

January 2017

# UNITY News



## UNITY LECTURE

Sunday 6 November 2016

### UNITY WITHIN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

an address by LAURA MARKS O.B.E.

**F**or our Unity Lecture of 2016 we were privileged to be addressed by Laura Marks. She is a vibrant, dynamic lady who has held many prestigious positions, including Planning Director of the country's largest ad agency AMV.BBDO, Senior Vice President, Board of Deputies of British Jews, chairing the Commission on Women in Jewish Leadership, chair of the Community Issues Division which deals, amongst other things, with regional communities and with Jewish education. When in post, Laura wrote the Jewish community submission to the Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission, set up Jewish Connection (focusing on small Jewish communities) and campaigned for reform within the Board and established Women in Jewish Leadership. In 2016 Laura Marks was delighted to be appointed as Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust Board of Trustees.

After marrying Dan Patterson and having three children, the family lived in California for three years, where Laura first encountered the idea of Mitzvah Day. On their return to the UK she set up Mitzvah Day in 2005, which became a charity in 2008. It is a global day of Jewish-led, inter-faith social action based on the premise that we can all give some time to help others and that together we can really make a difference to our world. It leads the way in faith based social action and is proudly and visibly Jewish.

Laura told us how Mitzvah Day encourages people of different faiths to come together for a day of social action each year to engage with local charities, celebrating the values of justice, acts of kindness and environmental awareness, operating now in 20 countries. Now a well-anticipated focal point in British Jewry's annual calendar, Mitzvah Day galvanises people – regardless of age, faith, affiliation, gender or socio-economic position – to donate their time and energy.

She chaired the government's inter faith project - A



Year of Service - and is now adviser to the new Sedaqa Day, the Muslim community's own Mitzvah Day. In 2014, fifty seven such inter-faith partnerships took place where synagogues, churches, mosques, other places of worship and community centres built relationships throughout the year and on Mitzvah Day participated together in a wide range of local initiatives.

Laura is also co-founder of Nisa-Nashim (the Arabic and Hebrew words for women) and described

how it is dedicated to bringing the Jewish and Muslim communities in Britain closer together by setting up groups of women nationally to build personal friendships, grow as leaders and benefit wider society.

Laura made us aware that when we all work together as a team on issues that matter, we can involve people from large and also small communities, empower people to drive change and ensure that every single person can play a part. Our proven model of grass roots social action-based interfaith fosters collaborations centred on the mutual values of social action and giving. These result in initiatives that have not only made a very real difference to helping the needs of local charities but importantly, forge long-term relationships and understanding which leads to more cohesive local communities.

Laura shared with us her passionate belief in a strong, positive, outward facing and inclusive community where we are safe and free to live Jewish lives as an integral part of British society.

**“There are not many people who can claim to have changed the face of Anglo-Jewry; Laura Marks has done just that”** (*Jewish Chronicle*, November 2014).

She was awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Years' Honours list for her work in building inter-faith relationships.

**Hilary Sinclair**

News and Views from First Unity Lodge

## **FAMILY NEWS.....**

Mazel tov to grandparents **Sylvia and David Lewin** on the birth of their grandchild Maya Aviva to Michael and Nina.

We wish **Walter Weg** a full recovery following an extended stay in hospital. He is now home with a temporary hip replacement.

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### **John Levy - A Memory by Alan Usiskin**

**J**ohn Levy was introduced to us by Lily and John Ainley in the early 1980s. We soon became friends helped by our shared interest in jazz as we were both saxophonists. We were soon involved in going to jam sessions and venues to play.

John loved music so much! Right up to the end he would practise his instrument whilst bedridden.

He was always convivial, considerate, humble, gentle and charming with a great sense of humour in conversation often displaying his wide intellectual interests and knowledge. His attributes also included the ability to speak five languages.

He was educated at St Pauls School and obtained a scholarship to Cambridge where he graduated with a First Class degree.

He later studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and had

a keen interest in sport and politics. He met and married Vivienne in the late 1980s. They both became members of our Lodge until the time they decided to relocate to Spain.

Whilst there, John applied himself to a new challenge by studying for a PhD in the history of the Jewish Golden Era in Spain which was cut short by ill health.

He displayed excellence as a stepfather to Vivienne's son and as Vivienne's health unfortunately deteriorated, he became a devoted carer to her too. Due to Vivienne's worsening health they eventually returned to London.

Five years ago came the commencement of his own illness.

John was a dear friend who will be sadly missed by us and John and Lily Ainley.

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#### **Message From Louise Goldschmidt**

**Dear Henny**

Happy New Year and love to you all.

Alfred is still mostly bed bound at Lady Sarah Cohen House, Asher Loftus Way, Colney Hatch Lane.

I would like to thank all those who have joined Shar's lift rota to take me by car five or six mornings a week to nurse Alfred every day. I have to be there by 10.00am to give him his special breakfast, which takes an hour

and also his special medication three times daily.

I also do physio and keep his mind stimulated and cognitive. The staff is always short and changing. It is very physically and mentally exhausting.

If anyone else would go on the rota, even if rarely, please contact Shar email:.  
sharir28@gmail.com

Thank you,

**Louise**

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#### **Dear Lodge Members,**

Thank you for all the cards, 'phone calls, visits and emails we received during my recent lengthy hospital stay and when I came home.

It is all very much appreciated and good to be part of such a caring community.

**Sue (& Gabby) Kessler**



## WELCOME 2017

*On this page we have a panorama of photos taken by Robert Bruckner of the forty two members who attended our New Year's Eve party at the home of Hilary and Tony Sinclair to whom we are very grateful that they allowed us to turn their home into a festive arena.*

*This year we provided a mixture of favourite salads together with fish balls, pakoras and samosa titbits. This change of menu was very well received as an unusual combination and delight for the palate. We finished off with New York cheesecake and raspberry coulis.*



*For our cerebral delight, a quiz was put together featuring thirty six of Peter Brookes cartoons highlighting the events of 2017. To help jog our memories, Charles Bieber, in his inimitable way, created the questions while Henny spent the whole year collecting the cartoons.*

*Our thanks also to Jo Bieber without whose help this would not have been such a successful evening.*

*We ended the evening by toasting the New Year in with Champagne in the company of our friends and fellow Lodge Brothers and Sisters.*



## FIRST UNITY LODGE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS DONATION



The staff and pupils of Herzl Primary School in Qiryat Gat gratefully acknowledge the generous donation of the First Unity Lodge which enables the purchase of one trombone, one trumpet, one baritone and additional mouth pieces so that two students can learn on each instrument.

These instruments with add the depth of wind instruments to the school orchestra which at present is limited to string and per-

cussion instruments.

Three hundred and forty two children attend Herzl School. One third are new immigrants from the former Soviet Union, one third Ethiopian immigrants and one third children born in Israel. A large proportion are from

low socio-economic homes.

This government school regards learning to play a musical instrument part of enriching the students' world and forming their personality. In addition, it generates a more relaxed and cooperative atmosphere within the school. Music opens new and additional channels of communication for the pupils and community.

The children are taught the history of music, to read musical notes and from the second grade to play a musical instrument. Eight musical instruments are taught at the school: cello, violin, guitar, mandolin, portable organ, darbuka, melodic and metalophone.

The pupils are taught in small groups of up to ten. Those learning string instruments receive individual, group and orchestra lessons. The peak of this activity is the end of year concert, which is of a very high standard.

Sincerely  
**Yitzhak Abt**  
 Chairman of the Board of Directors

Dear All,

I would like to share with you this photograph, which I have just received from the Kadima After School Club in Qiryat Gat, Israel.

We, the members of BBUK, raised the splendid total of £1,475 from the recent Chanukah Gelt Appeal to provide Chanukah gifts for the children and so improve their enjoyment of this festival. I think you can see from the face of the girl in the photo that we have at least partly fulfilled our objective. The gifts were given out to the large number of children who use the Centre.

Each of the gifts was labelled as a gift from the members of BBUK. No money was spent on expenses as the gifts were bought, wrapped and distributed by volunteers.

Thank you for generously supporting this appeal. With very best wishes for 2017,

*Yours fraternally,*

*Alan Miller, President, BBUK*



Dear Tony and The First Unity Lodge,

On behalf of BBYO UK & Ireland, I want to sincerely thank you for your latest annual donation. Your money will ensure we are able to continue to provide meaningful Jewish experiences to the youth in our community.

I would be thrilled to attend your next meeting to discuss what our organisation is all about and currently up to. Please let me know when this will be. Again, your contribution is greatly appreciated.

Joshua Harendorf, Director of Chapters & Community Engagement



14. 11.2016

*Dear Donors,*

*We are much grateful for your very kind donation. Your generosity made an incredible positive effect on the atmosphere of our school. Thanks to your extraordinary support, we could purchase new musical instruments for our kids, who were very excited to get them.*

*With the new instruments, our pupils will be able to touch many more hearts with their music.*

*You made a great difference!*

*May G-d light your year like you lit ours!*



*Thank you again for your kindness,  
Erella Nachlieli  
Principal of "Herzel" school Qiryat Gat, Israel.*



## This Is So Crafty

A few months ago I realised that we weren't doing any external welfare work because our time is spent on looking after each other. Therefore, I felt that we might enjoy activities which are tailored to our needs of relaxation and enjoyment. To this end, I instigated Craft Workshops.

These have got off to an excellent start. The participants are delighted with their own creativity and with the bonhomie which ensues while they are together in a group with one of our many talented members.

At the time of writing, we have been lucky enough to have a thoroughly successful workshop under Ruth Bruckner's tutelage – you might have seen some of our lovely ladies sporting new handmade bead necklaces.

Equally successful and enjoyable was Bunty Phillips's patchwork workshop. Five happy ladies went home either with mats or needle cases and a determination to return for more creativity.

Unfortunately, Sue Kessler was not well enough to put her suggested pottery painting workshop into action. Now that she is feeling better we hope that this will happen in the near future.

We also have a new volunteer – Judith Usiskin



will be putting together a mosaic workshop.

So watch this space for up and coming opportunities to indulge your fancy. No one needs previous experience in order to enjoy these events. They take place in the afternoons between 2.00pm and approximately 4.00pm at the home of the leader.

Book early to avoid disappointment.

I hope you enjoy the photo of the patchwork workshop above.

**Sylvia Lewin**

**DISNEY DISSECTED**