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THE HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON
SYNAGOGUE

ANNUAL REPORTS

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APRIL, 1964/5724

HAMMERSMITH & WEST KENSINGTON SYNAGOGUE

BROOK GREEN, W.6.

Secretary's Office: Riverside 1405

Synagogue Hall: Riverside 5238

Minister: Rev. S. VENITT B.A.

Reader: Rev. SAMUEL FORSCHER.

Emeritus Reader: Rev. B. PALETZ.

Secretary: Mr. G. COHEN.

Wardens: Dr. L. COLLINS, Mr. M. A. AMIAS.

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Rev. S. FORSCHER	(Chairman)	Dr. E. SOMMER
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Hammersmith & West Kensington Synagogue

ANNUAL REPORT

The past year has been generally one of quiet and steady progress and the following paragraphs record events which make up the life of the community.

The highlight of the year was perhaps the Civic Service for the Mayor of Hammersmith, Councillor Stanley Atkins, J.P., held in our Synagogue on Sunday, 9th June. The Service was conducted by Rev. I. L. Abrams, Minister of the Shepherds Bush Synagogue, together with Rev. S. Venitt and Rev. S. Forscher, with the choir under the direction of Mr. B. H. Busky.

A full report appeared in the last number of "Brook."

On Sunday, 5th May, 1963, a Supper evening was held at the Synagogue Hall to open the year's J.P.A. Appeal Campaign for our area. The local J.P.A. Executive under the Chairman, Dr. L. Freeman, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. J. G. Silver, and the Treasurer, Mr. B. Davis, successfully raised the sum of well over £3,000.

At the Annual Dinner and Ball held at the Porchester Hall, Bayswater, on Sunday, 8th December, the Guests of Honour were the Mayor and Mayoress of Hammersmith. The evening was a social and financial success and enjoyed by all who attended. Thanks are due to Mr. A. Coleman, President of the Functions Committee, and to Mr. F. J. Gertler and Mrs. A. Turner, his Chairman and Vice-Chairman, no less to those hard working members of the committee who were responsible for the success of the occasion.

A beautiful stained glass window over the Ark was presented by Mr. C. Libowitz in memory of his wife, and a full report on this was given in the September 1963 "Brook."

At Simchat Torah the Synagogue was happy and delighted to accord the honours of Chasan Torah and Chasan Bereshith to Rev. S. Venitt and Dr. L. Freeman.

The Autumn series of lectures (under the auspices of Jews' College) was given by Rabbi Dr. S. Goldman on "Fundamental Books of Judaism." This interesting and well-delivered course was illustrated with magnificent colour slides, including a bonus in the form of a visit to Israel at the end of the lecture.

This last occasion was taken as an opportunity to make a presentation to Dr. and Mrs. L. Freeman in acknowledgement of their Silver Wedding Anniversary.

The thanks of the congregation due to the Ladies Guild (and those husbands who are presumably honorary members), for so beautifully decorating the Succah. We are no less grateful to the members of the Synagogue whose gifts in cash and kind enabled us to enjoy our Succot at the Synagogue.

During the year the Rev. S. Venitt has had a steady attendance for his Thursday evening lectures on the Siddur.

We are pleased to record that a small membership committee under the active Chairmanship of Mr. M. Presky, has worked hard at the unostentatious but really important task of improving our membership. In this connection, it is worthy of note that 10 marriages were celebrated at the Synagogue during the year. A higher figure than for some time.

On the financial side the income for the year was £8,660, and it is pleasant to record an improvement in the income received from covenants. The surcharge imposed on all male members of the United Synagogue by the Council of the United Synagogue at Passover 1963 brought in the sum estimated. The past year saw the retirement of Charles Baumgartner, our Caretaker. He and his wife have left London to live in the West Country. We were pleased to have them with us and they take the best wishes of the congregation for the future.

We have been fortunate in obtaining a new Caretaker, Mr. L. Rogers, and he and his wife have taken up residence. We hope they will enjoy their stay with us.

The Hon. Officers and Board of Management place on record their sincere appreciation of the work of our officials, Rev. S. Venitt, Minister, Rev. S. Forscher, Reader, Mr. Gerald Cohen, Secretary, and Mr. B. H. Busky, Choir Master. The congregation is indeed fortunate to be served by such a sincere and devoted staff. In addition the Hon. Officers wish to record their pleasure in working with their colleagues on the Board of Management.

Signed

M. A. Amias }
L. Collins } Wardens
J. Brand, Financial Representative.

The Hon. Officers wish to tender thanks for the following generous gifts.

Dr. L. Freeman - Chumashim,

Mr. F. J. Gertler - Material for Sefer Mantles and Reading Desk.

Mr. P. Wender - Prayer Books.

The Ladies' Guild - Decorations for Shavuoth and Succoth.

WESTERN AREA REGIONAL CLASSES

The national statistical trend has been reflected in the enrolment number of the Hebrew Classes, which now stands at 110 pupils. Mr. Maurice DeVries, who is one of our most zealous participants in Synagogue procedure and ritual, has joined our teaching staff and is undertaking the tuition of the elementary class. All children are invited to make use of the splendid juvenile library in the Waley-Cohen Room. Books dealing with many aspects of the Jewish Way of Life and with vivid accounts of famous personages in Jewish history and literature, may be borrowed on application to Rev. Venitt.

The Annual Chanukah Service held jointly with Shepherds Bush, Fulham and District Synagogue, took place at the latter venue on Sunday, 15th December, 1963, in the presence of the Mayor of Hammersmith, Councillor S. Atkins, J.P. Thanks to the intensive preparatory vocal tuition by the Rev. S. Forscher, the youthful officiants acquitted themselves admirably. Barend Velleman acted as Reader of the Mincha Service and Jeremy and David Eynine and Mervyn Beth sang the traditional Chanukah melodies most pleasingly. Appropriate selections from the historical records of the Maccabean heroes were competently rendered by Esther Kraus, Caroline Gassman, Vivien Ohayon, Elizabeth Benzimra and Ruth Forscher.

We have sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Aaron Shenfield, one of the most devoted representatives on the Western Area Education Committee. His sage counsel in pedagogic presentation, in the realm of Hebrew knowledge and scholarship, and in education as a whole, proved of inestimable value. He will be sadly missed.

A most effective "Mock Seder" took place on Sunday morning, March 22nd, 1964, under the supervision of the joint Superintendents. Authentic atmosphere was provided by the Passover culinary and ritual embellishments on a long table surrounded by a "Ma Nishtana" crowd of eager juvenile participants. Many children were accompanied by their parents who enjoyed the nostalgic scene with utter absorption in the traditional setting and with the melodies of Seder Night.

The Annual Prize Distribution will take place on Sunday, May 24th, 1964. Our guest of honour will be Rabbi Dr. J. J. Ross, who has recently been appointed as Deputy Principal of Jews' College. With his unique scholastic background in the multi-faceted setting of Rhodesia, Israel and England, he has demonstrated his mastery of Jewish sources and profound insight into the spiritual needs of Jewish youth.

HAMMERSMITH SYNAGOGUE LADIES' GUILD

The Guild once again was responsible for decorating the Synagogue for Shavuoth.

Parcels have been sent three times this year to the Jewish patients at the Southall Mental Hospital.

A roll of velvet was given to the Guild and Mrs. Wynbergen made two new Sefer Torah covers for the Synagogue.

Seventeen members of the Guild made a very pleasant tour of Cadby Hall in October.

The Guild helped to organise the Simchat Torah Party, and in November provided tea for nearly 100 Standard Bearers from AJEX, in the Communal Hall.

On the 12th January a very successful Social and Card Evening was held, and on the 15th January some members of the Friendship Club and Guild Committees entertained to tea a party of handicapped children from the Ravenswood Home who had visited the Circus.

On 3rd March a Social Evening was held during which presentations of Trees in Israel were made to Mrs. J. Caplan and Mrs. F. Hodes, Past Chairmen of the Guild, and also a presentation was made to the Rev. and Mrs. S. Venitt, on the occasion of their Silver Wedding.

DOREEN OHAYON, Hon. Secretary.

THE HAMMERSMITH FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Arrangements for our 13th Birthday are in full swing. This will take place in the Synagogue Hall on 13th May when the Mayor and Mayoress of Hammersmith will be guests of honour.

Our weekly meetings have continued with satisfactory attendances and with an increase of membership. Programmes such as quizzes, discussions, concerts and, of course, bingo, are thoroughly enjoyed, but as usual, outings to the coast are most popular.

To implement our funds, a "Bring and Buy Sale" was held. This was most successful thanks to the members and friends who contributed towards it.

At our Chanukah Party young Malcolm Venitt, assisted by his father, kindled the lights and gave a short service.

Parties were given by many members to celebrate their birthdays, grandchildren's Barmitzvahs and Wedding anniversaries.

To celebrate their Silver Wedding, our President, Rev. Venitt, and Mrs. Venitt, gave a party and a presentation on behalf of the members was made by our Life-President, Mrs. J. Apfel.

LECTURE ACTIVITIES 1963-1964

Over a period of twelve years, the Hammersmith Synagogue has organised no less than 15 full courses of University Extension Lectures under the auspices of Jews' College, on subjects of profound Jewish interest. This congregation has gained a deserved reputation throughout the London Jewish community as one of the pioneers in the field of adult Jewish Education. It is therefore a matter of concern that our most recent course in the autumn of 1963, given most brilliantly and lucidly by Rabbi Dr. S. Goldman on the vital subject of "The Fundamental Books of Judaism," was so poorly attended. It is not easy to induce scholars of renown to undertake the necessary preparation and time to deliver popular addresses, when the response is so deplorable.

During the series last autumn, Rabbi Dr. Goldman enlisted the visual aid of screen and slides to illustrate vividly some of the characteristic folios of these classical books of Judaism. He traced the continuity of Jewish traditional sources right back from the Divine Revelation of the Bible. A most comprehensive survey was given of the biblical commentaries and the historical development of the Halachic and Aggadic Midrashim. The formulation of the Mishnah and the rich but labyrinthine content of the Talmud received much focal attention. The legal and investigative essence of the Halachah and the imagery and folklore of the Agadah were delineated in a most intelligible and popular manner.

Two lectures were devoted to the works of the mediaeval luminary, Maimondes, whose all-embracing Codes of Jewish Law have cast their particular hue on Jewish scholarship throughout the last eight centuries. It is incredible that one individual could fill a life span with so much spiritual and intellectual content. The lecturer completed the course with a consideration of the great compilation the "Shulchan Aruch" which has become the accepted guide and norm of Jewish ritual practice.

As the final address fell on the seventh day of "Chanukah," a traditional "Neshef" was introduced to conclude the proceedings on a lighter note. A lantern slide "Contemporary Tour of Israel" was shown to an appreciative audience, with special emphasis on some of the religious, historical and archaeological sites and scenes of the Holy Land associated with the personalities described during the lecture course.

We welcome the future co-operation of all our congregants to support our local efforts for the dissemination of Jewish knowledge and to enhance the status of the Hammersmith Synagogue.

**HAMMERSMITH AND DISTRICT BRANCH
ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH EX-SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN**

The Branch has continued most active during the past year under the able Chairmanship of Lenny Benjamin. Fortunately there has been some lessening of Fascist activity in West London and members have not been called upon as frequently as in the previous year to observe meetings and carry out other anti-defamation duties. The strength of the Branch has been well-maintained at over 200 members and all Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women in the district who have not already done so are invited to join by contacting the Hon. Secretary, Councillor Norman Mann, of 61 Clifford Avenue, S.W.14 (Phone PRO 3049), or the Hon. Treasurer, M. Ast, Esq., of 25 Cloncurry Street, S.W.6 (Phone REN 3175); the subscription is only 10s. a year.

The Branch has continued to work in support of charity, a substantial donation having been sent to the AJEX Charitable Trust and valuable help given to the Mayor of Hammersmith's Springtime Ball. The Branch paid tribute to one of its members, Councillor S. M. Atkins, the present Mayor of the Borough, who, with the Mayoress, Mrs. Atkins, were guests of honour at its 10th Annual Dinner and Ball held on 22nd February last at the Northumberland Grand, an outstanding social occasion.

Branch members and their wives gave splendid support to the AJEX Hospital Scheme at Xmas, working in the wards and kitchens of six local hospitals, relieving nurses and staff from duties to enable them to have an enjoyable holiday. Members also ran a car transport service for hospitals' staff when public transport was not available. This outstanding piece of social service was greatly appreciated by the hospitals and must greatly redound to the good name of the Jewish Community.

WEST LONDON ZIONIST SOCIETY

After a period of inactivity, due to various reasons beyond control, the Society is now planning a revival of activities in the coming season.

To mark the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Hyman Gelpman, members of the Society had their names inscribed in the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund. The presentation was made at a Chanukah Neshef held at the residence of Rev. and Mrs. Venitt.

THE WESTERN AREA PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Parents' Association continues to encourage parents to send their children to the Hebrew Classes, and to deal with entertaining, arranging teas and functions for the benefit of the children. More parents are urgently needed to join our Association, so if you would like to join, please contact our Chairman or Secretary. Several functions were held during the past year. The Annual Summer outing took place in June, when we visited Woburn Abbey and had tea at the Luton Synagogue, and despite the appalling weather, this was a great success.

The Chanukah service was held at the Shepherds Bush Synagogue, and all the children received a gift of sweets and chocolates.

Once again there was another Chanukah Ulpan, which was very successful.

Our sporting activities are flourishing, and our Football Team is thriving, although we still need more support from parents (especially fathers)! Girls do not think you have been overlooked, as we are hoping to start a netball team very soon.

Chairman: Mr. M. Godel. SHE 3626.

Secretary: Mrs. S. Verby. REN 3731.

WEST LONDON JEWISH YOUTH STUDY GROUP

This group is part of the Jewish Youth Study Groups' Movement, which has many groups throughout the country. It continues to be successful, and many of the leading members have come from our Synagogue.

The programme is varied, and is designed to have a wide appeal, yet with a basis of serious study of Judaism. Talks and discussions are of a high standard, and the Shirim and Rikkudim which conclude each meeting add to the interest. Also there are occasional social gatherings and group inter-functions.

Although the group is very active in the National Movement, and has enjoyed support in the past from our Synagogue, I am quite sure that there are many more people in the area who would find our activities interesting and enjoyable. Apart from group meetings, the Movement has both Summer and Winter Schools which are a highlight of our programme.

The group meets on Sundays from 5.15 p.m.-7.15 p.m. in the Herbert Samuel Hall, Bark Place, W.2. If you are in the 14-19 age group, and would like to know more about the group, contact me at RIV 5823 or come to a study group meeting.

MAURICE DeVRIES, National Treasurer

The West London Young Zionist Society, whose report had not arrived at the time of going to press, have had a very successful season of cultural content and earnest endeavour. A well-balanced programme of lectures, brains trusts and social activities has been carried out, and the Society has worthily held its place as a constituent of the Federation of Zionist Youth.

The Wessix Youth Club has had a very active year and has been meeting regularly at the Synagogue Hall. A full and varied programme has been carried out and attendances were very good.

AARON SHENFIELD

Aaron Shenfield, who died on 25th February, was a man so modest and habitually self-critical that he probably never realised how much he was respected and loved. He himself loved both scholarship and people, which made him an ideal schoolmaster. From 1931 until his death he taught a constant succession of pupils at the Solomon Wolfson School, where he was Deputy Headmaster, and inspired them with a love of learning and a wholesome breadth of outlook, as well as a scholarly regard for close reasoning. This faithful career was interrupted only by the war, when he served most bravely and conscientiously as a captain in the Army.

His emotions were always closely engaged by the Jewish tradition and for many years he worked steadfastly for the Hammersmith and West Kensington Synagogue (he was warden from 1947 to 1949, and for many years a member of the Board of Management and the Religion Classes Committee).

Our deepest sympathies are extended to Mrs. Lily Shenfield and Margaret.

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.

ORGANISATIONS

Hammersmith Synagogue Ladies' Guild. Meets every Tuesday in the Communal Hall. Hon. Sec.: Mrs. D. Ohayon, 35 Byfield Gardens, S.W.13. Tel.: RIV. 8492.

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. Hon. Secretary, Mrs. R. Nelman, 25 Lena Gardens, W.6. Tel.: RIV 2127.

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

Hammersmith, Shepherd's Bush & Chelsea District Defence Committee (under the auspices of Board of Deputies of British Jews). Hon. Sec.: Miss H. Berk, 17 Elgar Court, Blythe Road, W.14. Tel.: SHE 2770.

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

Riverside Jewish Social Club. Enquiries to Chairman, Mr. M. Godel. Tel.: SHE 3626.

Wessix Jewish Youth Club. Hon. Sec.: Miss M. Cirsch, 4 Cawdor Crescent, Boston Manor, Hanwell, W.7.

Wessix Junior Jewish Youth Club. Chairman: Barend Velleman, 125a Earls Court Road, S.W.5. Tel.: FRE 7171.

West London Zionist Society. Hon. Sec.: Mr. P. Ferst, 83 Globe Street, W.4. Tel.: CHI 4859.

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

West London Jewish Youth Study Group. Enquiries to Miss Ruth DeVries. Tel.: RIV 5823.

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

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.

CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Sabbaths	11.15 a.m.
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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 12.30 p.m.
Tuesday	...	...	..	5.15 p.m. to 6.45 p.m.
Thursday	..	...	...	5.15 p.m. to 6.45 p.m.

The Secretary can be seen any weekday morning between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and by appointment.

The Ministers can be seen by appointment.

Rev. S. VENITT, B.A., 69, Brook Green, W.6
RIV 7601.

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