

Batmitzvah

Twinning

● Larry Gould



IN May, Hale shul saw a Batmitzvah with a difference. More than 300 guests filled the shule for Claire Abrahams' Batmitzvah ceremony, where they were surprised to be told that Ethiopian Palgoosh Darba would be sharing the celebrations via a video link. Palgoosh and her parents arrived in Israel only a year ago after a long and arduous journey from their Ethiopian village of Sarago, where they crossed dangerous terrain to Gondar. In Gondar they were told that they would have to wait just days until their transfer to a transit camp in Addis Ababa, but it took five long years until their dream was realized and they arrived in Israel.



Fast forward two months, to July 28th and the venue is The Great Synagogue in Jerusalem. Claire has met her twin Palgoosh at a day camp for the 30 children that are going to

be Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and Sarah Jacobson has met her twin Workia. At the day camp the girls participated in arts and crafts and learned a dance together, which they performed after the celebration lunch.

As in previous years, Chief Rabbi Lau addressed all the Bnei Mitzvot in front of 320 guests, Ethiopian parents, sisters, brothers, one of the FZY tour groups from England, UJIA staff and family and friends of the Abrahams and Jacobson families.

The night before all the children met at the Kotel, where their Rabbi, Rav Micha Peled addressed the children. They had all written notes to put into the Kotel, after which they sang and danced with their madrichim.

The day itself was emotionally charged as Chazan Daniel Feingold, our very own Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur Chazan, sang all the Bat Mitzvah girls into the Great Synagogue with his beautiful rendition of Eshet Chayil.

The children were in awe of the greatness and beauty of the Great Synagogue. It was a day of many firsts; their first time in Jerusalem and they were so excited by the new clothes they had been given to celebrate the occasion, another first!

The Hale girls gave a wonderful dvar torah from the Bimah along with Katy Landy from North West London, who was also twinning her Batmitzvah. After the service all the children were photographed in front of the Aron Kodesh along with their parents and siblings. At the end of the celebration they were presented with a framed copy, a memento to a wonderful, unforgettable day, another first, as the children had never before seen a photograph of themselves!



The Bar/Bat Mitzvah programme is sponsored by UJIA and FZY. It begins with a learning programme after Pesach and culminates in three day summer camp and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at the Great Synagogue.

Already, many families are showing an interest in next year's twinning.

If you have a son or daughter that may want to twin his/her celebrations, then please contact Larry Gould on 0161 903 9367. All you need to bring is a packet of Kleenex!!!