



# TERUAH

SEPTEMBER 2012 / ELUL 5772

## ● FIND YOUR 3-MONTH CALENDAR of events enclosed.

Dates to Note:

Rosh Hashanah: 16/17 Sept  
K'ver Avot: 23 September  
Yom Kippur: 25/26 Sept  
Succoth 30 – 7 Oct  
Simcha Torah: 7-8 Oct  
Shabbaton: 23 – 25 November

## ● NEXT ISSUE

The next issue of Teruah will be published in December 2012. The deadline for copy is 12th November.

## ● Next Sisterhood function!

Thursday 6 Sept at 7:30pm  
"Book Night" at Arcadia Bookshop  
26 Osborne St, Newmarket  
Come for a browse, a schmooze and a glass of wine

## Hold the date



### 'Kehila, A Jewish Community'

SHABBATON 23 – 25 November 2012

Carey Park, Henderson  
See poster on page 12  
See you there!

## Letter from the President

Dear Congregants

As the High Holiday days approach we as a community need to spend a little time reflecting during the days of Elul on how much our Jewish Community means to us and in particular Beth Shalom. It is a time of rest, of sweetness and joy followed up by thoughtful repentance. I am sure you are looking forward to the Chagim to rest, take stock and enjoy the pleasure of being with family and friends.

Our Student Rabbi, Dr Rachel Safman, will be with us from 14 September to 01 October and I do hope the congregation will extend hospitality to her as she will be here without her family. I am sure Rachel's presence over the High Holy Day period will benefit us all.

At the time of going to press the sanctuary refurbishment was on time and on budget until today as I write this. The inevitable hurdles in a project of this magnitude have been faced and with careful management I am pleased to say we are dealing admirably with each in turn. It has been all-consuming for a small group, but equally it has also been a pleasure to do this for the congregation.

In the course of the alterations, faulty and unsafe wiring was uncovered; some major maintenance has been undertaken and the building has been rewired. The motherboard on the 20 year-old alarm burnt out and we took the opportunity to upgrade and replace the alarm system. Difficulties with the surveillance equipment are also being repaired and upgraded. This Board is committed to keeping our spiritual home in safe and timely repair.

### Installation of a Permanent Rabbi

In this Teruah you will find the High Holy Day Annual Appeal enclosed in a blue envelope.

Please take the time to read this carefully. The congregation has shown a preference for having a permanent Rabbi at Beth Shalom. We must all be prepared to contribute generously to achieve this goal.

I wish you your family and those dear to you

L'shana tova and well over the fast

Judith Hunt

Source: <http://www.liveinternet.ru/users/925521/post134421373/>

## From the Editor

It is sobering to write today as I listen to the announcement of the deaths of three more NZ troops whose lives were lost in Afghanistan, only days after two others have been buried and a further six wounded. NZ as a nation is rarely exposed in such a raw way to the visceral sadness that is caused by the loss, or injury, to young lives who are serving their country in military combat. As Jewish New Zealanders we can contrast this to the constant threat that prevails in Israel; it is not a matter of comparing the two, rather of appreciating the enormous pressure on, and emotional fragility of, a nation whose youths are exposed daily to the threats in their region, particularly those threats specifically directed at Israel.

How can we respond to the military realities here and in the Middle East, do Jewish Kiwis have a responsibility to consider this? Can we effect change in any useful way from such a distance? In what ways are Israel's conflicts (internal and external) our conflicts, and how, if at all, does this situation impact on other conflicts in our world? Recently **ARZA** was launched in NZ, this political group provides a forum within which we can tackle these and many other questions. Here we can find a time and place to consider, debate and struggle with these issues: and then translate that into a vote in Israel that will count. This is a big and

broad dialogue – with plenty of positive actions to hear about and celebrate. If the cross border politics aren't enough to get you excited, consider the battle described in the recent TIME Magazine – "The Battle for the Heart of Jerusalem" – Jews everywhere need to be a part of this discussion too. To understand more about ARZA see the article on page 13.

A few weeks ago I was in Israel, and amongst a hectic schedule of meetings, I also had the privilege to attend the Presidents Conference, hosted by Shimon Peres. The conference was titled '**Facing Tomorrow**' and explored this theme from many perspectives: industry, technology, ageing, medicine, theology, economics and politics to name a few. Attended by some 4,000 delegates from across the Jewish and non-Jewish world this cornucopia of topics was addressed by some of the worlds best minds, including Dr Alan Bollard, Governor of the Reserve Bank of NZ. To listen to any of the lectures or panel discussions from the conference, I recommend you visit the website: [www.presidentconf.org.il/2012](http://www.presidentconf.org.il/2012), consider taking time to listen to the Panel which included Rachel Korpus, President of the Zionist Federation of NZ, who presented on 'To Be Jewish: The Challenge of Being Jewish in the Diaspora', an excellent and insightful session.

It gave me reason to pause and reflect on the passion we Jews have traditionally fostered for learning: exploring ideas and

growing our knowledge. By the time this goes to print, we will have just finished **LIMMUD NZ** – and I know that it will be have been another astonishing moment on my Jewish journey, an exceptional learning opportunity delivered to my doorstep in kiwi-land. How fortunate this community is to have these inspiring, empowering, shared experiences: filling our community's reservoirs and challenging us to keep making being Jewish relevant everyday. My heartfelt thanks go to all those who have dedicated so many hours to creating another wildly successful LIMMUD NZ. If you are inspired to continue with your Jewish education over the coming year – no need to wait until the next LIMMUD! Read the articles about the ongoing learning available to us on a weekly basis - the Melton Mini-School (pg 16), History Classes (pg 9) and Talmud Study sessions (pg 8) offered by our own extraordinary educator, Udi Dvorkin.

Thank you for the appreciative feedback that followed the last Teruah, we hope that with your support this publication will continue from strength to strength. Please feel free to contact me or Christine in the office, if you have a story you would like to contribute.

Wishing you and your families Shona Tova and a meaningful fast.  
...and happy reading...

Alison Dyson



Claire, Peter and granddaughter Lily celebrate at Anton and Vanessa's wedding



Indiana Grace

## Beth Shalom Buzz

Hello again from the Beth Shalom Buzz. I can't believe that it is already September and the High Holidays are upon us! Lots of wonderful news to share, so let's get right into it.

First, a welcome to our newest members: Marcus Cohen, Idit Forester and her daughter, and Shelley Tenenbaum and her family. Many of you already know Shelley as she has been involved at the shul in many capacities over the past year!

A huge Mazel Tov to Chelsea Rothbart. Following on from her Eden Arts Award last year and invitations to present her art at an exhibition near Hamilton earlier this year, Chelsea has been featured in an award winning review for her exhibit which is currently on display. For those who would like to take a look, the link is <http://artweekauckland.co.nz/artzine/review/melting-familiarity>.

Auckland lawyer Sarah Janine Katz has been appointed a Judge of the High Court. The new Judge will sit in Auckland, commencing on 6 August 2012. Mazel Tov to Sarah on a great achievement!

Congratulations go out to Anton Bruell who was married in mid-July. We wish him and his new wife, Vanessa, a lifetime of joy and happiness together.

We also wish many years of wedded bliss to Talia and Itai Fleissig, the daughter and new son-in-law of Rachel Dekel. The couple married in Israel at what looks to have been the party of the season! Rachel and her son Jesse travelled overseas to share in the celebration which included a flash mob!

The stork has been busy around town of late. Pauline Miller is proud to announce the arrival of another grandson, Daniel Meyer Alizade, brother to Jacob, Benjamin and Zachary. Also we wish

**Continued on page 3**





# Preparing for the Holidays

Rachel Safman offers us some reflections in preparation for the High Holy Days. Rachel holds a doctorate in Sociology and is currently completing her training at the Ziegler School of Rabbinical Studies. Rachel has had experience with communities around the world, including Perth, Australia and Singapore as well as various communities in the USA. We look forward to welcoming her to Auckland and sharing services with her over the High Holidays.

## Preparing for the Holidays

Dr. Rachel Safman, American Jewish University

Our discussions of *teshuvah* (loosely translated, "repentance" or "returning to God with a repentant heart") tend to

focus on the ten-day period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but traditional Jewish thought designates an entire month for the "spiritual accounting" which forms the foundation for our annual efforts to "clear the books" with the Divine. The entire month of Elul (the 28 or 29 days immediately preceding Rosh Hashanah) are, by tradition, supposed to be occupied with a systematic spiritual inventory of our conduct during the year that is rapidly drawing to a close.

The term *cheshbon nefesh* (literally, an "accounting of the soul") was coined by Menachem Mendel Lefin, an important early leader of the 19th-century Haskalah movement in Galicia. His book *Cheshbon ha-Nefesh*, first published in 1809, set out a program which led his followers through a rigorous examination of their thoughts and behavior, the aim of which was refining and elevating their conduct -- and not only with respect to matters conventionally regarded as 'religious'. Like all the luminaries of the early Musar movement (an effort to codify the ethical teachings of the Jewish tradition), Lefin believed that Judaism and Jewish values should inform all aspects of our conduct, including our interactions with friends, with business associates, with family members and, of course, with God. His program of self-improvement consisted of a series of exercises that extended over hundreds of hours and took decades to master.

I think it is safe to say that there are few among us who are both willing and able to commit themselves to such an extended

and rigorous program of personal reform. What is more, our tradition recognizes this, and while the study of Musar remains an active stream of thought and practice in the contemporary Jewish world, it is pursued by only a small minority of those who consider themselves Jewishly committed. A far more normative -- and I would argue, realistic and sustainable -- goal is for each of us to commit to a scaled-down set of Musar practices during the month Elul and, in this way, to slowly condition ourselves to a set of habits that will hopefully bring us closer to being our best, most Godly selves.

In preparation for the holidays, I invite you to join me, over the next few weeks, in setting aside just a few minutes at each day's end (or during a few quiet moments in the middle of the day, if you find that easier) to ask yourself: What have I done in the past day that I am particularly proud of? What have I done that I regret or feel I might have handled better? Will those who had dealings with me in the past 24 hours walk away with the impression of me that I would like to leave? If not, how might I have handled our interaction differently?

You might want to take down your answers to these questions in a ledger, perhaps an actual journal (paper or electronic), perhaps as something you store away in your mental archives for later examination. Then, at the end of each week, maybe during a quiet moment on Shabbat, review what you have recorded and ask yourself if what you see is who you would like to be during the coming year.

## Buzz from page 2

Pauline a Happy Birthday, she recently celebrated her 70th with a lovely afternoon tea for family and friends at Pakuranga Retirement Village.

We also send a hearty Mazel Tov to Judith Hunt who became a grandmother for the first time! Judith's daughter Stephanie and her husband Stephen welcomed their first child, Indiana Grace, earlier this winter.

Finally, we'd like to send lots of luck to those students (both big and small) who will be taking exams in the coming months. A special shout out goes to Nan Jensen who is finishing her Law Degree and to Lenny Bloksberg who is completing his MBA. We know you will all excel and you always do us proud!

May you all be inscribed in the Book of Life for another wonderful year. Until the next Buzz, L'shana Tova. ☺



Daniel Meyer Alizade

## A New Ner Tamid for Beth Shalom's Refurbished Sanctuary

Conceived by artist Helen Schamroth and designer Michael Smythe, the new eternal light reflects its place in New Zealand while paying homage to our traditions.



The new lamp is based on the motif of the reconstructed Golden Menorah at the ancient Temple of Jerusalem, the menorah design wraps around each corner of the triangular lamp. The motif is defined by cut-outs of tumbling pohutukawa leaves. The menorah concept is echoed in the etched glass of the bimah.

lines the inside of the lamp, creating a glow of warm light through the leaf cut-outs. An etched Magen David forms the base of the lamp. While the new eternal light evokes our past, its design is clearly rooted in NZ and its manufacture uses technology that is relevant to today.

Fabricated from 'aged' brass metal, the design in the Ner Tamid is created by a technique that uses very fast jets of water to cut the brass. Amber coloured perspex

Our new contemporary Ner Tamid is being donated to Beth Shalom by the Burial and Benevolent Society in memory of Fred Silberstein. It has been created to coincide with the major refurbishment of the sanctuary.

# The Place of Place

JENNIFER GLASER

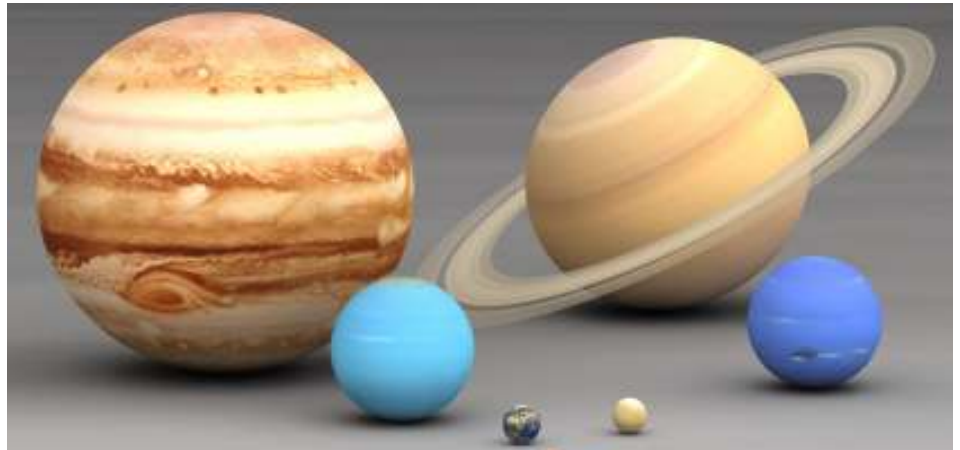
"The world is, minimally and forever, a place-world." — Edward Casey

Where were you born? How many times have you moved? What makes a place special? When you travel, what makes you feel at home? Could we live, but not live anywhere?

Over the past several years, there has been a renewed interest in the role that place plays in Jewish life. It follows a general Western rethinking of identity from one in which identity is situated in a set of mental contents (the mind-body split in which "who I am" is given by my value system or a set of beliefs, that are only incidentally housed in a body), to a more holistic approach that takes our physical presence in the world more fully into account. This approach sees mind and body as aspects of a single, whole person, (whereby "who I am" is at least in part determined by my actions, my relationships, and the physical environment in which I live).

We might say that if modernity's focus was on space/time, the contemporary focus is on place/temporal experience, and with it, on notions of dwelling, inhabiting, and heritage. With this new focus comes an acknowledgement of the role of place in building individual as well as social and communal identities. On an individual level, this has meant reclaiming the importance of our body in thinking about identity and, with it, Jewish identity. Not only are our bodies the most intimate "place" we inhabit, but through our body's movement in space we express meaning in our daily lives and experience the world around us.

Communally, we have just begun to puzzle over what this means for collective identity. We are beginning to pay increasing attention to the way our communities are located



Source: Lempascal, Solar system planets size comparison, 2012, CC

in and shaped by their physical environments, the patterns of movement and the historical meanings that are embedded in place. Asking where someone was born is not merely a conversation starter; it offers us a window into the internalized patterns through which an individual organizes and negotiates the world. (Would I be the same person if I had spent my childhood years growing up in Paris, France, rather than Paris, Texas?)

Attending to place helps us not only to attend to the origins and construction of Jewish cultural and social diversity, but also to explore the ways in which our physical environment affects our identity in the details of everyday life. In what ways does the architecture of a school impact a student's experience? Does the architecture of a synagogue make Judaism seem grand or intimate? What effect does this have on the Jewish experience and identity of its members? What purposes and commitments are put forward through our design and furnishing of the spaces we inhabit?

Much of the work on place is happening in the field of geography, and there is a growing Jewish interest in applying its insights to our thinking about Jewish identity, community, and peoplehood. In a beautiful book titled *Space and Place*, the American geographer Yi-Fu Tuan distinguishes between space as movement and place as rest (a pause, a dwelling). Place

is space embedded with meaning. We all know the difference between a house and a home: A house is a physical set of spatial parameters, while a home emerges from a life of meaning lived within that spatial/temporal framework. To come home is more than to come to a specific building; it is to come back to one's center, to the interpretative structures, even the obstacles, that lead us to navigate our lives in a certain way. We might say that the challenge of Jewish education today is to make Judaism a "home" in the lives of the next generation.

In this overview, I will focus on three interests that emerge in current writings on place.

The first concerns the way physical form shapes our cultural imagination. Our relation to geographic place is three dimensional, and the contours of this space shape our orientation in the world. When I visited Cape Town, South Africa, for example, I was intrigued by the way people there spoke about the surrounding hills. The hills gave them a feeling of nestedness, even constraint, while at the same time leading their eyes ever upward. They shared the ways in which this experience contributed to the spiritual life of their community. The experience of growing up in Australia was different; there, the eye was led outward, toward an expansive horizon. In Israel, geography shapes our interpretation of both the desert

**Continued on page 6**

# Toda Raba - We Thank You for Your Donation



As Rosh Hashanah approaches, we would like take this opportunity to sincerely thank the many community members whose generous donations have made a significant contribution to Beth Shalom over the last year.

This vital financial assistance has enabled the board of management to continue to serve our community with the many projects that we undertake.

- Specifically your gifts have contributed to:
- Sanctuary refurbishment
- Professional development for a singing group
- Appointment of Programme Director for Beth Shalom (yet to be finalised!)
- Continued provision of Ma'ariv Dinners
- The Shabbaton
- An expanded Teruah

Our Hebrew School is to receive a substantial grant from The Pinchus Foundation and the Sanctuary

Refurbishment has received a significant donation from the Raye Blumenthal Freedman Trust.

On behalf of the Beth Shalom community, we would like to thank all those members who contribute to our finances and we gratefully acknowledge and thank the following donors who have contributed funds beyond their Membership Contributions:

Harold and Joyce Baker  
Sarah Berman and Stephen Rothman  
Paula Browning  
The Bruel Family  
Burial and Benevolent Fund  
Rachel Campbell  
Dan and Valerie Cohen  
The Dyson Family  
Stephen and Virginia Fisher  
Charles and Tana Fishman  
John and Ann Gelb  
Stella Harris  
Leora Hirsh  
Wally and Adele Hirsh  
Naomi Johnson  
Robert Knight  
David Kranz and Karen Jaffe  
Dennis and Stephanie Markson  
Naomi Meltzer  
The Morley Cavell Trust

Hezi and Sally Natan  
Ann Paykel  
John and Jill Pezaro  
Laurence and Claire Reynolds  
Roger Reynolds  
Rachel Rich-Dennyss  
Ellen and Richard Selkon  
Gordon and Madeline Stern  
Debbie Swiatek  
Paul and Wendy Wilton  
Bill Zucker  
Several Anonymous Donors

We apologise if your name has been omitted from this list and we will endeavour to include it in future publications.

Your gifts will resonate today and into the future.

Wishing you and your families Shona Tova

Neil Rothbart  
Beth Shalom Honorary Treasurer

THE PROGRESSIVE JEWISH  
CONGREGATION OF AUCKLAND  
TRUST BOARD 211960

Charities Commission Registration  
Number CC29542

## To Our Valued Volunteers

*Kol HaKavod and Toda Raba*



Source: Vistamommy, Wikimedia Commons

Many dedicated volunteers make Beth Shalom a vital, caring and inspirational place.

They work in our Hebrew school,  
They organise and lead services,  
They care when community members need care,  
They prepare, cook and clean up, design and implement,  
They maintain our garden, grounds and building,  
They host and make welcome visitors to our community,  
They teach and mentor,  
And they agonise over decisions, accounts, management issues....and

so much more.

**'They'** are you...and **'they'** are me. To each of **you**, and to all of **us**, we say **"Kol HaKavod"** for a job well done!  
With out each of you, we would be nothing at all.

Toda Raba.

May you and your families enjoy a Shana Tova and a meaningful fast.

From the Community of Beth Shalom and the Board of Management



## Place of Place from page 4

and the Mediterranean shore. In the Jewish textual imagination, the desert carries with it the experience of awe, fragility, timelessness, and spiritual encounter. Yet in modern Zionist terms, the desert was considered a void — an untamed landscape awaiting settlement, thereby transforming mythic space into new modern dwelling places.<sup>1</sup> Urban spaces, too, capture different meanings of place: Tel Aviv's White City sits in contrast to Jerusalem's City of Gold. Jewish place is open to an additional dimension. It can be makom or HaMakom: a place in which God dwells, a name for God, "the place" as an orienting center. Makom brings with it the politics of dwelling: sharing place, dividing place, multiple expressions of allegiance.

The physicality of place shapes our imagination at a micro, or bodily, level as well. Gestures and actions become internalized as meaning structures through which we relate to the world around us. High/low, left/right, in/out, inhale/exhale, hold/release, gather/scatter: "All my limbs shall say 'Who is like You, O Lord?'" (Psalms, 35:10) The choreography of prayer — sitting, standing, bowing in the amidah, rising for kaddish, sitting in the sukkah, shucklen, placing one's hands on one's children's heads with a Shabbat blessing, and sitting in the same seat around the table each Friday night. Our bodies turn space into sites of meaning.

In *The Poetics of Space*, French philosopher Gaston Bachelard speaks to the way home constitutes a cultural space of meaning, identity, and memory. My grandmother's side table, the family's kiddush cup and candlesticks, the contents of the bookshelf and the kitchen, cupboards of clothing (the *shtreimel*, the knitted kippah, or the kibbutz shirt), items from our travels, all embody our personal narrative. The home also reflects the place where one is in life; it conveys socioeconomic and family cues transmitted through choices of fabric, furnishings, and style. Home



is not just physical, but sensual; it is transported through the melodies we sing, through spices, through festivities and through the telling of stories. It travels with the immigrant, reflecting individual experiences, collective history, and socioeconomic standing: a poor man's gefilte fish, the numerous traditions of charoset. All these place us within the kaleidoscope of Jewish possibilities.

The architecture of place also reflects changing social values — a changing relationship between public and private, vertical to horizontal authority; and this, too, has entered the intimacy of the home. For example, the open-plan kitchen reflects shifting attitudes toward gender and family life, giving expression to changing sensibilities about what should be visible and what should be kept behind closed doors.

Place is also an internalized metaphor. In the European context, the idea of the family home was a multigenerational space where people connected through genealogy, and those who dwelt with them merged in the shared house, or *casa*. The house established occupations and passed on traditions.<sup>2</sup> Such homes, as sites of meaning, are challenged by modern mobility. In the American experience of constant movement — to college, to work, or to another job in another city — home ceases to be constitutive of a multigenerational identity. Place becomes contracted, carried in

one's travels through symbolic items that transport a narrative from place to place — the immigrant's experience naturalized.

A third contemporary interest in place is in the textured traces of Jewish presence as it has permeated local history and culture in the public domain. For example, traces of occupations and industries (the fur and clothing districts), the stories of street names, the history of old stones used in new walls, the doorpost with its niche for a mezuzah — all carry traces of Jewish place memory. Shifting Jewish neighborhoods as well as our cemeteries and historic sites remind us of Jewish worlds nested in a larger civic sphere.

**Through all of this, we as Jews seek to find our place in the world and to build a world in a place. Place is space embedded with meaning.**

Reprinted with permission from *Sh'ma* (shma.com) June 2012, as part of a larger conversation on the relationship of place to creativity.

Dr. Jennifer Glaser is co-director of the Israel Center of Philosophy in Education (philosophy4life.org) and an independent educational and community consultant, working in Israel and abroad. She can be reached at [glaserjen@gmail.com](mailto:glaserjen@gmail.com).

<sup>1</sup> Yael Zerubavel, "Desert and Settlement: Space Metaphors and Symbolic Landscapes in the Yishuv and Early Israeli Culture," in *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, Julia Brauch, author/editor, and Anna Lipphardt and Alexandra Nocke, editors, pp.201-222, (Ulster, U.K., Ashgate) 2008

<sup>2</sup> Joelle Bahloul, "The Memory House: Time and Place in Jewish Immigrant Culture in France," in *HouseLife: Space, place and family in Europe*, eds. Donna Birdwell-Pheasant and Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga, pp. 239-250,

(Oxford, UK., Berg)



### Steve Denenberg, CEO of the UPJ considers the year ahead

As we approach the High Holy days it is appropriate to reflect on the past year and to plan for the year ahead. As an individual this reflection should include taking stock of achievements and errors and seeking forgiveness from God and any person that we may have wronged. As an organisation and a Movement it also offers a timely opportunity to consider recent achievements and failures and to set goals for the coming year.

Recent developments in Israel suggest that we could be witnessing the start of the long-overdue process required for Israel to recognize Progressive and Conservative Judaism, as well as other non-Orthodox groups, as "authentic" streams of Judaism.

The State recognition and payment of Rabbi Miri Gold and 14 other Progressive Rabbis is a significant step forward, notwithstanding the conditions and the limited number of places to be funded (as opposed to the thousands of Orthodox rabbis who are paid by the State). Similarly,

recent research showed that 8% of Israeli Jews describe themselves as being affiliated to Progressive or Conservative Judaism, in comparison to 7% who call themselves Haredi (ultra-Orthodox). In addition the number of Progressive congregations continues to grow from year to year and the number of Israelis becoming Progressive Rabbis also increases each year.

World-wide, Progressive Judaism is the largest stream of Judaism, with more than 1.8 million members in 45 countries and ARZENU, the political Zionist arm of the Progressive movement around the world, is a central part of the largest coalition in the World Zionist Organisation.

At the same time though, we need to reflect on the fact that assimilation is increasing in all streams of Judaism; relevance to younger generations is a massive challenge to all religious groups; and Jewish literacy is a real problem within our congregations. It is also true that the response of the ultra-Orthodox Chief Rabbinate in Israel to the changes there has been little short of an open declaration of war on non-Orthodox Jewish groups.

So, is our "cup" half full or half empty? During my recent visits to congregations in Poland, Israel, South Africa, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria I have not ceased to be amazed by the dedication of the rabbis, staff and volunteers; astounded by the amount of work they put in to caring for their congregation; and staggered by the extent of their social justice work in the Jewish and wider community.

There is no question in my mind that we have some serious challenges ahead in our region and in Israel, particularly with regard to developing much greater pride in who we are and what we, as Progressive Jews, do in and for the community. However, I am increasingly of the view that we are at the beginning of the inevitable process of Progressive Judaism being properly acknowledged in Israel, allowing the Jewish State to be the home for all Jews, and for it to become the religious and spiritual home for increasing numbers of people around the world.

May you and those you love be inscribed for a year of good health and happiness. *Shana Tova.*

## Hannah prepares for her Bat Mitzvah and invites us all to help



Bogdan Giuscă, A dog swimming, 2005 CC

Hello, my name is Hannah Hoff and I will become Bat Mitzvah on the 8th of December 2012.

I was born in Singapore, my family moved to Auckland when I was one year old. I went to Kadimah School for 7 years and last year moved to St Cuthbert's College, which I really enjoy. I love all sport but especially netball and tennis which I play for my school.

Part of my study for becoming Bat Mitzvah is learning about tzedakah

and tikkun olam- helping to make the world a better place. For my Bat Mitzvah project I have chosen to help the SPCA as I love animals and they play a big part in my life.

I would really appreciate it if people could support me in this project by donating un-opened pet food, towels, bedding and toys, you can leave them in the box I will provide. I will deliver these to the SPCA.

Thank You.

## Bagels and Talmud A Mouthwatering Combination!



**Dane Giraud gives us his impressions of the Talmud study sessions in the Library at Beth Shalom,**

**Defying genre, style and all expectations** With the smell of warm bagels and good coffee thick in the air an inaugural group of Talmud students were guided through the first page of "Berachot" (Blessings) - the opening

volume of this corner stone of traditional Jewish leaning. First we explored the laws surrounding the reciting of the shema. A fantastic introduction explained the page set up and identified the many commentaries provided. The group then split into pairs to commence wrestling over some truly inspiring text. The Talmud is the greatest single work to deal with the humanities ever, in any culture. Defying genre, style and all expectations, open a page anywhere in this epic work and you'll be instantly confronted by history, tradition, rich psychological insights, a surprising amount of humor and artful discourse; often all to be found in a single line. It strikes me as a great shame that the Talmud doesn't play more of a role in the lives of many Progressive Jews.

**Bringing adult education to Beth Shalom** The Ritual Committee, in collaboration with our Shaliach-educator Udi Dvorkin, has introduced this programme as a way of bringing exciting and challenging adult education to Beth Shalom.

Study sessions are every second Sabbath and begin at 9.00am, and are followed by the morning Shabbat service. We look forward to other students joining the 'chavruta' (friends study circle). Students may choose to stay for the Shabbat service, or not. Either way it is a personally extending and genuinely rewarding way to start your Shabbat.

Come and take the journey with friends old and new and try the Talmud

### SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS

Do you have a special birthday coming up that you would like to share with your friends at Beth Shalom? The Ritual Committee is very happy to help with celebrations by offering an aliyah or other honour such as scheduling a drash or service leading. You might just want to organise a special kiddush following a service. Celebrating special occasions together is what community is all about so we welcome your call.

### YOU MAKE A COMMUNITY

Are you looking for a way to help your community but are no sure what it is you have to offer? Maybe you can only spare a limited amount of time and feel it not enough to bother stepping forward? As many of you would know, volunteers are the lifeblood of our shul. Ritual C'ttee are constantly being presented exciting initiatives just waiting for someone to step forward for them to take flight. A couple of hours, or just one day a month could be enough to sustain a really exciting project. Please let Ritual Committee know if you are keen to help in anyway.

**Remember: you don't have to be a committee member to contribute to the work we do. Any thoughts, questions or concerns will always be welcomed.**

## Ritual Corner

"Welcome to the new Ritual Corner" by Dane Giraud and Harvey Livschitz. Here they discuss the job of the Ritual Committee and consider the community's task in approaching the High Holy Days

A Ritual Committee's job is to educate, facilitate and ruminate on all matters ritual in the running of a synagogue, "This is a responsibility we at Beth Shalom take extremely seriously, many of our decisions directly affect the way the community engages with their Judaism. For this reason we want to open up some of our discussions and challenges by contributing a section in Teruah" say the team. "In the coming issues, we will share some of the sources, traditions and personalities that enable us arrive at decisions that respect our unique minhag and the shul, Jewish tradition and our status as Progressive Jews".

For our first article we would like to share some perspectives on Forgiveness.

### Isn't it a sin to not forgive? Some thoughts on forgiveness

With the focus turning to our behavior over the past year some of us may be preparing to ask forgiveness of someone, or at the very least be using the season to patch-up with friends, co-workers or family members. Some of us could be called upon to

consider someone else's plea... and some of us will have already decided that the appeal will fall on deaf ears.

But as Jews, is this acceptable behavior? Isn't it a sin to not forgive?

The Talmud explains that even if someone has hurt us terribly we should find the strength to forgive them, at least to the point where we can move on personally and not wish ill upon the person. A complete inability to forgive can be seen as a sign of cruelty; wishing badly on someone, a sign of weakness.

**Still planning to deny that person? Consider this...** Atonement for sins committed between individuals can only be granted once the offended party has forgiven the offender. One could view choosing not to forgive as putting a barrier between another and G-d. This might sound an archaic view and hardly 'progressive' but it's an image worth reflecting upon even as an exercise. Was the act someone committed against you so bad that'd you'd wish such a barrier upon the person?

**Wavering yet?** It may also be worth considering our "obligations without measure" recited as part of our daily prayers. One of our obligations, as Jews, is to "make peace where there is strife". We as a

*Continued on page 9*



## Ritual Corner from page 8

people are commanded to find peaceful resolutions to conflicts, not to prolong or exasperate them. If granting forgiveness could end a conflict situation we as Jews should leap on the opportunity.

**Still not convinced?** Here is another image for you to ponder. Shalom doesn't only mean peace, it also means "whole" or "complete". As the "collective body" of the Jewish people would we be helping ourselves by denying blood to our own finger, hand or foot? This is why we are all called upon to make peace with each other in the concentrated time provided us by the High Holy Days – to make the job of the prosecuting angel difficult. If all Jews are busy making peace at this time, becoming "whole" as a people, what would

the prosecuting angel have to report back? "What can I say?! They all look like angels (dressed in white) and are making peace with each other! I find no case against them!?" The thought of a happy "whole" community is another reason to examine if any the slight committed against you is really so unforgivable.

**What if you really want to forgive but feel the person's apology insincere?** That's different.

According to the Shulchan Aruch one may withhold forgiveness for the good of the person asking. There is no doubt that some "repeat offenders" are only able to continue operating due to the goodwill of others. If certain people simply see forgiveness as a "get out of jail card" that enables them to roll the dice with people's feelings

yet again, granting forgiveness could even be looked upon as irresponsible. Forgiveness might be a dance that takes two, but it certainly isn't a performance.

If we *can* forgive we *should* forgive. Only we know within us if granting forgiveness is possible. In Judaism there are levels of forgiveness as there are levels of tzedakah; just because you didn't reach the highest level, doesn't mean you didn't perform a mitzvah. To the contrary. While you may not get to a point where you want to continue a relationship with a person who hurt you, you may have still allowed them the chance to voice their regret, and will likely have let go of a lot of personal anguish in the process.

The rest is your call.

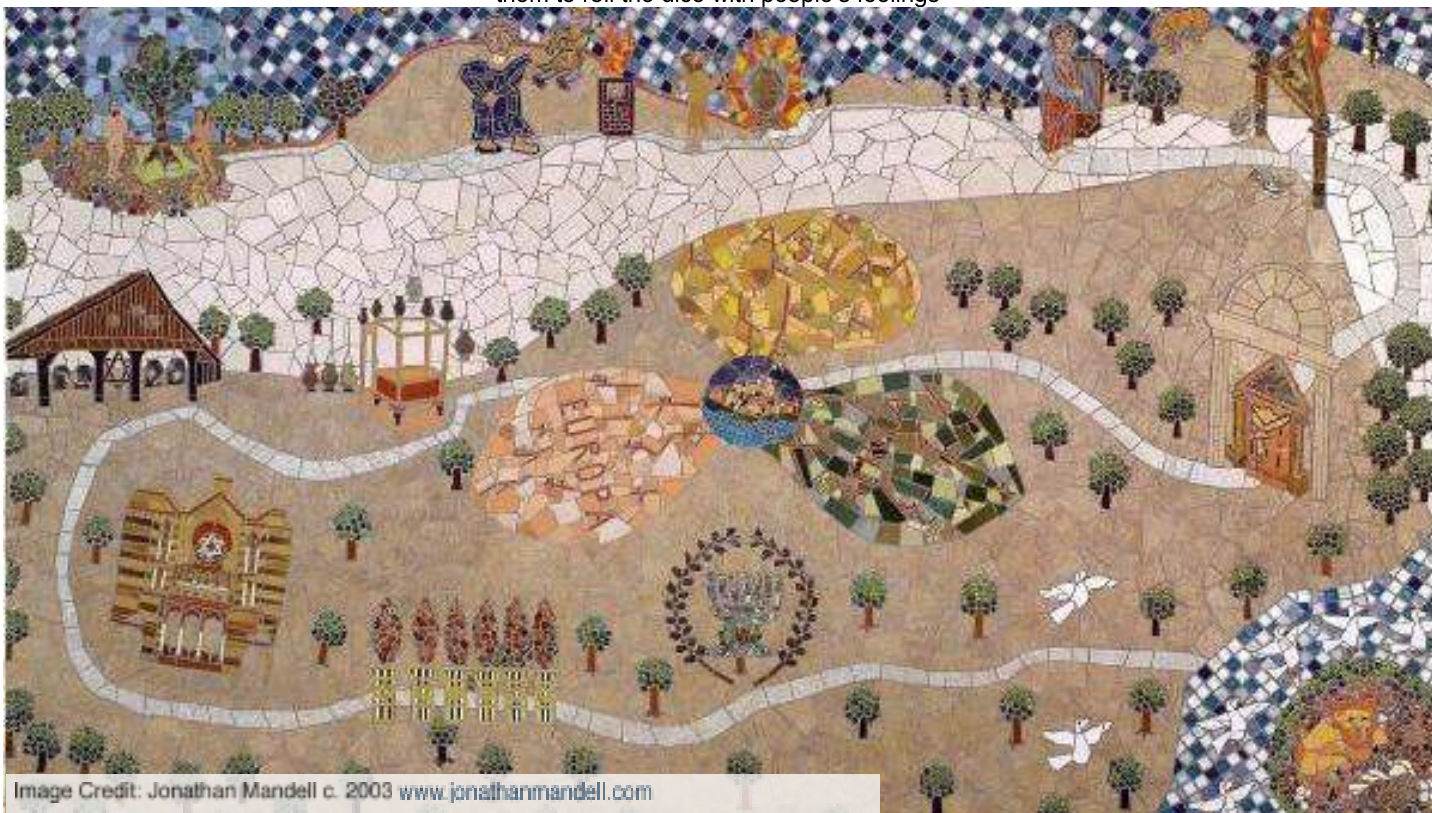


Image Credit: Jonathan Mandell c. 2003 [www.jonathanmandell.com](http://www.jonathanmandell.com)

## New Perspectives in "PATHWAYS IN JEWISH HISTORY"

**Rob Bernstein reflects on the lecture series delivered by Udi Dvorkin, and concludes: "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity"**

**The content of the series is completely different** to any English history of Judaism that I have previously encountered. The first 20 lectures covered the social and political history of Jews: from Bronze-age pre-history (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) through the Temple times, Prophetic times, Judges, Jesus and Christianity, Babylonia/Iraq and the competing Talmuds, feudal Europe and the Crusades.

There are many more periods to come: Blood Libels, the Inquisition, the Messiah, the Jewish enlightenment and so it goes on following the threads of our people's history.

**A master of revealing minute and fascinating details.** Descendant of a long line of Jewish scholars, Udi Dvorkin is a history graduate, and has great sympathy toward Judaism with its quirks and towering strengths. While this lecture series entitled "Pathways in Jewish History" is sweeping in its scope, Udi is a master of revealing minute and fascinating details.

A group of devoted students has established itself as a result of his inspired teaching; they would have to be very hard pressed to miss a lecture!

**Join our learning table** Combining passion, humour and an extraordinary depth of knowledge both of Judaism, its history and its people's history, is a rare mix. I encourage you to join our learning table - the scheduled topics appear on the web site, so have a look and see what lies ahead!

**Lectures are on Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm.**



## Jenna Bernstein reflects on what Hebrew School has meant to her...



## Bar & Batmitzvah chaverim meet in Wellington

**Lifelong friends** Beth Shalom Hebrew School has provided me with not only an amazing Jewish education, but with lifelong friends. I started going to Hebrew School when I was 5 and I remember being welcomed with

open arms. The art projects we did proved intriguing as we learnt about the Festival of Lights and the Alef-bet.

**Those Bar and Bat Mitzvah kids looked so grown up! My love for**

Judaism flourished as I continued through the Hebrew School system. I would look at the Bat-Mitzvah kids and think how big and cool they were. I would never have guessed that just in a few short years, I would have the honour of performing my own. As our bar and bat mitzvahs grew nearer, our lessons spent with each other at the shul lengthened. My bat mitzvah changed me in ways I had never thought possible. I was thinking in completely different ways, reading Hebrew fluently, gaining confidence. I had conquered something that I would hold dear to me, and that was certainly something of which to be proud.

After our bar and bamitzvahs, the Seniors in the Beth Shalom Hebrew School went to Wellington and we met up with other Jewish kids our age. It was a team and connection building trip that was very fun!

# The Israeli Corner

An exciting new opportunity for Israeli kids growing up in Auckland!

**The Israeli Corner** was created to strengthen and develop the connection of Israeli children living in New Zealand to Israeli culture and Hebrew language.

Roni Neeley says that, “Even though I was born and raised in Israel, and I try to teach and raise my children in the spirit of my culture, as we live in New Zealand, I was aware that some of this cultural background is lost. This program is an opportunity to give kids a taste of Israeli childhood through songs, games, stories, food and language. They can enjoy what they learn with new friends and share it with their families.”

The sessions are taught in Hebrew, encouraging the kids to speak as much Hebrew as possible. Through fun activities we introduce a variety of subjects, all with a relationship to Israel, such as important places in Israel, Israeli food, childhood games, Israel in space, important holidays and dates in the Israeli calendar.

We would love to receive any input from

***Kids of Israeli families are invited to come and join The Israeli Corner!***

the community about this activity, there is always room for improvement and any ideas and suggestions are welcomed.

ZFNZ is the organiser and Sponser of this program. It is facilitated by Roni Neeley ([ronishulman@yahoo.com](mailto:ronishulman@yahoo.com)) and

ZFNZ Shaliach Udi Dvorkin ([Shaliach@zfnz.org.nz](mailto:Shaliach@zfnz.org.nz)).

ילדים, בואו נזמין עוד חברים להיצטרף לפינה, שילחו לי ציור, סיפור או כל רעיון אחר להזמין ילדים אחרים להיטרף אלינו. ההזמנות הזכות יפורסמו בעיתון הבא. להתראות.



ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית  
World Zionist Organization



הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל  
Jewish Agency for Israel





Zionist Federation of Great Britain and Ireland  
ההסתדרות הציונית של גבול אנגליה

# "הפינה הישראלית"

**הפינה שלכם באוקלנד, מטרתה לשמר את הקשר של  
הילדים הישראלים השוהים בחו"ל  
עם התרבות והרוח הישראלית.**

**פעילות שבועית לגילאי 6-8, ימי ראשון בשעות 12:30-14:00  
כל הפעילויות יתקיימו בעברית**

הפעילות תתקיים בבית שלום, רחוב Epsom, Manakau 180  
לפרטים ניתן לפנות לאודי דבורקין 0278623229 shaliach@zfnz.org.il  
או לרני שולמן 021454882 ronfishulman@yahoo.com  
המפגשים יתקיימו אחר בימי שישי או ראשון, בהתאם להיענות המשתתפים  
מתחילים בשבוע שלאחר פורים, שבוע לפני סוף מרץ



Zionist Federation of Australia  
ההסתדרות הציונית של אוסטרליה



Zionist Federation of Canada  
ההסתדרות הציונית של קנדה





## Hebrew School Cooks Up A Kabbalat Shabbat Storm

Classes Alef and Bet celebrated a Kabbalat Shabbat together by designing and making their own challah cloths and baking delicious challah for the occasion. Their teachers, Jude Berman and Shelly Tennenbaum were delighted with everyone's enthusiasm. What a great way to learn brachot!



### High Holidays Word Search

At the bottom of the page is a list of words. These words are hidden in the puzzle. The words have been placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - frontwards or backwards. When you locate a word, draw a circle around it.

J	R	K	A	K	V	Q	V	H	A	U	R	E	T	I
T	Y	T	S	P	L	F	A	J	G	R	Q	R	H	R
I	H	T	A	B	P	L	P	Y	C	O	C	U	O	Q
Y	L	A	F	S	L	L	I	Y	O	S	N	P	N	N
O	A	J	K	I	H	Z	E	T	N	H	X	P	E	U
S	V	M	F	A	K	L	E	W	T	H	S	I	Y	E
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I	E	A	H	L	H	R	R	V	F	N	Y	Q	H	N
A	H	I	E	C	H	O	A	A	U	A	H	I	O	I
Z	Z	S	L	S	A	R	T	Q	I	H	R	Y	F	D
M	L	P	I	A	I	M	B	M	O	M	A	V	A	R
J	P	T	H	M	H	E	T	E	K	I	A	H	R	E

TERUAH  
TEKIAH  
MACHZOR  
NEILAH  
SELICHOT

YAMIM NORAIM  
HONEY  
YIZKOR  
TISHREI  
SELICHOT

TEFILLAH  
ROSH HASHANAH  
SHEVARIM  
KOL NIDRE  
APPLE

TZEDAKAH  
YOM KIPPUR  
SHOFAR  
TESHUVAH  
TASHLICH

Can you make your own  
Rosh Hashanah Cards? Have a look at  
the cards here for some great ideas!



## Fun (but no sun) for Habo Campers

"Aged between eight and eighteen? Went on a Habo camp this holidays? No? Why not?!" **Sarah Livschitz** reports on a great camp experience.

Over the winter school holidays, Habonim Dror held two fantastic camps. Mini Machane was a shabbaton for chanichim aged eight to thirteen years, Machane Choref was a week-long camp for the older chanichim – those aged 14 to 18 years.



included a delicious Shabbat dinner, a nighttime game of 'spotlight', and a trip to Parakai hot pools! As camp was held at Mangawhai Heads, chanichim also spent an afternoon at the beach. Sand castles, delicious chocolate brownies and a homemade limbo pole accompanied the afternoon. Organised and run by our very own Tali Josephs, this camp was a real milestone for Habonim Dror, with the largest number of chanichim ever attending Mini Machane. Both parents and chanichim are raving about the quality of the event.

### Jewish Journeys on the Wild West Coast:

Just a week later, Madrichim were again packing their bags. This time we were headed for Houghton's Bush Camp, which is located just a few kilometers from Muriwai beach. The theme was Masa Yehudi, or Jewish Journeys. Chanichim were taken on a journey through time, learning about the Jews of Europe, the Enlightenment, the idea of the New Jew, and Jews in the Diaspora and Israel today.

**Highlights:** On Wednesday, we went on a hike that ended up being just 55 minutes long, though it was enjoyed immensely anyway! Thursday saw us running around in the dark during the infamous Wide Game – a camp-wide competition – and Friday was a chance

to sit back and enjoy Osnat's delicious challah and learn some Israeli-style dancing from a visiting Australian leader. The camp was run by Wellingtonian Eve Mackenzie-Bock, it was great fun for everyone who attended, and we were very sad when it ended!

**Kenim Houses sustain the enthusiasm around NZ:** Overall, nearly 100 Haboniks were lucky to be participants at one of the winter camps. We hope the enthusiasm will continue until summer. Kenim (Habo houses) throughout the country open their doors every Sunday until the end of the year.

### New Sunday night initiative in Auckland:

Sunday night dinners will be hosted once a month for the older chanichim. If you know someone who is aged roughly 15 to 18, please encourage them to come along to our dinner events – they are extremely affordable and a great chance for older teenagers to socialize in a relaxed Jewish environment.

**Anticipating summer camp:** The Habonim Dror leader body are already looking forward to summer camp, and hope to get at least 120 kids attending. With the simply spiffing Jack Wilton at its helm, the camp promises to be at least as much fun as both Winter Camp and Mini Machane combined!

## Powershift NZ-Pacific!

Sam Dyson wants you to know that on 7-9 December 2012 1000 students, young professionals and emerging leaders from across the Pacific region are being invited by Generation Zero and 350.org Aotearoa to converge in Auckland for the first ever Power Shift NZ-Pacific. Participants will hear from inspiring speakers and celebrities, take part in workshops, develop leadership skills, join in a big climate related action and be part of launching a massive nationwide climate campaign for 2013.

You're invited to join the biggest youth climate summit New Zealand has ever seen! To sign up and find out more go to: <http://powershift.org.nz>

Are you involved in something the community should know about? Tell us!



BETH SHALOM  
בית שלום

The Progressive Jewish Congregation of Auckland

2012

"KEHILA"

BETH SHALOM SHABBATON



23 - 25

November



Join us to enjoy international and local speakers, nature, good food and fun for the family

The theme this year will be "Kehila" - A Jewish community.

What makes us a community? We will explore the concept of a Jewish community and see what creates that. How has the concept changed in history? We will discuss issues that engage us as a community and participate in a variety of sessions that will cater for all of our community. How do we grow and stay a Mishpacha?



# The Israel Discussion: Introducing a Progressive Zionist Politic in NZ

**Roger Reynolds outlines the ARZA model and answers: "Why yet another community organization in New Zealand?"**

The mission statement of Beth Shalom agreed back in 2007 is "To Foster Judaism within the Community based on God, Torah and Israel." Since then many words have been spoken - from the bimah, in youth classes and adult educational sessions, in informal meetings - about two of these pillars, God and Torah, and many great programmes have been built in our community based on these fundamental tenets of Judaism and values derived from them. However within the progressive Jewish community in Auckland there has been little organised discussion about the third pillar: Israel.

**Facing the uncomfortable discussions** For many of us, such discussions (whether amongst ourselves or with members of the wider society) uncover strong but widely varying convictions, engendering high emotion and strong words that leave us feeling even more polarised, or hurt, or impotent to influence the course of events that feel deeply personal but that happen half a world away. Many of us avoided such debates because we lacked deep knowledge of the issues, or lacked answers to common challenges. Some felt inspired by Israel while others felt alienated. We have observed from afar events in Israel - barriers and battles, faltering peace processes, the hegemony of the orthodox religious establishment - and did not know where to find a safe place to raise our questions, voice our doubts, educate ourselves, and - hopefully - to take positive steps to make a difference in Israel. So, what does it mean to Progressive Jews to stand with Israel?

**A call to action** Rabbi Peter Knobel, in his High Holy Day sermons to the congregation last year, finally lifted the lid on the 'Israel discussion.' He gave us a learned and heartfelt defence of Progressive Zionism, raising the possibility of informed discussion and

meaningful action within the community of Beth Shalom. Meanwhile we had been visited during Limmud by Anat Hofman of IRAC (the Israel Religious Action Centre) who stunned us with her energy and her dedication to transformative action in Israel based on Progressive values. The wave of interest aroused by these experiences culminated at the 2012 Shabbaton in a forum at which a range of views was expressed about our personal relationships with Israel and our desire to make Israel a more central part of our discussions and lives. Earlier in the year Gusti Yehoshua Braverman, Co-Chair of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) Diaspora department visited New Zealand. Gusti spoke to key



members of the community and to the community as a whole, emphasizing the need to establish a local body of ARZENU in New Zealand and the immediate effects this will have on New Zealand - WZO relations.

**Aligning NZ with a world wide movement** Subsequent to the Shabbaton a core group of interested individuals built on the ideas expressed there and determined to found a New Zealand Progressive Zionist organisation. In developing the nascent organisation we have been greatly supported by the Zionist Federation (ZedFed) shaliach Udi Dvorkin, and by the well-established ARZA Australia.

So what will ARZA New Zealand be, and do, and feel like? First, it will be what its members wish it to be, but a suggested list of objectives has been circulated and will be discussed when we next meet. The statement of purpose begins with an unequivocal statement about the centrality of Israel in Jewish life, and the importance at-

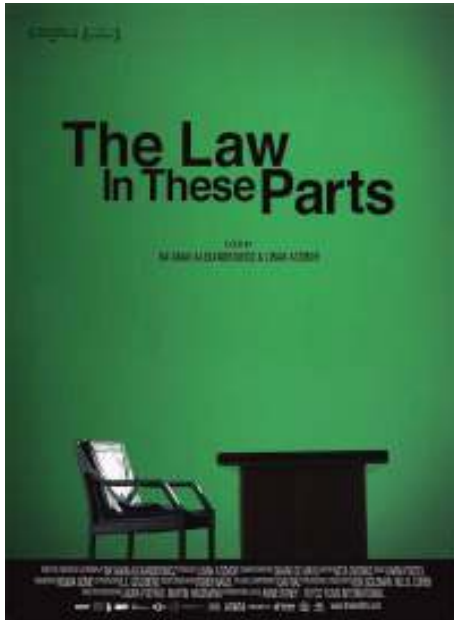


tached to Jewish unity and our spiritual and cultural values. The objects call for the expression of such values, and especially their Progressive interpretation, in Israel's public life, and in underpinning the relationships of Israel with her neighbours. There is a desire to promote education about Israel among the Progressive congregations in NZ.

If we succeed in the above, will we matter only to ourselves, or will we have a voice on a wider stage? ARZA is - unambiguously - a political organisation, and ARZA New Zealand will be allied with the world-wide Progressive Zionist organisation ARZENU, itself a political force within the overall World Zionist Organisation. In this we will be supporting, not competing with, the work of ZedFed New Zealand. In these large forums we Progressive New Zealand Jews can have a voice, helping determine policies based on OUR values and recommendations that will directly impact on Israel and thereby on the world-wide Jewish community. As befits a democratic organisation, our voice will be in direct proportion to our membership. So if you feel that it's time to have a say on a global stage, about matters that are at once deeply personal and communal and global, this is your chance to do so! We will advertise our meetings widely, and our membership dues will be small as we want EVERYONE on board.

**Join Us** If this resonates with you, and if you would like to be involved in future meetings and discussions, please ask to be on the ARZA mailing list, contact [arzenu@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:arzenu@bethshalom.org.nz) We look forward to exciting learning and vigorous debate, and to seeing you at our meetings.

# The Law in These Parts - Film Review



The New Zealand Film Festival was once again a popular destination for film lovers in July. Amongst a huge selection of films were three from Israel. *Sue Pezaro reviews The Law in These Parts, a challenging Documentary Film*

By Israeli director Ra'anana Alexandrowicz, this is a compelling documentary which exposes the injustice arising from the

court system administered by the Israeli Defence Force in the occupied territories. The format is a series of interviews with the men who designed and established the legal system operating in the occupied territories. Some of the interviewees acted as judges and one was a Supreme Court judge. The men were interviewed while seated at a small desk and filmed against a background of original footage depicting some of the trials over which they presided and the circumstances surrounding them. They were asked to consider how their decisions had affected the lives of the accused and those living in the occupied territories. The unseen interviewer cleverly turned the tables on men who had sat in judgment over others by posing questions that challenged them to examine the legality and morality of the IDF justice system and their role in maintaining it.

The responses are remarkably candid, to the extent that I wondered whether the director had told the interviewees that the documentary was merely an historical review. Many of the men initially seem proud of the system they administered but subsequently became defensive or evasive as the interviewer confronted them with the stark contrast between this legal

system and accepted principles of justice – the rule of law; the right to know the evidence on which a charge is based; the right to representation and an interpreter.

As the interviewer questioned each man about the decisions he made and the rationale behind them, the tension between attempting to uphold basic legal principles and ensuring justice for a people seen as 'the enemy' becomes increasingly apparent. The film maker highlights the discrepancy between the legal system applying to Israelis and the military law of the occupied territories. The myth underpinning the continuation of military law is that the occupation of the Palestinian territories is temporary however the unavoidable conclusion is that the IDF legal system cannot be justified on the same basis 50 years later.

The film won the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize in Documentary at the Sundance festival and screened in the NZ Film Festival. Speaking of his win, Alexandrowicz described the film as portraying a painful and unresolved subject: *What you find out in the film... is that upholding law doesn't always lead to justice. It can even be used as a tool against certain segments of society.*

## The Joy of Shabbat



**Marcus Cohen, shares thoughts on "The Joy Of Congregation".**

An ancient Jewish tradition recites our belief: 'God made the Jews to observe Shabbat'. Yes, and at a joyful Shabbat service I attended recently, a small committed

Beth Shalom gathering witnessed the Mitzvot of Torah readings.

This commitment to things Jewish remains with me as I sit at the Interfaith monthly meeting-table surrounded by representatives of seven major world religions. Each sitting member looking to the other for personalised explanation of faith-as-practice. As I continued to sit

at this table of interfaith voices, I began to sense an incongruity of self: Who was I by way of congregation? Thus, as I reflected, I felt an urgent need to revisit my own practice of faith.

### A global community, an inheritance

To be Jewish is to participate in a covenant membership of a global community of 13.6 million Jewish souls. This dedication to ancestral membership brings Jews into joyful Congregation with one another.

**Inspired leadership** The Mitzvot of Shabbat service was inspirational because the shule setting demonstrated inspiring leadership. By way of L'drosh, ably led by Chris Shiller, and Deborah Miller, the congregation enthusiastically engaged in contextual discussion (a midrashic-activity) arising out of the Parashat. I was spiritually warmed and intellectually enthralled by the insightful conduct of our Beth Shalom Shabbat service. I wished my interfaith colleagues could have been part of my Shabbat day.

**A mantra for all ages: where would I be without my traditions?** We are the stories we choose to tell: as an aging grandparent I sense an urgent need to illuminate those significant traditions I have been part of these past eighty plus years. My grandchildren will, I know, value the biblical stories they hear me re-tell. Already, at age four and a half, Sophia recites with grandpa, in clear Hebrew, the HaMotzi. An insightful prayer—especially the Shabbat HaMotzi: the significance of the two Shabbat challah is a reminder that God provides new life, not only for today but, for a plentiful tomorrow (Ex. 16.4-30).

Parashot ha-Shavua, delivered in an engaging Beth Shalom shule and surrounded by a supportive congregation, was the spiritual high-light of my week.





# Tefillin - Those Myseterious Black Boxes

**Ever wondered about those mysterious little black boxes? Chris Milton shares a significant family story and some fascinating facts:**

What has some calf hair sticking out from a stitch hole, is used six days of the week and is regarded as so joyous that its use must be deferred on *Tisha B'Av* to the afternoon service? The answer is *tefillin*, those two black leather boxes (*beitim*) that contain small scriptural scrolls (*parshiot*) and have long leather straps (*retzuot*) which we strap to our forehead and non-dominant arm and hand most days except Shabbat. We refer to them whenever we read *V'Ahavta*. The hand-*tefillin*, *shel yad*, is worn on the upper arm, hand and fingers, the head-*tefillin*, *shel rosh*, is worn above the forehead on the hairline. The Torah commands that tefillin should be worn as a "sign" and "remembrance" of our Divine deliverance from Egypt.

I was given my first set of *tefillin* by my Great Uncle Robert Hahn. An escapee from Nazi Germany Uncle Robert was Reform and regarded *tefillin* as superstitious nonsense. However, somehow he saw that they might be of interest to me. These *tefillin* were lost in a house move by which time I rarely used them. I resumed laying *tefillin* just a few years ago. But this was the beginning of a wonderful story.

**Following the genealogical trail** My paternal grandmother and grandfather were acrimoniously divorced in 1934. Both remarried and never had contact again. After ten years of genealogical research I found my father's sister and brother in 2008. Both were assimilated and neither knew much at all about Judaism. In 2011 this aunt and her husband visited me in New Zealand. Within half an hour of our first meeting she presented me with a plastic shopping bag within which I found a very old embroidered red velvet bag, a tangle of disintegrating leather straps and four small leather boxes. They turned out to be my grandfather's two sets of *tefillin* – they are over a hundred years old. I sent one set off to a sofer, Rabbi Eli Gutnick in Melbourne and he checked and kashered them. I now use this set on one day of the week in the place of my own modern pair.

**Rashi and Rabbeinu** It was curious that my grandfather had two sets and so I began some research into this. I learnt that it is most likely that these are different *tefillin* of the Rashi and Rabbeinu Tam types. The *shel rosh* has four separate compartments with different *parshiot* and there are four different prescriptions for how the scrolls should be ordered in these: Rashi's, Rabbeinu Tam's, Shimusha Raba's and Ra'avad's. Halacha accepts Rashi's opinion as correct and everyone uses "Rashi" *tefillin* to fulfill the *mitzvah*. However, halacha also states that a pious person who is meticulous in mitzvah observance should also wear tefillin according to Rabbeinu Tam. Consequently some people change *tefillin* in the middle of the morning service (Shacharit) – commonly after they have said the silent *Amidah* and before the cantor says it with the whole congregation. Some people put on the Rabbeinu Tam *tefillin* after the prayers are over – in order to avoid distracting themselves and others from the prayers. Very rarely kabbalistically inclined people use the Shimusha Raba *tefillin* for the afternoon service (*Mincha*). The Ra'avad order is never now used. One can differentiate the different types by looking to see where the binding calf hair pokes up through the stitch hole in the front.

**The significance of calf hair** Even before I learnt of the different types of *tefillin* I was curious about the calf hair that pokes up – apart from the obvious role this plays as an indicator of the type of *shel rosh* what could their purpose be? According to the Zohar, this strand of hair is a representation of the Golden Calf and acknowledges the darkness in ourselves by rendering to the Other Side (the *Sitra Achra*) a place even in our Holy practices.

**Women and tefillin** One of my worries in laying *tefillin* has been around inclusivity – is this a practice that excludes women? The answer I have is that women are not excluded from laying *tefillin*. Firstly, it needs to be said that many of our great sages (Rashi, the Rambam, Rabbenu Tam, Rabbi Zerachia haLevi and the Rashba) have endorsed women wearing them. Secondly, there are precedents of significant historical women wearing them. Mikhal the daughter of



David Shankbone, Young Jew at Western Wall praying with Tefillin, 2009 CC

King Saul is said to have worn tefillin, there are persistent stories that Rashi's daughters wore them as too did Fazonia, the first wife of Rabbi Haim ben Attar and after her his second wife also wore them. The 19th century woman "Rebbe", the Chassidic Hannah Rachel Werbermacher, also called the Maid of Ludomir, wore them. Today it is certainly an acceptable practice for Progressive Jewish women to lay *tefillin*.

**Ancestral voices and mental clarity** I personally lay *tefillin* for two reasons: as part of my spiritual discipline and because they give me a deeply resonant sense of responding to my ancestral voices. There is some emerging research that suggests that they are practically functional as part of a spiritual discipline. Acupuncturist Steven Schram has carefully examined the various different styles of laying *tefillin* (Ashkenazi, Sefard, Sefardim and Chassidic) and come to the conclusion that on the whole they fulfill a prescription for mental clarity and mental calming specifically relieving anxiety, sorrow or fear, clearing the mind and enhancing concentration, stimulating and improving memory. My own experience of regularly laying *tefillin* confirms the sort of effects Steven Schram suggests.

I believe that these are good grounds to consider including the laying of *tefillin* as part of one's spiritual discipline.

## First Impressions: Insights and Highlights from the WZO Va'ad Hapoel

By Bianca Kraitzick

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to escape the harsh New Zealand winter and bask in the Israeli summer. However the glorious weather was not what drew me to Israel on this occasion.

Due to the support from the Beth Shalom Education Bequest Fund, I had the honour to participate in a week-long leadership programme in Jerusalem. As a part of the first ARZENU Young Adult Shadowing Programme, I had the opportunity to attend back-to-back committee meetings dealing with a variety of pressing Zionist issues and attend the World Zionist Organisation's 36th Zionist General Council/Va'ad Hapoel. As well as sitting in on meetings and attempting to follow debates in a combination of Hebrew, English and sometimes Spanish, the programme also created a forum for me to make connections with

other passionate young adults dedicated to their Progressive Jewish communities in England, Australia, Germany, Brazil, Canada and Israel.



During the programme I had the privilege of shadowing William Hess, the President of the American Zionist Movement. Bill graciously answered my many questions and introduced me to the most influential people in the Zionist World today. Whilst in Israel I also met with Barbara Ford, who was recently in New Zealand for the ARZA launch.

One of the personal highlights of the programme was being invited to sit and meet the Heads of the Zionist Federations from around the world. I found it inspiring to see the impact ARZENU, the political Zionist voice of the Progressive Jewish world, had on the discussions and subsequent votes that took place at the Va'ad Hapoel. Many resolutions that were drafted and supported by ARZENU where adopted by the Va'ad Hapoel. Most notably was the General Council's vote to congratulate and acknowledge the recommendations made by Israel's Attorney General on funding Reform and Conservative rabbis. The WZO also passed a resolution condemning the forced separation of genders in public space in Israel.

It is heartening to learn that a New Zealand branch of ARZENU has been launched and that we will be lending our weight to the support of Progressive Judaism in Israel.



## News from Rabbi Ed



Recently Rabbi Ed Rosenthal was in contact with Stephanie Markson; he was our full time Rabbi at Beth Shalom during the 80's and attended our jubilee celebrations in 2006.

Rabbi Ed tells us he is still building the Hillel community on the west coast of Florida working over five campuses. He enjoys his work with the students and remarks that the fundraising, community relations and administrative work keeps growing along with the programs on the campuses, so instead of getting easier it just keeps getting bigger!

His son Jonah graduated in May from

the NY Maritime College and is staying on to get his masters degree, which he will finish in December. Gabe his daughter is now attending Eckerd College in St Petersburg, just across the Bay from where he lives. It's on one of his campuses so, it will be nice to see her and comforting to know that she'll be so close. She'll be majoring in Business Administration with a minor in International Business. His wife Mindy is still doing her yoga and now that Gabe is at university she is looking for new challenges.

Rabbi Ed sends his best wishes to everyone at Beth Shalom!



## "36 Arguments for the Existence of God: A Work of Fiction" by Rebecca Goldstein

Reviewed by Ian Morrison

Suddenly, the Wars of Religion have returned. Some strap on exploding vests, some wage rancorous turf wars and others undermine scientific understanding in the name of faith. Meanwhile, an increasingly truculent and intolerant atheism clamours for an end to all transcendent belief, however nuanced.

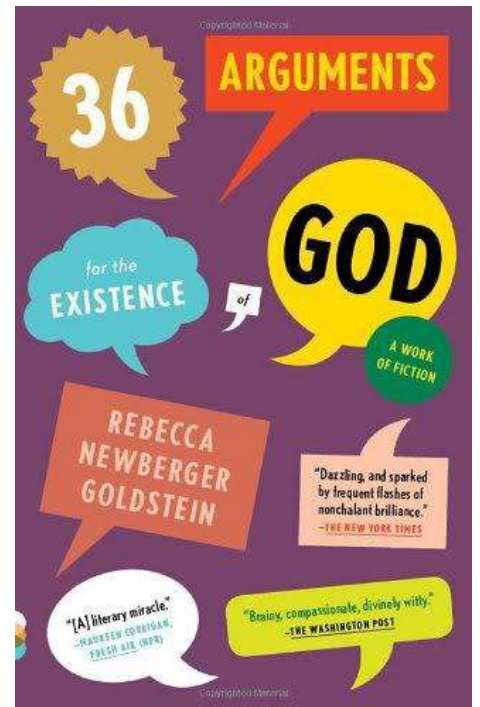
Cass Seltzer, the hero of philosopher Rebecca Goldstein's novel, is thriving unexpectedly in this strange new climate. An academic psychologist specialising in religion, he's just published a best seller and been dubbed 'The Atheist with a Soul' by Time Magazine because of his reluctance to see faith as the root of all evil.

The novel recounts Cass's inner travails as he receives the offer of a Harvard fellowship, defends disbelief in a high profile debate and survives the break-up of the latest of his disastrous relationships. A

significant sub-plot concerns his cousin, a youthful mathematical genius, torn between academic fulfilment and responsibilities as the hereditary rabbi of a tight-knit Chassidic community.

Ms. Goldstein writes with elegance and sparkle. She can make you chortle with intellectual delight but can also pierce the heart with pathos. But what makes this novel unique is that each of its 36 chapters is a meditation on an argument for the existence of God. Moreover, these arguments are restated and discussed more formally in a tightly philosophic appendix.

Like her hero and unlike this reviewer, the author is clearly not a religious believer. Yet her novel is haunted by Jewish spirituality, as well as enlivened by a rich cast of quintessentially Jewish characters, worthy of the later novels of Saul Bellow. It's a moving, scintillating, often hilarious and always cerebrally-challenging read.



## STILL PERPLEXED?

by Ian Morrison

My atheist cousin, Solly, davens three times a day. I tried explaining this to someone who isn't Jewish And watched the lines of puzzlement spread across his face, Whilst the inevitable question formed silently:

"Why do they have to be so complicated?!"

In contrast, a friend learned in Torah and Talmud, Seemed strangely unfazed by the Solly conundrum.

"Us Jews don't tend to fixate on the Andere Welt. Nor do we define ourselves primarily through theology. What's important is being a mensch in the here and now!"

"But," I retorted, "what you're really saying is that Jews, A people known for their intellectual tastes, Don't bother themselves with the really big questions. So what was Rambam doing synthesising Torah and Aristotle, Whilst also exercising a deft hand at Neo-Platonism?"



Filosofias filosoficas, *Thinking Man*, 2010 CC



Filosofias filosoficas, *Thinking Man*, 2010 CC

"As to Solly, his peculiarities surely demand an explanation. In his mind, whatever Science can't prove has to be a fairy story, His favourite read, of late, has been *The God Delusion* And he didn't need Madonna to tell him the world was material. Yet he has tzitzit billowing ostentatiously out of his trousers!"

"Listen to me, Nudnik!" my sometime scholar pal responded, Sagely stroking his chin and beaming with avuncular delight; "What makes you think your Cousin Solly is so unique? I wouldn't say that every Jewish family has one, but many do. And why? Because we like to be complicated!"

Yet my friend's breezy dismissiveness still left me wondering; Why should all these contradictions and eccentricities Be concentrated in, of all places, my cousin's cerebral cortex? Is Sol just a slave to his genes? Does he just need rules and ritual? Or is the whole caboodle truly and infinitely more complicated?

*Disclaimer: I don't have a cousin named Solly.*

*(Rambam would probably have disapproved of this artifice).*

## Behind the Lens with Ilan Wittenberg

In June of this year Ilan entered the annual National Salon of Photography with entries from all over NZ, it is organised by the North Shore Photographic Society. In total there were 2,243 entries submitted in 6 categories: Open Colour, Open Monochrome, The Four Elements, The Family of Man, Abstract and Urban Environment which were displayed in the Aotea Centre. Ilan won two Bronze, one Honours and nine Acceptance Awards.

Ilan started being seriously interested in photography as a teenager, although he remembers that he received his first plastic camera as a gift for his birthday when he was 6. His drive to become a professional photographer started after his third redundancy from IT. At that pivotal moment Ilan realised that it is important to do what you love when you

are young, and decided that photography, a passion of his over years, could become his professional life and work. He believes that it is never too late to follow this path if you are really focused and committed to the opportunity..

The photograph we see here won a bronze medal in the 'Family of Man' category. The subject is Ilan's lawyer. In the original photo there was a large canvas hanging above the table, Ilan has digitally photo-shopped this out leaving a negative space, to focus the viewer's attention on the relationship between the man and the elements on the table. Ilan says, "The monochrome emphasises shape and form and is timeless".

To see more works go to:  
[www.IlanWittenberg.com](http://www.IlanWittenberg.com)



## Majestic and Moist Honey Cake, for a Sweet New Year!



Gran, Honey Cake, 2011 CC

Adapted from Marcy Goldman's  
Treasure of Jewish Holiday Baking

3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
4 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves  
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice  
1 cup vegetable oil  
1 cup honey  
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar  
1/2 cup brown sugar  
3 large eggs at room temperature  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 cup warm coffee or strong tea  
1/2 cup fresh orange juice  
1/4 cup whiskey  
1/2 cup slivered or sliced almonds (optional)

Enough mix for: One 9 or 10 inch tube or bundt cake pan, or one 9 by 13 inch sheet cake. I made mine in two full-size loaf pans plus. Preheat oven to 175°C. Generously grease pan(s) with non-stick cooking spray. For tube or angel food pans, line the bottom with lightly greased baking paper, cut to fit.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves and allspice. Make a well in the center, and add oil, honey, white sugar, brown sugars, eggs, vanilla, coffee or tea, orange juice and rye or whiskey, if using. (If you measure your oil before the honey, it will be easier to get all of the honey out.)

Using a strong wire whisk or in an electric mixer on slow speed, stir together well to make a thick, well-blended batter, making sure that no ingredients are stuck to the bottom.

Spoon batter into prepared pan(s). Sprinkle top of cake(s) evenly with almonds, if using. Place cake pan(s)

on two baking sheets, stacked together (this will ensure the cakes bake properly with the bottom baking faster than the cake interior and top).

Bake until cake tests done, that is, it springs back when you gently touch the cake center. For angel and tube cake pans, this will take 60 to 75 minutes, loaf cakes, about 45 to 55 minutes. For sheet style cakes, baking time is 40 to 45 minutes.

Let cake stand fifteen minutes before removing from pan.

### High Holidays Word Search

At the bottom of the page is a list of words. These words are hidden in the puzzle. The words have been placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - forwards or backwards. When you locate a word, draw a circle around it.



TERUAH	YAMIM NORAIM	TEFILLAH	YIZCHAK
TERUAH	HONEY	ROSH HASHANAH	YOM KIPUR
MACHZOR	YIZKOR	SHEVARIM	SHOFAR
NELAH	TISHREI	KOL NIDRE	TESHUVAH
SELUCHOT	SELUCHOT	APPLE	TASHLICH



# Literary Legacy

Marcus Cohen has allowed his mind meander over precious memories after attending stimulating Silver Club meetings.

Here he writes about **'Congregation as a Living Jewish history'**.

**As an octogenarian I feel equipped to make this challenging observation:**

**Grandparents are special: We know things, serious things like work and migration histories that coloured an era that our children and grandchildren will never fully know, or medical histories — even causing death; so much information easily lost unless we leave a literary legacy.**

**Silver Club members are an engaging mix of minds** It has taken me some two years to learn how to relax and then take pleasure in Retirement as a social activity. I had to re-discover new brain pathways, for example, how to continue to grow in an intellectual sense, while the physical body is

racing to slow down. Thankfully my eye sight allows me to enjoy reading. (Singleness requires compensations!)

Silver Club participation made me think about what kind of social history I was observing. I felt a calm yet magical atmosphere as I listened to speakers at the monthly get-together. A week or so later I sit to think, and write about my first impressions: Notably, Silver Club members are an engaging mix of minds, and I wondered what memories exist in the living that will be lost forever—if those memories remain unrecorded.

**A Therapeutic Activity** Documenting one's life-story in written form is simpler than you might think. And, the recorded outcome will become a significant legacy for your grandchildren. Furthermore, we older-aged people need 'brain work'. Writing a family history will increase brain activity (brain plasticity), a helpful antidote that slows the brain's ageing process. **Will our grandchildren be interested in our stories?** Yes; maybe not in the moment. Nevertheless, your

writings, your papers, are important family documents that will be read with warm interest by family members that follow in your legacy.

**A Jewish Audience Writing** can become a stimulating at-home activity. We Auckland Jews are part of an intellectual, yet small community and we value an audience: we need ten for a Minyan, we need a gathering to celebrate the Bris or Bar/ Bat Mitzvah and we need a gathering for our final Rights. Writing about these precious rituals is a familiar starting point for recording one's earthly Jewish journey

Finally, I suggest that the more often we older-aged meet together the better we will navigate this precious age-phase.

*Marcus can help you with the writing task and invites you to contact him by email [mcohen@clear.net.nz](mailto:mcohen@clear.net.nz) -- or phone 415 5529. He also has a list of book titles on New Zealand Jewish Communities and their Histories if you would like to read more on this topic.*

## Silver Club

At this time of Renewal and Reflection we firstly wish to thank all the Silver Club participants and community seniors for taking part in the programmes we have all enjoyed so much throughout the year!

We are looking ahead to another year of gatherings thus strengthening our friendships and community.

Thank you to our magnificent volunteer team who continue to support the Silver Club. Wishing you all Shana Tova, may you be inscribed in the book of life.

Stephanie Markson and Tali Mozessohn



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From Alison Dyson on behalf of the Teruah Team.

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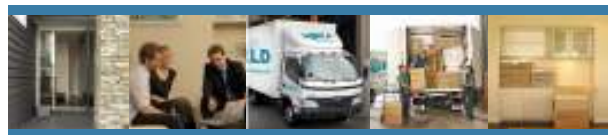
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