

Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation

Leamington Road, Blackpool, FY1 4HD



A last service of

REFLECTION, REUNION AND COMMEMORATION

celebrating 114 years of the
Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation : 1898 – 2012

SUNDAY 13TH MAY 2012 – IYYAR 21ST 5772

*Service conducted by
Rabbi Arnold Saunders, Rabbi David Braunold
and the Reverend Stephen Robins ARCM*

A PROUD AND LONG HISTORY

Goodbyes are always difficult, and today we are saying goodbye to the Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation and this great shul as it comes to the end of its long and proud history.

But we are also celebrating today : celebrating the lives and the legacy of the people – ourselves, our parents and grandparents – who came through its doors, many of whom were also leading lights in the wider Blackpool community and who helped build the town into what it became. And we are also celebrating the opportunity to come today and say hello to one another, to rekindle old friendships, and to stir old and happy memories.

In this commemorative booklet we have tried to recall just a few of the stories, events and people that have made up the Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation in a period spanning three centuries.

Thank you to everyone who responded to our request for historic material. We received lots! We have set up a special website to retain the memory of the shul and community at www.blackpoolunitedhebrewcongregation.org. Please add your own memories there. We hope it will form a permanent record, widely accessible. We welcome today Rabbi David Katanka and Beverley-Jane Stewart, who are documenting the community for a book they are writing.

Whether we were here last in this House of Prayer only last month, or have not revisited it for decades, we all have very special and closely held memories of ‘our’ shul : “The Synagogue, Leamington Road” - as my grandfather always used to say to the taxi driver, as he got into the Streamline cab each day to come here.

So as we leave today, and sing Adon Olam here for the very last time, let us remember all those great memories we each cherish from BUHC and give thanks to G-d for what has gone on here, and for the community it has been.

Russell Grossman (Blackpool 1961 – 1983, on behalf of today’s service organisers)

1926 receipt from shul
Architect, R B Mather
For the first instalment
of £400 towards his fees
for design of the “Assembly
Hall at The Cemetery,
Westcliffe Drive”
(the Tahara House, or Ohel,
at Layton Cemetery)

R. B. MATHER, Architects & Surveyors 54, BIRLEY STREET, BLACKPOOL.
SONS & WILSON.

No. *11* 12th October 1926.

Amount of Contract	£ 515 0 0	Instalments brought forward £	Nil
Extra Works £	Present Instalment	£ 400 0 0
Total	£ 515 0 0	Total	£ 400 0 0

To The Blackpool Jewish Community
per S. Corner Esq.

We Herewith Certify that the sum of Four hundred pounds
is due to Messrs. Chadwick Bros. of Little Layton, Blackpool
on Account of the erection of Assembly Hall at the Cemetery, Westcliffe Drive, Blackpool.

400 0 0

R. B. Mather, Sons & Holdings Architects & Surveyors.

MINISTERS OF THE CONGREGATION

1898 - 2011

*This list is the most accurate we have been able to piece to date, in the limited time available.
If you have more information, please let us know. See www.blackpoolunitedhebrewcongregation.org.*

First Readers are in bold

Rabbi I Simon (1898 – 1901) (resident in Manchester)

Rev A Levi (1901 – 1908) (first resident Minister)

Rev Weinberg (1908 – 1910)

Rev Daniel Caplan (1910 - ?1920)

Rev L Weiwow (?1915 - ?1923)

Rev Henry Olivestone (?1920 - ?1924)

Rev Shmuel Arkush (?1924 - 1939)

Rev David Garb (1939 - 1948)

Rev Reuben Restan (1946 - ?1950)

Rev Cyril Braslavsky (1949 – 1973)

Rev Nathaniel H Rockman (?1950 - ?1964)

Rev Anthony Dee (1964 – 1976)

Rabbi Benjamin Rabinowitz (1973 – 1976)

Rabbi Ephraim L Gastwirth (1976 - 1979)

Rabbi Julian Jacobs (1979 – 1982)

Rev Nathaniel H Rockman (1982)

Rabbi Arnold Saunders (1982 – 1985)

Rabbi David Braunold (1985 – 2011)

Beadles and Shochetim

Mr S Fisher

Rev Alec Brown (1946 - 1974)



*Rev Daniel Caplan
(in top hat) with
Great War
combatants,
including those
from the
Congregation c.1916*

SNIPPETS OF BLACKPOOL SHUL HISTORY

- The first recorded Jew in Blackpool was S Leman, of Gosforth Road, who settled in Blackpool in 1897.
- A meeting on **13th May 1898**, at Mr. Latte's Trevelyan Hotel, Blackpool, agreed to form a Hebrew Congregation. The first services were above a shop in Church Street.
- The first Synagogue, in Springfield Road, was consecrated on **17th May 1900** by Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler (Chief Rabbi from 1891 – 1911).
- In **July 1901** Rabbi I Simon, Locum Minister, was presented with a "handsome silver tea-urn" in recognition of "his service in the formation of the Synagogue".
- Two Jews, three opinions. By **1905** a dissident "Blackpool New Hebrew Orthodox Congregation" vied with the original Blackpool Hebrew Congregation for members.
- In **1907**, D L Alexander, President of the Board of Deputies, intervened such that the two communities combined to form the "Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation". BUHC's Centenary was thus in 2007.
- By **1910** the congregation had 37 members, and by **1914**, over seventy souls.
- The Rev Daniel Caplan's salary in **1912** was £58 10s but he received an additional £2 13s and 6d for killing poultry. We believe the latter payment was not popular with the chickens.
- In **1913**, work began on the new synagogue in Leamington Road and the following appeal went out in March 1914:

The Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation.

APPEAL FOR £2,000.

March 1914

The Blackpool Jewish Community consists at present of about 50 resident paying members, but in the Season these are largely augmented by visitors.

During the last 16 years, service has been held in a room situated in the Metropole Arcade, Springfield Road, the situation of which is excellent, but in all other respects the accommodation is entirely inadequate for the needs of the community at the present time.

It is too small and both the ventilation and sanitary arrangements are very unsatisfactory. The entrance to the Synagogue from the street is common to a Turkish Bath, Billiard Saloon, and a Cinematograph Show, and there is an engine in connection with the latter working in the basement beneath the Synagogue.

There is no suitable provision for Cloak Rooms, Vestry, or Class Rooms, and through lack of the latter, the religious education of the children is not up to that standard which its importance demands.

A large and representative Committee has been appointed, and in order to avoid, if possible, the financial responsibility of building, they have made continued efforts in the following directions:—

Firstly.—They have negotiated with the proprietors of the Metropole Arcade to enlarge and improve the present Synagogue.

Secondly.—They have made efforts to secure Rooms in other buildings in the town.

Thirdly.—They have made efforts to hire or purchase one or two adjoining houses, with a view to convert the same into a Synagogue, etc.

After many months of strenuous work, it has been found impossible to succeed in any of the above-mentioned directions, and finally it has been decided to acquire a suitable plot of freehold land, and to erect thereon a Synagogue, Class Rooms, and Offices.

This apparently ambitious scheme has been made feasible by the munificent offer of Mr. Mark Shaffer, the President of the Congregation, to purchase a freehold site, and to present it to the Congregation with a donation to the Building Fund of a sum equal to the difference between the cost of the land and the sum of £500.

A very suitable freehold piece of land on the Raikes Hall Estate has been acquired by Mr. Shaffer at a cost of £388 14s. 8d., and will in due course be conveyed to the trustees of the Congregation.

Encouraged by the splendid example, other members of the community have together subscribed about £500 to the Building Fund. and the Committee confidently anticipate that they will be able to raise a further sum of about £500 from the residents of Blackpool.

The Committee have approved of plans providing a suitable Synagogue with all necessary Class Rooms and Offices, at an estimated cost of £3000, and, taking into consideration, on the one hand the smallness of the community, and on the other the large amount raised locally, the Committee feel justified in confidently appealing to their co-religionists in London and the provinces for £2000, which amount it is estimated will be required to enable the Synagogue to be opened free from debt—a consummation very much to be desired. Our Scheme has received the approval of the Chief Rabbi, and Mr. D. L. Alexander, K.C., copies of whose letters are enclosed.

Donations will be thankfully received by the undersigned:—

MARK SHAFFER, 199, Hornby Road, Blackpool,
President of the Congregation.

LEWIS LEVENE, 258, Hornby Road, Blackpool,
Chairman of the Building Committee.

JOSEPH MYERS, 40, Burlington Road, Blackpool,
Treasurer of the Congregation, and Vice-Chairman of the Building Committee.

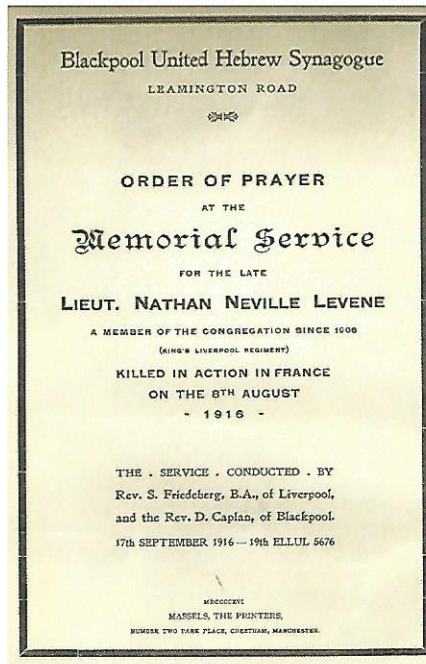
BARON WOLFE, 16, Claremont Avenue, Blackpool,
Treasurer of the Building Committee.

M. SILVERSTONE, 16, Balmoral Road, Blackpool,
Trustee.

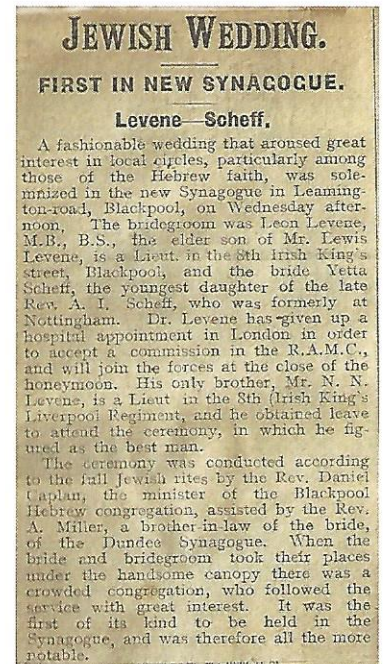
HENRY COMOR, "Brereton," Promenade, Blackpool,
Hon. Secretary of the Building Committee.

- In **1915** the congregation Annual Report said "War deems it advisable to at once stop all canvass for funds". Given this, it is all the more remarkable that the shul building, originally planned as a ten year project in 1913, was completed and opened in **1916**.

- By 1916 five sons of the community were serving in war. Not all returned. Nat Levene's memorial, the first commemorative service took place on 17th September (below, left).



- The first wedding in the new shul, actually in 1915 before the official opening, was of Yetta Scheff (brother to Nat) and Leon Levene. This was reported in the Gazette & Herald (right)
- The Minister's house at 18 Woodland Grove was rated at £8 15s 4d in 1922.
- In 1928 a contract was established between Mark Shaffer, for the shul and "Morris Freedman, a butcher", relating to the selling and slaughtering of Kosher meat - for the sum of two pounds per week in licence fees.



- In 1932 a dispute between the shul and Blackpool Council, regarding an amount for the renewal of the lease at the public abattoirs for Shechita, was agreed by Mark Shaffer JP for an annual rate of £15 15s.
- The 1933-34 accounts' highest expenditure was a donation of £111 14s 6d to the Ukrainian and German Relief Fund, with £87 15s 6d collected from members. Rev Arkush's tram contract that year was £4 10s.
- Rev David Garbaz (Garb) arrived in May 1939, aged 29, on £338 per annum and lived at 21 Leicester Road. This was paid weekly each Thursday with two weeks holiday a year - which had to be taken in June.
- A lot of families were evacuated to Blackpool in WWII, and many stayed. When Rev Reuben Restan came in 1946 he lived at 12 Lincoln Road. He was paid £1 1s for each Tahara on top of his salary.
- In 1948, Harry Ramm, President, sought support from the new congregation in St Annes, having done a deal with RHO Hills to create a kosher kitchen there, but which needed full Fylde communal support.
- Eli Caplan gained his licence to operate as a Kosher Baker at 84 High Street, Blackpool in July 1950.

Members Nominated for Executive and Council.

YAR, 5694. ELECTION, MAY 13th, 1934.

Executive :

✓ N. SCHEFF, President	} Unopposed.
✓ L. LANGTON, Vice President	
✓ J. H. BLUESTONE, Hon. Treasurer	
Hon. Secretary.	

Representative on Board of Deputies :

✓ B. FELDMAN, Unopposed.

1934 election results

Council Seven Members :

*S. BLOOMBERG.	✓ B. BERNARD.
✓ H. COHEN.	A. COHEN
✓ J. CRISPAL.	(187, Reads Avenue).
✓ J. HIGHAM.	A. M. KAYE.
✓ J. HARRIS.	✓ J. LYONS.
✓ S. J. MYERS.	J. SCHLEIFER.
✓ J. MARKS.	S. SAMUEL.
✓ E. WANSKER.	

* Denotes Retiring Members, eligible for re-election.

- The buildings insurance policy in 1951 included cover for "impact from aircraft or articles dropped therefrom".
- The Nathan Scheff Hall was opened by Scheff himself in 1955.
- In December 1963 the shul licensed the New Continental Hotel, Queen's Promenade for kashruth. Tinned foods used were not to contain "meat stock, animal fats, treifa oils or treifa fish".
- In July 1964 Sidney Cohen, President, got a concession from the Rabbinical Commission for the Licensing Of Shochetim for a licence fee of only £1 1s - "in consequence of special pleading".
- 1973 saw the community appoint its first ordained Rabbi, Benjamin Rabinowitz BA, MPhil, AJC - in his first posting.
- From a peak after the war, by the late 70s the community had begun a slow decline as younger members sought roots outside the town : mostly to Manchester and London.
- The last wedding in the shul was on 23rd August 1992 when Andrew Kaye married Vanessa Black.
- Blackpool's last, and longest-serving, Minister was Rabbi David Braunold whom we're delighted to see at today's service.

SERVICE OF REFLECTION, REUNION AND COMMEMORATION FOR THE BLACKPOOL UNITED HEBREW CONGREGATION

Also Marking the 114th Anniversary of the Founding Of the Congregation

1. **ברוך הבא** Cantor and Choir

2. **Welcome Address**

Rabbi David Braunold, Immediate Past Minister of the Congregation

3. **מה נטבו** Cantor and Choir

4. **מנחה** Cantor

5. **שומר ישראל** Cantor and Choir

The Ark is Opened

6. **Prayer for the Royal Family** (Rabbi David Braunold)

7. **Prayer for the State of Israel** (Rabbi Arnold Saunders)

8. **Prayer for the Congregation** (Member of the Congregation)

9. **ובנחה יאמר** Cantor and Choir

The Ark is Closed

10. **Address**

Rabbi Arnold Saunders, Past Minister of the Congregation

Mr Barry Goodstone, Last President of the Congregation

11. **Reading - Psalm 91** **ישב בסתר עליון**

12. **עלינו לשבח** Cantor and Choir

13. **Reflections – A Proud History**

Mrs Helen Melrose

The Ark is Opened

14. **תפלת הדרך** Cantor

The Scrolls are taken out of the Ark and paraded to the exit of the synagogue

15. **שאו שׁערים** Cantor and Choir

16. **Concluding remarks**

Mr Robert Pinkus, President of the Amalgamated Congregation

The Shofar is Sounded

17. **אדון עולם** Cantor, Choir and Congregation

The congregation are invited to refreshments in the Nathan Scheff Hall

A PROUD AND LONG HISTORY

BLACKPOOL
United Hebrew Congregation
SPRINGFIELD ROAD.

Blackpool United Hebrew Congregation.
Leamington Road.

APRIL 27th, 5683
1923

BLACKPOOL,
16th MAY, 1913.
DEAR SIR,
You are requested to attend the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, to be held at the SYNAGOGUE CHAMBERS, on SUNDAY, MAY 25th, 1913, at 6-30 p.m. prompt.

AGENDA.

1. Reading of Minutes.
2. Council's Report.
3. Adoption of Audited Treasurer's Report.
4. Auditor's Report.
5. Election of Eligible Seat-holders as Members.
6. Election of Honorary Officers, President, Treasurer, and Hon. Secretary.
7. Election of Five Members of Council.
8. Two Honorary Auditors.
9. Election of Deputy (London).

Yours faithfully,

NATHAN SCHEFF,
Hon. Secretary.

Notices of the
Annual General
Meetings in 1913
and 1923

DEAR SIR,

You are respectfully requested to be present at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, to be held at the SYNAGOGUE CHAMBERS, LEAMINGTON ROAD, on SUNDAY, MAY 6th, 1923, at 3-0 p.m. prompt.

AGENDA.

1. Read Circular convening Meeting.
2. Adoption of Minutes of last Annual Meeting.
3. Election of Eligible Seat-holders as Members.
4. Annual Report. Presentation by the Jewish National Fund Committee of a Certificate of the Golden Book to the Blackpool Jewish Community.
5. Presentation of Balance Sheet.
6. Declaration of Members nominated for Executive and Council.
7. Election of Secretary or Secretaries.
8. To Ballot on an unanimous recommendation from the Executive and Council to the General Body, the question of Rev. H. Olivestone.

W. COMOR,
Hon. Secretary.

EXTRACT FROM RULE 9.

The non-payments of eight weeks' Subscription debars any Member the right of Voting at any General Meeting. No Member in Arrears shall be eligible to hold office.

Any Member or Seatholder may pay his Arrears before the Meeting.



Above : "RHO Hills" gathering for
"Levene Silver Wedding" ?1948 or ?1949.
Can you name the people pictured?

Below : Bas Mitzvah Ceremony, 1975.
Rabbi and Mrs Rabinowitz with (l-r)
Karen Stratton, Sara Freedman,
Caroline Sherwin, Rosanna Black,
Eunice Goodstone and Alison Goodstone



Right :
Blackpool Herald report of the first
bar mitzvah to be
held at the shul -
of Jack Shaffer, son
of shul founder
Mark Shaffer JP

BLACKPOOL HERALD AND

"THE BAR-MITZVAH."

Interesting Jewish Ceremonial and
Banquet at Blackpool.

CONGRATULATORY SPEECHES BY MAYOR
AND EX-MAYOR.

There was an interesting ceremony at the Jewish Synagogue, Springfield-road, Blackpool, on Saturday, the occasion being the confirmation of Master Jack Shaffer, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Shaffer, of "Southlea," 248, Hornby-road. In addition to the members of the family, there were also present the Rev. A. B. Harris, Mr. P. J. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. J. Tural, Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Francoys, Mr. Compton, Comn. and Mrs. T. Charnley, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Robinson, Mr. A. R. Greenhagh (Bolton), and Mr. L. Greenhagh (Bolton). The confirmation ceremony was performed by the Rev. D. Caplan, who spoke on the spiritual significance of the rights of Bar-Mitzvah, and there was also the reading of a portion of the law and Haphtorah. In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Shaffer held a reception at "Southlea," at which about 200 guests attended, and offered their felicitations to the host and hostess and their son.

On Sunday evening the guests attended a magnificent banquet in honour of the Bar-Mitzvah of Master Jack Shaffer, in the Masonic Hall, Adelaide-street. Mr. Louis Levene was in the chair, and the company present included the Mayor and Mayoress (Coun. and Mrs. M. G. Wade), Comn. and Mrs. J. Collins (Deputy Mayor).



Founders' plaque from 1933, which in latter years hung in the Nathan Scheff Hall.

Today would not have been possible without the insight and hard work of many people.
Special thanks: to the Presidents and Executive Boards of the **Blackpool & St Anne's Shuls**
 to **Rabbis Saunders and Braunold**, and **Chazan Steve Robins** for leading the service
 to our **Choristers** today, and for travelling from London especially for the occasion
 to **Lynn Shaw** (nee Burman) for co-ordinating all the replies
 to **Russell Kett and Russell Grossman** for organising the day
 to the **ladies** for organising the refreshments following the service
 and to **Michael Jolles** for his very kind contribution to defraying the costs of today's event.

We have set up a memory of the shul and of the community, to which you can contribute, at
www.blackpoolunitedhebrewcongregation.org.

חזק חזק ונחזיק