

From beyond Hadrian's Wall

We hope you are all keeping well and enjoying the better weather and longer nights and went easy on the cheesecake over Shavuot.

I am sure you are all following the events in Israel as Hamas launches over 3,000 rockets at the civilian population of Israel. The antisemitic backlash has unfortunately been felt by our Jewish brethren in London and beyond with CST stressing we are all vigilant. Sadly, the young six-year-old Ido Avigal who was murdered in Sderot lived in the same neighbourhood where I have often stayed with my dear friend Stewart Ganulin of Hope for Sderot. Gie's nieces and sisters have spent most nights sleeping in public bomb shelters as their homes have not a Mamad. Her brother lives in Lod where much of the rioting has been taking place with the area being placed under curfew. A Jewish man was murdered by Arab terrorists and an Arab man and his young 16-year-old daughter was killed by a Hamas rocket.

Nearly five years ago I touched base with the community and was welcomed by Byron, Annie and many others. I went through the conversation process with Rabbi Leah and no disrespect intended to anyone else in the community, but was assigned the most perfect mentor in Dr Philip by our "matchmaker" Annie Henriques. What can I say about Dr Philip that you don't already know, he is an amazingly humble and wise man who is a fountain of information and advice and when I finished a module and sent it to him, always added wonderful ideas. He was such a positive and special guide to me on my journey. There was nobody I was more proud to have beside me on the Bimah when I first read from the Torah scroll. That memory will live with me forever. I still have a small cardiology book which got me through my cardiology exam in the ambulance service and I will treasure the book forever as well as the precious times spent in his and Noni's company.



A great photo courtesy of Mr Alan Joseph

Dr Philip as you know is always testing himself and trying out quirky new hobbies such as lockpicking and Gie is amazed by his "survival kits". I know he will be a great Chair in

his second stint, in a wonderful council representing a very special and unique community. There are very exciting times ahead with an amazing young Rabbi and the possible link up with NHC and we will watch with interest, how things develop in Norwich LJC. I always think back to the times when we were making the long trek to the service especially with Kacey being travel sick and that every time I felt that it was too far, I came out of the service refreshed and reminded of just what a fantastic membership there is in NLJC. I wished I could have said goodbye in person and I so wanted to do my annual Torah portion at the April service but sadly neither was to be.

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We are making another move this time to Scotland, with work and hopefully Gie will begin her nursing bursary thanks to the Scottish government scheme as she gets her UK residence in July 2022. At one stage my company had an opening in Norfolk and it seemed we were destined to move back to Nelson's county. Norfolk and especially Norwich will hold a special memory for me, with my time working in the Ambulance service and with NLJC. There are times there that changed my life and the pathway I was on and for that reason I will always hold it dear.



One last hang out with the Clacton Massive Crew for the girls!!

We are replacing the sandy beaches and pier with the rolling hills of the Clyde Valley, the traffic chaos of the A12 with South Lanarkshire country lanes gridlocked by sheep and cows where tractor is king, the smell of marijuana drifting down the side streets of Clacton will now be superseded by the scent of fresh slurry and other agricultural aromas.



Clacton pier

The girls are very excited to move to Scotland and start a new journey of their life. Althea will start High School next year and Kacey is doing her Bat Mitzvah through the Yad Vashem. The Bat Mitzvah girl is twinned with a child who did not have a chance to mark her own Bat Mitzvah. The girl being remembered will share something with Kacey – a birthday, a name or place of origin. The customized Twinning Kit contains the Page of Testimony of Kacey's "twin" and of her immediate family members, as well as a study guide and a special certificate acknowledging participation in the twinning program. She also received a USB containing a short tour of the Holocaust History Museum at Yad Vashem, filmed especially for the project.



A recent trip to the beautiful Loch Lomond and Althea thinks her mum deserves a place amongst Scotland's favourite Roberts - Burns and Bruce !!

I hope you will soon all be back in your spiritual home again, hugging and sharing stories, enjoying the services and the company which Covid has robbed us all of. Zoom has been a saviour to many and allowed many who could not attend to share in the services and celebrations. For me I cannot get on with it. I have enjoyed the webinars which have been broadcast and the CST training and presentations, but I cannot get used to it at all.



Not sure Cabbage will grow this big in Scotland!!

As I said, I am sorry I couldn't do it in person, but this great initiative of Miriam has allowed me to at least say goodbye by message. By the time you have read the message we will have long passed the big blue "Failte Gu Alba" sign at Gretna, but I hope you will all continue to keep the Friday Night Message going strong and wish you all health, happiness and success in every area of the community or if you prefer a little Yiddish - ***A Gezunt Dir in Pupik.*** (I will let Dr Phillip translate that one for you in his next monthly Yiddish column.)

Finally, a bit of trivia?

Which current member of NLJC once landed a plane in this airfield in Clacton?



Clacton airfield, a familiar place to one NLJC member.

Thank you all for everything and Shabbat Shalom, Stephen, Gie, Kacey and Althea.

Stephen Haire
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Postscript

I penned a previous Friday Evening Message about Hevron here is a Link for a free virtual tour of the City of Hevron <https://youtu.be/BaUnv4XgaDg>.

A useful update if anyone is planning to visit Israel soon. <https://oneisraelfund.org/not-just-lip-service-info-on-travel-to-israel>.

The girls loved this song as it reminded us all of Chaim of Woodton now Drayton. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sR_OibUmuL8.