



The Jewish Community of Hamelin Newsletter



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December 2012 • Kislev–Tewet 5773

[Program](#)

Dear members, friends and supporters,

Who is not looking forward to the month of December? Hannukka looms twinkling ahead with all its cultural and historical meaning. We will bake Hannukka cookies, buy each other presents, decorate our homes and synagogues and place our Hannukiot in our windows. We will take time for our family and friends and enjoy the days together. These are wonderful things to look forward to.

But let us begin with a review of the past month and the main events in our community.

On the 9th of November we remembered the Pogromnacht of 1938 as we gathered in front of the Memorial in front of our new Synagogue. It is now 74 years ago that the unthinkable happened. Mrs. Daria Leuthier told the story of the



Birnbaum family. Deacon Joachim Wingert read a psalm from the Bible. The names of all Hamelin Jewish citizens who were victims of the Nazis in 1938 were read aloud. We have not forgotten them. Our Rabbi assessor, Adrian Schell, recited “Kaddisch” with us and sang “El Male Rachamim” with deep emotion. Our choir Shalom sang songs that touched the heart, and the service ended with a minute of silence.

The students and teachers of the Elisabeth-Selbert-Schule opened the exhibition “Anne Frank—A Story for Today” at noon on the 9th of November. The exhibition was open for visitors from November 9th until the 30th, housed in the rooms of the Technischen Akademie, situated at the Hamelin train station.

On the 11th of November beautiful Jewish music was heard in our community, thanks to the Central Council of Jews in Germany. Many community members and



guests came to hear the Klezmer group, led by Professor Igor Epstein (Cologne). The spirited and melancholic music moved and inspired the attentive listeners. We thank everyone who made donations as a sign of thanks on this evening. We thank Faina Pelts for organizing the concert.

On Friday, the 16th of November, there was a musical Kabbalath-Schabbath-Service, which our group Shalom arranged with Peter Benjamin Wendt, and it was led by Faina Pelts. It was an immersion in Jewish liturgy and music.

On the 18th of November we opened our doors to Natalia Arnstein (Berlin), who read from several of her books. Mrs. Arnstein is a travel guide and author of popular Russian literature. It was an afternoon to remember, a relaxed and humorous atmosphere. Mrs. Arnstein told her life story and read some excerpts from her books in Russian. It was a very pleasant experience listening to her. Some community members were familiar with Mrs. Arnstein, having met her during a community outing to Berlin last August. They were very pleased to see her again in our synagogue here in Hamelin. The afternoon ended with coffee, tea and refreshments and everyone went home relaxed and happy.

We also want to thank Mr. Linde, Community Outreach Officer from the Hamelin Police, for his very informative and interesting talk on “Protection from Fraud.” Everyone in attendance felt safer and better informed after the talk and were thankful to the community for arranging such events. Many thanks to Faina for inviting this guest and Polina for the translation of the material.

On the 16th of October we opened a very moving Exhibition in our community, which commemorated the many Jews that were deported from Hamelin more than 70 years ago. The exhibition was attended by many visitors. We thank Hamelin historian Bernd Gelderblom for his work here. The exhibition ended in November.

The Society of Christian and Jews undertook a day trip to Münster to the exhibition “Marc Chagall and the Bible.” Lively scenes from the Bible came alive and seemed to jump from the canvas at the hand of the great master. Deeply rich colors held one captive in front of these compositions. This trip will be an unforgettable for everyone, not only because of the exhibition itself, but also the companionship and friendly spirit on the trip there and back.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

Late December is vacation time in our community.

Mr. Heinrich Moos will be on vacation from 12/18/ until 12/26/2012.

Mrs. Faina Pelts will be on vacation from 12/24 until 1/2/2013.

Mrs. Olga Gerr is on vacation from 12/27/12 until 1/3/2013.

Please ask your course leaders when the last course meets in 2012 and when the course resumes in 2013.

Treasury Time

We are now specifying Tuesdays and Thursdays for members to speak to the congregational treasurer. On these days members will be able to transact with our Treasurer Mrs. Olga Gerr for matters concerning membership fees, orders, shopping disbursements, bills and receipts or other payback. We hope this will make our work more efficient.

Our Internet Presence

Those of you reading this newsletter in English are reading the Internet version. The newsletter is also available in print form in [German](#) and [Russian](#) for members and supporters here in Germany. Many hours and many hands and heads go into producing this monthly informational newsletter. Keeping us online is no small expense for our small community of 90 percent Russian Jewish immigrants. We recognize the importance of this media tool in connecting and informing others of our congregational efforts and developments. And this newsletter has been the most efficient and successful outreach tool in our attempts to network internationally. Many new relationships have been established and built as a result of this newsletter and we are grateful to all involved. If you would care to help us stay online, please contact Rachel Dohme at racheldohme@jghreform.org. We appreciate any and all support.

Jewish December



Rock of Ages let our song,
Praise thy saving power;
Thou amidst the raging foes,
Wast our shelt'ring tower.

Furious they assailed us,
But Thine arm availed us,
And Thy word broke their sword,
When our own strength failed us.
And Thy word broke their sword,
When our own strength failed us.

This is the text we sing each year as we watch the Hanukkah candles burning brightly. This year Hanukkah begins on the 8th of December, and we will hold our congregational Hanukkah celebration at 5:00 p.m. We will listen to the Hannukkah story, sing songs, eat Latkes and Sufganiot, and most important, we will celebrate the lighting of the first candle. The children will receive presents and as every year, we will have lots of fun in one another's company.

The German Medal of Merit to Be Awarded to our Chairwoman, Rachel Dohme

We consider this award a great honor and sign of recognition for the work and commitment we have all invested. Our members, friends and sponsors have dedicated more than 15 years of hard work and have rebuilt Jewish life in Hamelin from the ashes. Today, the Jewish community is a lively and active symbol of Jewish life, for not having been erased, but for having been rebuilt anew. The first construction of a liberal synagogue in Post-War Germany on the grounds where the original synagogue stood since 1879 is also a sign of remarkable cooperation. Jews and Christians of this town have replaced the walls of hatred and prejudice with the walls of this new synagogue: Beitenu—Our House. A wonderful celebration and short service are planned on Friday, the 14th of December. Music will be performed by the group Shalom and Rebekka Dohme. We will be welcoming the County Com-

missioner of Hameln-Pyrmont, Mr. Rudiger Bütte, the chairwoman of our State Board of Jewish Communities, Mrs. Katarina Seidler, our Rabbi Irit Shillor, and last but certainly not least, our members, without whom this all would not have been possible. Personal invitations will be sent to all members, founding members and members of our Foundation Liberal Synagogue Hamelin.

The Union of Progressive Jews of Germany

The Winter-Machane will take place from 12.23.2012 till 12.30.2012. This time we will go to the Harz Mountains (Bad Sachsa). Children from the age of eight on can take part.

Information flyers and registration forms are available in the synagogue and online at www.upj-netzer.de. Questions are happily answered at the UPJ Youth office: 0521 3043185.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome new members and look forward to their active contributions to our congregational work. We welcome Rabbi Assessor Adrian Schell, Dr. Chayim Apacik-Schell and Mr. Samuil Koudinov. We're happy to have you.

Mazel Tov

We extend our wishes of Mazel Tov to Mrs. Ingrid Wettberg, chairman of the Liberal Jewish Community Hannover, for receiving the German Medal of Merit in November.

We congratulate our sister congregation in Schleswig-Holstein, the Jewish Community of Pinneberg on their 10th anniversary as well as the tenth anniversary of their State Board of Congregations.

Refu'ah shlemah

We pray for the complete recovery of all who are ill, and everyone who is going through difficult times. We will recite Misheberach for them during services and will be with you in our thoughts and prayers.



Donations — Tzedakah

We thank the following people and organizations for supporting our community life and the synagogue construction with generous donations. The Jacobsberg family, USA, the Holz and Schor families, Class 12B from the Handelslehranstalt and their teacher Mrs. Dr. Schmidt as well as Mr. Hans Weltner, Mrs. Rachel Dohme and as always, thank you to Mrs. Ute Gibas.

We greatly appreciate all donations for the concert from November 11th. May you all be blessed for your generosity.

Cemetery Maintenance — a Mitzvah

We thank Aron Kaplan, Heinrich Moos, Valerij Bogachyck, Matvey Dvortsis, and Lev Bachmatchnikov for the service of the heart which they performed at our Jewish cemetery. This is the meaning of Mitzvah. After countless hours of work the cemetery looks well-kept again. Although the maintenance of the graves remains the relatives' responsibility, this group of men, led by former board member Aron Kaplan, deserves our recognition for their dedication. Selfless deeds like these demonstrate the soul of Judaism. Making the world a better place by helping others; in other words: Tikkun Olam.



Etz Chayim — Tree of Life

Winter is upon us. The wind is cold, the sky grey and the trees are bare. But inside our synagogue we hope to continue adding leaves to our tree and you can help! You can donate a leaf with an engraving in memory of special events, such as a birth, Bar or Bat Mitzwa, wedding, or other memorable occasions. Your donation contributes to the maintenance of the synagogue. Forms are available in our office. Thank you!

Newly added was: In memory of Henry Friedlander from the Dohme family

Newly ordered were: For Rachel with love, from the Jacobsberg family

Best wishes to Family Schwartzkopff from the Holz and Schor families

Thank you — Todah Rabah

We thank Mr. Gelderblom for his well-prepared exhibit and everyone in our congregation who made the exhibit and accompanying program possible. Thanks to our custodian Mr. Moos and Board member Peter Wendt for the organization.

We thank Professor Epstein for the concert he gave in our synagogue. We also thank the Central Council of Jews of Germany for their financial support which allows small communities to present Jewish culture.

Also thank you to Ms. Arnstein for her reading and Mr. Linde, from our local Police force for his presentation. We thank Faina Pelts for organizing these events.

Thank you to Polina Pelts and Hans-Georg Spangenberg for the excursion to Münster.

We thank everyone who helps in making our holidays and cultural events very special. Our thanks go to everyone who plan and organize activities in our community. All the regular group activities, led by volunteers, contribute to our community life. We appreciate your commitment.

Yahrzeit in December

Roza Chirita 12/1/2000 / 4. Kislev 5761

Frida Dachkevich 12/3/2001 / 18. Kislev 5762

Grigori Drabkine 12/7/2005 / 6. Kislev 5766

Igor Fuksa 12/5/2006 / 15. Kislev 5767

Genrich Leimunski 12/29/2006 / 8. Tevet 5767

Ira Leimunskis 12/3/2011 / 7. Kislev 5772

May the memory of our loved ones be for a blessing. Please join family members during Sabbath services as we recite Kaddish. Yahrzeit candles are available in the office.

We wish everyone a Happy Hanukka!

Shalom!

—The Congregation Board



[Newsletter Archives](#)

Jewish Community of Hamelin

Member of the Union of Progressive Jews in Germany, the World Union of Progressive Judaism, and the Central Council of Jews of Germany

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Program for December 2012 • Kislev–Tewet 5773

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 1	10:00 a.m.	Shacharit services and Torah study with Rabbi Irit Shillor
Monday, December 3	12:00 noon	“Judaism” a course in Russian “The History of Hanukka” W.Pesok
Tuesday, December 4	9:00 a.m.	Monthly Board meeting
Saturday, December 8	5:00 p.m.	Congregational Hanukka Party Hanukka sing along with “Shalom”, lighting of the first candle, suf-ganiot, dreidels and more
Sunday, December 9	3:00 p.m.	“Young and Jewish” with Marysol Fischer
Tuesday, December 11	11:00 a.m.	Russian Book Club with A. Konstantinova
Friday, December 14	5:00 p.m.	Special Friday night services German Medal of Merit Award ceremony for Rachel Dohme Festive Kiddush
Friday, December 21	5:30 a.m.	Friday night services with Faina Pelts
Outside the congregation		
Tuesday, December 6	10:30 a.m.	“Hanukka” presentation with R. Dohme and C. Bruns Reading from Bella Chagall’s book, “Burning Lights” Lutheran Church, Hugenottenstrasse

Happy Hanukka and a happy and healthy 2013 to all our members, friends and supporters!

