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Registered Charity Number
1110416

PaL is dedicated in lasting memory of Sammy Homburger ז"ל



PaLs

The Newsletter for Friends of Phone and Learn

No 25 | February 2015

Dear PaL

I've just come back from an amazing weekend in Brisbane. My wife and I went for the weekend to celebrate the Bar Mitzvah of my young PaL partner Daniel. Daniel and I have been learning together since Pesach via Skype as Daniel is based in Queensland, and I live in Melbourne, a distance of nearly 2,000km across Australia.

Daniel and his twin sister Avital were going to turn 13 so our learning sessions were geared to his upcoming Bar Mitzvah.

Avital had also been learning with a PaL tutor, based in Sydney. Daniel and Avital live with their mother Anna in Queensland, whilst their father, Raymond, lives in London. Initially they were unsure whether their celebration would take place in the UK or Australia. However, 6 weeks before the date it was decided that the double celebration would be held at a shul in Brisbane.

The shul turned out to be a perfect venue, with a small but friendly congregation who were more than happy to host the simcha. A beautiful sit-down kiddush with cholent and kugel was laid on, and a special cake had been organised by the shul for the celebration which was a wonderful surprise.

Daniel leined very nicely and had his aliyah. Avital gave a speech after davening which she had prepared with her PaL tutor. Friday night we ate with the Rabbi, Rabbi Jaffe who was very welcoming and we all felt very much part of his family. On Sunday morning, Daniel and Raymond came to shul and were able to put on Tefillin together, which was very special. Daniel and I hope to continue our PaL learning partnership with our focus now on Hebrew reading, learning to daven and the meaning of prayer.

All in all, it was a wonderful experience for us, and a great privilege. We are very happy to be a part of the PaL family.



Raymond, PaL partner Daniel and PaL tutor Yaakov

Yaakov



US Lunch and Learn for Women in the City

United Synagogue Women's Lunch & Learn

PaL was presented at the pre Chanuka United Synagogue Women's Lunch and Learn session hosted by Investec at their London office in the City.

The United Synagogue's City Rabbi – Rabbi Jonny Hughes delivered a thought-provoking session highlighting the vital role women played in the Chanuka story and explained that the laws regarding a woman's obligation to light the Menorah are a testimony to this. At the conclusion of the session, Rabbi Hughes introduced the **PaL** concept to the audience inviting the participants to sign up to **PaL**.

The US Women's Lunch and Learn sessions usually take place several times a year and are always well attended. This event drew the largest crowd ever with over 40 women attending; most of them based or working in the City. Many of the attendees expressed interest in the concept of **PaL**, especially as the flexible learning sessions suit their busy schedules.

PaL Chairman Dov Harris said: "We are delighted to welcome new City members to the **PaL** learning family and a special thanks to our friend Elissa Bayer, Director at Investec, for hosting this wonderful learning session and for providing spiritual and physical nourishment to all who attended." 🕎



PaL Programme Coordinator Rivka Graham with PaL partner Siena Carver

Kneading it together

This past October, world Jewry united to celebrate Shabbos like never before.

The Shabbos Project introduced by Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein of South Africa, proved to be so successful when it was launched in 2013, that well over a hundred countries across the world clamoured to join in for the 2014 initiative. The Shabbos Project's catch phrase was #keepingittogether. As a key education partner in this project, **PaL** adapted this hashtag to #learningittogether and encouraged existing **PaL** partnerships to study more about Shabbos in their weekly learning sessions.

In the UK, the weeks before Shabbat UK saw a flurry of activity. Communal events across the country were oversubscribed, and overflow venues had to be arranged at the last minute to accommodate the massive interest.

The main event which launched the weekend was the Challah Make – a mass gathering of people to make their own challah. **PaL** tutors and partners attended the Challah Make events, in Manchester, Leeds, Essex & London.

The Great Challah Make in Allianz Park in London drew the largest crowd with over 3,500 people attending. The atmosphere was indescribable, the

noise deafening and the sheer scale of the event incredible. Thousands of men, women and children from across the spectrum of Anglo Jewry, were mixing, kneading and braiding their challah dough together. The challah 'Masterchefs' helped those who were making challah for the first time, and chatted with each other as friends, despite never having met one another before.

A number of **PaL** partners and tutors had arranged to meet up and attend the Challah Make together and some were meeting each other face-to-face for the first time. **PaL** partner Sophia Chidgey-Hallan who travelled from South East London a journey of over two hours, to attend the Challah Make remarked, "I really enjoyed the event, the atmosphere and the ambience, it was very special and the challah was delicious too!"

PaL partner Siena Carver who travelled from Leamington Spa to come to the Challah Make in London and to participate in Shabbat UK activities commented, "The Challah Make was a really inspiring event that I will remember for a long time. My experience over Shabbos was fantastic – I wish I could have stayed longer."

In the weeks before and after The Shabbos Project, hundreds of people from all over the world signed up to **PaL** via The Shabbos Project website to learn more about Shabbos. People from across Europe, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Panama, Philippines, Uruguay and Zambia, have signed up to **PaL** to study more about Judaism and themselves.

Rivka Graham, **PaL** Programme Coordinator commented, "The Shabbos Project generated such a positive response from Jews across the globe. **PaL** is perfectly placed to help Jews across the globe study more about their heritage and religion irrespective of their level of observance or location." 🕎



Part of the crowd at the Challah Make / Paal Lang Photography



Phone and Learn (PaL) is a division of Partners in Torah*, USA
www.partnersintorah.org, a unique Jewish identity-building initiative committed to fostering unity among Jews of all backgrounds. **PaL** matches Jews who want to know more about their heritage with a friendly, knowledgeable tutor for an hour a week of Jewish study and discussion, over the phone.

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