Rabbi’s Column — On Being Part of a Community

My own Bat Mitzvah took place on September 23, 1978, a full month after my actual birthday to allow those on holiday to return and so that my aging relatives wouldn't have to endure too much of the ferocity of a Washington, DC summer. The morning slot was already taken for that week, so my parents scheduled my Bat Mitzvah for Shabbat afternoon. As members of a large synagogue, we were well-versed in the protocol that demanded that only those who had been personally invited to the Bat Mitzvah should come. Even more so on a Shabbat afternoon, when very few Jews are accustomed to attending synagogue in the first place. As a result, the only people in the congregation on the day I was first called to the Torah were our own invited guests. My Bat Mitzvah was important to me, but I couldn't possibly call it a community celebration.

Being part of a small congregation undoubtedly has its challenges, but I believe these are far outweighed by its benefits. One important advantage is that it is possible for the whole community to participate in joyful events without resorting to special invitations. This was certainly the case for both of my sons' B’nai Mitzvah, which were each attended by well over 100 members of Beit Shalom. Thank you so much for celebrating with us at these wonderful occasions! It meant so much to me to mark these important events in the presence of our community.

Ultimately, what ties us together as Jews is not what we believe, which varies wildly from one person to another. It is the fact that we all belong to the Jewish people. Beit Shalom, with its diverse membership who work so well together, is living testimony to this. When we join together to celebrate, we express our connectedness as Jews. May we have many more opportunities to do so!

Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky

Nadav Nansel who was Bar Mitzvah on 11 January with his family—parents Bobby Nansel & Rabbi Shoshana Kaminsky, brother Yonatan & grandparents Naomi & Irving Kaminsky from USA
**Congregational News**

**BIRTHDAYS**

Wishing a Happy Birthday to the following members:

Leslie Zetlein
Judith Choate
Petra Hill
Ma-Li Wong
Tom Sag
Laurence Lester
Lynette Ninio
Bernice Cohen
Wendy James
Linley Pearlman
Pam Vroom
Janet Hiller
Ron Hoenig
Eva Tuckfield
Margot Bailey
Sylvia Barnes
Kenneth Helfand
Thomas Banhazi
Heidi Limareff
Ali Sulan
Andrew Limareff
Katherine Filcoff
Daniel Kowald
Jonah Sag Blakeley

**DONATIONS RECEIVED**

Thank you to the following members who have made Yahrzeit donations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>In Memory of</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jack Gubbay</td>
<td>Regina Rachma Gubbay &amp; Jonah Gubbay</td>
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<td>Andrew Steiner</td>
<td>Margaret Steiner</td>
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<td>Daniel Katz</td>
<td>Robert Katz</td>
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<td>Shirley Abrahamson</td>
<td>Jocelyn Abrahamson</td>
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<td>Dorothy Staska</td>
<td>Elizabeth Shnukal</td>
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<td>Ron Hoenig</td>
<td>Dora Gardos &amp; Allen Brown</td>
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<td>Michael Levin</td>
<td>Sharon Levin</td>
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**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES**

Mazel Tov to the following couples who celebrate a wedding anniversary this month:

Andrea Kipperman & Ben Fitzgerald
Marion & Ron Hoenig
Ruth Marshall & Tim Muecke

**Cheder Term 1 commences**

**Sunday 2nd February**

at 10:30am

**2013 Cheder Prize Winners:**

Beit Shalom Board of Management Prize for a Junior Primary Student who shows Great Promise—Eleesheva Fitzgerald

Beit Shalom Sisterhood Prize for an Early Years Student who shows Great Promise—Sarah Ninio

NCJW Prize for an Outstanding Senior Cheder Student—Nadav Nansel

SZC Prize for a Cheder Student who has shown Excellent Improvement in Hebrew—Felix Menashe

**Rosters**

**SHAMUS**

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<td>February 7</td>
<td>R Gilbert</td>
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<td>P Main</td>
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<td>February 15</td>
<td>R Hoenig</td>
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**BIMAH**

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The Passing of Ariel Sharon z”l

In response to the recent passing of Ariel Sharon, former Israeli Prime Minister and military commander, the World Union for Progressive Judaism posted the following tribute.

The World Union for Progressive Judaism marks with sadness the passing of Ariel Sharon z”l. Throughout his life, he was always in service to his country. We will ever be grateful for his passion for the State of Israel.

We share the words of our Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism:

"All Rend for the Fallen President" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Mourning 9:14)

Ariel Sharon 1928-2014

The Reform Movement in Israel, its communities, its members and its rabbis express their grief over the death of Ariel Sharon, the 11th Prime Minister of Israel; a native son and lover of his country.

In an era where the willingness to devote one's greatest personal efforts to "the public need for faith" (from the Shabbat morning prayers) is not obvious, the life's work of the late Ariel Sharon is another chapter in the story of a generation, who knew that his actions would tip the scales.

In view of his passing on Shabbat "Beshalach"—with the Song of the Sea—we dedicate to his memory this beautiful Gemara passage:

"Rabbi Judah said: [while the Children of Israel stood at the shores of the Sea] Each one argued with the next saying, "I do not want to go into the sea first." While they argued, Nahshon son of Amminadav jumped up and went into the sea first." (Bavli Sotah 36, 72)

Our condolences to his family.

Yahrzeits

February 7 – 8

Jillien Goode
2 Adar I—2 February
Mother of Matthew Goode, grandmother of Jamie
Rae Samuels
2 Adar I—2 February
Mother of Myra Waddell
Anita Lester
4 Adar I—4 February
Mother of Laurence Lester, Ian, Lee, Gillian & Karen
Carol Millis
7 Adar I—7 February
Aunt of Dina Tversky
Bob Phillips
8 Adar I—8 February
Husband of Eva Phillips, father of Lynda & Nola

February 14 – 15

Martin Jacob Somers
9 Adar I—9 February
Father of Ron Somers
Alice Victoria Benjamin
9 Adar I—9 February
Grandmother of Stan Benjamin
Florence Roberts
11 Adar I—11 February
Mother of Mary, Sylvia & Phillip Roberts
Michelle Lewandowski
14 Adar I—14 February
Congregant of Beit Shalom
Mary Schaeffer
15 Adar I—15 February
Congregant of Beit Shalom

February 21 – 22

Sally Gilbert
17 Adar I—17 February
Mother of Ruth Gilbert
Isaac Musry
18 Adar I—18 February
Father of Joe Musry

February 28 – March 1

Mina Demucha
23 Adar I—23 February
Congregant of Beit Shalom
Liesel Gilbert
27 Adar I—27 February
Schueler
Betty Pearlman
28 Adar I—28 February
Aunt of Teresa Kodym
Josephine Lewis
29 Adar I—1 March
Congregant of Beit Shalom

March 7 – 8

Hilda Hartman
30 Adar I—2 March
Mother of Sheila Hyams
Jetta Martz
30 Adar I—2 March
Mother of Hermina Pincus
Berlina Millis
6 Adar II—8 March
Aunt of Dina Tversky

Barbara Paleg
19 Adar I—19 February
Mother of Julie, Kim & Robin
Hilda White
22 Adar I—22 February
Congregant of Beit Shalom

February 28 – March 1

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Congregant of Beit Shalom
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Berlina Millis
6 Adar II—8 March
Aunt of Dina Tversky

May their memories be for blessing

Our condolences to his family.
I’ve stolen my own thunder. The big event of this month is the barbecue Oneg honouring our UPJ award winners, Beit Shalom’s dynamic duo, Larry Lockshin and Janet Henrie.

They will be receiving their respective Vatik (Veteran’s) and Ner Tamid (Eternal Light) awards from the President of the Union of Progressive Judaism, Stephen Freeman at a ceremony on Friday 21 February as part of the Shabbat service, to be followed by a BBQ Oneg in their honour.

I could have spent a lot of time outlining all they have done, but I did that just in the December edition last year, so I won’t. But I will congratulate them and thank them for the years of effort and commitment and all the time they have invested in Beit Shalom. As the judges of these honours, representatives of communities across the country agreed, they are very worthy recipients of national honour and we salute them.

Please come to the service on the night to say thank you to them for the time, the commitment and the care they have put in to make our synagogue the vibrant place it is today. And enjoy a fabulous BBQ meal (that they don’t have to cook) organised by Ali Dwyer. Thank you so much Ali.

I left in a hurry in the middle of December because I was notified that my aunt in New York, who recently turned 94, was extremely ill and this might be my opportunity to see her alive one last time. Within a few days, I made bookings for travel and accommodation and I was on a plane. I thought it would be a mitzvah to be at the funeral of this woman whom I love very deeply and who is the last member of my mother’s family.

It would have been, but my aunt did not die. Instead, she got better and that gave me the opportunity to see her alive once more. I spent three weeks in New York visiting her almost every day and talking with, about and over her aided by her very loving 24 hour Hungarian carer.

This meant that I spoke much more Hungarian than I have since I was a child, because while my aunt spoke excellent English when she was younger, for some years she has been in the care of Hungarian speaking non-Jewish women who came to the US, overstayed illegally and performed this duty for about $100 a day for the previous generation of migrants.

One jetlagged night, I woke up and heard myself thinking, obsessing, in Hungarian.

Hungarian was my first language. When I was born, my parents lived in Israel and they spoke to me in Hungarian. At about age three, I went to day care in the Melbourne suburb of Prahran and the matron, Sister Jenkins, reminded me that I used to wave goodbye and say Sa-boos (szerbus) to my parents.

I’m not sure when English became my preferred tongue but I remember understanding Hungarian fluently, but speaking less.

When I was 13, my parents moved to working class Richmond and opened a sandwich shop and they enforced a rule on themselves: no Hungarian in the shop. They spoke excellent English with a very clear Hungarian accent. Suddenly their names changed. They were no longer Gaby and Gizi; they were now George and Lisa. They thought you couldn’t be too foreign, or too Jewish, in working class Irish Catholic Richmond. My uncle, Avram Berkovits, survived forced labour, escaped Europe, went to a displaced person’s camp in Germany and finally arrived in New York in 1948, where he became Allen Brown. He married a New Yorker from Brooklyn called Yetta Brown, and she became Loretta.

Maybe this is as it should be. Newcomers should adapt to the culture they enter. If it’s hard for others to say their names correctly, then it’s only reasonable to change their names. But maybe all cultures lose when people make these accommodations. I speak Hungarian. I was a foreigner. My brother, who is 11 years younger than I, doesn’t speak Hungarian, although I bet he understands, or understood, quite a bit. What do we lose when we accommodate to the culture?

We’ve just had the Australia Day weekend – and Professor Ghil’ad Zuckermann is responsible for staging a national Australian Association of Jewish Studies 2014 Conference on Jews, Judaism and Hybridity at the University of Adelaide on the 9-11th of this month. Both raise important questions of identity. When I was a child Australian identity was clear. To be an Australian you left behind the language and culture of your past and assimilated into the dominant community. Now this is a much more complicated question. Multiculturalism says it embraces religious and cultural diversity, and especially food. But, as Australian Jews, there isn’t just one way to be a Jew. We have a diversity of religious and ethnic cultural traditions including our Ashkenazi and Sephardic cultural heritage. We have the influence of our connection with the Holocaust—and with Israel. We have the influence of our connections with other religious traditions. What’s the nature of the hybrid Australian Jewish identity we will carry into the next century and pass on as a legacy to our children and grandchildren?

Perhaps I’ll try to consider responses to these questions in Hungarian.

Shalom,

Ron Hoenig—President
Get to Know the Choir—Jill Noble

How did you come to be a member of the Beit Shalom choir?

I joined the Beit Shalom community in 2008 with my husband Steven Knopoff and children Alexandra and Zachary. As an American Jew living in Adelaide, Steven eventually came to the realisation that it was too hard to retain a Jewish identity and pass on a Jewish heritage and education to our children (compounded by being married to a non-Jew like me), unless we belonged to a Jewish community. Being religiously agnostic myself but happy to support Steven’s aforementioned goals, Beit Shalom was the obvious place for us. As a very inclusive community towards non-Jewish spouses, when my musical interests and background became known, I was quickly conscripted into the choir.

What is your musical background?

I have always had a love of music-making, and have continued with this as an amateur hobby throughout my life. I started playing recorder at age 7, graduating to oboe in high school. I continued my oboe playing into adulthood, playing with Flinders Street School of Music Orchestra, Elder Conservatorium Orchestra, and currently Norwood Symphony Orchestra. I also sang in school choirs, and after that in adult choirs, including the Adelaide University Choral Society and Graduate Singers.

Tell us about your earlier years

Although born in Millicent SA, I grew up in Hamilton, a country town in western Victoria of about 10,000 people. I am the youngest of six children. My parents still live in Hamilton. I was very fortunate to have been mentored by a very passionate and dedicated music teacher, who began a program to bring orchestral instrument teachers from the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne to teach orchestral instruments once a fortnight in Hamilton. She also coordinated a multitude of playing and singing groups in which I had the opportunity to perform, including a performance of the school recorder consort for the Queen in Melbourne on one memorable occasion!

What about your professional life?

On completing high school I moved to Adelaide to attend university and have been here ever since. I studied for a degree in Computer Science and Mathematics, and worked as a software engineer and software development project manager for ten years. I then returned to university to obtain an MBA and worked the next ten years in management in the IT industry. Deciding that I needed new challenges and that I no longer had a passion for keeping current with technology, I returned to university again to study a Master of Commerce (Accounting) degree, and changed my primary career focus to finance. I also completed my CPA and now work as the CFO of an engineering management consulting company called Nova Systems.

Why do you like singing in the choir?

There are several answers to this question. As a non-Jew, being in the choir gives me a way to be more fully engaged, rather than just on the periphery. Since my whole family is immersed in Beit Shalom (Steven is on the Board, Alexandra is a Cheder teacher, and we were all in last year’s Purim Spiel) it makes our family experience a more enjoyable one if I am also fully involved and committed. When I first joined Beit Shalom, we did not yet have our new transliterated prayer books and I found the services less “accessible” as a non-Hebrew speaker. Joining the choir gave me an

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<td>Tetzaveh</td>
<td>Exodus 27:20—30:10</td>
<td>Ezekiel 43:10—43:27</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Vayakhel</td>
<td>Exodus 35:1—38:20</td>
<td>I Kings 7:40—7:50</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Pekudei</td>
<td>Exodus 38:21—40:38</td>
<td>II Kings 12:1—12:17</td>
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(Shabbat Shekalim)
I’ll begin with the story of my parashah. It all begins... with a heroic victory, or some other cliché line like that. Moses had managed to release the Jews from slavery, and starts to lead them out of the land of Egypt. But the pharaoh, who enslaved them, wants his revenge. Watch the adventure in 3-D... Nah, just kidding.

Pharaoh sent out his army to hunt down the Jews as revenge for the ten plagues. These ten plagues were sent down as God’s revenge for Pharaoh enslaving the Jews. Pharaoh enslaved the Jews as his revenge for the overpopulation of the Jewish people in Egypt. Moses spoke to God as they came to an obstruction: the Red Sea. And God told Moses to raise his hand towards the sea, and the sea split allowing the Jews to walk across on dry land. The Pharaoh’s army started coming too, and they were able to cross the sea too. But once the Jews crossed, the sea collapsed on the army, drowning them all.

Most retellings of the story insist that the pharaoh had changed his mind and decided to send his army after the Jews. But the Torah specifically says that God said, “I have hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and changed his mind so I may gain glory through him.” If God’s major goal was to release the Jews from the land of Egypt, then why would he play with Pharaoh to make God seem, well, more glorious? The Torah has many metaphors, but I’m not sure this is one of them. The splitting of the Red Sea may mean that the waters were shallow enough to pass. But how can we find a different meaning for what God did to Pharaoh?

This story makes me feel frustrated in a sense, knowing that God might care more for his glory than he does for his people the Jews. God could have easily gotten the Jews out of slavery without causing so much hardship to Pharaoh and his people. We have an entire celebration based primarily on the fact that the Jewish people were freed from the land of Egypt—not the rest of the story.

I’ve learned that there is a possibility that the Gates of Repentance are always open, except for those who have been horrible, like Pharaoh. But what if people think that of themselves? They would feel like they’d lost the possibility of forgiveness and then give up on trying to start over again. I think you should always believe in yourself—there is always a possibility of forgiveness.

I would like to thank all who supported me in getting ready for my Bar Mitzvah, including Shoshana Kaminsky, my mother and Rabbi of this synagogue, my father and my brother. I’d like to thank my friends who have supported me over the years and my grandparents who came all the way from the US. Thanks also to Rabbi Fred and Sue Morgan, and to Vima and Shasta Pitts who have all come from Melbourne for today. I’d like also to thank my teachers from Cheder, Parkside Primary School and Massada College, which unfortunately closed down. Finally, thank you to the Catering Committee for coming so early to make lunch for today. Shabbat shalom.
A Father’s Blessing—by Bobby Nansel

This is the beautiful blessing that Bobby Nansel gave his son Nadav on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah on Saturday 11 January 2014. It brought tears to the eyes of many congregants who were so moved to learn that Bobby used to sing his version of John Lennon’s song to his boys as they were growing up. Thanks Bobby for sharing this with us.

Beautiful Boys
(with apologies to John Lennon)

Close your eyes
Have no fear
The monster's gone
He's on the run and your abba's here
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Before you go to sleep
Say a little prayer
Every day in every way
It's getting better and better
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Out on the ocean sailing away
I can hardly wait to see you come of age
But I guess we'll all just have to be patient
'Cause it's a long way to go, a hard row to hoe
Yes, it's a long way to go but in the meantime

Before you cross the street
Take my hand
Life is what happens to you
While you're busy making other plans
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Before you go to sleep
Say a little prayer
Every day in every way
It's getting better and better
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful
Beautiful boys
Darling, darling, Yonatan and Nadav.

Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful boy.

I reckon I sang that word “beautiful” about twenty thousand times for your brother in the two years before you came along. It occurs twenty-eight times in John Lennon’s song “Beautiful Boy” (I counted); your first ten years I must have sung it eighty thousand times more to both of you.

So, I want to do one very special thing for you right here, right now, in front of everybody, with the indulgence of the choir—and that is to reassure you I won’t be singing it to you this morning.

Besides, all that time I really sang a modified version of the song at bedtime, the second song of the night—after Sh’Ma. My first two changes were “The monster’s gone / he’s on the run and your abba’s here” rather than daddy and “Darling Yonatan” rather than Sean. But those twenty thousand Beautifuls were all meant the same way.

The next three changes came when you did. I had plural sons, so it became Beautiful Boys; the line following “I can hardly wait / to see you come of age” became “but I guess we’ll all just have to be patient” rather than both; and “Darling Yonatan” became “Yonatan and Nadav”.

And that was my definitive version of our bedtime song. Sometimes your Mum sang it, but usually I did.

Somehow in the hundred thousand repetitions I must have become patient—it was indeed a long way to go and a hard row to hoe; but we’ve nearly arrived, all of us.

You’re both getting the feel of life becoming men.

And, maybe you’re also starting to understand why I stopped singing the song. You’ll both, always, forever be my beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful boys in my heart. But the world expects and my respect for you as men demands that I stop calling you boys. At least in public.

It’s not easy. I can’t expect you to understand, not really, not until you have a little hand to take yours before crossing the street. That will be a hard habit to break. Only last night, I took your hand to cross the street, and you asked why I chuckled when I let go, realising what I had just done.

Unlike Bar Mitzvah, life really is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.

It’s life’s markers that stay put, the little prayers you say every day that help you find your own way. Your birth was one. This day is another. B’Ezrat h’ashem, kiddushin and bris and baby naming will be others—but, no hurry on those, if you please.

I am so proud of you, I can’t help but say—just one last time: “Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful boy.”
Our thanks to Billie Hocking for submitting this article on the Shabbaton that took place in Melbourne from Friday 29 November 2013 when a small contingent of Beit Shalomniks attended the interesting weekend workshops.

Friday afternoon of Hanukkah 2013, I flew to Melbourne for The Shabbaton.

The Shabbaton was hosted by Rabbi Jonathan Keren-Black, of The Leo Baeck Synagogue in Kew and went for the whole weekend. Or as Rabbi Jonathan put it and succinctly, too, "the Shabbat that goes on and on and on".

I landed at Tullamarine and bussed it to Melbourne. I left the bus, schlepping the overnight bag on my arm and iPhone at the ready, looking like a yocal. I have, of course, seen a big city, but the anticipation of what the weekend may hold and trying to locate Judith Choate, my weekend compatriot, was a little daunting.

We finally located one another and between, "I've really missed you", hugging and "we have to catch this tram and then another", we finally made it back to her apartment, which luckily is on the tram route.

We took a breather and again with our trusty iPhones, found our way to Kew. It looked really easy to get to Kew on the map and it probably was...all we had to do, was cease our chatter and concentrate on 5 o'clock Melbourne traffic. Yep, that's not gonna happen.

We eventually arrived and walked into the synagogue to be greeted by Deb Boock and Michelle Morris, 2 welcome and familiar faces from Beit Shalom. And of course our genial host, Rabbi Jonathan, whom both Judith and I had met on our recent Beit Din.

We sticky name labelled ourselves and made our way into the synagogue for the Shabbat service, which was well attended and all in fine voice. It was also the third night of Hanukkah and the candles were lit.

After the service, we went for dinner, ably provided by the Catering Committee in the hall, attached to the synagogue. We entered the hall to find a dozen round tables, each able to seat 8 people. So we mixed and mingled and enjoyed our Mexican feast, with much wine and liberal instruction from Rabbi Jonathan.

Saturday morning, 9:00am saw us arrive at Leo Baeck for an hour of Torah study firstly with Rabbi Jonathan, then with 2 senior congregants, who lead the study group, every Saturday morning. It was wonderful to sit with others, who were also keen to listen and learn. We all then went into the morning service and sang with gusto and sat in awe as we listened to the beautiful voice of their female cantor.

Lunch was provided and we ate latkes and Mexican food. Judith and I decided to return to her apartment & have a power nap in the afternoon, as it was free time and welcome, it was. We awoke rested and made our way to Kew, again. And again, we still managed to miss the turnoff. There is never a quiet moment when we are together...and the drive to Kew is proof positive.

Saturday night was a beautiful night. We all meandered over to Vicki's Italian restaurant which was just a short distance from Leo Baeck, where we partook of fabulous pasta, very drinkable wine and affable conversation with more congregants and converts we had not yet met. As this was intended as a learning weekend, we were all instructed on the dos and don'ts, from the menu. Even though I have schooled myself and I have been instructed (thank you Rabbi, thank you Deb Boock) in Kashrut, there were still things to learn.

Once we finished our meal, we returned to Leo Baeck, found good seats and settled down. Firstly for Havdalah and to light another candle, then to watch an Israeli documentary. The documentary, The Gatekeepers had been nominated for an Academy Award in 2013. A most interesting and engaging 2 hours, that sparked a lively debate, when the lights came up.

Cont’d on page 14
80th Birthday Invitation

Ed Argy invites the Beit Shalom community to celebrate his 80th Birthday and enjoy the kiddush in the Rose Harrison Hall following the service on

**Saturday 29 March**

at **10:30am**

Please bring your own copies of *Mishkan T'filah* to the service

For catering purposes, please let Marie in the office know if you will be attending—phone: 8362-8281 or email: bshalom@bshalomadel.com

**National Council of Jewish Women**

**SA Section**

Our first meeting for 2014 will be held

**on Wednesday 5 February**

at **12:00 noon**

in the Rose Harrison Hall at 39-41 Hackney Road, Hackney

**JNF GREEN SUNDAY**

**16th February 2014**

Support sustainable communities & the environment in Israel on this year’s Green Sunday.

Please be generous when we call.

*Annetay Henderson-Sapir—JNF President SA*

**Purim Spiel 2014 Auditions**

**Sunday 2nd February**

12.30 PM Rose Harrison Hall

The play’s the thing, wherein we’ll catch the essence of Purim

W. Shakespeare
**The Sisterhood invites you to...**

**Choc Chodesh**

A celebration of...

the new month

Havdalah

and (belatedly) Tu B’Shvat

with

chocolate
dancing

fruits of the trees

and much, much more

**Saturday 1st February**

at 7.30 pm til late

in the Rose Harrison Hall

$10 a head

Adults only (sorry)

Light supper, dancing and conviviality provided.

RSVP: Ruth Gilbert
heyruth@internode.on.net or 0421-008-981

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**Sisterhood Report**

Dear all,

I hope you are all continuing to enjoy the summer season of festivities with the coming of the Fringe, the Festival, Choc Chodesh and our very own Purim Spiel.

2014 started well with a great discussion of “The Gallery of Vanished Husbands” by Natasha Solomons at the home of Alison Marcus. A lively conversation ensued around a table full of tasty refreshments. Ah, those hot scones! Thanks so much to Alison Marcus for hosting (and for those scones).

Alison is kindly hosting again for the March Book Club on **Sunday 2nd March at 10:30am**. We will be discussing the book “Disobedience” by Naomi Alderman.

This book is described by the Telegraph as ‘a prize-winning portrait of a very unorthodox Jew’. It looks to be a great read. Hope to see some of you there.

Keep cool.

Regards,

**Ruth Gilbert**

**Sisterhood President**
**Purim Spiel Notice**

Beit Shalom Players present

**Shushan High**

**Sunday 16th March**

at Beit Shalom Synagogue

Megilla Reading at 6:00pm
Purim Spiel at 7:45pm

Costume Parade at 7:00pm before the Purim Spiel
Refreshments afterwards in the Rose Harrison Hall

Tickets: $10 single / $20 family

The Sisterhood will provide cordial, tea and coffee,
and you are asked to bring a plate of finger food
to share that does not require heating, and
preferably to bring Hamantaschen.

Bookings are essential.
Please phone Marie on 8362-8281 or
e-mail: bshalom@bshalomadel.com

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**Notice of Meeting**

**Jewish Genealogy & History Society of South Australia**

Date: **Sunday 16 February**

Time: **2:30pm**

Venue: Home of Eva Temple &
Gilbert Fromm
46 Hill Street, Mitcham

Speaker: **Stan Benjamin**

Subject: “How did a boy born in
Tripoli, Libya, end up in
Adelaide after having spent
time in the British Merchant
Navy after being a Cadet on
HMS Worcester in the UK?
Not a ‘Jewish’ thing to do!”

Stan was born in Tripoli, Libya, in
1945 and left for the UK in 1948
after Arab riots in Tripoli due to the
creation of the State of Israel.
Educated in some of the UK’s best
private schools, including HMS
Worcester on the River Thames, he
was prepared for a life at sea. Little
did he know that a long-legged lass
from next door would be the catalyst
for his life in Australia and the
discovery of Beit Shalom in
Adelaide.

Cost: Members free,
non-members $5,
concessions $3

RSVP: President Margot Bailey—
Phone: 8295-1220 or
Email: kwbailey@optusnet.com.au
by 9 February

Afternoon tea will be served
The Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) received an invitation from The Jewish People Policy Institute (JPPI) inviting them to participate in a process of consulting Diaspora communities worldwide about their understanding of what is meant by Israel as a “Jewish and democratic state” and the nature of the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora. The ECAJ in turn invited communal organisations to submit their views on these topics. The following are the replies submitted by the UPJ and ARZA.

1. What constitutes world Jewry’s vision of a “Jewish and democratic” state? In what way should the state reconcile its wish to clearly express its “Jewishness” with what might seem to be the contradictory aspiration to be a state that bestows equal rights for all its citizens? In this question we refer to both commonly held beliefs and views and to expert opinions.

The Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ) & the Australian Reform Zionist Association (ARZA) believe that the Jewish People have the right to sovereignty in a country where the dominant values are the essential Jewish values of concern for yourself and others. The UPJ & ARZA believe that the Jewish People have a unique and unbroken link with the Land of Israel that justifies Israel being the Jewish Homeland.

It is the view of the UPJ & ARZA that the concepts of Israel as a Jewish State and a democratic State are compatible—and achievable.

The UPJ & ARZA believe that the general will of the people of Israel is to live in a country ruled by “western” democratic values where each citizen, regardless of their religion, gender or sexual orientation can participate fully in all areas of society, as described in the country’s Declaration of Independence:

“The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

There are a number of areas where Israel, like many other acknowledged democratic countries are deficient and each of these situations are significant areas of concern, including:

◆ The treatment of minorities;
◆ The response to asylum seekers;
◆ Inequality in the treatment of different groups of Jews; and
◆ The inappropriate allocation of religious authority to one stream of Judaism.

The continuing, if unavoidable, confrontation with the Palestinian people that has forced Israel to become an occupying force is also a cause of great concern for all who want to see Israel living in peace with her neighbours within secure borders. UPJ & ARZA wish for the day when this conflict will be resolved through the establishment of an equally free and democratic Palestinian State.

The UPJ & ARZA are concerned that the treatment of some minorities (e.g. the Bedouin people) falls short of Israel's stated claim to treat all citizens and residents equally.

However, what is evident—and is a defining feature of Israel as a democratic state—is that there is open debate about all of these issues. There is also a political and judicial system that allows for peaceful, if heated, debate and development in these, and other areas, of social and human rights.
The UPJ & ARZA believe that the achievements of the State of Israel over its short life, while faced with an existential battle since its establishment, are nothing less than miraculous. This is not to say that things cannot be improved or that the current situation in the areas described above are acceptable. However, UPJ & ARZA see the importance of placing these matters within context and believe that social progress is an integral and inevitable expression of the ethos of the State and of its citizens.

With regard to the “Jewishness” of the State, the UPJ & ARZA believe that while Israel’s Declaration of Independence provided the framework for a State that is both Jewish and democratic, the current situation falls far short of the lofty goals expressed and that this is a crucial issue to be addressed and resolved.

UPJ & ARZA believe that the acceptance of the term “Jewish” in purely religious terms is not only shortsighted and discriminatory but also ignores the reality of the Jewish People throughout history. Prior to, during and following the exodus from Egypt, the definition of the Jewish People has included a wide and diverse range of cultural, social and religious beliefs and practices. The real lives of Jews living in Israel and the Diaspora today testify to this, while the current allocation of religious authority to a specific and unrepresentative stream of Judaism in Israel is a matter that must, and we believe will, be corrected over the coming few years.

While acknowledging that the wresting of power and resources from the currently entrenched religious authority is a significant challenge to the State of Israel, it is the view of the UPJ & ARZA that the majority of Israelis are coming to appreciate the untenable situation; Israelis are taking action to remedy it, both through practical action (e.g. 30% of all marriages are held outside of the country to avoid the Rabbinic authority) and through the ballot box. The last elected Israeli Government has for the first time no ultra-Orthodox representation.

Once the representatives of all denominations of Judaism receive equal recognition and support from the State, the UPJ & ARZA believe that the complete implementation of the Declaration of Independence will ensure that Israel is both a Jewish and a democratic state.

Library News

New items in the library this month:

Non-Fiction
"The modern men's Torah commentary: new insights from Jewish men on the 54 weekly Torah portions"
"Jewish living: a guide to contemporary Reform practice" by Mark Washofsky
"Gates of mitzvah: a guide to the Jewish life cycle"

Books for Children & Teenagers
"The Jgirl's guide: the young Jewish woman's handbook for coming of age"
"The Jguy's guide: The GPS for Jewish teen guys"
"But God remembered: stories of women from Creation to the Promised Land" by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso
"For Heaven's sake" by Sandy Eisenberg Sasso
"Elijah's tears: stories for the Jewish holidays" by Sydelle Pearl
"The seven good years and other stories of I.L. Peretz”; translated and adapted by Esther Hautzig.

Penny Richardson—Librarian

NB: The second part of this article will appear in next month’s newsletter
Sunday morning, we were acutely aware that this weekend was almost at an end. We had waited for it and looked forward to it for so long and now... We all had enjoyed ourselves, so much. So, we made our way back to Kew and for the first time, we arrived without any issues. ♪ Ta da ♫!!

We grabbed a cup of tea and were invited to join one of 2 groups – Jewish calendar or an open discussion with 2 couples about inter-marriage. Michelle opted for introduction to the Jewish calendar whilst Deb Boock, Judith and I chose the discussion with the couples. This decision was fascinating. Both Jewish men had married Catholic wives. Their decisions not only had repercussions on the couples and their children, but also for both sets of parents, grandparents and siblings. When the bell sounded for lunch, I for one was disappointed that the discussion came to an end.

We all went to the BBQ lunch and had the proverbial photos taken, some of which have been included.

After the BBQ and photos, Judith and I found our way to Golds and met up with Deb Boock. And what a treasure trove. After some purchases and to finish our weekend, Deb introduced us to Glicks, where we had coffee and cake and surprisingly, more chatter.

I flew home Monday morning, but that saga is for telling at another time.

It was a wonderful weekend and I have fabulous memories and pictures to keep. From a personal note, I would like to thank Judith, Deb and Michelle. And a very special thank you to Rabbi Jonathan who treated us like Leo Baeck congregants and who was always approachable, friendly and instructional. Also, a vote of thanks from we Beit Shalom'ers for the wonderful Catering Committee. If this weekend should come to pass again, I highly recommend attendance.

Billie Hocking

Nominations Wanted

Nominations for the Adelaide Jewish Youth Achievement Award 2014 close on 15 February.

Please make the effort to fill in a nomination form on behalf of one of our many outstanding young achievers aged 15—30 years.

We are looking for someone who has made a major contribution to leadership in fostering cooperative activities among youth of both congregations or within their own congregation—someone who has participated in youth activities in Adelaide.

Do you know someone who has fostered a warm collegiate spirit among Jewish youth in Adelaide and drawn those at the margins, for any reason, to participate with their peers in Jewish youth activities?

Nomination forms were included with last month’s newsletter and can be obtained by contacting Marie in the office on 8362-8281 or email: bshalom@bshalomadel.com

All nominations are strictly confidential. Please act now! Give the judging panel a difficult task in choosing the $500 prize winner.

Jill Noble

Cont’d from page 5

Get to Know the Choir—Jill Noble

Cont’d from page 8

Enjoyable way of participating more fully because the choir music was all available in transliteration. (Singing in a foreign language was no particular issue, as much classical choral music I have sung previously was in Latin or German or French.) As probably more than half of the service is sung this makes Judaism the perfect religion for me! The other huge side benefit is that although the choir is small, it is populated with highly talented and musical individuals who make the experience very enjoyable and highly satisfying.

Jill Noble
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**Upcoming Events for your Diary:**
- **Sunday 2 March** — Sisterhood Book Club
- **Sunday 16 March** — Purim Spiel Auditions
- **Saturday 29 March** — Ed Argy’s 80th Birthday Kiddush
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CHOIR CO-ORDINATOR:
Janet Henrie ................................. 8362-8281

HONORARY SHAMUS:
Ron Hoenig, Janet Henrie, Sue Musry,
Ruth Gilbert, Penny Main ................................. 8362-8281

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