

Kol Kehillat Kernow

Voice of the Jewish community in Cornwall

Issue 11

Tishri 5765/September 2004

One special weekend with our guest lecturer: Bertha Leverton



Leslie presenting the Kehillat Kernow mezuzah to Bertha

Harvey Kurzfield

We were delighted to welcome Bertha Leverton as our guest for the weekend of 3rd and 4th July. Some of you may remember that I had asked Bertha to be our 'guest lecturer' last year, following on from Anthony Fagin's memorable talk on Masada the previous year. Bertha was unable to make it down to Cornwall in 2003, but she certainly made up for that this year, fitting in a remarkable schedule that might easily have daunted a younger person. She arrived on the Friday afternoon by train from Paddington, collected and driven to Rosudgeon (where she would benefit from the welcome hospitality of the Lipert household - Pat, Leslie & Tovah). Just after 6pm, Bertha was interviewed by Nina Davey



Bertha Leverton who visited in July

of Radio Cornwall, followed later by a Friday night Shabbat evening meal. On Sunday morning at 7.30am, she was whisked off for a live broadcast and gave a superb talk on the Sunday afternoon to a good sized crowd.

Torah Scroll for Kehillat Kernow

Harvey Kurzfield

As we head towards Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur it is a time for reflection for everyone in our community. We have all endured some ups and downs: some more than others. Life has a habit of throwing up unexpected events which can throw us off track, shatter our illusions and even, at the worst of times, lead us to question our faith. Up to and after my illness in 2001 I went

through some very tough and trying moments. Without the support of both my wife and my friends in the community my recovery and recuperation could have been even more traumatic. In some of my darkest moments, my desire to return as a fully functioning member of Kehillat Kernow helped to keep my faith alive. I know that we, as a community, will continue to give support to anyone within or outside our wider congregation who has been or will be experiencing the upsets that life can sometimes bring.

Life can also be good. Over the last few months we have been blessed with some memorable moments. As most of you know by now a party of Kehillat Kernow members drove, in some style - thanks to David Hearle's chauffeuring - to Exeter for the Erev Shavuot service at Exeter Synagogue. During the wonderful service the generous Hebrew congregation of Exeter presented us with a Torah Scroll. When I went up to receive the scroll I felt a huge surge of emotion, which I hope was shared amongst those of you who were there in the synagogue. Each time we use the scroll now there seems to be an extra dimension to our own services. I have written



Harvey with the Torah Scroll

officially to Frank Gent and Tony Reese, but would like to express, once again, our sincere gratitude and thanks to the Exeter Hebrew congregation.

INSIDE...

BERTHA'S WEEKEND 2

3RD LITERARY FESTIVAL 3

YOM KIPPUR IN ISRAEL 4

NEWQUAY SUMMER 5

Designed and printed by Noah Hearle, phone: 07005 150000; email: noah@designextreme.com; web: www.designextreme.com.

Treasured visit from Bertha



Leslie and Anne enjoying Bertha's talk to the community

Pat Lipert

In the first weekend of July, the members of Kehillat Kernow were privileged and honoured to welcome Bertha Leverton to our small Cornish Community.

She came to deliver our annual lecture on the Kindertransport. During the time she spent with us, from Friday until Sunday, she not only created a greater awareness amongst ourselves and the greater community of the plight of those 9,354 children who were saved from an almost certain annihilation at the hands of the Nazis, but also managed through her energy and natural warmth to inspire everyone with whom she came in contact.

A mere glance through some of the Kindertransport literature makes one instantly realise what a larger than life figure she is.

In 1988, the idea for a 50th reunion of her Kinder began to form in her mind when she looked at a picture of her grandchildren in her sitting room and realised that one of them would be the exact age as she was in 1939 when she made her stressful journey by train from Munich to Liverpool Station. And they knew practically nothing about that momentous event in human history! She envisioned a small get-together but as it happened, the thing grew and grew. The first reunion of Kinder took place in 1989. A thousand people from all over the world gathered for their first emotional meeting. In the fifteen years that followed, films, documentaries, radio and television programmes, newspapers and magazines have highlighted the work of Bertha Leverton and the plight of the Kindertransportees.

She is an internationally known figure who has ensured the Kindertransport's place in holocaust history to make certain that people will never forget.

Bertha arrived in Penzance after taking the train from Paddington in London about

5 pm on Friday, the 2nd of July. She said she'd be easy to recognise as she was wearing a salmon coloured outfit. Leslie is colour-blind but typically, Bertha is not one person you would ever miss in a crowd. Bustling and exuberant, she appeared at our door and even Tovah, the usually suspicious dachsy, was instantly smitten. A quick cuppa and Harvey and a Radio Cornwall interviewer showed up, complete with mike and recording equipment to interview Bertha. Completely non-plussed, she spoke to the woman for almost an hour (while I got Shabbos together). More people arrived and she charmed and

regaled us with stories and information about the Kindertransport until well after 10 p.m. that evening. What a special shabbos it was!

"If you don't mind," she said, "I always sleep later on Shabbos." She slipped off to bed. Before 9 am the next morning, there she was, bustling and beaming, all ready for our Saturday Shabbat Service. More of our community arrived and were treated to her presence as she complemented the service and Kiddush afterward. A quick nap in the later afternoon after everyone had left, and it was time for evening drinks and dinner and more talk. Unbothered by the fact that she had to get up at 6.30 am the next morning for a television broadcast in Truro, she continued to reveal more facts about her life and the people she has known and helped throughout the world. When it got very late (for Leslie and me; Bertha at 81 was just fine), we reluctantly said good-night.

On Sunday, after a live broadcast, a 54-mile return drive, and a quick lunch, off we were to Carnon Downs for the lecture. She came fully prepared with books, leaflets, and video.

We and those who attended from the greater community were moved and enlightened about what took place those many years ago and in the ensuing years to her and her kinder. Leisl Munden, another kinder and our own special Cornwall treasure, contributed too. Most special was her gripping poetic tribute to her parents. By 4:30 pm it was time to say good-bye to our new friend. Bertha went home with Leisl and the rest of us departed, changed by the experience and feeling something very special had happened.

Thank you, Bertha, for the memories and for being there for all your kinder and for being here with us.



Bertha addressing a rapturous audience at Carnon Downs

Literary Festival

Pat Lipert

The Third Annual Kehillat Kernow Music and Literary Festival was the best ever! The range of talent in our community knows no bounds. MC Leslie Lipert kicked things off in the lower garden of his home (and the



Harvey, Ash and Scarlett playing Klezmer

weather held) with a few well chosen jokes. The concepts of a Sefer Torah and The Chrain in Spain have taken on a whole new meaning. After that, things got much more elevated with a beautiful poem, "Kite flying," written and recited by our chairman, Harvey Kurzfield in his own inimitable style. Jacqueline and Harvey then performed the charming "How



Leslie and Pat about to give a few words

I hope my brother will look better

Milton Jacobson

On a bright early summer's day an expectant mum is out for a walk with her six, soon to be seven, year old little boy. She met a family friend who was pushing her baby son in a large very smart pram. The two young women stopped to chat about the expected arrival. The small boy quickly becomes bored and with the natural curiosity of the young decides to have a look in the pram. The baby's mother sees this and asks

Pleasant and Delightful," in perfect harmony. What a team they are! Estelle Moses, in her debut performance, was stunning in her recitation of "Subaltern's Love Song." Leisl Munden read four of her poems, all of which were both moving and displayed her wonderful talent and sensitivity to what life has offered her through the years. Ashley Cohen chimed in with a musical selection (which included a Leonard Cohen-not a relative-piece) and ended up doing a Klezmer duet with Harvey. It's clear that Louise Garcia has a true flair for comedy; her School Medley, everything from Joyce Grenfell sketch to Harry Potter, was a stitch. Antony's Fagin's explication of the first book of Genesis was both fascinating and erudite and his Haiku was terrific. A Yiddisher version of the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet by Pat



Estelle reading "Subaltern's Love Song"

and Leslie ended things on a comic note.

In all, it was a fine day with good company, a bit of wine and cheese, and a true variety show. The festival, an inspiration of Harvey's, has shown all of us what a fine group we are, and makes the summer season something to anticipate. So put on your thinking caps early and get ready for next year. The show will go on!

him "Would you like your mummy to give you a baby brother like this?" With scarcely a moment's hesitation he replied, "I'd like a baby brother, but not one that looked like that!" The young mother gasped with horror and sped off. From that day on she never spoke to the boy or his mother again even though they lived in the same neighbourhood and community.

I know that this story is true as the little boy in question was my elder brother and I was the unsuspecting baby in waiting.



This Is My Son

Liesl Munden

By way of working through the experience of the second Kindertransport Reunion - a kind of therapy using poetry, written on 19th June 1999.

I gave you my last polo,
So easy to know why;
It's simply 'cause I love you
Though my mouth and throat were dry.

My son and I together
In June of ninety-nine;
Ten years before, another June,
The weather also fine.

The last of two Reunions
Already in the past,
But memories will linger
And photographs will last.

Two generations this time,
And there were even three
Made the occasion different,
For it meant you and me.

'This is my son,' I introduced
To many people there;
He talked to them so easily,
There was so much to share.

Two days of hearing, seeing,
Of reaching out to touch;
For old and young with feelings
It was all a bit too much.

I felt the halls were buzzing
With spoken tongues and more
Of unexpressed emotions
When tears came to the fore.

'This is my son,' I proudly said
'Who came, in part, for me.'
His eyes were newly opened,
To mine he holds the key.

Jerusalem Yom Kippur 55/94

Vera Collins

Erev Yom Kippur - I had arrived from England, two days before, to a heat wave that even the Israelis found daunting. The heat was overwhelming and, after dire warnings I had spent the two days with an air cooler in the apartment, drinking gallons of cool drinks and only venturing out briefly after dark.

Now, Chassia had prepared a substantial meat that we ate well before dusk. Chassia, an avowed secular Jew, as a great concession permitted me to light a memorial candle and then make Kiddush to usher in the solemn day.

Jerusalem is normally a noisy city. Drivers are loud and aggressive. Domestic life, with the ever-open windows, is carried on at full volume but as the afternoon drew to a close a change had crept over the city. As I stepped out into the darkening streets the stridency had given way to softly hurrying footsteps and hushed voices; a profound quiet had settled over it all. I made my way past the Yemenites, crowding into their small synagogue, out into Bezelel where black coated Ashkenazim milled about outside their large, imposing shul, and made my way to the progressive Har-El in Shmuel ha Naggid.

The rebbeztin showed me to my allotted seat. She had thoughtfully placed me among English speaking people, beside an open door leading into a garden. Even so, the heat was stifling, but as the haunting notes of the Kol Nidrei began we were drawn into the solemnity of the ancient service, surrounded by the strange silence of the city.

After the service, I walked back through streets completely silent and empty, except where worshippers quietly dispersed as they left synagogues.

Back at the apartment I chatted a little with Chassia. She agreed with my decision not to refrain from drinking water and to work through most of the services indoors, only to attend Shul for the Neilah service. In the heat, unacclimatised, it would have been madness to do otherwise. Next morning, before six, I awoke to the singing from the Yemenite synagogue across the road. Chassia was still asleep in the next room. I started early, using the reform Machzor I had brought with me.

As the door wore on, the silent city seemed to hold its breath in the incredible heat. In solitude, I prayed the familiar daily and weekly prayers, and the remembered soul searching prayers that mark this holiest of days. I delved deep into the accompanying treasury of quotations; the profound thoughts of great minds throughout the ages on the

demands of this task of making atonement. Beyond me, there were only the sounds of others praying, which enclosed me in the space and time devoted entirely to the day's divine purpose.

Later, the heat as I stepped out into Bezelel was still searing. I walked in the harsh glare until I reached Har-El and entered the pleasant shady garden. Inside, the Rebbetzin motioned me to her seat by the door until the sermon was over. Rabbi ben Chorin had



East Jerusalem on Yom Kippur

an interesting and dramatic delivery but, not knowing enough Hebrew to understand, I was frustrated. I recognised references to Jonah, and several quotes, but that was all.

Neilah always promotes a sense of urgency, a rallying of flagging spirits as the end of the day approaches, and the gates of repentance are closing for another year. The whole congregation puts extra effort into these last entreaties for forgiveness and a good inscription. There is real drama in the way that the prayers of the day reach their culmination. Finally, the sounding of the shofar, the great Tekiah Gadolah, brought a universal sigh, almost of relief, that we had met the demands of the day, and had achieved what was required.

Then Havdalah, followed by singing and rejoicing, concluding with 'Ha Tikvah'.

Refreshments had been provided for breaking the fast. I took a biscuit to nibble, and quickly set off. The streets were thronged with happy home goers; traffic was starting up. Jerusalem was returning to noisy reality. Everywhere, everyone was celebrating the

conclusion of Yom Kippur.

This was what marked that special day in Jerusalem for me. I was not a solitary Jew, as in Cornwall; not one of a minority where others carried on with every day life, as in Birmingham or Exeter. Here, I was one of the majority, in a city that stood still in silent reverence for the holiest of days. I shall carry the impact of that experience forever in my heart.

Honig Lekach: Rosh Hashanah honey cake

Pat Lipert

No New Year's celebration would be complete without a honey cake, something to sweeten the New Year. Everyone has her own recipe but this one is especially good. It's combination of several. Hope you like it! It mostly comes from Claudia Roden.

2 eggs

1 cup (200g) sugar

½ cup (125 ml) light vegetable oil

1 cup (200g) dark honey

2 tablespoons (or more) of rum or brandy. Brandy is better.

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon of baking soda

A pinch of salt

1 teaspoon of cinnamon

¼ teaspoon of powdered cloves

½ teaspoon of ginger

Grated zest of orange or lemon

2 cups (300 g) of flour.

½ to 1 cup of coarsely chopped walnuts (50 -100 g)

1/3 to 2/3 cup of raisins

½ cup (125 ml) of warm, strong, black coffee

Note: If you lightly coat the raisins and walnuts with flour, they will not sink to the bottom of the cake.

Beat the eggs with the sugar until pale. Then beat in the honey, oil, brandy, and coffee. Mix the baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and orange/lemon zest with the flour. Add gradually to the egg and honey mixture, and beat into a smooth batter. Line a 9-inch (24-cm) pan with greaseproof paper, brush with oil and dust with flour. Pour in the batter (or use two 9-x 5-inch loaf pans). Bake the large cake in a preheated 350-degree F (180 degree C) oven for an hour and a quarter, longer if necessary, until firm and brown on the top. The smaller loaves take about an hour.

Summer in Newquay: parallel worlds

Joy Dunn

Well, I survived the bank holiday weekend and the 'run to the sun'. For those who are not familiar with this activity, it is a kind of car rally, originally only for Volkswagens, but now, it seems, anything goes!

Only once did I have to run the town gauntlet. This I did with grim determination and returned to base as quickly as possible. Later, when I decided to take a walk on the headland, the contrast was particularly apparent. From jam-packed streets, roaring vehicles, loud music, crowds, beer cans and water pistol sprays to the peace, beauty and tranquillity of the headland.

The flower clad promontory stretched out

in the sea like a benign, sleeping presence over which a colourful patchwork quilt had been thrown; pink from the clumps of thrift and the yellow carpeting of kidney vetch. Here and there the background showed through with hues of soft greens and gold of summer grasses. Patches of blue squill, late violets and purple heather were sewn into the design with liberal threads of the delicate pink and white sea bindweed.

As I explored this other world a multitude of colours and textures revealed themselves. I discovered outcrops that had become the most beautiful rock gardens bearing creeping plants with tiny and exquisitely coloured jewel-like flowers. Lichens in silver grey and greens and splashes of orange softened the

rugged cliffs.

I thought of the people filling the amusement arcades, no more than two miles away, pouring their money into machines for entertainment; two worlds, so close, yet so far apart.

Editor's note: Joy is not Jewish but she often attends our services and also joined in with our Chavruta sessions. I am delighted to be able to add her contribution to our newsletter.

□ **Prayer for Israel in Newquay:** You might be interested to know that there is a regular monthly prayer meeting held in Newquay with prayers said for the protection of the land of Israel and the Jewish people.



Various Jewish jokes

The Kaplan Diamond

An old Jewish lady was sitting in the window seat in the first class cabin on a plane from New York to Miami. The man who was assigned the aisle seat next to her noticed her diamond solitaire ring - the diamond was the biggest he'd ever seen, more like a rock than a gem, and he knew enough about diamonds to know this one was real and looked flawless. He couldn't keep his eyes off of it.

After the flight was well underway, she noticed his gaze and helped him out, "I see you're looking at my diamond." "Yes," he admitted, "I couldn't help myself. It is the most stunning diamond I've ever seen." "Young man, this is the Kaplan Diamond." He responded, "The Kaplan Diamond? You mean it has a name?" "Oh yes. And the Kaplan Diamond comes with a curse."

The man was impressed. "My goodness, that's very interesting. A diamond with a name which has a curse attached to it! Please, if you don't mind telling me, what is the curse?"

The old lady smiled and said, "Mr. Kaplan."

Cultivate

Saul Epstein was taking an oral exam, applying for his citizenship papers. He was asked to spell *cultivate* and he spelled it correctly. He was then asked to use the word in a sentence, and with a big smile, responded: "Last winter on a very cold day, I was waiting for a bus, but it was too cultivate, so I took the subway home."

Shmuck!

A Rabbi was opening his mail one morning. Taking a single sheet of paper from an envelope he found written on it only one word: "shmuck." At the next Friday night service, the Rabbi announced, "I have known many people who have written letters and forgot to sign their names, but this week I received a letter from someone who signed his name.... and forgot to write a letter."

Oy, yoy, yoy...

Three Jewish women get together for lunch. As they are being seated in the restaurant, one takes a deep breath and gives a long, slow "oy."

The second takes a deep breath as well and lets out a long, slow "oy."

The third takes a deep breath and says impatiently, "Girls, I thought we agreed that we weren't going to talk about our children."

Synagogue Bulletin Board:

Under same management for over 5763 years.

Beat the Rosh Hashanah rush, come to Shul this Shabbat.

Don't give up. Moses was once a basket case!

Come early for a good seat. What part of "Thou shalt not" don't you understand?

Chanukah Songs that never quite caught on:

"Oy to the World"

"Schlepping through a Winter Wonderland"

"Matzo Man" by the Lower East Side Village People

"Come on Baby Light my Menorah"

"Deck the Halls with Balls of Matzos"

"Silent Night? I Should Be So Lucky"

Chanukah stamps

A woman goes to the post office to buy stamps for her Chanukah cards. She says to the clerk "May I have 50 Chanukah stamps please."

"What denomination?" says the clerk.

The woman says "Oy vay, my g-d, has it come to this? Okay, give me 6 Orthodox, 12 Conservative and 32 Reform!"

All sent in by Leslie Lipert

Historical fish

As Moses was leading the children of Israel through the parted waters of the Red Sea, some of the children complained of thirst after walking so far. Unfortunately, they weren't able to drink from the walls of salt water on each side. Then a fish from the wall of water stuck his head out and spoke to Moses. He told him that his family had heard the children's cries and that they (the fish) could, through their own gills, remove the salt from the water and then force it out of their mouths like a fountain for the Israelites to drink from!

But, said the fish, before his family could help, they had one demand: they wanted to be part of history and to be part of the Seder meal to commemorate the Exodus.

Moses readily agreed to this and gave them their name, which remains to this very day. He said to them, "go filter Fish!"

Sent in by Ron & Leila Mole

Important notices

Cheder

Cheder is now being held during the Saturday morning service in Truro. Some parents felt that this would be easier for them. We are always happy to oblige! We are using a room upstairs at TBC. This is a light and airy room with plenty of space for activities. Our aim is for the children to enjoy learning about Judaism and to form friendships with other Jewish children. Sadly, in the past, many children have grown up in Cornwall feeling isolated and 'different'. Now they can learn and have fun at the same time. We have stories and craftwork as well as our continuing efforts to learn Hebrew. We are also planning to have social outings and get-togethers in forthcoming programme.

Ring Bonnie on 01209 714555 for more information. Children of any age are welcome - we even seem to be developing a nursery section!

Remember, friendships formed now, will strengthen our community in the future.

Editor's note:

Along with the new Torah Scroll we also have two 'yads'. One has been donated by Donna Jacobs of Truro and the other by Bonnie and Wilf Rockley. On behalf of all of you may I say a big 'THANK YOU' for the generosity shown by Donna, Bonnie and Wilf. We have used both yads very effectively during our recent services.

**Please visit the
Kehillat Kernow
website at:
kehillatkernow.com**

News, events, AGM details,
resources, reading list, recipes,
newsletters, forum, guestbook,
member directory, photos, kids
stuff, links, contact us

Important dates for your diary

Service dates, places and Torah portions
September 4th - Shabbat - TBC @ 10am - Parashat Ki Tavo

September 15 - Erev Rosh Hashanah - Pat & Leslie's @ 6.30pm

September 16th Rosh Hashanah Morning Service - Pat & Leslie's @ 10.00am

September 18th - Shabbat - TBC @ 10am - Parashat Ha'azinu

September 24th - Erev Yom Kippur (Kol Nidre) - Bonnie & Wilf's @ 7pm

September 25th - Yom Kippur - Bonnie & Wilf's - services from 10am - 8.30pm

October 2nd - Shabbat - TBC - @ 10am

October 16th - Shabbat/Rosh Hodesh - TBC

RSGB Southern Synagogues Adult Study Weekend

Friday 5th - Sunday 7th November 2004. Rabbi Jackie Tabick will be the "Resource" for the weekend which will take place at Esher Place Conference and Training Centre, Esher, Surrey. The cost will be £155.00 per person. For further details and an application form please telephone Sally Rosebery on 0208 8654 6713.

Forthcoming events

Please try to come to as many of our forthcoming events and services as possible. Remember, you, our community members, are the life-blood of Kehillat Kernow. Without your continuing presence and attendance we will be unable to achieve our full potential.

I really do look forward to seeing as many of you as possible from September onwards and especially at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Subscriptions

Don't forget your Kehillat Kernow subscriptions. To make things easier for the Treasurer, and if it is convenient for you, I would prefer a once Yearly payment by Standing Order of £60, or more if you wish, instead of the £5 monthly.

If you are a new member to Kehillat Kernow here are the Bank details, which you will need to set up with your own Bank: HSBC; sort-code: 40-36-13; account number: 41374435.

We are now a registered charity, the number is 1090562.

I would very much appreciate if you could send back to me your gift aid declaration, so we can get the tax back that you would have paid on that amount from the Government.

My address is: Anne Hearle, 3 Vivian Terrace, Mousehole, Cornwall, TR19 6QZ.

With many thanks. Anne Hearle, Treasurer.

Joke prescription

Bizz Buzz

Two bees meet up in New York. One bee says to the other "How's it going Buzz?"

"Not so good," replies Buzz. "de flowers aint so hot dis year, y'know what I mean."

"Gee Buzz, I'm sorry to hear that. But, hey, maybe I can help you out."

"Hey," says Buzz. "Dat'll be great Bizz. I need nectar real bad."

"Sure, I know you feel. Now listen up, there's a Barmitzvah at the Shul on the corner of 7th and 15th and I know for a fact that the hall there's been decorated with thousands of dollars worth of flowers. Believe me you'll be in heaven."

"Gee, tanks Bizz, I'll get along dere right away." And with that Buzz whizzes away.

An hour or so later he zooms back and greets Bizz warmly, yellow nectar still clinging to his proboscis. Bizz flaps his wings in amazement for he notices that Buzz is wearing a tiny yamulka. "What's up Bizz?" asks Buzz. "Why are you wearing a yamulka, a yiddisher skull cap on your head?" asks Bizz. "Oh, dat!" replies Buzz. "I just didn't want the guests to tink I was a wasp!"

Sent in by Louise Garcia

More jokes on page 5...

Newsletter comments

"We thought the new Newsletter was brilliant and enjoyed reading all the articles. We saw the beautiful lamps in Penryn and saw they had a sold sign on them and were wondering where they had gone. We were thrilled to see that they had gone to the Jewish Museum in London."

Ron & Leila Mole

**Contribute
to the next
newsletter**

Please make sure
your voice is heard.
Send your articles, book
reviews, recipes, stories, poems,
hard-hitting political comments
to Noah or Harvey.

**Let's make the next
issue even better!**

noah@designextreme.com
harvey@kehillatkernow.com