



IFR NEWS Adar I and II 5776



Volume 2 Issue 31

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IFR's gone GLOBAL!

We've always been the International Federation of Rabbis, and this issue of our newsletter highlights this fact. In our 16 year history IFR has dedicated itself to Jewish pluralism and the ideological support of rabbis who serve all around the world. Today we meet some of our international members.



Dateline - Australia



Rabbi Judeth Newham

I was born in Australia and trained as a nurse. In 1972 I moved to the United States where I spent 18 years working in clinical nursing. My life took a different turn when I became the President and CEO of Holland Hospital in Holland Michigan, a position I held for a decade. My husband and I joined forces to work on

medical staff and hospital issues and I also was the Chief Thinker for the Excellence in Governance Institute for 5 years.

I found my true calling with my ordination as a Rabbi and I have so enjoyed the learning and the journey. My mum became infirm, so we moved to Australia to be close to her, where I had three great years of reunion before she died with grace and grit.

Although I do not have a congregation as the number of Jews in this area is very small, there are a few progressive Jews who meet locally. The group is served by a local rabbi but I am able to use my skills to provide counseling for palliative care clients. For example, a son whose father committed suicide came to me for help to recite Kaddish and for emotional support in dealing with his loss.

In addition, I also help with pastoral care education for local candidates and have offered insights on Torah and holidays for local clergy.

Weddings are my joy and I recently married an Israeli native to her Aussie soulmate. We gathered under the southern stars for a hauntingly traditional ceremony but so very Australian, too, complete with kangaroos showing up in the valley below!

I think the differences in ministering to Jews here in Australia actually comes down to numbers. There are so few rabbis of reform inclination that my influence matters and I feel that responsibility greatly I try to be present for the Jews who need me and to always be good role model, although there are times when I fail miserably!

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IFR Mission Statement

The IFR is a professional organization of rabbis united by a commitment to Jewish tradition and a desire to facilitate the Jewish spiritual growth and life cycle needs of all.

IFR provides a progressive, pluralistic forum, linking member rabbis in a spirit of friendship and a sense of community.

IFR provides support for members in their professional endeavors and offers continuing education.

IFR encourages professional relationships with rabbis and other rabbinic organizations.

www.intfedrabbis.org



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IFR MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE-AUSTRALIA

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Dateline -Australia-Newham

There are two large Jewish communities in Australia – one in Sydney and the other in Melbourne. Most Jews identify as orthodox or conservative although Progressive Judaism is on the rise here.

I've noticed that there is a fierce feeling on not wanting to rely on American traditions (such as an American version of the Siddur) but to create uniquely Australian responses to liturgy. I feel that this independent streak is the result of the fact that here in Australia we enjoy different seasons – Passover occurs in our autumn and Succot is a springtime holiday- both of which make for interesting allegory!!

I hope that I have added a little Aussie spice to the Havdalah box!

B'ahava v'shal from Down Under!

Dateline-AUSTRALIA 2015

Rabbi Suzanne Carter



shosh with the City of Melbourne
behind her Brighton Beach VIC

Australia's Jewish Community

- shosh's findings.

Then and Now

The Australian Jewish community had its beginnings with the arrival of the first settlers in 1788. Only then did Jews constitute more than one per cent of the colonial community and this was because most of the convicts sent out in the First Fleet were selected from the prisons of London.

It took until 1821 for the first Jewish free settlers to arrive. By 1828 there were 100 Jews in the colony. Numbers continued to grow and the first synagogue was formally established in 1837. By 1841 there were 1083 free Jewish settlers in the country. The 1841 census shows that New South Wales Jewry accounted for 65.3 % of the Australian Jewish population and 0.57% of the total population.

The Gold Rush of the 1850s attracted a sizable number of Jewish immigrants. Census figures show that between 1851 and 1861 the Jewish community almost tripled to 5486.

Many prominent Australian families trace their ancestry to these times.

By 1901 the Jewish population exceeded 15,000, the majority immigrating from Britain. Organized Jewish communities began to flourish in provincial towns, as well as in Sydney and Melbourne. The first congregation in Sydney took up home in the first purpose-built synagogue, located on York Street, in 1844.

In 1878 The Great Synagogue was consecrated, and its imposing structure remains a historic feature of the Sydney city skyline, the building being restored for the Bicentenary in 1988.

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IFR MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE - AUSTRALIA

The first significant evolution of Sydney Jewry occurred with the arrival of refugees escaping Nazi Europe in 1938-39. A further influx of Holocaust survivors after the war revitalized the community and led to the establishment of a large number of suburban synagogues.

Further waves of immigrants from Hungary in the 1950s, Russia, Israel and South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s continued to enrich the community. Sydney today comprises about 27 Orthodox synagogues, three Progressive synagogues and six Jewish schools. Today the great majority of Australia's Jewish population (approx. 112,500) lives in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia's two largest cities, with only Western Australia of the other states having as many about 8,000 Jews. (However, there are established Jewish communities in all major cities in Australia.) Jews live mainly in the state capital cities, with only small numbers in the smaller country towns such as in Horsham VIC. The only exceptions to this are in Queensland, where there is a substantial, rapidly growing Jewish population in the Gold Coast resort area, and in Tasmania. As noted, the two largest Jewish communities by far in Australia are in Melbourne and Sydney.

It is often said that the ambience of the two communities is different, with the Melbourne community (approx. 45,000) primarily of Polish background, being more conservative, and the Sydney community, with relatively more Hungarian and German Jews, being more liberal. (This may reflect the tone of the two cities as much as anything else.)

In both cities there are distinctly Jewish areas where many (though certainly not all) Jews live and where most Jewish synagogues and other institutions may be found.

In Melbourne, about 75 percent of the Jewish community lives south of the Yarra River in a belt running from South Yarra and Toorak to

Moorabbin and Glen Iris, and centering in Caulfield and St. Kilda.

The 'main street' of Melbourne Jewry is Carlisle Street, East St. Kilda, while the well-known tourist district around St. Kilda's Acland Street also has a Jewish ambience.

Much of the Caulfield-St. Kilda area is heavily part of a 'Jewish neighborhood', with many Jewish interest shops, kosher restaurants, cafes, butcher shops, and numerous Chassidic residents. About 20 percent of the community lives in a second belt of Jewish settlement in north-eastern Melbourne, with synagogues and community centers in Doncaster and Kew. Another distinctive feature of Melbourne life (much more so than of other Jewish communities) is the amount of Yiddish still spoken by the Jewish community. Many older Jews still prefer to speak Yiddish. There is also a Yiddish school and Yiddish theatre in Melbourne.

The Jewish community of Sydney is more spread out than in Melbourne.

The traditional centre of Jewish life in Sydney is in the eastern bay and beach suburbs from Double Bay through Woollahra to Bondi, although these areas are not as distinctively 'Jewish' as their equivalents in Melbourne. Bondi contains a number of Jewish shops and the principally-Jewish Hakoach Club.

Many Jews also live in the northern suburbs to the north of Sydney Harbour, known as the North Shore, which has a strong Southern African Jewish ex-patriate presence. There are no distinctively Jewish areas in other Australian cities. However, many Jews in Perth live in Yokine, Dianella West and Noranda which, like Sydney's North Shore and Melbourne's Doncaster, is home to large numbers of South African and Zimbabwean Jewish migrants.

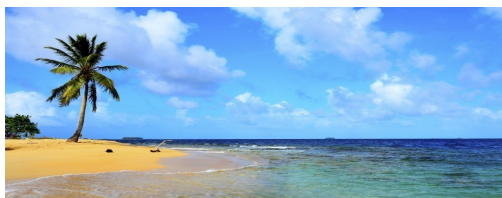
-shosh spent 6 weeks in Australia in 2015.



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IFR MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE-SOUTEAST ASIA

Dateline Southeast Asia

Rabbi Bruce Forman

Every year for five years and for several weeks each year I have the pleasure to serve as a rabbi on cruise ships. In December, I served on a cruise that sailed out of Singapore visiting ports in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei.

In addition to leading two Shabbat services, I had the opportunity to kindle Chanukah lights on a lovely menorah, share interesting factoids and stories and enjoy our holiday of freedom on the freedom of the high seas!

For Chanukah services aboard ship I served nearly 30 Jewish passengers, most of whom were Americans but others came from France, Hungary, Canada, and Australia.

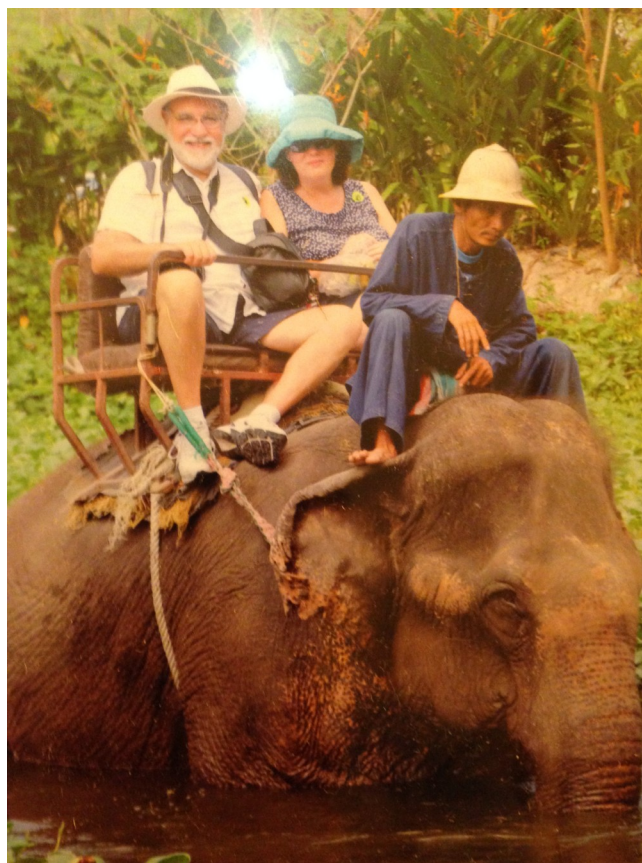
It was a joy and a bit of a surprise, especially since I have served on cruise ships where there was scarcely enough Jewish passengers to make a minyan.

Rabbi Bruce recalls that soon after arriving in his cabin, as he began to unpack, he made an amazing discovery. "I found some foreign currency leftover from a trip to Europe last year.

Among the cash was about 30,000 Hungarian Forint, which amounted to around \$100. A firm believer in Divine Providence, I presented the Forint to a couple from Hungary whom I found out were survivors of the Holocaust. I suggested they make a charitable contribution and indeed they did!"

A few weeks later Rabbi Bruce received an email saying a charitable contribution was made to a kindergarten operated by a syna-

gogue in Budapest and the staff was most appreciative of the gift.





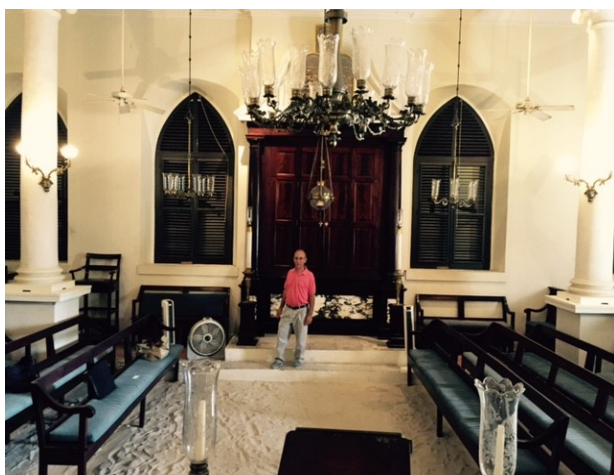
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IFR MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE-ST. THOMAS V.I.

Dateline: Saint Thomas V.I.

Rabbi David Degani

Rabbi David Degani and his wife Cantor Lee in the St Thomas V.I Synagogue, holding a 400 year old Torah.



A visit to a synagogue in St. Thomas was an eye opening experience, an amazing lesson about the Jewish history of the region.

The Jews, as many of us know, were among the very early settlers of the Caribbean. They were Spanish Jews, "conversos" who were trying to return to Judaism by escaping the Spanish Inquisition to South America in the 16th century, only to be followed by the Inquisition. Moving away from Spanish controlled areas they settled in the Caribbean.

While I did not get to visit the oldest synagogue in the new world, located in Curacao, the visit to the second oldest synagogue in the Americas, the one in St. Thomas, was nevertheless a very emotional experience.

The synagogue is a small, beautiful building inside and out. The energy of the place, the echo of Jewish people struggling to maintain their heritage was overwhelming to me. I was lucky, though, to convince the cantor who happened to be in the building when we were there to let me hold one of their 400 years old Torah by invoking my "status" as a rabbi...)

With much trepidation she let me hold it. One can see the sand floor which is common to other synagogues in the islands. This was done as a way of remembering the sand used to block the sounds of prayers in hiding places in Spain in order to avoid being caught by the Inquisition.

The history of the Caribbean Jewry is incredibly rich. In fact, most of the Islands experienced Jewish involvement in their history. Like everywhere else, Jews contributed greatly to the economy of the entire region. In fact, it seems that Jews from St. Thomas were instrumental in building the first United State synagogue (A Sephardic synagogue, of course) in NY.

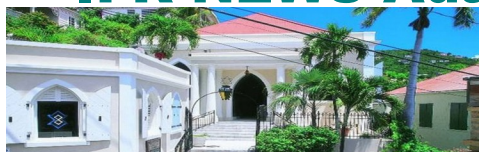
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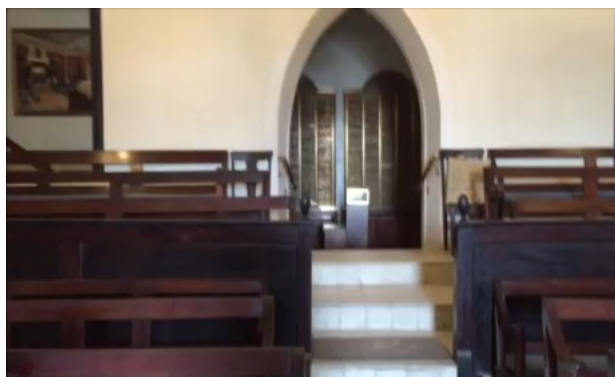
And another interesting tidbit: according to some historians like the Jamaican based Ed Kritler, there is a history of Jewish - only pirate ships who roamed the area with exclusively Jewish pirate crews, complete with kosher food on board synagogue.

While just as vicious (and rich...) their target was mainly Spanish merchant ships as a way of revenge.

Apparently some of the Jewish pirates were quite influential. They led large a number of major raids on the Spanish fleet and in fact, helped in the Mexican war of independence against Spain.

A Yideshe Piraten.....David

For a Tour Click on the Synagogue LINK



Hebrew School Kids encounter Carobs

Yes, it's true! The sixth and seventh graders ate real carob pods and made carob fudge in Hebrew School to celebrate Tu B'Shvat, Birthday of the Trees!

There are many stories in our tradition about carob trees including Choni and the Carob Tree

that is associated with Tu B'Shvat.

Here is one version of the story: Choni, a pious person, sees an old man planting a carob tree and questions how long it will take for the carob tree to bear fruit.

When the man answers 70 years, Choni questions why he is doing this as the man certainly won't live another 70 years.

The old man replies, "when I was born in this world, I found many carob trees planted by my father and grandfather. Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children and grandchildren so they will be able to eat the fruit of these trees.

Choni falls asleep for 70 years and when he wakes up he sees the grandson of the man also planting a carob tree.

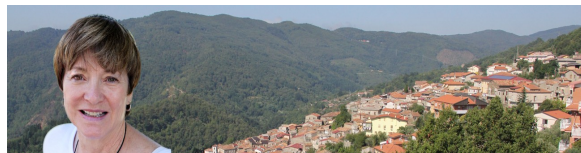
Yes, a beautiful lesson for our children and for us! And along with telling this story a beautiful custom has developed to eat carob on Tu B'Shvat!

But will the children actually try the real carob pods Rabbi David bought for them?

Watch and see in this student made and produced video!

Click on Shirat Shalom LOGO LINK below





IFR MEMBERS AROUND THE GLOBE-ITALY

Dateline: Italy **Rabbi Barbara Aiello**



This year 2016 marks the tenth anniversary of the dedication of Sinagoga Ner Tamid del Sud, the first active synagogue in Calabria, (the southernmost region of Italy) in 500 years since Inquisition times.

“Our congregation is unique,” says Rabbi Barbara Aiello, “because we serve ‘b’nei anusim’ – Italians whose ancestors were forced into Christian conversion during the Inquisition.”

Indeed during the last decade the congregation has grown in numbers and influence. Rabbi Barbara is Italy’s first and only woman rabbi and first and only non-orthodox rabbi, which has been a joy and a challenge in this stunning but remote agrarian village high in the Calabrian mountains.

The village is called “Serrastretta,” which means “narrow garden,” and the step-like tomato and lettuce patches are reminiscent of the same configuration found in China. Houses literally hang off the hillsides in a part of Italy that few tourists ever see.

But all that is changing with a vibrant distance learning Bar and Bat Mitzvah and destination wedding program that allows families from the US, Great Britain, Canada and Singapore to visit this village, founded by five Jewish families who were running from persecution.

The family founders, named Aiello, Bruni, Gallo, Mascaro and Scalise, all Jews, demonstrate that Jewish ancestry goes far beyond the usual surnames.

There is much to learn about the lost, hidden and isolated Jews of southern Italy and the island of Sicily and Rabbi Barbara aims to bring that unique history to light.



Ravenous Ravens



Rabbi Frank Tamburello's column featuring
Jewish holiday Eats and Treats

Adar rishon/sheni Recipes



Persian Lentil Salad Recipe

This recipe includes traditional Persian ingredients like mint, parsley, and lime juice. Because lentils are seeds, they represent the seeds that Esther ate to keep kosher while she lived at the palace.

Ingredients

- ½ cup dry lentils
- 2 cups water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chickpeas
- 1 cup green bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 tablespoon jalapeno pepper, minced
- ¼ cup green onion, chopped
- ¼ cup mint, chopped
- ¼ cup of parsley, chopped
- 2 tablespoons lime juices
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Instructions

1. Cook lentils by bringing lentils, water, and salt to a boil.
2. Reduce heat to medium and cook for 25 minutes or until lentils are tender.
3. Drain and rinse with cold water.
4. Toss together cooked lentils and all of the other ingredients in a bowl.

Serve warm or chilled.



Here are some suggestions for Shalach Manot or Mishloah Manot gift baskets for family and friends....Chag Sameach!

Low-Cholesterol Chocolate Hamantaschen

- 6 egg whites
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4 1/3 cups flour
- 1 Tbs baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup poppy seeds
- 1 egg white, beaten (for brushing)

Chocolate Filling (Dairy/Pareve)

- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup milk or coffee
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Combine all ingredients. Yield 2 cups

In a large bowl beat egg whites, sugar, oil and vanilla together. In a second bowl, mix flour, baking powder, salt and poppy seed together. Blend flour mixture into egg mixture; mix well.

Roll out a portion on a floured board and cut into 3 1/2" circles. Place a teaspoon of the filling in the center of each circle of dough. Bring up dough to cover filling and pinch together to form a triangle. Place on lightly greased cookie sheet. Brush with egg white and bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until golden. Yield 5 dozen.



Ravenous Ravens



Rabbi Frank Tamburello's column featuring
Jewish holiday Eats and Treats

Adar Leap Year Recipe



Zucchini Bread



- 2 cups flour
- 1 Tbs ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 Tbs. vanilla extract
- 1 cup (or less) chopped nuts
- 2 cups zucchini, unpeeled and grated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sift together flour, cinnamon, baking soda and salt. Combine eggs, sugar, oil, and vanilla.

Stir into flour mixture until well blended. Add zucchini and nuts. Pour into 2 greased loaf pans. Bake for approximately 60 minutes.

Prune Jam



- 12 ounces pitted prunes
- 1 1/2 cup unsweetened prune juice

Puree prunes and juice in food processor or blender until smooth. Cook in saucepan over medium heat; stir until thick and darkened. Yield approximately 2 1/2 cups. (Sugar and nuts may be added to prune mixture for Hamantaschen or coffecake filling.)

ADAR 7

Yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu 1273 BCE (Jewish year 2488), on the same day of his birth 120 years earlier.

(Consequently, "May you live to 120" has become a common Jewish blessing.) Or AD Meah KI ESRIM-

To 100 like a twenty year old!

IFR Newsletter

Rabbis

Barbara Aiello

Frank Tamburello

Design/Layout: shosh

IFR Rabbis News & Shmooze

IFR DUES 2016

Now is the time to renew your membership in the IFR. Payment via Paypal is \$122.00

Payment via check payable to:
The International Federation of Rabbis

Renewal invoices via paypal are sent out to members 15 days prior to their renewal dates.



Rifuah Shelema to:
Rabbi Barry Coffsky
Rabbi Marvin Pearlman
Rabbi Raphael Pazo

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Rabbi Roger Ross

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IFR Advisors:

Rabbi Lewis "Buz" Bogage

Cantor L. Jerry Cohn ESQ

Rabbi Lewis Solomon



Donations

B'Todah to the following Rabbis who have made donations over and above their membership dues to the IFR:

Rabbi Bill Kurry



To new IFR member

Rabbi Roosevelt Solomon

IFR Conference

Re-Scheduled for March 2017 - DATE TBD

*Duncan Conference Center
Delray Beach, FL*

IFR Conference 2011 Duncan Center-Delray Beach FL.



IFR Conference 2011 Duncan Center-Delray Beach FL.