

JuniOur Cong

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A weekend away never to be forgotten by Sacha Livingstone

On Friday, 11th April something very special took place ... The annual BSS weekend away began. Why was it so special? Because it hasn't happened since 2019, thanks to Covid. Was it worth the wait? We think so but why don't you read on as Sacha Livingstone shares his account and thoughts ...

The weekend away started on Friday night at Phasels Wood, a Scouting activity centre in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire. After being assigned our rooms - My roommate was Sam who was really nice - and unpacking our kit, we met in the main room for Shabbat and a delicious dinner of chicken and rice. After dinner, Benji Nathan, our "Rosh" for the weekend, hosted a "Challenge quiz" which involved some very unusual challenges like eating chocolate with a knife and fork and wrapping one of our teammates in toilet paper! We were all quite tired after the excitement of this, so we had a cup of hot chocolate and a biscuit and went to bed. We didn't necessarily go to sleep though ... Some people stayed up until quite late or early even!

The next day, we all woke up and had breakfast, which was followed by a Shabbat morning service led by Rabbi Botnick who spent the whole weekend with us. Then we went off to our activities which were run by Phasels Wood staff; archery or air rifle shooting and the Cresta run, which is where we slid down a massive metal track in plastic carts. The activities were so much fun - Everyone really enjoyed having a go at something new and a bit different! After the activities, we had lunch and then we played a wide game in the field near our lodge. We had to invite people to a dinner party, just like in the Purim story. This involved getting a piece of paper from Haman (Harry Solnick), a date stamp from Esther (Alice Salmon), a sticker from King Achashverosh (Celia Krikler) and post it via Mordechai (Jack Loison). This was also such fun, although it was quite tiring running around such a huge field for an hour! Then we went back to our rooms to relax (and recover?!?!?) for a bit before Rabbi Botnick ran a really interesting session about the Parsha and justice. We then made Havdalah before having sausages and latkes for dinner and going outside for our highly anticipated campfire. We sang some very funny songs, ate some delicious S'mores with marshmallows toasted on the campfire and some very messy chocolate cake cooked inside hollowed-out oranges. The day ended with us watching Encanto accompanied by popcorn and various other treats before we all went to bed (quite late)! Turn over the page to find out more about our last day away ...



← Rosh
Madrach, Benji,
with his amazing
team of
Madrachim -
Harry, Alice,
Celia and Jack

→ Archery
activity run by
Phasels Wood
Staff



Don't forget to see the back page for Cheder dates this half-term!

Sunday morning we were woken up by Benji blasting a song from "The Lion King" incredibly loudly into each of our rooms to encourage us to get out of bed and go to breakfast. After an early morning forest walk and wake-up session with Rabbi Botnick, we had breakfast before having a bit of a tidy-up and packing up our stuff. Feeling a little more energised, we then did an orienteering session where we looked for photos or letters posted around the site. We then returned to the lodge to watch Caroline and Benji demonstrating their "magical brain connection" for some "Black magic". I am still not sure if I believe this but I just couldn't work out how they managed to read each others' minds! Then we had lunch before writing compliment slips for each other and finally going home. I thought the weekend away went really well - The food was yummy, the activities were great and I cannot wait for Caroline to organise more amazing adventures like this in the future.

Chocolate, chocolate and more chocolate!

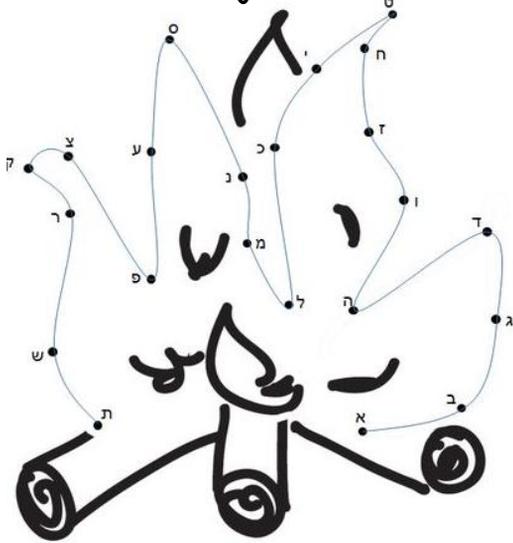
On Sunday, 27th March, we welcomed nearly 60 people to BSS's Mock-a-Choc-a-Seder for our first LIVE Mock Seder since 2019. It was wonderful to see so many children and parents with us, including many people who don't usually come to BSS on a Sunday morning! Rabbi Botnick led us expertly through the 15 steps of a Seder and any steps involving food or drink had a chocolate or sweet treat element to them. Everyone enjoyed drinking four cups of chocolate milk, eating chocolate-covered matzah, dipping a strawberry in chocolate sauce, creating a delicious S'mores Hillel sandwich using chocolate charoset and sour sweets plus various other treats throughout the morning. A special thank you to Mickaël Loison for preparing all of the food for us to enjoy and to all of the staff and parents who stepped in to help us serve and hand-out bits and bobs such as ping pong balls, sunglasses and lion/bear/giraffe biscuits.

It would not have been possible without you! Everyone at BSS Cheder wishes you and your family a Chag Pesach Kasher v'Sameach! May your Seders be as sweet as ours and filled with lots and lots of chocolate!



Lag b'omer fun

Can you follow the letters of the א-ב to join the dots?



The origin of Shavuot

Photo gallery - Annual weekend away

Here is a selection of photos from the weekend away at Phasels Wood ☺ Participants did archery, games, arts & crafts, forest walks, the cresta run, air rifle shooting, wide games and much more!



My BM project @ BSS by Jack Lesser



Jack Lesser has been working on an amazing Bar Mitzvah project. Read on to find out more as he shares this important part of his BM journey with us ...

For my Barmitzvah project, I had been wondering what I could do to help develop my understanding of Judaism and something related to this subject. Although I believe that volunteering is a really good (and necessary) thing to do, I was already volunteering as part of my Duke of Edinburgh award, so I felt that I could take this opportunity to do something different and find out more about my own family's history. Consequently, I was so excited when my Dad and I stumbled upon my Great Grandpa's life story - "My First 80 years" - which he had written many years ago. Let me tell you a bit about him and what my Dad and I have found out ... My Great Grandpa's name was Sammy Pelten and he was born in 1902 in Warsaw, the capital of Poland. Although I never got to meet him because he died in 1989 and I was only born in 2008, I am very proud to have been given Samuel as my middle name, so I feel we have a special connection. The story that he wrote talks about various life experiences including what it was like to live through two World Wars. Luckily for my family and I, he managed to escape from Nazi Europe to England and began a new life in Belsize Park.

As I am sure you can imagine, reading his story has been fascinating and it has given me a unique opportunity to learn more about my family's history as well as its relationship with Judaism and, of course, BSS.

Whilst reading Great Grandpa's story, I realised that there was one worrying issue - All of his writing had been done by hand on scrap pieces of paper with loose pictures and letters, all of which were held together in two big and unorganised folders.

My dad and I decided that sorting these out would be a fabulous project for me to undertake as part of my BM journey. We are taking it in turns to read a page into our phones and this turns the handwritten text into typed text. We hope to turn "My first 80 years" into a proper book that my cousins and I can read and learn about our amazing family's history and maybe one day you might read it too?!?!)

Ice cream in a bag - A fun scientific & dairy feast for Shavuot

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream or half and half
- 1tsp vanilla
- 2.5tsp granulated sugar

DIRECTIONS

Place all of the ingredients into a tightly sealed sandwich sized bag, pressing the air out as you seal it. Then put this bag into another tightly sealed sandwich bag. Finally, fill a third large sized resealable bag half-way full of ice cubes and mix with 6 tablespoons of coarse kosher salt. Then put the sealed bags into the middle of the ice and seal the larger bag. If you have another large bag, you could put everything into that to be extra safe! To make the ice cream, get moving - You need to shake the bag for about 5-10 minutes until the ice cream forms.

Then sit down, relax and enjoy your ice cream 😊



BSS Cheder Shavuot/Summer 1 dates

Join us, every Sunday morning:
9:45am to 12pm for BSS Cheder - Jewish Studies, Aleph Champ reading and Ivrit Club for children in Years 1 to 6 OR 10am to 12pm for our new and inspirational Beit Mitzvah program for Years 7 & 8 OR our amazing iGCSE in Religious Studies for Years 9 & 10.
For more information contact caroline@synagogue.org.uk

Sunday 1 May 2022 - **Yom Ha'atzmaut theme**

Sunday 8 May 2022 - **Projects**

Sunday 15 May 2022 - **Lag b'Omer theme**

Sunday 22 May 2022 - **Shavuot theme**