

CENTRE FOR JEWISH LIFE
September 2011 – August 2012

A YEAR OF CONNECTIONS

**CENTRE FOR
JEWISH LIFE**
where jews connect

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New Year Message & Appeal

Dear Friend

Over the past few days, millions of our people in every corner of the globe came together, as our ancestors have done for thousands of years.

What has made these days so powerful in their appeal?

How do they continue to attract such a diverse range of human beings?

What is it that somehow attracts both believers and sceptics, religious and secular, conservative and liberal?

The answer in a sentence: It is the moment in time that we are given the opportunity to click the refresh button on all our relationships.

We begin by connecting to our core self. To recapture something of that innocence and purity we all experienced as a child; a time when we were clear of the difference between right and wrong, when we were happy and full of hope. When optimism prevailed.

This leads us to the next phase: Our connection with G-d, the source of all innocence and hope. He gives us the inspiration and strength to come back home by rediscovering our true self.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, phase three: Our connection with our fellow man. For it is only when we love each and every Jew and empathise with him/her that we really connect with ourselves and with our spiritual Father in heaven.

And in a very real and practical way, what better than by focusing on our people's future?

The Centre for Jewish Life regularly engages many thousands of unaffiliated young people, imbuing them with Jewish pride and a sense of responsibility. Their hearts and minds are alive and eager to rally their peers. We just have to give them an opportunity.

As we begin the New Year, we ask for your friendship and generosity by becoming a partner in sharing and implementing this vision for an empowered and focused new generation.

At these momentous times, let us seize the opportunity to refresh and reinvigorate all those beautiful relationships in our lives.

Let us not take them for granted.

Let us fully acknowledge them.

Let us fully appreciate them.

Let us say thank you and let us reciprocate accordingly.

Wishing you and your family a sweet New Year, with blessing for much health, happiness and prosperity, always.



Yosef & Mendy

Programs & Events



SHABBAT & JEWISH HOLIDAYS

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS @ THE MARRIOTT HOTEL

Marriot Medley

23 September, 18 November, 20 January, 30 March, 6 July

One of our flagship events, the Marriott Friday Night Dinners have been going on for 5 years. With 5 dinners a year, each attracting 300 guests, both foreign and local, 7500 people have come together to connect with others, connect with a community and connect with their heritage.

It is no wonder that the reputation of these Friday nights precedes them!

This year, between the events, 1500+ guests came together to celebrate Shabbat dinner at the Regent's Park Marriott. With food and drink in abundance, connections were forged and friendships were strengthened. All left with a hopeful smile that the jovial atmosphere would linger into the upcoming week.

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS @ THE CJL

Septemberfest in Deutscher Sprache

9 September

In response to much demand and the increasing size of the Jewish young German community in London, the CJL hosted a German-themed Friday night dinner for young professionals.

Over 90 guests attended this fabulous four course dinner and in true Septemberfest style enjoyed plenty of beer, a great time was had by all.

Middle Eastern Delight

9 December, 22 June

Nearly 130 young professionals from all over the world enjoyed a delicious 4 course Israeli-themed menu of steaming hot food, plenty of alcohol & great company!

Programs & Events

A Taste of the South!

16 March

An exotic array of South African specialties delighted the palates of over 100 guests who came to spend Friday night at the CJL. A friendly and dynamic ambience, typical of South Africa natives, was felt by all. A traditional occasion celebrated in a non-traditional way.

Olympic Fever

3 August

When thousands converged for this memorable summer, some were using the games lanes to take them directly to the CJL for a delicious 4 course dinner with good Israeli Wine & Ice Cold Vodka.

Absolut - An International Language

28 October, 24 February, 18 May

The CJL hosted another sold out dinner aimed at young international students, ages 19-29 which nearly 200 guests enjoyed. A delicious four course dinner was served with plenty of Absolut Vodka. A great time was had by all and the committees are already looking forward to the next dinner!



FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS @ SWISS COTTAGE & SOUTH KENSINGTON

A Personal Touch

3 February, 10 February, 2 March, 8 March, 4 May

As an alternative to the large-scale Friday night functions, These home-style dinners provide a more intimate experience amongst the young people themselves, as well as an opportunity to get to know the Rabbis and their families.

Occurring once or twice a month, these warm and cosy meals are usually attended by 20-30 guests between the two locations. Another side benefit: a number of lucky individuals have met their soul-mate through spending a Friday night in this personal setting!

Programs & Events



Come One, Come All!

29 September, 7 & 8 October

Over 220 guests attended High Holiday Services (Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur) at the CJL. Guests commented that it was a welcoming, easy to follow & meaningful experience. These services were created due to the huge demand from young professionals who are not members of a particular synagogue or association. Since they have nowhere to go where they feel comfortable and can follow an explanatory service they choose not to attend prayers. This year the CJL created an environment where they could come to and be themselves whilst learning and understanding the services at their own level.

SUKKOT

The Festival of Tents in Swiss Cottage

12, 13 & 14 October

Over 120 young Jewish people from around the world celebrated the wonderful and joyous festival of Sukkot at the home of Rabbi Yosef Vogel. There was great food, lots of drink and a great atmosphere – a good time was had by all!

Sukkah in the Square

17, 18 & 19 October

Back due to popular demand: a Sukkah was erected in the beautiful Manchester Square Gardens for people to pop by and enjoy the mitzvah of being in a sukkah CJL style with a L'chaim and a bite to eat. Guests were also given the opportunity to shake the lulav, many of whom would not have otherwise had the opportunity to do so.

CHANUKAH

CJL's Pre Chanukah Party

17 December

Nearly 250 young professionals from all over the world came and enjoyed a very special Pre Chanukah party and an inspirational talk by Rabbi Yosef Vogel. Guests then partied the night in style at the Centre for Jewish Life's legendary Chanukah party that took place at our centre in the heart of the West End.

Designer cocktails were served by the renowned Liquidchefs and delicious jam doughnuts, latkes and chocolate gelt were eaten and enjoyed by all. There was a live DJ spinning Israeli and other party tunes, dancing went on until the early hours and a great time was had by all. Guests were also delighted when given a menorah and candles to take home.

PURIM

Purim Party

7 March

Colourful hula skirts; bright flower garlands – an exotic backdrop to the Hawaiian Purim Paradise! Sushi and Lechaim, by the famous LiquidChefs, kept the energy pumping as more than 200 young people continued to party well into the night. The air was charged by a rocking DJ who kept the tempo going, with dancing breaking out amongst the masquerading merry-makers. A perfect way to celebrate the classic day of upside-down!

Programs & Events



Megillah Reading

8 March

With the mood of the party still lingering in the air, Purim day saw a group gather for one of the central mitzvot of Purim: the reading of the Megillah, with Hamantaschen and other refreshments served.

PESACH

Celebrating Freedom: Seder @ CJL

6 April

Celebrating the holiday of Jewish rebirth, 75 guests attended a beautiful Seder-dinner at our West End location. With the Matzah taking the main role, the other traditional foods were served as well, and of course the four cups of wine. A fusion of remembrance of the past and hope for the future, this gathering of Jews was a fitting way to mark the holiday of Passover.

Seder #2 @ South Kensington & Swiss Cottage

7 April

With the ambience that only home can provide, 25 guests in total visited the families of Rabbis Yosef and Mendy Vogel to join them in their Seder. The stage was taken by the children asking the four questions, moving through the Haggadah, and rounded off with a delicious, home-made dinner.

BBQ in the Park: Lag Ba'omer

10 May

Park Crescent Gardens saw 100s of young professionals brave the typical English weather for a smashing, fiery BBQ. Digging into their meaty fare, guests were wowed by a fabulous line-up of dancers, fire eaters and stilt walkers. Even the rain couldn't mar the atmosphere of warmth and joviality that spread through the massive marquees set up for the event.

SHAVUOT

Cheesecake for the Body, Wisdom for the Soul

27 May

Another holiday celebrated at the homes of the Vogel Families. Lovely company, good food and a contemporary Torah message in honour of the receiving of the Torah.

Shavuot Lunch & Learn

27 May

Food for the mind & heart for the 25 who joined us for Shavuot lunch. Beginning with the reading of the Ten Commandments and continuing into a delicious lunch topped with cheesecake. Torah thoughts were explained and analysed, with animated discussions extending until 5pm!

Tisha B'av: Inspirational Talk and Film

29 July

'In Darkness' – In the Nazi-occupied city of Lvov, one man risked his life to save 15 Jews from the Sewage. Child of one of the survivors, Mr. Margulies attended the event and gave over a few words. Rabbi Yosef Vogel also spoke on the phrase, 'Saving one life is like saving a whole world'.



EDUCATION FORUM

Relationships and Understanding the Opposite Sex: Rabbi Yosef Vogel

Series 1: 17, 24, 31 January Series 2: 8, 15 & 22 May

A unique series of 3 classes addressed the following topics: Why is it so hard to commit? How do you know if he/she is the right one? Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus! Accompanied with sushi, Rabbi Yosef Vogel took the group through a practical, philosophical and Jewish approach to marriage.

Young International Student Group:

Mrs. Eva Schloss

7 February

The harrowing but triumphant story of a young girl's survival of the Nazi death camps; Eva Schloss, Anne Frank's stepsister and survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau, recounted the events of her life when she was just a teenager. The 40 attendees were taken on a journey from hide-out to hide-out, country to country. While predominantly a story demonstrating the capacity for human evil, the glimpses of rare human kindness that she received restored hope for her future, and inspired the audience to reach new heights in their own lives.

Ishamel Khaldi

27 March

A unique personality addressed the CJL's audience on Israel-related affairs. Ishamel Khaldi, Bedouin-turned-diplomat, related a tale of his transformation and how that influenced his perspective on Israel and his relationship with Jews and Muslims alike. All listeners agreed that it was a story like none other they had heard before; a story of determination, change and persistence.

BBC Journalist

26 June

An International foreign correspondent and film-maker, has just returned from tracking the progress of the Egyptian upheavals, culminating in the election of a new President for a country of vital significance to the region. He has also spent time in Syria, Iraq, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza - and has found himself captured or imprisoned in at least two of those locations! With this unique background, he addressed the CJL's audience on the Arab World's upheavals.

Destiny, Renewal and a Happy New Year to All

13, 21 September & 4 October

Guest speakers and topics included Rabbi Naftali Brawer PhD From Profit to Purpose: a contemporary message for Rosh Hashana, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Levy O.B.E Teshuva, Renewal & Repentance: Spanish Style and Rabbi Yitzchak Schochet MA Teshuva, Tefila, Tzedaka - can they really alter destiny '. Many young professionals attended this lecture series, which enabled them to discover how the high holidays can make a powerful difference in their lives. With a bit of guidance the participants felt better prepared and a stronger desire to make the year ahead, their best yet.

CJL Highlights



ENTREPRENEURSHIP FORUM

Jonathan Medved
Co-founder and CEO of Vringo
9 May

Over 50 guests came to hear Jonathan Medved, Serial Entrepreneur and Venture Capitalist, share his expertise on Israel's economic strength and growth. He quoted impressive percentages, names of leading companies and areas of development that have contributed to this remarkable state of affairs. At the forefront of the international markets, with many start-ups, Medved explored the reasons for this level of economic success as well as how things can be improved.

Joe Osnoss
Co-head of EMEA
30 May

Following on the heels of the previous entrepreneurship event, Joe Osnoss, Co-head Silverlake (EMEA), SilverLake delivered a presentation on the key-role of technology investment in developed and emerging markets. Facts and figures were displayed on a thorough powerpoint presentation. He also expounded on the implications of this for Private Equity. The audience numbered 60 guests.



Edouard Cukierman
Founder and Managing Partner of Catalyst Funds
9 July

Another event in the entrepreneurship line-up, Mr. Edouard Cukierman addressed the CJL regarding the high-tech investment opportunities in Israel. He delivered a clear and interesting lecture outlining the possible reasons for Israeli success in high-tech, figures & charts attesting to its success and the Europe-Israel investment relationship. The audience enjoyed sushi and had the opportunity to network for a half hour before the talk, which was followed by Q&A.

“Social networking can be a valid trend...which is almost a separate question from whether you should buy Facebook at \$100 billion. There is a difference between a good company and a good deal.”

- Joe Osnoss



FINANCE FORUM

Mario Blejer

Former Governor Of The Central Bank Of Argentina
21 February

Argentine economist and former governor of the Central Bank of Argentina, as well as advisor to the governor of the Bank of England, Mario Blejer addressed a crowd of 30 people, with a range of financial backgrounds. He clearly presented the intricacies of today's financial climate, accompanied by a comprehensive power point on the subject. At the conclusion of the evening, all agreed that they now had a more firm grasp on this complex subject.

Michael Sherwood

Vice Chairman of Goldman Sachs
12 June

A round-table event, which took place at the Bevis Marks Restaurant, Mr. Sherwood shared his personal story with 20 young people who attended.

Peter Oppenheimer

Chief global equity strategist Goldman Sachs
4 July

Peter, chief global equity strategist and head of ECS Research in Europe, spoke masterfully on the challenging question: Is Europe too big to save? With his background in finance, he delivered insight into this much-discussed topic, as well as talking about social responsibility, as he is a trustee of the Anne Frank Trust UK and the Anne Freud Centre.



LEGAL FORUM

The Rt Hon. Lord Justice Rix

Lord Justice of Appeal
1 February

As part of our goal to create an environment where Jews from all backgrounds can connect with and learn from each other, we provide a platform for speakers who are masters in their field of business. In the newly-established legal arena, Lord Justice Rix was one. His masterful talk included personal and professional lessons that he learned throughout his career. The audience of 50 walked away with a profound glance into the fascinating world of Law and what it takes to be a good lawyer.

“The end product is simplicity but you can't get simplicity unless you have clarity and you can't have clarity unless you have analysis so it's a sort of triangle, each one feeding into the other...”

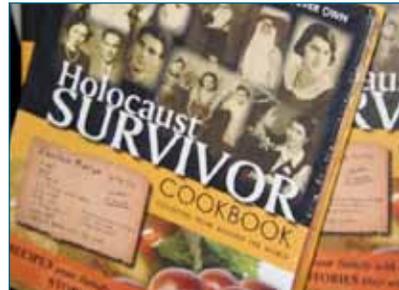
- Lord Justice Rix

WOMEN'S EVENTS

J-Ladies: Mrs. Levine

16 February

The premier event of our new J-ladies group featured Mrs. Levine sharing her experiences in Russia during the war. She described the material sacrifice that today's generation cannot even imagine making, but humbly conveyed that the spiritual gain made it all worthwhile. With her life on the line, she persevered in her commitment to the G-d. She remembers climbing into a window of a nearby synagogue to salvage some Jewish books. In a time that danger lurked behind every corner, Mrs. Levine felt that the books were protecting her. Almost 30 ladies listening spell-bound to her narrative, were empowered with the thought that one woman, running for her life in Russia, flourished into many beautiful generations.



J-Ladies: Mrs. Joanne Carras

23 May

The second of our J-ladies events, Joanne Carras brought her world-famous cookbook and delivered a poignant message; that of bridging the gap between past and future. Recipes, cherished by the descendants of survivors, have been collected, with a miraculous tale of survival accompanying each entry. Joanne related some of these touching stories, as well as the effect that the cookbook is having on young and old across the globe. The audience cried and laughed, and at the end of the the talk, bought a copy or more of the book. This initiative, in aid of the Carmei Ha'ir Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem, stands as an eternal witness for future generations, celebrating the life of all those who survived, and honouring the memories of all those who perished.

OTHER EVENTS

Speed Dating

9 February, 17 May

Between the two evenings, 50 singles aged 28-30 dated each other; 4 minutes each! Interest was kindled; matches were made. Who knows what the future holds...

Challah Baking

1 March

Dedicated to the nostalgic Jewish bread, a mixture of 15 people from different culinary backgrounds learnt the source and meaning of the mitzvah whilst baking their own Challah roll. This was baking taken to a new level as the secret tips known 'only' to veteran Challah bakers were revealed for all to incorporate and produce something that Bubbe would be proud of. Everyone went home happy with their accomplishments and with the confidence to give it another go at home.

White Summer Nights BBQ

5 August

Although it forced us indoors, the rain couldn't compete with the CJL's Annual Summer BBQ. 200 guests enjoyed a delicious BBQ spread, while watching the 100m men's finals that was taking place simultaneously. DJ entertainment and a message from Rabbi Faivish Vogel added the finishing touches to this light-hearted night out. The event was organised in association with the Tree of Life Foundation.



CJL Highlights

BENEFIT DINNER

CJL Annual Benefit Dinner

19 March

The CJL Annual Benefit Dinner was held at our West End location, with a turnout of 200 supporters, young and old. The dinner was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Keith Breslauer, Mr. & Mrs. Alan Lee and Mr. & Mrs. Edward Misrahi. Guests of Honour were Mr. Conrad and Mrs. Ruth Morris, who joined us on skype and addressed the crowd from Israel via video. Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks introduced the keynote address, former ambassador to Israel, Mr. Yehuda Avner. The appeal brought in upwards of £200,000.



“This Centre for Jewish Life is in fact a mini-temple, a place which Jews of all backgrounds can call home.”

- Mr. Conrad Morris, Guest of Honour

“We have many friends in the centre of London, but here we have Mishpacha.”

- Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks

Mont Blanc Climb

MONT BLANC SUMMIT SPONSORED CLIMB

The Rabbi writes

June

This past June, we took a journey beyond our comfort zones and reached new heights by summiting the Gran Paradiso (4063m).

The experience was both extremely challenging and exhilarating. Over a five day period we trained in the Mont Blanc area, using for the first time crampons and ice axes, scaling steep summits (including Glacier Toula, summit approx 3600m), walking across ridges at dizzying heights, rock climbing, sleeping some nights in mountain huts (incidentally one of them was called “Rifugio Chabod”) and lots more. All this under the experience guidance of Advisory Board member, Keith Breslauer, and a team of some of the most accomplished mountain guides in the world.



Due to negative weather conditions it was not possible to climb the Mont Blanc so instead we climbed the Gran Paradiso - highest mountain in Italy (4063m). We began our ascent at 5:30am and arrived at the summit at about 10:30am.

We climbed a total of 1300m, through snow, ice and rocks, reaching our destination after crossing a rocky ridge. We then descended 2200m which lasted about six hours



Why did we do this and what did learn from this amazing experience?

Great things in life are only achieved by going beyond our comfort zones. Jews throughout the ages were forced to live outside their comfort zones and it is precisely because of this that they, as a people, have made the greatest contribution to society.

We have challenged ourselves to move beyond our comfort zones. We have challenged ourselves to provide a home where over 5000 young Jewish people - irrespective of religious background or nationality - can connect (or reconnect) with likeminded Jews in a welcoming, non judgmental, environment.

We would like to extend sincere thanks to our all our generous sponsors for supporting us, and allowing us to raise close to £15,000 in this endeavour.

CJL Services



BOARDROOM

With full presentation facilities and multi-line conference phone, our intimate boardroom accommodates up to 10.

CAFE

Open Monday to Thursday: 9:30am - 5:00pm

If you want to pop in or hang out, just turn up. There's delicious steaming coffee, gourmet sandwiches, salads, soft drinks, cakes and snacks and all the space you need to unwind or catch up - with friends or email. Free WIFI available.

CJL LIBRARY

Open Monday to Thursday 9:30 - 5:00pm.

The CJL library is home to approx. 2,000 volumes of Judaica. It comprises both classic and modern texts covering a wide variety of subjects. Whether you are looking to browse, prepare for a class, pursue research, looking for a Dvar Torah, or following up a reference, the CJL library in the heart of the West End is just for you. WiFi internet access and laptops are also available

INTRODUCTION AGENCY

CJL have developed a specialist Introduction Agency offering an exclusive, discreet service to find your perfect partner and soul mate. We promise to be confidential and successful; this personal service is perfect for busy people who feel that life of late has become all work and no play. Every relationship is unique and has its own dynamic. But we know that with the right help and your courage and commitment to take the first step, you will find the partner of your dreams. Benefits of

Agency: CJL have a rich database of 5000+, Special & Targeted Events, Personal Advice from our Introduction Agency Panel..

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The CJL have recently launched a mentorship programme aimed at professionals aged 25 - 35 years of age. We will provide our members with an experienced and independent source of career and workplace guidance. The value of having a dispassionate and experienced person who can be a listening and sounding board cannot be underestimated. Our mentors are drawn from the ranks of successful practitioners in the business and legal community. We will match you with one of our mentors. Once a mentee has been assigned to a mentor, it is the mentee who will be responsible for initiating contact and setting up an initial meeting. They have agreed to make themselves available for between three and six meetings a year with each mentee. The CJL wants to help you manage your careers and work-life balance.

MINCHA

Open Monday to Thursday 1:45pm - 2:00pm.

Make it to Mincha, in the perfect place for afternoon prayers.

SYNERGY @ THE CJL

The CJL are happy to announce a new and exciting opportunity for young people who work from home as a freelancer or entrepreneur and would like to work in a beautiful venue in the heart of the West End. There is WIFI, as well as tea & coffee, so all the attendees need to do is bring their lap top & they're good to go! A good place for networking & meeting new friends.

Performance

SEPTEMBER 2008-AUGUST 2012

FACTS & FIGURES

Unique Participants:	6897
Average Age:	28
Nationalities:	45
Number of Programs & Events:	438
Total Attendance:	47,647
Young Jewish People married someone they met at the Centre:	132

FINANCIAL

Income

Donations:	£555K
Events income:	£110K

Expenditure

Publications & Promotions:	£26K
Operating overheads:	£56K
Governance costs:	£7K
Premises:	£150K
Programmes & Events:	£392K

CONNECT WITH US

When two Jews connect, a third benefits. For more Jews to connect with each other, we need you to connect with us.

There are a number of levels at which your contribution will make a real difference. To find out more, or to make a donation please call 020 7495 6089 or email info@thecjl.org

- £10,000 benefactor
- £5,000 patron
- £1,000 supporter
- £500 friend

Our People

Honorary President: Dr Sam Peltz

Chairman: Rabbi Faivish Vogel

Advisory Board: Mr Eduardo Azar,
Mr Keith Breslauer, Mr Colin Gershinson,
Mr Dennis Levine, Mr Edward Misrahi,
Mr Conrad Morris, Mr Martin Moshal,
Mr Alan Samson

Business Committee: Vladimir Bermant,
Oswaldo Pereira, Inna Khidekel,
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Simon Geldman, Patrick Schumann

Russian Committee: Ada Feygenson,
Anna Vainer, Ruven Shafir and
Alex Shevelenko

South African Committee: Gideon Valkin,
Rowan Jacobson, Natalie Hersch

Social Committee: Ada Feygenson,
Kelly Klein, Suzie Parkus

Young Committee: Mike Esfandi,
Victor Lee and Max Rayden

International Student Committee:
Dan Cegla, David Vilf

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Registered Charity Number 1119949
Company Registration Number 06239129

