alternative name of 'Hertshered' was often used for Bushey, and this name appears in several Deeds of Charter.

As you can see it was almost as difficult a task finding a name for Bushey, as it is for what will ultimately become its most famous periodical!

## HOME COOKING

### NUT COISSANTS

Cooking time - approximately 20 mins.  
Oven temp - 375<sup>o</sup>f or Gas mark 4-5  
Oven position - Centre shelf.

#### Pastry

4 ozs. cooking cheese  
8-9 ozs. S.R. flour  
3 ozs. caster sugar  
1 egg  
2 tablespoons milk  
4 tablespoons oil

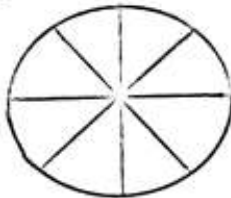
#### Filling

6 ozs. ground hazel nuts  
3 ozs. caster sugar  
3 drops almond essence  
White of 1 egg (beaten)  
2-3 tablespoons of water (if necessary).  
Mix all ingredients binding with beaten egg white.

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Dried fruit i.e. sultanas, mixed fruit, or jam may be used instead.

#### Method

Place cooking cheese, milk, egg, oil and sugar in bowl. Mix well. Add sieved flour and knead to a pliable dough. If too sticky, add a little more flour. Roll dough on lightly floured board about  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thickness. Using a large size dinner plate, cut out shape and then cut into 8 portions. desired filling. wider end to narrow crescent shape. beaten egg yolk.



Add teaspoon of the  
Then roll from the  
point. Form into  
Brush over with

### MERINGUE NESTS

Cooking time - approximately 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  hours  
Oven temp - 230<sup>o</sup>f or Gas mark  $\frac{1}{2}$   
Oven position - Bottom shelf

Whites of two eggs  
2 ozs. caster sugar  
2 ozs. granulated sugar  
Whipping or double cream  
Fresh or tinned fruit

Line baking trays with greaseproof paper and brush over with oil. Beat egg whites until a stiff froth and dry. Add granulated sugar and whisk again until dry. Then fold in the caster sugar very lightly with a large metal spoon.

Shape meringue mixture onto tray with two desertspoons into small mounds, shaping each one into a 'nest'. Dredge meringues with caster sugar and bake until firm. Can be made with a little colouring if desired.

If kept in airtight tin will keep for many days. When required pile cream (if for use after meat meal use Parev Whipping Cream) and fresh fruit i.e. raspberries, cherries or strawberries or well drained tinned fruit onto each 'neat'.

Be tay avoni!

Betty Segalov

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was most impressed to see you had managed to bring out a second edition of the 'shool' Newsletter, in spite of a sad dearth of contributions. That is certainly admirable, but it was in fact some comments in your Editorial that I considered controversial, which have caused me to 'put pen to paper', so I do hope that you are not averse to accepting critical contributions for your publication!

It was your remarks on the subject of decorum which made me "sit up". How can a shool, which has difficulty in getting a minyan on Shabbat, and only had such good attendances on this year's yomtovim because they fell on weekends, be concerned with the problem of decorum? I feel, Mr. Editor, that your priorities are somewhat confused and that you are hardly likely to attract larger numbers of regular shool-goers by even mentioning decorum, let alone exhibiting honorary officers in a box. Regular shool-goers are only too well aware of the attitude which should be adopted during a service, and to attract more "regulars", I suggest you lay more emphasis on their enjoying participating in the service, rather than issuing school-master-like admonitions as to their behaviour!

Please do not think I underestimate the role of decorum in the shool service - I consider it most important. However, I do not think it merits any mention in a shool that can scarcely muster a minyan on Shabbat.

Yours faithfully,

(Mrs.) Marian Lampert, L.C.S.T.

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The FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE tell us that there are still some tickets left for the New Year's Eve "DISCO". At £4.50 per couple, for a three-course supper including drinks, this should prove to be an inexpensive and most enjoyable evening. Please contact Ivan Gold (958.5868) for your tickets.

Don't forget Dinner & Ball on 4th February. Everybody in the area can contribute to the success of this function by making sure that they sell Raffle Tickets and Brochure Space. For further information, or with your queries, please contact Monty Cohen (205.0871) regarding the Raffle, and Harvey Lament (954.4884) in connection with the Brochure.

Next meeting at the home of Shirley and Paul Epstein (7 Coldharbour Lane) on Wednesday 29th November (950.5217).

Initial sales of Raffle Tickets has, apparently, been encouraging. We are asked to 'keep up the good work'.....

We extend a very hearty MAZELTOV to

.....Iris and Monty Cohen - belated congratulations on the birth of their first child, Neil Barry.....

.....Vivien and Laurence Greene, on the birth of their daughter Juliet Benita, a sister for Paul Anthony.....

.....Pamela and Stephen Kay, on the birth of their daughter Joanna Gabrielle, a sister for Deborah Rachel.....

.....Eva and Ronald Levene, on the birth of their son Jonathan, a brother for Deborah.....

.....Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Stein, on the birth of their grand-daughter Deborah.....

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.....Messrs. Malcolm Baum (950.2064) and David Shulman (950.6060) have recently joined the Membership Committee under the chairmanship of Len Salmon (92. 41981). Would all readers who hear of new arrivals in the area please contact any of the aforementioned, who will then set out to rope in new members.....

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We are very pleased to welcome many new members, and hope that they will feel 'at home' in Bushey: and that they will join in the various activities which are coming up in the near future.....

David & Ruth Coffey

Abram & Ethel Cohen

Tony & Patti Coleman, and Robert and Suzanne

Michael & Gillian Fielding

Louis & Betty Jacobs

Mr. Arthur Kays

Stuart & Linda Levene, and Darren

Brian & Elaine Newman, and Corrine

Harry & Rita Offenbach

Mr. Michael Solomons



REPORT FROM THE LADIES' GUILD

We are delighted to report that the Fashion Show, held on the 17th October, was a huge success - both socially and financially. A profit of £84 was raised, and this will go towards cutlery and crockery. Now the Guild are considering holding a similar Fashion Show by Jacqueline in the Spring.

Jumble is still being collected for the Jumble Sale, to be held in the evening of Monday, the 27th November. Can we rely on your support not only in supplying Jumble, but also in coming to help us fight the onslaught of bargain hunters on the night? Husbands are urgently needed to provide brain and brawn - and safeguard the monies collected.

The Chanukah party will be on Sunday, the 3rd December at 3.30 p.m. in the Synagogue Hall. The Guild would like to hear from those members whose children will be coming, so that the necessary catering arrangements can be made. Please contact either Shirley Epstein (950.5217) or Barbara Kaye ( ) - and keep the date free.

The next meeting of the Guild is being held on Wednesday, the 6th December, at the home of Mrs. Laura Arden, 12, The Four Tube, and old and new members will be more than welcome.

No more news for the moment . . . keep reading.

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REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIAL CALENDAR COMMITTEE

After some discussion, it was decided to cancel the £5 weekend in Rio de Janeiro and the trip to the summit of Everest as it might have made it difficult to get a minyan in shool on those Saturdays, and also as they are the type of function that every other shool is running. The committee therefore decided to do something completely different and will be holding a card evening. Watch this publication for further sensational details.

S.O.S. There are still three cars missing from October's car rally. If anybody sees them please inform the editor.

David Segalov

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.....Did You Know That.....Bushey Film Studios are almost certainly the oldest continuously operated film studios in the world, started by Sir Herbert Von Herkomer at the turn of the century. The studios incorporate a small Methodist Chapel built in the 1850s.....

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.....Did You Know That.....about 20% of houses built in Bushey in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries are still standing.....

.....You-know-who has done it again! He threw a challenge at Borehamwood & Elstree Synagogue, and now he has to try to get a Bushey Synagogue Football XI together. Would all potential World Cup stars please contact Johnny Back (950.1327)

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.....we have been asked to mention that donations of Kosher Wine and/or Whisky for the Shabbat morning Kiddushim would be most gratefully received by the Board.....

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Some points to remember about Chanukah

- the Chanukah candles are kindled from left to right, so that the additional light of each night is kindled first.
- the Chanukah candles must burn for at least half an hour each night.
- on Friday night, the Chanukah candles are kindled before the Sabbath lights; on Saturday night they are kindled after Havdalah.

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OTHER ACTIVITIES

W I Z O (Woman's International Zionist Organisation)

On Thursday, the 9th November, an initial meeting was held at which a local WIZO group was organised. The meeting was attended by Mrs. Brenda Katten and Mrs. Zippora Hatchwell, of the Federation of Woman Zionists, and about two dozen ladies from Bushey and the surrounding area.

Local WIZO officers were elected, including the co-chairmen Mrs. Myra Grays (92.29635) and Mrs. Elizabeth Finkelstein (950.1988).

The next meeting of the WIZO group - a film and social evening - will be on Monday, the 18th December, at the home of Mrs. Gloria Gold ("Hartsbourne Dene", 4 Hartsbourne Avenue, Bushey Heath) at 8.15 p.m. Two films will be shown: "WIZO Scrapbook", about the work of WIZO in the U.K., and "They Shall Be Secure", about WIZO's work at the Jerusalem Babies' Home.

.....there will be a SHIUR at the home of Jenny and Ronald Cole (8 Swallow Close, Bushey - 950.3566) on the evening of Tuesday, the 12th December, at 8.30 p.m. All those interested will be more than welcome.....

N.B. The Board of Management of the Bushey & District Synagogue wish it to be known that whilst they welcome the introduction into the community of the activities mentioned above, these activities are not arranged under the auspices of the Board and are not official Synagogue activities.