



# בית שלום

# Teruah

(ISSN 1177-2352)

# Our Board members

Affiliated with the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ)

Charities Commission Registration Number CC29542

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- Secretary, Rachel Zussman, [secretary@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:secretary@bethshalom.org.nz)
- Treasurer, David Singer, [treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz), (Finance Committee)

## Board members and portfolios

- Julie Dick, [primroseji@gmail.com](mailto:primroseji@gmail.com), Burial & Benevolent Society
- Ted Ries, [tedbries@gmail.com](mailto:tedbries@gmail.com), Security, JCC
- Shane Sampson, [shane@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:shane@bethshalom.org.nz), Finance Committee
- Michelle Wise, [wisemichelle@gmail.com](mailto:wisemichelle@gmail.com) Membership
- Co-opted to the Board, Arie Rosen, [rosenari@gmail.com](mailto:rosenari@gmail.com), Ritual Committee

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- Educator, Debbie Miller [educator@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:educator@bethshalom.org.nz)
- Community Care, Lita Summerfield, [serendipitylins40@gmail.com](mailto:serendipitylins40@gmail.com)
- Senior Outreach, Chris Shiller, [shiller@orcon.net.nz](mailto:shiller@orcon.net.nz)
- Auckland Jewish Burial & Benevolent Society, Sue Berman ... 022 051 3589, [ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz)

**Service times are Fridays at 6:30pm and Saturdays at 10am.**

We have now moved back into the **RED** setting of the traffic light framework, which still allows us to have in-person gatherings with some limits. Given the context of Omicron, however, we are intending to move the majority of our services online during this outbreak. This is a recognition that Omicron is far more transmissible and that many people will, understandably, be more nervous about in-person gatherings. Holding services online is the best way for us to ensure everyone's safety and to be as inclusive as possible, which is why it will be our main method of running services going forward. Decreasing the number of in-person services will also allow us to better focus on making those services special and meaningful events. We will keep you updated with our planned in-person services and gatherings as well as our online services.

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Opinions expressed in Teruah do not necessarily represent the views of Beth Shalom Board of Management.

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# Coming up in February...

- Rabbi Dean Shapiro will be with us 11-20 February. Watch your email for more information on what services and events will be happening while Rabbi Dean is in Auckland.
- Hebrew School Term 1 starts Sunday 13 February 2022 10am-12noon.
- Introduction to Judaism Term 1 starts Sunday 13 February 2022, 1:30pm.



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# From the President

I have wracked my brain for good things to report this month, but it feels like the past month has, overall, been a hard one.

Claire Reynold's death has touched so many of us and I'm sure you join me in sending our sympathy, love and caring to Laurie, Roger, Stephanie, Linda, Alison and their families.

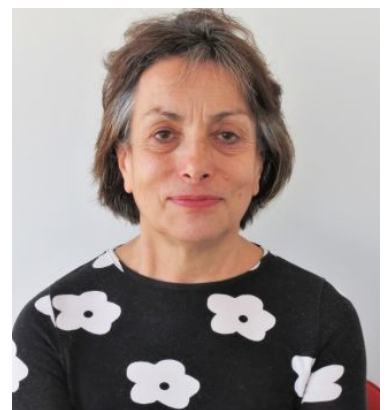
I've been holding off writing my bit for this month's Teruah, in the hope that I might have some progress to report about the rabbinic search. But time has run out to get this written, so I can only report that the negotiations are advanced. Please bear with us - I hope to come back to you soon.

I was also hoping to be able to give you an update on the JCC discussions, but the AHC has been having various internal issues that have delayed any progress. Again, my apologies and, again, I hope we'll be able to come back to you with more information as soon as possible. I'd like to thank David Kranz for the huge amount of time he's put into this project.

On a more positive note, David Singer has been doing an amazing job of tidying up our collections. Thank you to everyone who has paid their fees for this year. The only funds we receive are your fees and other donations, so we are totally reliant on these and deeply grateful to you for everything you give us. David has also already sent our accounts to the Auditor. So, we're tracking well for an AGM at the end of March. Thank you, David!

As we sit here, waiting for Omicron to affect the wider community, my prayer is that each and every one of you stays safe and well. I look forward to the day that we can meet again safely in person.

Olga.





# The Buzz ...

Lenny Bloksberg celebrated his Bar Mitzvah on 22nd January 2022



# Holocaust Centre of New Zealand appoints a new CEO

After an extensive search, the Board of the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand is delighted to announce that our incoming Chief Executive is Gillian Wess. Gillian was born and raised within the London Jewish community, spent many years in Christchurch, and now resides in Auckland. She has a deep understanding of the Holocaust and is passionate about Holocaust education. Gillian has extensive professional and results-driven leadership experience across the not-for-profit, corporate, public, education, and creative sectors. This includes governance and executive management, with a particular focus on strategy, policy and programming, and organisational vision. Gillian comes to us from a position as the Chief Executive of the Facilities Management Association of New Zealand. She is an executive member of the New Zealand Construction Industry Council, a Director of Enrich Arts and Business, and a member of the Institute of Directors, among other positions she holds.

Gillian has the experience, drive, and passion to ensure HCNZ's priorities, to inspire and empower action against antisemitism, discrimination, and apathy, by remembering, educating, and bearing witness to the Holocaust. We are confident that Gillian will build on our strong foundations, to take our organisation to its next level of development. We look forward to introducing Gillian to you. She starts in her new position on 31 January 2022.





# Ritcom Reports

## The History of Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Adult Bar/Mitzvah celebrations affirm the desire of adults to recommit to their Jewish lives anew. By contrast, many 12 and 13 year olds, once they attain the age and become a Bar/Bat see it as a graduation ceremony as opposed to a new beginning.

Adult bar/bat mitzvah is a contemporary adaptation of a well-established Jewish ritual of early adolescence that became common in the late Middle Ages. This new form developed as a local practice rather than at the initiative of any of the Jewish movements, and it spread because of its popularity.

## Men Felt Jewishly Incomplete

The initial desire for a belated Bar Mitzvah was expressed by men who felt that their Jewish identities were incomplete because they had not had bar mitzvah ceremonies. Their sense of cultural deficiency even made its way into popular culture. A television drama in the 1950s used this as a plot device, as did an episode of "The Dick Van Dyke Show."

This feeling of having missed something, however, has no basis in Jewish tradition, as a youth becomes bar mitzvah at age 13 with or without a ceremony. Yet rabbis welcomed men who came in search of a ritual confirmation of their Jewish identities. They created opportunities for these men to study and applied the name "bar mitzvah" metaphorically to the adult ritual. Rabbi Albert Axelrad at Brandeis University held the first "belated" bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies in the early 1970s. His approach became well known and was a source of encouragement to individuals and rabbis in all branches of Judaism.

In those settings where the movement for gender equality in Judaism had been successful, women were welcomed. Adult bat mitzvah developed at the same time that women were becoming rabbis and cantors and taking a more active role in the synagogue service. Many women have responded to this new ritual, using it as a way to develop the skills to be equal participants in the synagogue.

## Challenges and Satisfaction Different for Adults

As with the adolescent ceremonies, adult bar/bat mitzvah means more than simply being called for an Aliyah to the Torah and reciting the appropriate blessings. It also requires reading from the Torah. But the prerequisite for doing this, mastering the phonetics of the Hebrew language, often





feels like a major educational and psychological challenge for adults who are acutely conscious that the newly acquired Hebrew will be used in a public ritual before the congregation.

Adult bar/bat mitzvah, however, involves more than learning ritual skills. It is also about Jewish identification. During the period of preparation, students explore the Torah and its place in Judaism, the nature of the Siddur (prayerbook), the format of the synagogue service, and the meaning that Judaism has for them. Beyond this focus on Torah and worship, adult bar/bat mitzvah preparation typically includes study of the basic ideas and practices of Jewish life.

One part of the ceremony that takes on special meaning for adults is the preparation of a d'var Torah, a commentary on the weekly Torah portion. The d'var Torah often serves as an opportunity for these adults to integrate what they have learned into personal statements about Torah and what it means in their lives.

Adult bar mitzvah preparation is clearly more than adult education. It is also preparation for a public ritual act that makes a statement about choice and commitment. The knowledge gained has a social purpose. It is the knowledge that is shared among Jews, enabling them to stand before a congregation and participate in ritual. The knowledge gained through adult bar/bat mitzvah preparation is also sacred knowledge, giving meaning to all synagogue services in which the adult bar/bat mitzvahs will participate and to their personal lives as Jews.

Individual men and women still approach rabbis on a personal basis, but many congregations have instituted formal group ceremonies of adult bar/bat mitzvah. Preparation for the group ceremony, which can take up to 18 months, and the group ceremony itself, add depth to the experience for many involved. Many paths may lead individuals to seek an adult bar/bat mitzvah, and members of the group often appreciate their own motivations better through understanding others' reasons. Group members also help each other with tasks and with the emotional work involved in preparing for the ritual. The adult bar/bat mitzvah ritual is a ritual of identification with Judaism and with a social group—the Jewish people. Preparing for adult bar/bat mitzvah in a group can be a powerful way of living the identification that the ritual dramatizes.

Resources Kerry M. Olitzky and Ronald H. Isaacs, *Rediscovering Judaism: Bar and Bat Mitzvah for Adults*. (KTAV, 1997).

# Habonim Camp 2022

I have always loved attending the Habonim camp visitor day as my children progressed through the movement, seeing first hand the quite unique experience our youngsters have for ten days. This year when I visited my daughter Lilly in Auckland, I had a peek behind-the-scenes at what goes into preparing for this annual event.

For those of you who have never attended or had a youngster attend Habonim camp, let me set the scene. For ten days in the summer on a piece of farmland usually near Auckland, huge tents are erected to house our youngsters according to their schikva (age group). The chanichim (participants) bathe in the river and use long drop toilets (the beits) which are dug by the madrichim (leaders). All cooking is done in enormous pots in the canvas mitbach (kitchen) which churns out three hearty meals a day for those happy campers. For weeks in the lead up to the camp the madrichim shop for supplies, plan and create age appropriate peulot (programmes) to educate, stimulate and challenge our young people. No phones or screens but so much kef (fun). These amazing young madrichim take extended leave from their jobs and the comfort of their homes for the better part of a month to prepare, set up, run the camp then dismantle it again and return the farmland to its pre-camp state. They do this voluntarily, year in year out. Aside from the wonderful camp parents and medic, everything is youth led. The energy and ruach (spirit) that this environment creates is something special, something unique and to be treasured. As far as I am aware Aotearoa New Zealand is one of the few countries, if not only one, where a Habonim summer camp completely under canvas can still be experienced.

On a stifling hot morning we arrived at the Auckland Ken to find a dozen madrichim shlepping the camp gear and food supplies onto an enormous truck. They'd started at 7 and had a long day ahead of them to ensure they had everything on that truck to feed, water and house over 100 chanichim and madrichim. From there they would journey to their destination near Hamilton, unload and start to set up the camp ready to receive chanichim the following week. Like the madrichim before them, they knew exactly what to do and their energy was infectious.

If you have children in school years 3 upwards, I would encourage you to try out Habonim. Wellington, Auckland and Ken Svivot (for communities outside of Wellington and Auckland) run regular programmes for our youth. A winter camp in cabins is held during the winter school break. Seminars are also run for older kids. Again, all youth led and all run voluntarily. Wherever you live, sign up for machane (camp) and let your children experience this for themselves. Firm and lasting friendships are formed as they grow and learn with their peer group.

We are lucky to continue to have wonderful young people who freely give up so much of their time throughout the year to help ensure our youngsters have a safe space to learn about themselves and their heritage and culture. There really are no words that could sufficiently express my personal gratitude for what Habonim madrichim have given my children, helping them to have a positive Jewish identity. It is now with great pride they, and all of the madrichim, step up and give back to their community.

Aleh v'hagshem! (Arise and Actualise!)

Rae







# Education



## School without Walls



- Imagine a Jewish school that wants to focus on the world we live in.
- Imagine an education that takes the kids outdoors to discover the values we want to convey
- Imagine a Jewish school that tells the stories that aim to make us feel connected
- Imagine a playful, joyous place that makes us look forward to being together.

Beth Shalom has decided to make a "**Sunday school without walls**" this year. We want to prioritise our young people. We want to make sure that our kids get to meet up every week with their Beth Shalom community. We know how important our community is to their sense of belonging and identity, that is why this year Beth Shalom is making a "**Sunday school without walls**". We want you and all your friends to come and celebrate being Jewish and being together with our Beth Shalom community every Sunday from 10am to 12noon.

The first week we are going to meet in the Beth Shalom Garden with both parents and kids to discuss what our goals are for this year. Why we are there and where we are going.

Then we are going to hit the road, climb a volcano, visit the beach and take in the Maritime Museum. Every week we will cover a Jewish value and explore our rich Jewish heritage that makes it all so meaningful.

By taking the school outside we maintain our ability to keep our community together and supportive in spite of covid restrictions.

### February 13th at 10am in the Beth Shalom Garden



Week one February 13<sup>th</sup>, we will have Rabbi Dean on board leading an outdoor spiritual exploration. We will then follow that up with a parent and student discussion led by Debbie about what we want to achieve this year and what our goals are. And finally, we will plant a tree in honour of Tu B'shvat, the tree of the new year and eat some traditional fruits and nuts shared together.

Please come and bring your friends. It is open to everyone.



Click on the link below for the calendar for this year. It will be calling you all to try to set up Zoom meetings so I can get your thoughts and input on what has happened with you last year, what the needs and wants are for you and your children, as well as what are your concerns. We all have had a lot happen to us last year and we need to share where we are going in this coming year.

**Set up a Zoom Meeting with Debbie**

I am available most days from 9am-12noon and 5-9pm Monday-Thursday. Please send me the day and time that is best for you and your kids to talk with me on Zoom. Call, text or email me.

**[Click here for the Term 1 Calendar](#)**

Service leaders roster will be published progressively in the weekly email newsletter.



## Prayers for Healing Group

A group of Beth Shalom members has commenced, to think of and pray for individuals in our community, who are in need of healing.

The idea is that this group is not an organised group or minyan. Simply, caring people who, when made aware of the need, help healing with the power of prayer.

And that families in distress might receive comfort from the knowledge that this is taking place.

Caring for the unwell is part of being a community.

For those interested, I can supply articles: "The Jewish Way in Healing", and some scientific research on the positive power of prayer in healing.

- If you wish to be part of this group or if you know of someone who is unwell that would appreciate our prayers.
- Please contact Leon Goldwater or Christine O'Brien at shul office
- Leon: [ldgoldwater@gmail.com](mailto:ldgoldwater@gmail.com) 020 403 88054
- Christine: [office@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:office@bethshalom.org.nz) 524 4139

# Community Care ...

Hi Everyone, Wishing you all a Happy and most importantly a Healthy 2022.

There is some good news to start the year for Beth Shalom. Firstly there are a couple of new babies on the close horizon, one of them may even be born by the time you are reading this! We also have some new 'Jews by Choice' ready to join the community very soon. All of these new additions to Beth Shalom are so welcome in these troubled times.

We have also had already this year, an Adult Bar Mitzvah, with other Bnei Mitzvahs not too far away. So exciting to have these Simchas in our community. We also have some visits from Rabbi Dean in the pipeline, so more good news.

At the moment of writing there is a lot of uncertainty about what will happen when Omicron hits the community at large. We are now in the Red again, so it is replaced by a different kind of uncertainty, all of which can put a different stress load on each of us.

If we, in Community Care, can help you in any way please let us know, and let us help. Below are the ways we can help you, but if anyone has any ideas of what we could offer to do, but don't, we are very happy to hear your suggestions.

## HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY CARE TEAM HELP?

As usual, we are here to help and support you. Please feel comfortable to ask us

- After a fall or feeling unwell
- Finding it a challenge to do things for yourself,
- Need a helping hand short term,
- Perhaps need to just talk to someone,
- Need help with filling forms,
- Need someone to be with you when visiting a doctor,
- Or need support getting X-rays done.

We know some of these suggestions may not be possible at the moment, but we can still help you put things into place, for when they are. Like always though, we need to know if you want help of some kind before we can give it.

Do **you** know of someone who is unwell, that would benefit from

- **a phone call?** MOST important at this time. People on their own, even if they are well, can feel very isolated during lockdown and a friendly voice can be very comforting, OR
- a get well card,
- some flowers to cheer,
- receive a frozen meal. Get a family member to call us if you cannot.

## INDEPENDENCE IS WONDERFUL

Consider how a helping hand can support you in achieving this.

Especially when it is offered willingly by members of our team.

## LET US KNOW

We also want to know and share your good things, so tell us if there is a special Anniversary, or a new baby, or any other happy event on the horizon.

**Please, continue to take care and stay safe.**

**Cheers, Lita (Chairperson) and the Community Care Team.**

### Contact:

Chris Shiller 021 177 4934 [shiller@orcon.net.nz](mailto:shiller@orcon.net.nz)

Lita Summerfield 021 297 9462 (TEXT ONLY) or email: [serendipitylins40@gmail.com](mailto:serendipitylins40@gmail.com)

Lorna Orbell 022 026 2897 [chaim@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:chaim@slingshot.co.nz)

Left to right,  
Ora Lefebvre.  
Chris Shiller,  
Barbara  
Sandler, Lita  
Summerfield,  
Sandra van  
Eden, Bill  
Merrill, Lorna  
Orbell and  
Sandra  
Brickman.







# Burial & Benevolent Society

A key focus for the B&B committee in the past months has been developing a protocol for managing taharah, funerals and minyanim that complies with government regulations and is as consistent as possible with our rituals and practice. In developing these guidelines, we have consulted with the Beth Shalom board, the Chevra of Auckland Hebrew Congregation, Davis Funeral Homes and Rabbi Dean.

While it seems incongruous to be planning to manage another wave of Covid as Summer reaches its peak, we are very fortunate that our management plans are based on a highly vaccinated population. When these procedures are finalised, we will issue a community notice explaining how these protocols will be implemented.

It is likely that the arrival of Omicron in Aotearoa will have a significant impact on employment and business. The purpose of the Burial & Benevolence Society is two-fold as the name suggests; our aim is not just to assist the bereaved but also to provide financial assistance to members of Beth Shalom and the B&B. Usually, this assistance is in the form of a one-off grant, for example to enable the applicant to meet the cost of a medical appointment, an unexpected bill, or emergency travel. Requests for assistance can be made directly to the B&B committee or through Community Care.

We remind members of Beth Shalom that the B&B is a distinct entity; membership of Beth Shalom does not include membership of the B&B. However, membership of Beth Shalom is not a prerequisite for membership of the B&B and a person who is not a member of any synagogue may be accepted as a member of the B&B.

The benefit of membership of the B&B is that there is no charge to members for the conduct of the funeral service and minyan whether by a rabbi or lay reader. Where a funeral is conducted for a person who is not a member of the B&B or Beth Shalom, there will be a charge for those services. It is important to note that the membership subscription for the B&B, currently \$40 per annum, does not cover the costs of a funeral. Members of Beth Shalom and the B&B must meet the costs of the funeral director, including the plot and casket. These costs are substantial, usually around \$12-13,000 for burial and we encourage members to plan for them.

In the foreseeable future our services and practices will be adapted in ways that may seem strange or uncomfortable. One of the key issues we face is limiting in person numbers and the need to sight and record vaccination passes. We intend to carry out these obligations in the most respectful manner possible and assure you that we are continually working to adapt our practices in a manner that retains our key values of respect for the deceased and loving care for the bereaved.

**Sue Berman, President of the B&B**

We can be contacted on: 022 051 3589 or email: [ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz)