

Indian Jewish Congregation of USA Newsletter

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Useful Link

jewsofindia.org
The official website of the Indian Jewish Congregation of USA. Here you will find useful information about our organization, our heritage, future plans, and more.

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President's Message

The festival of Shavuot is on the 50th day of the counting of the Omer. This year, Shavuot falls on May 23rd and May 24th 2007 (Shavuot is celebrated for two days in the Diaspora). In the Torah, Shavuot is referred to as Ha-Atzeres. The Torah makes no mention whatsoever between Shavuot and the receiving of the Torah although we know that Shavuot is the anniversary of our receiving the Torah. Shavuot means "Oaths." When we the Jews accepted the Torah, G-d promised not to exchange us for any other nation and we promised G-d that we would not leave and exchange Him. Ha-Atzeres means cessations, stopping. It is cessation from work. Yet the Torah only mentions the bringing of the Omer and the bringing of the Bikkurim (first fruits) as reasons for celebration. It is now the day upon which we celebrate the giving of the Torah to the nation of Israel. It is the day upon which we commit ourselves once again to accept the Torah and treat it through study, with the honor and dignity this precious gift deserves.

"We shall do and we shall listen."

This was the response of our ancestors to the Divine invitation to receive the Torah 3,319 years ago. This unquestioning trust that they put into the Creator set them apart from all the other nations who insisted on first knowing what was expected of them before consenting to commit themselves to such an all-encompassing Divine set of rules. "Doing" before "listening" was an expression of faith that gained for each of the Bene Israel two angel-bestowed crowns — one for Na-asi (we shall do) and one for Nishma (we shall listen).

Torah takes root, however, in a person that says "Change me."

There is a parable: A king wanted to build a palace and looked around for an appropriate site. He went from one city to another. In each city, the people ran away from him indicating that they did not want the palace in their town. Finally, he came to a deserted ghost town and the few people there graciously and gratefully accepted the king's offer to build a palace in their town. The king said, "This is the place where I will build my place."

The Midrash explains the parable: When G-d wanted to give the Torah, he went to the sea and it ran away as it is written, "The sea saw and fled (Psalm 114:3)".

G-d then went to the mountains and they ran away, as it is written, "The mountains skipped like rams (Psalm 114:4)." He then came to a desolate desert (Sinai) that accepted Him with open arms, and G-d gave the Torah in the desert. What are our sages trying to tell us with this parable?

Why didn't these cities want the king's palace? Because they knew that building the palace in their cities would impact their lifestyle. They had certain ways of doing things; they had certain customs. They knew that building a palace would mean change for them. The ghost town knew it

had nothing. The people there were saying, as it were: Remake us, we have nothing anyway. We want you. We will accept you and we will take with your palace all the changes that accompany it.

If one wants to accept Torah, we must be like a desert — ready and open with no baggage. Torah takes root in a person who says “Change me”. Sometimes, we come across our “religious brethren” and leave disappointed. We question: Is this what Torah can do for a person? I thought Torah was supposed to change a person. Remember, never judge Judaism by Jews. Judaism is bigger than almost any Jew that one will find. If one wants to judge Judaism by a particular Jew, look at Maimonides or Rashi or the Maharil or the Chofetz Chaim, because these great sages made themselves like a desert and said as it were to G-d, “Change me,” they let themselves become desolate and open for the Torah to permeate them.

The rest of us are unfortunately like those cities. We are not really ready to fully change. If we accept the Torah we want to accept it on our terms. Therefore the Torah cannot change us because we are not willing to be changed. Become like the desert in the acceptance of Torah and then you can be changed.

Shavuot is the time when we are given the opportunity to reaccept the Torah with the same zeal and vigor as our ancestors and emulate the example of the nation of Israel when encamped at Mt. Sinai. Especially in these precarious times, our unity as a nation, united in the service of G-d with unwavering devotion to Him and His Torah is crucial to our survival. Give of ourselves to one another, promising not only to do kindness but to love kindness. Judaism requires the Jew to do what is right, just and fair. It places more intellectual, moral and spiritual emphasis on the heart rather than the mind.

The six most important words are: Forgive me Lord, I was wrong.

The five most important words are: I’m so glad I’m forgiven.

The four most important words are: Keep on keeping on.

The three most important words are: I love you.

The two most important words are: Thank you.

The LEAST important word is: Mine.

Let us forget the world of self. We must not live in the realm of “me” or “mine,” coveting all for our own satisfaction for that kind of satisfaction never remains. Love your neighbor as much as you care for yourself and do to others what you would have them do to you. Doing kind deeds for others and extending a warm loving hand will be a lasting joy. Remember the words “G-d told me to do this for you.”

May we all merit celebrating the receipt of the Torah as a united nation in Israel that knows only peace. Believe that you are worthy to be G-d’s agent on earth and that you are sent here to fulfill a sacred mission. The message of Shavuot is: You are important and significant to G-d. You have been given the opportunity to represent the Almighty. You, along with all Jews, are the perfect candidate for the job.

Romiel Daniel

Personalities of the Month – Dr. Solomon and Dr. Ruth Eulker



Dr. Ruth and Dr. Solomon Eulker have lived in Fostoria, OH (Ohio), for over thirty years, practicing medicine.

Dr. (Mrs.) Ruth S. Eulker (nee Mapgaonkar) completed her medical education and residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Pune, India and joined her husband Solomon E. Eulker M.D. in the U.K., where she completed her residency in Adult Psychiatry. After coming to the USA, she completed her training in child and adolescent psychiatry in Cincinnati, OH. Ruth is the daughter of Moses Samson Mapgaonkar and Lily Moses Mapgaonkar, daughter of Aaron S. Bhonkar, of Pune, India. While at home with her two preschool sons, she was one of the founding members and later President of the Fostoria

Family Services. After the children entered school, she started her practice in psychiatry in Toledo, OH in the 1980s and continues to practice there.

Ruth’s father, Moses Samson Mapgaonkar, was a mechanical and electrical engineer and was Assistant Director of Industries in the State of Bombay. Mr. Samson Mapgaonkar was very actively involved with the Magen Hassidim Synagogue of Bombay throughout his lifetime. Ruth’s mother Lily was the daughter

of Aaron Solomon Bhonkar and Shebabai Bhonkar. Mr. Bhonkar was a civil engineer and led the team building the Succath Shelomo Synagogue of Pune and the Pune Engineering College. He was Superintendent of the Pune Engineering College in 1906.

Solomon is the son of Eliab Isaac Erulker of Ahmedabad, India, and Sarah Eliab Erulker (daughter of Khansaheb Mordecai Bhorgaonkar) of Pune, India.

Dr. Solomon Erulker did all of his medical education in Mumbai, India, and completed his training in Internal Medicine, Cardiology and Pulmonary Diseases in the U.K. and later in Cincinnati, OH. He started his practice in Internal Medicine and Cardiology in Fostoria, OH in 1972. He established and headed the Coronary & Intensive Care Unit at Fostoria Hospital, Fostoria, OH. He continues to practice there.

Solomon's father, Eliab Isaac Erulker, was the Superintendent of The Telegraph in Bombay, India. Mr. Eliab was raised in Ahmedabad and was fluent in Gujarati, Marathi and English. He was the second son of Mr. Isaac Abraham Erulker and Miriam of Ahmedabad. Mr. Isaac Abraham Erulker was the eldest son of Dr. Abraham Benjamin Erulker.

Dr. Abraham went to Ahmedabad on July 25th, 1846, and started his medical practice. He was the personal physician of Mahatma Gandhi. He established the Bene Israel community in Ahmedabad. He was respected in the community and in the newly built Synagogue. Mr. Elijah Hayeem Killekar wrote a brief autobiography of Dr. Abraham Benjamin Erulker in Marathi and published it in 1934 for the community. Solomon's mother Sarah was the daughter Khansaheb Mordecai Bhorgaonkar and Simhabai of Pune (Poona). Khansaheb Bhorgaonkar was the son of Khanbhadoor Joseph Bhorgaonkar of Karachi.

Ruth and Solomon have two sons. Eliab Solomon Erulker, who is a Harvard and Columbia graduate, is presently a corporate lawyer and equity partner at Baker & McKenzie LLP at the New York Office. He is engaged to Miss Karissa Schechter, also a Harvard graduate. Jonathan Solomon Erulker M.D. got his medical degree at Yale, and after completing his orthopedic residency, also at Yale, is at present doing a fellowship in spine surgery in Boston. He is married to Deidre (nee Holden Carroll), who got her Masters of Science in Nursing at Yale and completing her Ph.D. in Boston. Their first son's name is Samuel, and their second child is due shortly.



Succath Shelomo Synagogue in Pune, India

Israeli Remembrance and Independence Days Marked in New York

On April 23rd, 2007, more than a thousand Jews from Israel and the United States got together to commemorate Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror as part of Yom Hazikaron, and to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's 59th Independence Day. The community-wide event, which is the largest Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration outside Israel, was planned by Dor Chadash. Dor Chadash is an organization devoted to creating a strong network between Israeli and American Jews by running various social and educational programs. The Indian Jewish Congregation of U.S.A. was one of the many organizations that partnered with Dor Chadash to help promote the event.

The program began with opening remarks and introductions by the event organizers from Dor Chadash, followed by a short yet inspirational speech on Golda Meir given by actress, singer, and playwright Tovah Feldshuh. Arye Mekel, Israel's Consul General in New York, offered his remarks on the event, dedicating a portion of his speech to the memory of Liviu Librescu, an Israeli-American professor at Virginia Tech University. The 76-year-old Holocaust survivor was shot and killed in the Virginia Tech shootings on April 17th, 2007 while holding off the gunman at the entrance to his classroom so his students could escape through the windows.

Following Mr. Mekel's address, memorial candles were lit in memory of fallen Israeli soldiers and victims of terror attacks by Captain Elad Mossayb, of Egoz Battalion in the IDF. Jack Baxter, an American producer who was hurt at a pub called Mike's Place, lit a candle in memory of his friend who died there. Lastly, Sari Singer, daughter NJ Senator Robert Singer, who got hurt on Bus #14 in Jerusalem in 2002.

After the candle lighting, *El Male Rachamim* was recited by Cantor Mark Samowitz.

One of the most emotional moments of the event was a televised speech by Karnit Goldwasser, wife of Ehud (Udi) Goldwasser, who was captured by Hezbollah in July 2006 along with Eldad Regev. Karnit requested that everyone present at the event try to get in touch with various government and social action organizations to ensure the release of Udi and Eldad, as well as Gilad Shalit, who was captured in Gaza in the summer of 2006 while on duty.

David Borowich, the Honorary Chairman and Founder of Dor Chadash shared his insights and reflections on Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut, followed by a speech by the Honorable Eli Moyal, Mayor of Sderot, a city in southern Israel that is often subjected to Qassam rocket attacks. According to Mr. Moyal, the continued Qassams have not lessened the residents' resilience and most have refused to leave Sderot despite the attacks — a declaration that was met by loud applause and cheering.

Mr. Moyal's speech was followed by remarks by Tzameret Fuerst, Chairwoman of Dor Chadash, and a televised address by Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. A recital of *Hatikvah*, led by the IDF Musical Ensemble and joined by the audience, marked the end of the Yom Hazikaron ceremony and signaled the beginning of the Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration.



The IDF Musical Ensemble started off the celebration with a cheerful and spirited medley of Israeli songs, followed by remarks by Adam Tantleff, the President of Friends of the IDF Young Leadership. A fusion dance and music performance by Mayumana, an international rhythm and dance group founded in Tel Aviv, ended the program, and an all-night dance party was started off with two DJs playing favorite Israeli and American songs.

This event was a wonderful opportunity for American and Israeli Jews to come together and show their solidarity and support for Israel. All proceeds from the event were donated to the Gvanim

Association for Education and Community Involvement. Those that attended had a chance to honor victims of terror and Israeli soldiers that gave their lives to provide a peaceful future for their fellow citizens, to offer support for missing soldiers, and to celebrate Israel's 59th Independence Day.

New Yorkers Show Support for Israel in the Salute to Israel Parade

The Salute to Israel Parade took place on a beautiful sunny day of May 6th, 2007 in New York. More than 70,000 people lined Fifth Avenue from 57th Street to 80th Street, cheering on the marchers. The Indian Jewish Congregation of USA was an active and enthusiastic group of 35 members, who proudly displayed their solidarity with Israel and their pride of India's heritage and culture.

Our goal of "Integration with Distinctiveness" is slowly but gradually catching on. Besides our staunch Bene Israel marchers, we had representatives from Israel itself, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, and the USA. The organizers and the supporters enthusiastically cheered our group, and the flyers with information about India's Jewish communities made many New Yorkers and out-of-state visitors aware of the existence and heritage of Indian Jews.



All in all, this was a very rewarding experience for all the participants, who were donned in blue T-shirts with the Jews of India logo. Thanks to Bension Reuben, who donated 50% of funds to make this possible this year and last year as well.

Thanks also to Lael, Evelina, Aylon, and Noreen, who helped get this together and also thanks to all the participants.

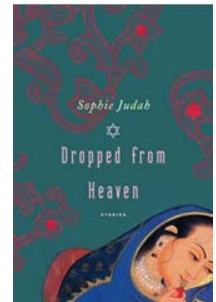
Dropped from Heaven: Bene Israel through Sophie Judah's Eyes



Sophie Judah was born in Jabalpur, a small town in the state of Madhya Pradesh in central India. She did not grow up very observant because of her father's profession — he was in the Army. The family moved around and very often they were the only Jewish family in town. Although her family was not very observant, they did keep kashrut. While her dad worked on Saturdays and the children went to school, her mother lit the candles and did not sew or knit on Saturday.

The turning point of her involvement with Judaism and Jewish culture was when she was about 10, when she first became conscious of the Holocaust after reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*. According to Sophie, she felt that a part of her had been taken away, even though she never knew the Jews who were killed, and it was her duty to replace that part. After *Anne Frank*, she read *Exodus*, and then started searching for books on Jews and Judaism. During her search, she found a lot of books about the Jews of Eastern Europe and America, as well as anthropological and historical literature about the Bene Israel. There were no books that documented the Bene Israel community from a more human perspective, which prompted Sophie to start working on her collection of short stories, *Dropped from Heaven*.

In her book, she describes a mythical village of Jwalanagar, where the Jewish traditions of the Bene Israel have survived for more than two thousand years. In "Hannah and Benjamin," the parents of a young woman are shocked when she defies their rejection of the man she wishes to marry — but no more shocked than the man himself. In "Nathoo," a kindly Jewish soldier and his wife adopt a Hindu boy orphaned in the post-independence violence of 1947 — with disastrous results. In "Dropped from Heaven," a mother with three unmarried daughters at home and a copy of *Pride and Prejudice* in her handbag springs into action when she hears that two single brothers are coming to town looking for brides. And in "Old Man Moses," a lonely and imperious old man is visited by his Israeli grandson and the young man's girlfriend, and finds that there is still a place in his heart for love.



Sophie immigrated to Israel in 1973, after her marriage. She currently lives in Israel with her husband and five children.

The article is adapted from *Nextbook.org's* "Out of India" by Amy Rosenberg and *Amazon.com* book review.

Turn Left at the End of the World – Cricket at the Movies



The rich history of cricket in the Negev desert has made its way to the big screen. "Turn left at the end of the world," directed by Avi Nesher, was released in Israel on June 26th 2004.

The movie tells the story of the immigration to Israel of Jews from two distinct backgrounds in the 1960s, and their settlement in the Negev towns of Dimona and Yeruham. Indian Jews arrived looking for a better life in the West, only to find themselves in the desert. With their English Colonial hangover, and the French background of the Moroccan immigrants, there is an inevitable clash of cultures, made worse when a married Indian man falls in love with a young Moroccan girl. The story comes to a climax when it is heard that the English cricket team will be stopping in the Negev for a match, and the two groups have to work together to produce a team capable of taking on the powerful English team.

The Israel Cricket Association was proud to play a part in the production of the film. Local cricketers were provided to act in the staging of the game which takes place in the movie, the lead Israeli actors were introduced to and coached in the game so as to get a better understanding of the roles they had to play, and assistance was given with regards equipment and costumes for the cricket scenes.

Avi Neshet, one of Israel's leading directors and responsible for hit films such as "The Troupe," "Dizingoff 99," and "Rage and Glory," recently returned to Israel after several years abroad during which he directed 14 movies in Hollywood, specifically to direct this movie. It features Parmeet Sethi, a leading Bollywood actor, as well as Aure Atika, a star French actress. Apart from Israel, the movie has also been released in France and India.

Article from Israel Cricket Association's web site.

Rivers of Babylon – Religious and Secular Music of the Iraqi Jews

Rivers of Babylon is a group of singers and instrumentalists that specialize in the religious and secular music of the Iraqi (Babylonian) Jewish tradition: instrumentals, folk songs and hymns (*shbaho*) for Sabbaths, festivals and life cycle events, sung in Hebrew—in the Babylonian (Iraqi) pronunciation, Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic and Arabic. The melodies are composed in the melodic modes (*anham* or *maqamat*) of Arabic music, and reflect characteristics of Iraqi folk song.

Most of the group members have known each other since childhood and were born into the Baghdadian Jewish community in India (Mumbai and Calcutta), thus representing a cultural tradition which was transported from Iraq to India and now to the U.K. The group includes ethnomusicologists, an expert on the Chinese *erhu* (spike fiddle), architects, a writer, accountant, secretary and fire prevention officer.



Rivers of Babylon after a concert at Patkar Hall in Mumbai

Most of the songs performed are known as *shbaho* (literally 'praises'), the most popular type of hymn in the Jewish Babylonian (Iraqi) tradition. Known as *pizmonim* or *zemirot* in other Jewish traditions, *shbaho* (singular *shbah*) are paraliturgical songs for daily use, Sabbaths, festivals, weddings and births.

They are usually sung around the dinner table, during or following a festive meal, though they may also be sung at synagogue, on pilgrimage, or other occasions. The texts are especially composed poems, of a religious nature, often expressing national troubles and hopes, and of beauty and literary merit, with the poet's name usually shown as an acrostic formed from the initial letter of each verse. On Sabbaths and festivals *shbaho* are sung unaccompanied.

Their vast repertoire includes songs such as *Deror Yiqra*, *Ki Eshmerah Shabbath*, *Yah Ribbon Olam*, *Eliyahu Eliyahu* and others. Sara Manasseh (dumbek, voice) is the musical director of Rivers of Babylon. Other members of the group are Ahmed Abd Alrhman ('oud), Dena Attar (violin), Margery Cohen (voice), Solomon Elias (mandolin), Pamela Solomon (voice), Solly Solomon (voice), and Susan Verney (violin).

More information on Rivers of Babylon, including their upcoming performances and CDs, can be found on their homepage, <http://www.riversofbabylon.com>.

Recipes from Noreen's Kitchen

The sweet dishes Shrikand and Basundi, given below, combine well with Puris and a dry potato vegetable dish. Everyone who has been brought up in Maharashtra will remember this menu and will share many sweet memories that go along with special occasions.

Shrikand

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds 2% fat yogurt
- 1 pound fine sugar
- 1 pinch of saffron
- ¼ teaspoon orange food coloring
- 1 cup 2% fat milk
- 10 grams (about ½ ounce) pistachios, soaked in water, skinned and sliced thin
- 10 to 12 cardamom pods, ground
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg



Preparation:

Pour the yogurt on a thin cloth and tie it tight to make a bundle. Hang it on top of your kitchen sink and leave it overnight for the water to drip. Transfer this thick residue (called *chakka*) to a bowl. Add sugar and mix well. Cover and let stand for about one hour. The sugar will dissolve in the *chakka*.

Put a large fine sieve over a container. With a large soup spoon, put the sweetened *chakka* into the sieve and rub it with the back of the spoon. It will fall into the container below. In this manner, pass all of the *chakka* through the fine sieve.

Soak the saffron in ¼ cup of the milk until the milk turns light orange. Add the food coloring to the remaining ¾ cup of the milk and mix well. Add the orange milk and the saffron milk in the above *chakka* and mix well with a spoon till the *chakka* turns light yellow.

Add cardamom powder and nutmeg powder and most of the sliced pistachios and mix thoroughly. Shrikand is now ready. Transfer it to a decorative dish and garnish with remaining pistachio slices. Cover and keep in a refrigerator. Enjoy it cool. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Basundi**Ingredients:**

4 liters 2% fat milk
1 cup sugar
1 tin condensed milk
20 grams pistachios, soaked, skinned and thinly sliced
10 grams almonds, soaked, skinned and thinly sliced
20 grams raisins
10 cardamom pods, ground
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

**Preparation:**

Pour the milk in a thick, big and broad container and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir continuously until about half of the original quantity remains. Add sugar and condensed milk, and keep stirring until the sugar completely dissolves. Add sliced pistachios, almonds, raisins, cardamom and nutmeg powder. Mix well and remove from heat. Let Basundi cool to room temperature, stirring it on and off. Pour into a decorative dish, cover and keep in a refrigerator. Enjoy Basundi when it is cold. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Recipe from Grandma Rosie's Kitchen

Grandma Rosie's Sweet Puris**Ingredients:**

5 cups whole wheat flour
2 or 2½ cups sugar
1 cup water
3 tablespoons cream of wheat
1 teaspoon salt
¼ cup oil

Preparation:

Mix sugar, water, salt and oil in a pot and cook until the mixture becomes somewhat dry. Add the mixture to the flour and knead, using as much water as necessary to form a dough. Let the dough sit at room temperature for two to three hours. Roll into small round puris and deep fry in oil.

For more recipes please visit our online forum at:

<http://www.jewsofindia.org/forums>

Click on the "Recipes" category.

Legacies (by Noreen Daniel)

This section has been reserved for real life stories concerning faith, trials, courage, support, miracles, traditions and brotherhood which you might have experienced or heard from your family members that you would like to share with others and also pass on to the next generation.

A Mother's Story

This incident took place in 1971 in Mumbai. My husband had been posted for a few months to Ahmedabad in Gujarat. My elder son Lael was three and a half years old and younger son Hillel was just a year old. I had a spine injury after an automobile accident in 1970. I had just gone back to work in the Cancer Research Center in Parel. One afternoon, I was busy in the animal house operating on a batch of mice. When I came out after almost three hours, I did not see anyone around. My laboratory and the office were locked. I walked to the corner of the lane and saw that all the shops were closed and there were no taxis at the taxi stand. On the way to the main road, I saw a man and asked him what had happened. He said, "Don't you know, the Shiv Sena has announced a total strike." How will I go home? I panicked, "Oh G-d, help me, for the sake of my children!"

Just then a taxi came from a lane and stopped by me. An old Sikh driver with a white beard asked me, "Beti (my daughter), where do you want to go?" I immediately said, "Take me to Bandra. My 2 small children are at home with a servant." "Get into the taxi. Keep the window closed. Wa He Guru will help," said the driver and started driving fast. He came on the road that ran parallel to the railway lines. In the distance, we saw a mob in the middle of the road with sticks and stones. The driver told me to duck under the seat and increased the speed of the taxi. I could hear stones being hurled at the taxi and shouts of "Stop, stop". The taxi stopped. The leader of the gang asked, "Sardarji, why are you taking passengers when you know there is a strike?" He answered, "She is like my daughter. There are two small kids at home. She had gone to work though she has a back injury because of an accident." Then he turned around and said to me, "Beti, show him the belt you are wearing." I removed the palav of my sari and showed the long leather belt I used to put along my spine.

The leader of the gang was convinced. He asked the driver to open the front door and he got into the taxi holding the Shiv Sena flag out of the window. The brave Sardarji said, "Wa He Guru," and drove full speed. I kept repeating Psalms 23 and 121 again and again.

As we came on the bridge of Mahim Causeway, we saw another mob in the distance. The Shiv Sena leader turned to me and said, "Tai (big sister), don't worry, seeing this orange flag they won't stop us."

Then he wrote down a telephone number on a piece of paper and said, "Anytime you are stranded because of a strike, you can call this number and a Shiv Sena taxi or ambulance will offer free service."

We ended our adventurous journey near our apartment building in Bandra. My two dear sons were waiting for me in the balcony. When I saw their smiling faces I thanked G-d for sending his angels to escort me home to my children. I wished to pay the old Sikh driver but he said, "I brought my daughter to her children, how can I take money from her?" With tearful eyes, I just said "Thank you."

"Always remain happy with your children," he added and drove away. This one memorable event in my life taught me that one can get the respect of a daughter or a sister from unknown people in a country like India.

Happenings

Shaar Hashamayim Synagogue in Thane Celebrates Its 127th Anniversary

The Shaar Hashamayim Synagogue in Thane had a community rejoicing in December 2006, celebrating its 127th anniversary. The Honorary Secretary Ezra Moses, whom we met recently in New York, and Rabbi Abraham Benjamin spoke about the synagogue and its aspirations. Our own Mr. Sam Daniel gave the vote of thanks.

Architect Sinora Penkar Wins International Award

Sinora Penkar, Project Architect with Somaya and Kalappa Consultants, received an award from the Leading European Architect Forum (LEAF) for her project, the design of Nalanda, an international school in Baroda, India.

Noreen and Romiel remember Sinora as a young, bright, and vivacious girl in Ahmedabad, and an active member of the Magen Abraham Synagogue. They recall the enthusiasm with which Sinora redesigned the Tiferet Israel Synagogue in Jacob Circle in her early days of the 1980s.

Upcoming Events

June 3rd 2007, 1p.m to 5 p.m.: The Great Jewish Wedding Event



The Indian Jewish Congregation of USA will be demonstrating the Bene Israel wedding rituals starting with the henna ceremony, the wedding ceremony with the songs, reading of the Akhtanah (Ketubah), and the blessings and will display photographs and other artifacts. Mr. David Abraham and his wife Naomi have consented to be the bridegroom and bride for this wedding ceremony demonstration.

This will be a great opportunity for all the members and friends of the Indian Jewish Congregation of USA to not only be observers but to also participate. Please contact the following and tell us what you would or could do for us:

Aylon	(718) 896-4314	e-mail: aylon@jewsofindia.org
Lael	(516) 735-2162	e-mail: lael@jewsofindia.org
Evelina	(917) 513-6220	e-mail: tapluna@jewsofindia.org

June 19th 2007, 6 p.m.: The Jews of India: An Introduction to Film, Food, Music and Henna!

Romiel Daniel, president of the Indian Jewish Community of the USA, will talk about the long, proud history of Jews in various regions of India. A buffet dinner, including a variety of vegetarian Indian delicacies and Indian music will follow. You can even have your hands and feet adorned with special henna decorations! Co-sponsored with the Indian Jewish Congregation of the USA, a new and very welcomed JCC partner, and with the Sharon Chapter of Hadassah. The price is \$20 for members of the Indian Jewish Congregation of the USA and JCC members; \$25 for non-members. JCC Manhattan is at 334 Amsterdam Av. At 76th Street. To register, go to www.jccmanhattan.org or call 646-505-5708.

August 12th 2007, 2 p.m.: A Celebration of India's Independence Day with a Jewish Twist

India celebrates its 58th Independence Day on August 15th. Join us in a display of solidarity among India, Israel and the United States. The program will include representatives of the Israeli and Indian consulates in New York and entertainment featuring both Indian and Israeli music and dance. Refreshments will be served. Co-sponsored with the Indian Jewish Congregation of the USA. The price is \$20 for members of the Indian Jewish Congregation of the USA and JCC members; \$25 for non-members. JCC Manhattan is at 334 Amsterdam Av. at 76th Street. To register, go to www.jccmanhattan.org or call 646-505-5708.

We would like all our members to send us articles of interest, birthdates or birth months, wedding anniversaries and any other information of interest to the community.

Please send the information to Evelina or Aylon latest by May 20th 2007.

tapluna@jewsofindia.org
aylon@jewsofindia.org

To be included in our electronic mailing list, please send us a request to: comments@jewsofindia.org

Special thanks to all contributors.