

# Kol Kehillat Kernow

Voice of the Jewish Community in Cornwall

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## Alice in Limmud land

**Stephanie Berry**

It's late December and I'm screeching up the A30 armed with Kehillat Kernow Siddur, talking books, and 3 flasks of motorway juice: a smoothie, carrot soup and Colombian, decaff. Destination: University of Warwick, a 5½ hours drive. Must get through M6 traffic to check in to my dorm room well before it starts. I managed to get away at the crack, neighbour providing running commentary while I load everything into my car.

"Where you off to then?" she asks. "Stonking, big Jewish Christmas party in the Midlands, 2500 of us from all over the world," I say. "No turkey, no mince pies, just lots of lectures, hectic socialising and no TV." "Hmm... sounds interesting," she says. "Hope the food's alright?"

The food is edible, mostly. For all I care they could serve me baked beans on toast for five days and I would still be chortling with joy. I am escaping Christmas for the Jewish Nirvana that is Limmud, happy to survive mass kosher catering, be it smoked salmon and rye bread in my room, or cheese and crackers too. Though I admit to being a bit of a foodie, on this occasion it's not an issue.

Mind you, I'll miss the Sally Ally's "Away in a Manger" in Penzance on Christmas Eve, but I take comfort in the fact that there will still be

Anne and David's mulled wine stall on the corner in Mousehole when I get back, proffered free to all Kehillat Kernow Jews who make the pilgrimage to the hallowed Christmas lights.

To Limmud then, to the Jewish hearth borne, that rare place of sanctuary where Jews from cradle to the grave, ad meah ve-eskrim, come together from the full spectrum of Jewish religious affiliations in the UK and from across the globe for five intense days over the Christmas period. The aim: To indulge every aspect of our love of learning, enquiry and lest we forget, socialising. It's a kind of seamless environment of complete tolerance where divisions and old boundary lines tend to miraculously melt away. All are there to absorb, reflect, talk, debate, commune, make new friends, nurture old connections and so much more. For me the Limmud experience is about taking time out to shed new light on what it means to be a Jew and a human being in the hurly, burly of our modern world. Also, to have some fun and be in a culture where I can connect with all sorts of thinking people who for all their differences have some kernel of sameness that is comforting - a kind of party for the Jewish soul. A word of warning: go once and it becomes an



Stephanie Berry looking very pleased that she attended the huge Limmud conference over the Christmas holidays at Warwick. These events are often life-changing experiences for many people who attend.

addiction. You meet some Limmudniks who have been coming for twenty years or more! So how is this alchemy achieved? Firstly, Limmud offers an extraordinary amount of variety all day, every day and every night for the full duration of the conference. It's bustling, intense... Continued on page 7

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**Pat Lipert**

Due to popular demand and increasing numbers, the Communal Seder on Saturday, 19th April, at 6.30pm will be at a new location: the glamorous Trelissick Gardens. Located in Feock, near Truro, the communal Seder service on the 14th of Nisan 5758 will be in the newly refurbished Trelissick Gardens Barn Restaurant. Seating for eighty people can be accommodated. A large parking area on level is available along with many catering extras we haven't had before. The Seder arrange-

ments are under the direction of Mrs. Anne Hearle and all members should have received notification forms and already have made their arrangements. Those members who are preparing food ought to arrive a half-hour before the 6.30 start of the service. Kosher wine will



Hilary Hoad

Tranquility and Pesach together in this glorious Seder setting at Trelissick Gardens.

be provided for the service but all members and guests must bring their own table wine for the meal if they wish to do so. Trelissick Gardens is part of the National Trust. If you wish to go into the gardens much earlier in the day, you will need to purchase tickets individually; the gardens close at 5pm.

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Rosie Brown in a thoughtful mood but also chuffed as she anticipates her upcoming Bat Mitzvah on the 12th of April at the Headland Hotel in Truro. Our own Harvey Kurzfeld is officiating. Parents Iain and Rachel, and brother Murray can't wait.

## Chairman's remarks

Harvey Kurzfeld

This is turning out to be quite a year for all of us. A number of members have been interviewed on Radio Cornwall; the community's membership is continuing to expand; there will be two Bat Mitzvot forthcoming; a large contingent of our membership attended the Holocaust Evensong service at Truro Cathedral; one of our own members has agreed to do the annual lecture in September and if that wasn't enough we are also in the midst of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel.

Why should that be considered important for us as a community living in Cornwall? The question hardly needs asking. The continuing existence of the State of Israel should be of prime importance to all Jewish people, whether they live in Cornwall, Calcutta or Cologne. We read about the gift of the Promised Land almost every week in our Torah portions and seeing the reality of that for only a mere 60 years now has got to be one of the wonders of the modern world.

It is also incumbent upon all Jewish people, of whatever persuasion, to actively support the State of Israel given the constant pressure under which it exists. There are, sadly, a few well-known establishment figures in Britain who openly attack the government of Israel and call for unconditional peace with its neighbours. Unfortunately this only lends succour to those natural enemies of Israel who suggest that this lends succour to enemies who suggest Israel should not exist!

I hope we continue to support Israel through donations and visits and both the Jewish and non-Jewish world will be celebrating the State of Israel for the rest of human history.

### ■ Editorial:

## A reason for kvelling

Pat Lipert

*"The old order changeth, yielding place to new; And God reveals himself in many ways..."* - Tennyson

A look through old AGM minutes of Kehillat Kernow from 2000 to 2007 is a good way to determine how far we have developed and changed in the past seven years. Whilst the community began about two years before that time, the community started to take a more formal shape with the onset of the millennium. And what changes have taken place! Our membership has trebled from six families to fifty-nine. Our finances have increased: Minutes of the 2000 AGM meeting indicated we had a balance of £25.06 in our bank account! Now it is in the tens of thousands. From no Cheder, we now have a formal course of study for various age groups training children in Hebrew, lifestyle and culture, history, festivals, Bar and Bat Mitzvot with Cheder parents participating fully in their children's Jewish

education on a BI-monthly basis. From no set venues for major Festivals or services to regulated observances both at church facilities, in people's homes, and at public meeting places. From no Constitution to a formal document amended at an annual meeting in 2005, we are now recognised as a recognised charity. From no books, no Torah, no Ark no Bimah, no Kiddush necessities, and no library to now possessing all of the above. In fact, prior to the year 2000, we did not even have a formal name!

A quick glance at the minutes of our last general meeting, shows us to be a thriving shul in the

midst of, yes, growing pains, as different influences and new challenges rattle our cages, and force us to grope as best we can toward a future which will be inclusive and provide a religious home for the next generation. Already, one of our 'youngsters' is now working as a teacher in our Cheder! We worry now that venues for our major holidays might need larger premises to contain our numbers; we concern ourselves with trips to various places of Jewish interest; we begin to make plans to participate in the European Day of Jewish Culture and Heritage; we anticipate more professional rabbis stepping in from time to time to guide us; we work closely with the RSGB; we have established a tradition of an annual cross-cultural lecture and literary festival; we have a regular newsletter and members of our

community have appeared on television and radio on a regular basis. And the list of activities goes on and on. You get the picture.

Lest we get staid and think things will ever remain the same, we are assured, particularly by the energy

**"New achievements should complement the old order"**

and new ideas of incoming members, that this will not and cannot happen. Our original objective was to advance Jewish religion and education. We now are expanding our scope to make Kehillat Kernow encompass the complete definition of a synagogue: a place for prayer, a place for study and a Kneset, a place for meeting. In doing this, we need to treasure and regard who and what have come before as valuable. We need to ensure that new achievements complement rather than diminish the old order. For in that way we can build a synagogue that embraces a myriad of members.

## Pirke Avot: a Pesach tradition

Vera Collins

When the children of Israel were led out of Egyptian bondage at Pesach, they journeyed for seven weeks before the giving of the Torah at Shavuot.

During these weeks they experienced more instances of divine intervention and encountered the harsh difficulties of life in the wilderness. Tradition has it that this was a necessary preparation for the receiving of the Torah. They needed to discover that freedom entailed responsibility and that, without an ethical social basis, together with outstanding personal qualities, they could not survive as a people.

With their acceptance of Torah, they were appointed to a divine purpose and given the key to achieving that purpose.

The area of social and personal life is the subject of the Mishnah tractate 'Pirke Avot.' It records the teachings of the early rabbis, debating and expounding how best to promote

ethical living and to exemplify Torah in action. Thus, 'Pirke Avot' is considered appropriate for study during the seven weeks leading up to Shavuot: 'z' man matan Torateinu.' It has become custom to study one chapter of 'Avot' on each of the six Shabbats. For this purpose, a sixth chapter was added to the original five. The sixth, extolling Torah, is read on the Sabbath before Shavuot, setting the tone for that festival.

In many communities 'Pirke Avot' is so loved and valued that it is read on Shabbat afternoons throughout the summer months leading up to Rosh Hashanah.

'Pirke Avot' is the only tractate of the Mishnah that is included in its entirety in the siddur because of its importance as a guide in Jewish life. It is readily to hand and furthermore, is good reading. The rabbis had a shrewd understanding of human nature that is relevant to our own time. Their comments are apt and witty. Why not taste and try during the next few weeks?

## ■ Profile: Milton and Gloria Jacobson

# A marriage of true minds

Pat Lipert

Gloria and Milton Jacobson, two founding members of Kehillat Kernow, were destined to be together. Having always known each other as cousins, they kept meeting up until the right moment presented itself. In 1969, they tied the knot. Adam was born; they moved from Birmingham to Cornwall, and the rest, as they say, was history.

What was Birmingham's loss, was certainly our gain. Members of Kehillat Kernow since 1999, they have contributed endlessly to our community's growth. They have dedicated their time and energies to hard work, various charities, theatre and the caring of others.

Milton's family was Orthodox and lived in Edinburgh. Milton's father, Noah (AKA Cecil) was in the Schmatta trade and his mother was a business-woman with her own ladies' outfitting shop. Milton's brother, Bernard a G.P., died young. Milton graduated from Durham University and qualified as a dentist in 1953. He immediately went into the Army for two years. He was commissioned in the Royal Army Dental Corps. After his stint in the military, in 1954, his best friend Len, who was also a dentist, talked him into moving to Hove to become his partner in dental practice there. He married, played golf, worked, and became an expert bridge player. He served as president of AJEX and vice president of the Maccabee organisations. "I have always been a member of a shul!" he said.

In 1967, after seeing Gloria again (his father and her mother were brother and sister), he moved to Birmingham to be with her and split his time between a dental practice in Birmingham and teaching at the Royal London Hospital. "I'd leave Birmingham at 6:30 am and drive down the M1 to start work at 9:00 o'clock in London," he said. At the end of 1969, he, Gloria and Adam moved to Cornwall, Devoran at first, then Carnon Downs, and finally Truro. They immediately became members of Plymouth Synagogue.

Gloria's life in the early days in Birmingham

took a different turn. "My mother used to take me to Edinburgh. Milton was away at school then, and I was in pigtails. When we met later, I was 17, and our relationship got more interesting," she said. While both fell in love, the families did not wish them to marry. Obediently, then went on to find other spouses, a situation that ultimately did not work for either one of them.

Gloria worked at various jobs: first, at Cadburys, then as an advertising manager for a newspaper, then as a personal assistant and buyer for a fuel company. "It was an unusual job for a woman in those days and the fuel industry was definitely a male preserve," she said. After her marriage broke up, a girl friend who lived in Bermuda convinced Gloria to leave

England for warmer climes. In 1960, she landed the perfect job for a young woman on a tropical island: "A wealthy woman artist had broken her leg and she needed someone to take her dog swimming every day. So I was paid very handsomely for taking a swim with a lovely dog." When the woman wanted Gloria to go to Egypt with her (as a companion), she declined and returned to England for a short period of time but found she missed Bermuda. She returned and with a Bermudian friend bought a glass bottomed boat. She took a Marine Pilots License before being cleared to take tourists out. She was astonished to find she was the first woman in Bermuda to gain the License and when TV and the local press wanted interviews, she was delighted with all the free publicity for the new business. After five years, her mother became ill and being an only child, she returned to the UK to look after her mother. A short time later, Milton's father became ill; her mother recovered and Gloria took her to



Milton and Gloria Jacobson looking beautiful and happy as they prepare to celebrate Shabbos dinner with friends

see her ailing brother in Hove. It was there that she met up again with Milton. This time, there was no holding them back.

When they moved to Cornwall, they joined the Truro Operatic Society (Milton is a tenor; Gloria is a soprano), and the Carnon Downs Drama Group. In addition, they raised Adam, and looked after both Gloria's mother and Milton's father. By the time they moved to Truro, in 1994, many of their responsibilities were lessened; Gloria began her work with Save the Children as a volunteer. The shop in Truro which she manages, has been visited by Princess Anne twice and Gloria has been summoned to St. James Palace for her work with the charity. Both Milton and Gloria also travelled a great deal during these years: Canada, the USA, South Africa, Europe...About nine years ago, they got in touch with David Hampshire having heard about a new Jewish community that was starting up. They have been active supporters and leading figures in our community ever since.

## The Walk of Cornish Jewry

Rachel Brown

In a letter to Kehillat Kernow read out on erev Rosh Hashana, Elkan Levy, minister for small communities, praised us, those who live away from Jewish centres, for making an effort to be Jewish.

During my childhood in New York, Judiasm was in the air. It seeped into your pores like Cornish mist. Jews didn't need to go to school, eat kosher, book off work and schools for Yom Tov's. It just happened. Everyone, Jews and non-Jews, knew what "Jewish" meant. Life in the 'ghetto' of

North Manchester is similar. All Jewish children in Prestwich attend Jewish day schools. From Monday to Friday they ride on the same Jewish conveyor belt of my youth. Families don't feel the need to go to school or think about Shabbos because the children get enough Yiddishkite during the week.

For the first time in my life, I am opting in. I am choosing to live a Jewish life. I am making the effort. Moving from the 'centre' has had the inverse effect predicted by the traditionalist and sceptics of the 'ghetto.' The smell of challah permeates my 200 year old miner's cottage every Friday afternoon. My family looks forward to davening, learning and eating with our fellow Cornish Jews on alternative Shabbos. The cloves are inhaled on a Saturday evening as the family make Havdalah. My family has opted in. We have made the choice to be Jewish as a family. We have jumped off the conveyor belt and are walking on our own two feet.



"May the Lord bless and keep you!" Parents and children huddle under the tallit for the Shabbat blessing at the end of the service.

# Jews and Christmas: a personal reflection

Julie Stone

Boxing Day. Thank God. I can on turn the computer and pretend that Christmas is over for another year and the vexed question of 'what does a nice Jewish girl do on Christmas Day?' can be put on the backburner for another year. I'm not alone in not knowing quite what to do with myself over the festive period. Google 'Jews' and 'Christmas' and an avalanche of articles pose the same question, namely: What should, or indeed do, Jews do at Christmas? Suggestions (catering to a largely American audience) include: 'Go out to eat Chinese/Vietnamese/Thai'; offer to work Xmas Day if you're a doctor/hospital worker/social worker; do voluntary work. But this is Cornwall, I'm volunteered out, and, I'm not a doctor. So what to do? And why the unique sense of unease about joining in this Hallmark Holiday? Some personal history. I was raised in a traditional North West London United Synagogue tradition. It didn't seem that frum an upbringing at the time; if you're getting out of school early on a Friday afternoon most of the winter, you're not going to complain. Besides, frumkeit is all relative and the rest of my family were to become a lot frummer in years to come. But the early years, at least, were characterised by shul most weeks, weekly shabbos tea for the masses (with eight of us already, I do mean the masses), two day yomtovs (shul to the table, to the armchair, to the table, shul, to the table, to the armchair etc), Chanukah, and *most definitely not Christmas*.

Like most aspects of indoctrination, this prohibition on Christmas went largely unchallenged in our uber-conventional household. The use of the derogatory term 'goy/goyim' was frowned on in our house, hence the seriousness, when invoked, of the term 'chookas ha goy' as the explanation for why our family didn't 'do

Christmas'. From what I could infer, this loosely translated as a religiously undesirable and inappropriate appropriation of traditions which weren't ours - tree, carols, decorations, turkey. In short, the whole Christmas shmegeggy. The trade off, as a young child, was, of course, Chanukah. "Moatzur Yeshuatsi - the cat's in the cupboard and you can't catch me..." Aah, the challenge of getting through all of the verses before the tiny coloured candles melted over the tablecloth. With Chanukah came presents, usually on the last day, accompanied by tea. Priorities in the right order - eat first, presents later. Hoping that I am not recasting the great unwrapping through my green-tinted glasses, I'd like to think that we were as taken with the lights and the singing and the *raison-d'etre* of the story behind Chanukah as we were our Boots bath baubles and soaps on ropes. Gifts were modest, and a bag of gold chocolate coins was indescribably exciting. The fact that non-Jewish friends really lucked out at this time of

**"Advocat at eleven, headache by twelve, losing the will to live at one"**

year didn't bother us. Once grandchildren got in on the act, present-giving involved not only six sibs but a small army of nieces and nephews. Things started getting out of hand. The year that 'present mountain' looked disconcertingly like an EU surplus heap, it was clear that 'Something Had To Be Done'. We took a decision that parents could give to their own children (and vice versa if old enough) but beyond that, genug was genug. This was in the days before you could buy an Oxfam goat or other worthy presents. With no children of my own, I carried on buying worthy for my nieces and nephews, until the year that they whinged disgracefully that all I'd bought them was Bob Geldof et al's 'Do they know its Christmas?' That was the last year they got Chanukah presents from me.

But Chanukah v Christmas was only part of the story. How far did one play along, all the while knowing that this wasn't really your yomtov?



Julie Stone in the "Simcha Hall" at Truro after Shabbat Services. A day of rest is just the ticket for this very busy lady.

A secular infant school provided some early challenges. My mother's suggested solution to carols was to sing along up but excluding utterance of sweet baby J. There was no question of appearing in the Nativity, and most years we even managed to get out of the carol concert altogether. Bonanza! The next few years were harder, when we holidayed, en famille, in Peebles in Scotland. Here, exuberant celebration of Christmas and Hogmanay was the object of the exercise, and non-participation was not an option. So we ceilidhed with the best of them, pulled crackers, and ate and drank ourselves silly. The teen thing saw further muddying of the waters. Peer approval was paramount and the last day of term exchange of trinkets de rigueur. Finding non-denominational wrapping paper seemed kind of pointless. Student years? A party's a party.

Fast forward to adulthood and autonomous decision-making. The compulsory few years' of 'Crisis at Christmas' volunteering. Holidays in India and other far flung places to escape piped music, Christmas television ads, and forced jollity. Invitations to share Christmas Days with work colleagues and their families, finally to understand, fully, what one hadn't been missing all these years. Joyless, stifling affairs. Advocaat at eleven, headache by twelve, losing the will to live at one, Eastenders at two. Ceremonial unveiling of ludicrously extravagant presents with their price tags on so they can be exchanged. And then finally, finally - lunch at around four, me wondering how hard it can be to orchestrate a large meal once a year on time. The sending of cards? A few, but mostly as a networking opportunity to work colleagues. Presents? Perhaps small, functional tokens of affection to the deserving. Tree? A step too far. Ditto decorations. Turkey? Why, when you could be eating roast chicken? All in all, a far cry from yomtov - with its legitimate reason to get together over and above food and presents. And my Cornish Christmas? A cliff top walk in the sunshine and stroll on the beach, grateful to be outside, unencumbered by obligation, and able to enjoy the gift of nature - much like any other day.



The Rosh Chodesh Ladies meet and eat: the first gathering of the special society at a local Chinese restaurant to celebrate the new moon. Organised by Louise Garcia, the ladies are hoping to meet on Rosh Chodesh at various venues in future months. From left to right (back row): Louise Garcia, Stephanie Berry, Jacquie Ricketts; (front row), Karen Myers, Pat Lipert, and Gay Jewell. Anne Hearle, Rachel Brown and Jenny Cohen also attended but were not available for picture.

# Travels with Ant and Kate

**Anthony Fagin**

*When we left Ant and Kate in the last issue, they had left Africa and were on their way to Australia and New Zealand in their year-long adventure.*

When we arrived on these bone-dry shores nearly nine weeks ago, Australia was in its sixth or seventh year of droughts conscientious visitors with an established international



**Cuckoo, cuckoo... No it's not the kind found in clocks, but a live tropical beauty resting on our Ant's capable shoulder as he trudges through the rain forests with Kate in Australia.**

reputation to maintain as drought busters, we set to work immediately. We achieved early success and managed to wash out our own trip in a camper van to the Blue Mountains. Now crops stand proudly where there was once dustbowl. Fat, contented cattle chew the cud. We have greened much of New South Wales and Queensland and arranged for cyclones off the eastern seaboard, particularly around Fraser Island, where we arrived last evening. To escape the monotony of this English type weather, we decided against the prevailing wisdom, to go to the Red Centre where no-one in their right mind ventures at the height of summer. Also, I had an appointment with destiny: to celebrate my seventieth birthday at Uluru. We didn't climb the rock in defence to the entreaties of the local Aboriginal people for whom it is profoundly sacred. We also visited Kata-Tjuta (the Olgas), and Watarrka (King's Canyon) and had an unforgettable six kilometre walk around the canyon rim and saw the sunrise from every edge. On to the West MacDonnell Ranges (the WestMacs), and at Standley's Chasm at midday. Despite the overpowering heat and persistent flies, we witnessed the effect of the overhead sun on the walls of the narrow gorge. Stupendous! On our way back to Alice Springs, we made a point of stopping at Jim's Place to meet Jim Cotterhill, who with his father, had cut the road to King's Canyon

and who owns the world-famous singing dingo, Dinky. We can report that Dinky had the privilege of singing a couple of songs to Kate's accompaniment on the piano. On to Mount Greville with Dib, Kate's brother; his wife, Neen, and his eldest son, James. It was nearly 700 metres high! And thus, I did things of which I believed I was no longer capable greatly assisted by my recently acquired Nordic walking poles. During our time in Queensland, we

explored rainforests including Ravensbourne National Park and Crow's Neck National Park. We heard the Whip Bird and the Cat Bird, and saw reptiles. But it's the trees that are so awe-inspiring: gigantic eucalyptus, Red Cedars and Rosewoods, Hoop, Brush Box and Bunya Pines. We watched out for the Gimpy-Gimpy, the stinging tree, and the Strangler Fig. It's been wonderful for us to have been made to feel so welcome by various branches of Kate's Australian family. We also spent a week on Fraser Island, the largest sand island in the world. At low tide, you can drive for miles in a rented 4x4 along the beach. One day, I went on a solo bush walk, deep in the forest. Some sixth sense made me turn around. I was

being dogged noiselessly by a male dingo. I managed to drive him off by brandishing my walking poles. I'm glad there wasn't a pack of them.

On to Bundaberg and then a cruise on a 100-year old tall ship. We flew to Hamilton Island, then on to Solway Lass and on to Whitsunday Islands, colloquially known as Wet Sundays. Rain, rain and more rain. We landed late at night at Christchurch in New Zealand; it was dry but perishingly cold. Only 7 degrees C. In Brisbane it had been 27 C and a few weeks before that in the Red Centre, 47 C. We went on to Te Anau where we met up with my kid sister, Jess, and Alan, a friend and co-conspirator from Cornwall. The 120 km drive from Te Anau to Milford Sound (it's really a fiord), was breathtakingly beautiful, all that to us New Zealand is about: rivers in spate, roaring cataracts, snow melt waterfalls, drizzle, heavy rain, cascades, torrents, Alpine peaks and swirling mists. Unsurprising that Lord of the Rings should have been filmed in this part of the world. During the return voyage to the Tasman Sea, the rain held off; we sailed under towering cliffs and by rock which exuded deep green copper ore, sea lions, dolphins and cormorants.

*Editor's Note: In a few weeks' time, Ant and Kate will be gong on to Tahiti! Tune in next issue.*

# Singing for charity

**Pat Lipert**

Crohns Disease is a punishing illness which is particularly prevalent in Jews. Natasha Adley has managed to raise over £1 million with her Walk For Crohns which began in 2002. This year, she is organising a signing competition, Saturday, 1st November at the Royal College of Musicians in Central London. Auditions will be the 21st and 22nd of September and the ten finalists will perform at the show in front of a panel of expert judges and people from record labels.

At this point the charity is gauging the levels of interest and therefore asking any act who is interested to email: [info@walkforcrohns.org.uk](mailto:info@walkforcrohns.org.uk) with the name of the act and the type of music if they are interested in auditioning. As most of you know, our chairman, Harvey Kurzfeld has suffered from this disease since he was seventeen. For more information about Crohns you can check their website: [www.walkforcrohns.org.uk](http://www.walkforcrohns.org.uk).

# A Mouse, A Different Mouse

**Liesl Munden**

No, no, I've never been a friend of mice,  
Don't like their beady, steely eyes.  
Their grey coast has a silvery hue,  
Which makes me shudder, does it you?

Their tales are long, and black and thin,  
No, my affection they can't win.  
They multiply and in my book  
Have nothing to endear their look.

They're clever, people tell me so  
'Cause they're always on the go.  
They've got a lot to answer for  
With crumbs of knowledge in their store.

But, I won't have one in my house,  
No, never will I like a mouse.



**A mouse or a mouse?**

■ The Miracles of Exodus by Colin J. Humphreys

## Moshe on a mission



A field trip extraordinaire led by the incomparable Moshe.

David Hearle

It happens that a book comes along that is about just what I have been thinking. Those who heard Louise Garcia's comments on the miracles of the plagues of Egypt will be ready to go along with Mr. Humphreys' theories, too. His premise is that the reporting of the miracles leading up to Passover, the Exodus and the events at Sinai and after are factual, and as such must have a basis in sound scientific principle.

It is the old axiom that even God can't beat the ace of trumps with a deuce, or even God has to play by rules, especially if He was the instigator of the rules.

Humphreys' looks at the life of Moses as reported in Exodus and picks up events early in Moses' life that he suggests were fundamental to understanding later events. He suggests that after the killing of the slave master, Moses had to leave town in a hurry and where he ended up with Jethro, his future father in law in Media, was in present day North Western Arabia. He states that there were well traveled desert routes this way with adequate water, that a traveler intent on speed and survival would have had to take. Moses learned, then, some of what he would need for later. After the plagues of Egypt, all more or less explained along the same lines as Louise, the good people of Israel headed South East along the fringes of the modern Sinai area, following not only the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, but the trade routes that Moses had been on before. Most modern biblical scholars have Mount Sinai in the wrong place, he states, something that would have been obvious to those who wrote the account down years later.

God's markers in the sky turn out to be an active volcano, no where near the present Mount Sinai, which is definitely not a volcano. Humphreys' suggestion is that it is Mount Bedr in Arabia. The Torah description is spot on for

a volcano, and by various deductions about times of travel and geological activity he makes a convincing case.

As for his descriptions of miracles, he manages, with the exception of the deaths of the first born in Egypt, to explain they all could well be factual. I particularly liked his explanation for Moses making sweet water flow from the rock for his cantankerous fellow travelers. There have been modern day eyewitnesses to similar events. The explanation

for crossing the Sea of Reeds, hinged on a piece of luck explained as co-incidence, for fixing the geography of the event. For the first time I felt that it was feasible.

Lastly by explaining such miracles is it possible to diminish them? Humphreys' handled this well; the miracle hangs not in the rules governing the physical universe but in the timing. One can almost feel Moses our teacher breathing sighs of relief as well.

Editor's Note: Who says people do not listen to sermons? David is commenting on a sermon delivered by Louise Garcia one Shabbat in January in relation to a book he was reading!

## The Triumph of Israel in Words and Music

On July 27, from 2-4 pm members of Kehillat Kernow will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the state of Israel through literature and music at its 6th annual Literary and Music Festival at the Lipert's in Rosudgeon.

All members are urged not only to attend but participate! If not now, when? If not for Israel, what?

Poems, songs, stories, vignettes, jokes, dramas, musical recitations with an Israeli theme are most welcome. In order to set up a programme to celebrate Israel in style, we need all the talent of Kehillat Kernow to join in!

Anyone interested in participating should contact Pat or Leslie Lipert. If you wish to attend, please let them know by the first week of July so refreshments can be arranged.

## “The children! The children! We can't forget the children”



Karen Myers tutoring her son, Sam, during Cheder. Parents, under the leadership of Bonnie Rockley, keep the Cheder alive and kicking on Shabbat.

# Under this Blazing Light by Amos Oz

Pat Lipert

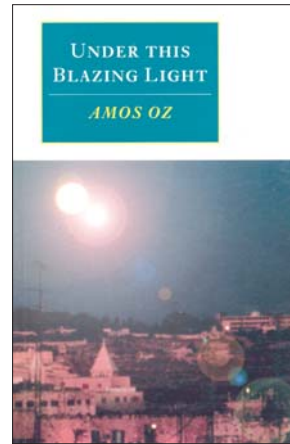
This collection of Amos Oz essays was written thirty years ago. These essays are as relevant today in sizing up the Israeli-Palestinian condition and the state of Israeli literature as they were thirty years ago. The only difference is that the situation has worsened. Oz, with his unique ability to bore in unmercifully into the essence of things, is a hard task master. Hypocrisy, excuse, platitude and myopia have no place in his vision of what literature should be nor what Israelis should be. He does not suffer fools gladly and as a result of his views, he has often been the subject of controversy both within Israel and internationally.

These essays are a must if you want to hear an honest portrayal of the Palestinian-Israeli tragedy as he terms it. He believes both have a "powerful claim" to the land and he knows that

while a contract of co-existence must be made, he also knows that it will never be an easy, happy-ever-after co-existence. But co-existence it must be if any are to survive. The Israelis cannot live anywhere else nor can the Palestinians. And Oz is no wide-eyed liberal. He draws a distinction between the attacks on Israel from other Arab countries; in deed, he was a reservist soldier in '67 and '73. A two-state solution must be achieved for the issue is about human sur-

vival, not political or religious ideology. His insightful discussions on the role of Israeli literature (there is no such thing as yet; the country is too new; the writers not far enough removed from their disaporan roots), and on the function of writers is enlightening. The writer straddles the world of events and the world of words. They are incompatible, for words "are connected to a place from which our captious witness contemplates events."

Read these essays and weep. Read these essays and rejoice. Like all great writers, Oz has the ability to be searingly honest, excruciatingly moving, and timeless. *Note: Another book worth reading which has been recently published by Forum Books is A Journey Through Jewish Bagad by Violette Shamash. ISBN 0-9557095-0-4.*



Jerusalem encompassed by a misty light.

## Alice in Limmud land

Continued from front page ...and hugely energising; it's often hard to decide what to opt for at any one time. Sessions are approximately one hour and ten minutes and the range of topics covered is vast: Torah, Israel, Jewish history, spirituality, culture, community, politics, philosophy and science, interfaith relations, music and performance.

My personal favourite this conference was an American, Amy-Jill Levine, who describes herself as a Yankee Jewish feminist and who is Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University

Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee. Her razor sharp insights into Judeo-Christian relations, coupled with old fashioned Jewish humour, saw her daily lectures packed. Then there was Efraim Zuroff who gave a riveting account of how people from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre go about their worldwide efforts to track down Nazi War Criminals. Hagai Segal, Middle East affairs and terrorism expert, delivered a series of eloquent lectures on "American and Middle Eastern Foreign Policy", "Assessing the Al Qaeda/Islamist Thereafter the Failed London and Glasgow Attacks" and the devastating effects of "Holocaust Denial". Clive Lawton, explained how Jewish Ideas have changed the World. These were some of the 200 presenters on offer.

I also loved the range of Jewish documentaries and feature films. There's also entertainment aplenty in the evenings, until the small hours if you can burn the candle at both ends. There's time to laugh, have a drink with friends old and new, sing Yiddish songs, get nostalgic over Leonard Cohen and bop the night away to bands like Reva Le Sheva or Y-love, Yitz Jordan, a convert to Hasidic orthodoxy, who is a Hip Hop Artist who weaves sassy rhymes in English, Arabic, Yiddish, Hebrew and Aramaic.

Uniqueness is what Limmud encourages. Actually anyone who has a passion for a topic related to some aspect of Judaism, sacred or profane, bog standard or bizarre, is welcome to apply to present a session.

Limmud is organised by a dedicated team of volunteers who work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure conference runs smoothly. When

you register you get a fat conference booklet detailing all that is available each hour with a brief background on each presenter. The information is also arranged in themes so you can work out the best way you want

to approach your learning at Limmud. This is also available to download from the Limmud website beforehand so you can plan in advance. Finally you flop into bed; the Warwick halls of residence are comfy and warm. Many have their own en-suite bathrooms so no queuing for showers or loo if the idea of university accommodation sounds off-putting. Exhausting it may sound, but you can take Limmud at whatever pace you like.

Finally, if you think Kehillat Kernow isn't firmly on the Limmud Map, you would be wrong. Maureen Lipman spoke of her many Jewish connections and how people granted her abilities she didn't know she had. One American lady from Cornwall at a recent conference in Paddington, in response to a story about a shul in Suriname which asked ML to find them a rabbi piped up, "Can you find us a rabbi too?" I couldn't contain myself and shouted out from the front row, "That's our Pat, that's Kehillat Kernow!" "Right," said Lipman, quite amused. "But we carry on regardless, rabbi or not; that's us!" I answered, amazed at my own chutzpah. No one is going to forget us in a hurry!

Let's hear it for Limmud and bring on the mini bus for 2008!

**"Uniqueness is what Limmud encourages"**



Zachor! Zachor! We are commanded to remember those who came before us. No time is more poignant than Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January in England), when many remembrance activities are held. Both Liesl Munden and Harvey Kurzfield participated in events this year along with other members of our community. Harvey sang the moving verses from Micah 4:1-4, the highlight of Evensong services to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day at Truro Cathedral. Liesl spoke to over one hundred students at the St Ives School about her experiences as a young Jewish girl living in Hitler's Germany and as a member of the Kindertransport.

# Notices and diary

**Welcome to new members:**  
Buli Corby, Edmund Cutts

**Get well wishes:**  
Vera Collins, Milton Jacobson, Joy Dunn

**Condolences:**  
Ashley Cohen on the loss of his mother.

**Return, return:**  
Please return any 'borrowed' Reform prayer books which belong to Kehillat Kernow. We are short several copies.

**Diary:**  
**Apr 12<sup>th</sup>:** Harvey. Metzora. Nissan 7. Service to be held at 11 am at the Headland Hotel, Newquay to celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of Rosie Brown. All members. Welcome to attend the service. No service to be held at the TBC.  
**Apr 19<sup>th</sup>:** Erev Pesach. Communal Seder, Treliwick Gardens Barn Restaurant, 6:30pm

**Apr 20-26<sup>th</sup>:** Pesach. Nissan 15-21<sup>st</sup>.  
**Apr 26<sup>th</sup>:** Pat. 7th Day Pesach. Nissan 21.  
**May 10<sup>th</sup>:** Harvey. Shabbat Atzmaut. Emor. Iyar 5.  
**May 24<sup>th</sup>:** Louise. Bechokotai. Iyar 19.  
**June 7<sup>th</sup>:** Pat. Naso. Sivan 4.  
**June 9<sup>th</sup>:** Shavuot.  
**June 21<sup>st</sup>:** Harvey. Shelach Lecha. Sivan 18.  
**July 5<sup>th</sup>:** Louise. Chukkat. Tammuz 2.  
**July 19<sup>th</sup>:** Pat. Pinchas. Tammuz 16.  
**Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Harvey. Mas'ey. Av 1. Rosh Chodesh.  
**Aug 9<sup>th</sup>:** Tishah b'Av  
**Aug 16<sup>th</sup>:** Louise. Shabbat Nachamu. Va'etchanan. Av 15.  
**Aug 30<sup>th</sup>:** Pat. Blessing for Elul. Machar Chodesh. Re'eh. Av 29.  
*Note: Services will resume at the Truro Baptist Church, Simchah Hall, on Sat. 20<sup>th</sup> Sept.*

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# Tri-colour Kneidlach



**Hag Sameach!** There's no better way to begin your Seder meal than with a steaming bowl of chicken soup and matzo balls. When they are as colourful as this, you can't miss.

**Pat Lipert**

Passover is looming over our addled brains. Merely, the prospect of all that special holiday cooking is enough to make a matzo pudding of us all. Susie Fishbein, a well-known American kosher cook, has come up with a sparkling solution to our must-serve chicken soup and you know what! The secret, by the by, of light matzo balls is plenty of egg and plenty of time to let the dough rest. Nothing less than 5-7 hours in the refrigerator, or overnight. I've combined Fishbein's recipes with mine.

**Tomato Matzo Balls:**  
 3 large eggs  
 2 tablespoons olive oil, or vegetable oil, or chicken fat  
 3 tablespoons tomato paste  
 1/2 - 3/4 matzo mix, either coarse-ground or fine.  
 Pinch of salt

Pinch of grated nutmeg  
 Mix eggs and oil; add tomato paste, nutmeg, and salt. Whisk well. Stir in the matzo meal using enough to make a very, very thick paste. Do not over stir. Set in the refrigerator for many hours. Form into balls. Drop in boiling salted water or chicken stock (not the stock you will use as soup as the liquid will get cloudy as the matzo balls boil). Simmer gently for at least 40 minutes.

**Turmeric Matzo Balls:**  
 Same recipe, different dish. Merely substitute the tomato paste with 1-2 teaspoons of turmeric.

**Spinach Matzo Balls:**  
 Same recipe but substitute with 3-4 ounces of fresh, frozen very finely chopped or pureed) spinach. Remove as much of the moisture with paper towels as is humanly possible. Proceed as in the original recipe. Hag Sameach!

# Joke: But seriously folks...

**Leslie Lipert**

Two Hasids were stuck in the desert wandering aimlessly and close to death. They are about to lay down and wait for the inevitable when all of a sudden...  
 "...Hey Moishe, you smell what I smell? It's bacon. I'm sure of it!"  
 "...Yes, Hershel, it smells like bacon to me."  
 So, with renewed strength, they struggle up the next sand dune and there in the distance is a tree loaded with bacon. There's raw bacon dripping with moisture; fried bacon, back bacon, double smoked bacon. Every imaginable kind of pig meat. "...Moishe, Moishe, we're saved! It's a bacon tree!"  
 "Hershel, are you sure it's not a mirage? We're in the desert!"  
 And with that, Moise races towards the tree. He gets within five metres with Hershel close behind, when suddenly a machine gun opens up and Moishe is cut down in his tracks. It is clear he is mortally wounded, but being the true friend he is, he warns Hershel with his dying breath, "Hershel, go back. You were right; it is not a bacon tree."  
 "...Moishe, my friend, what is it?"  
 "It's...it's...it's a Ham Bush."

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# SUDOKU

How to play: Complete the grid so the numbers 1 to 9 appear only once in each row, each column and 3x3 box. Don't worry; no maths is involved. Only logic is required to solve the puzzle. Have fun!

**IT'S MODERATELY HARD**

9			4					5	
		1					7	4	8
			1	8					2
	7	3	8						
						6	2	1	
1				2	7				
7	6	9					5		
3						9			4

For the solution and more free puzzles, have a look at the Sudoku website: [sudokusolver.com](http://sudokusolver.com).