

ISSUE 18 IYAR 5773 / APRIL 2013

Training on Tour 2013

Connecting in Israel and North America

For the first time this year Limmud International will hold two regional training, development and networking seminars outside the UK, for Limmud team members in Israel and North America. Part of Limmud International's mission is to support and enable Limmud groups to flourish around the world. An important part of fulfilling this task is to assist in the volunteer development process: strong volunteers are central to ensuring successful Limmud events and sustainable Limmud communities.

These seminars or, as we have come to know them, 'Training on Tour', have a number of components. Drawing on Limmud's core values and principles, the common foundation for all Limmud activities, the seminars will focus on volunteer and leadership development. Emphasising strategic thinking and practical implementation of Limmud values, we will look at messaging to encourage inclusivity and creative programming to ensure diversity and more.

A key element of Training on Tour is the dedicated opportunity to bring together Limmud volunteers in a region, or in the case of Israel, country. Through consultation with the relevant Limmud groups in advance of the seminar, we are able to more

effectively support groups in facing challenges of particular relevance to their region or country. Simply being able to come together in person is also a vital platform for Limmud group team members to learn from one another and develop supportive collaborative relationships going forward.

Training on Tour 2013 is taking place in:

- **Israel: 23 - 26 May, near Jerusalem**
- **North America: 27 - 30 June, Chicago**

For further information about taking part, contact your local Limmud leadership for North America. Applications for Israel are nearly full.

Each year Limmud International also sends experienced volunteer trainers and facilitators to individual Limmud groups to support their development. If you would like assistance with general volunteer development or dealing with specific challenges, please contact international@limmud.org to arrange this.

By David Bilchitz and Dani Serlin,
Limmud International
Steering Group



Message from the Chair

It is a great pleasure to be welcoming you to my first Limmud International Newsletter as Chair of Limmud International. It has been a great privilege to take over from Helena Miller and Uri Berkowitz and I am excited to take on the challenging role of keeping in touch with and arranging support for all the many and varied Limmud groups around the world.



I will be working alongside Kevin Sefton who has taken over from Carolyn Bogush as overall Chair of Limmud, and will be supported by the new Limmud International Steering Group, a team of dedicated volunteers from around the world, who are introduced in the next page of this newsletter. I will of course also have the invaluable help of Dani Serlin, the Limmud International Co-ordinator, Clive Lawton, our Senior Consultant, and Shelley Marsh, Limmud's new Executive Director.

At Limmud International, we can help you at every stage of your development and growth, as your Limmud takes each step on its Jewish journey. Apart from advice and support from myself, Dani, Clive, Shelley and the Limmud International Steering Group, we have trainers who can meet with your team, helping you to think through all the issues you may face running Limmud events.

My particular concern is to ensure that Limmud International helps and supports Limmud groups around the world by creating better links between all the Limmud groups - both with each other, especially on a regional basis, and with Limmud International. And I hope we can continue to ensure that as many groups as possible have access to the training and development opportunities that Limmud International provides in your own locations for your own teams, as well as regionally and internationally.

We have coming up in the next few months two 'Training on Tour' volunteer leadership and development programmes, one in Israel in May and one for North America in Chicago in June. We hope that if your Limmud is in one of these regions then you will be able to send some volunteers to participate. Your group will have received details already, but please ask if you want to know more.

We are already making plans for further volunteer events and visits to individual groups, so please let me know what you would like from Limmud International in this respect. And of course, Limmud in the UK is already starting to plan Limmud Conference 2013, which will be held December 22-26th again at Warwick University. Limmud International will as usual have a programme of volunteer development sessions and ample networking opportunities so it's not too soon to start thinking about taking part.

STAY IN TOUCH

I am also keen that Limmud International should be in touch more regularly with Limmud groups. One way this is now happening is with regular email bulletins to groups. Other ways you can make sure we know what you are up to are:

Check the [Calendar](#) and [Limmud group contact details](#) on the [Limmud International website](#) www.limmudinternational.org. If your event is missing, or if something is not accurate, please do let us know.

Please make sure you are a member of the Limmud International [Online Forum](#), which is a great place to ask for feedback and assistance from other Limmud groups. You can find out details here: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/limmud-international-forum>.

Please do add my email address to [your mailing list](#) if I'm not there already so I can be kept posted with your events - internationalchair@limmud.org

In addition, the [Limmud International Resource Directory \(LIRD\)](#) is now available online for your Limmud group as a resource for sharing documents from different Limmud groups around the world. Please do ensure that your team both has access to these resources and that you send us your own documents to add so that there is as wide a range as possible of guidance, templates, notes etc - more details later in this issue.

We also try and make available a [welcome message](#) from Limmud International for any group who would like one for your programme book for your event. We will try and be in touch at the right time, but please do ask if you need material for your book and we haven't been in touch yet.

And please do get in contact if there is anything that Limmud International can help you with, or advise you on, or just to let us know where you are up to as a group, what you have planned and what we can do to support you - either by emailing me at internationalchair@limmud.org, or Dani Serlin at international@limmud.org.

I look forward to working with you and hearing all your news!

David Hoffman
Chair,
Limmud International

"At Limmud International, we can help you at every stage of your development and growth, as your Limmud takes each step on its Jewish journey"

Introducing the Limmud International Steering Group: 2013

David Hoffman

David has been coming to Limmud Conference in the UK since 2002. He has been involved in Limmud UK events since 2005, initially with Limmud Fest, which he went on to co-chair in 2009, but also Limmud Conference, for which he co-chaired Programming in 2007, and where he has been regularly involved in music programming and sessions. He restarted Manchester Limmud in 2008 and co-chaired its events between 2009 and earlier this year. He has been a Limmud trustee since 2011, with a portfolio for programming support and publications, prior to taking over as chair of Limmud International at the start of 2013. Outside Limmud, he is a commercial lawyer (a barrister, and yes he does wear the wig from time to time) and occasional musician (recording as The Magic If). David lives in Manchester, UK.



Shoshana Waskow

Shoshana is a community pediatrician who has been committed to volunteer-driven lay-led Jewish community endeavors since her youth spent growing up in the havurah movement. She is currently chair of the board of Limmud Chicago having previously co-chaired Limmud Chicago's conference and led team efforts in outreach and volunteer development. She is excited to get more involved in the world-wide Limmud movement. Shoshana live in Chicago, USA.



David Bilchitz

David is a professor at the University of Johannesburg, and Director of SAIFAC, specialising in fundamental rights law. He is a founding member of Limmud South Africa and Jewish Outlook: SA LGBTI Alliance and is a lay-leader at Temple Israel, Hillbrow (Johannesburg). David lives in Johannesburg, South Africa.



Rebecca Lester

Rebecca has been involved in Limmud UK for 8 years, co-chaired Conference in 2009 and has been on a number of steering groups co-chairing participant care, families, volunteers and programming. In her spare time she is an infectious diseases doctor. Rebecca is currently working in Tanzania.



Shep Rosenman

Shep is an entertainment lawyer for talent, a musician and songwriter, an avid student and teacher about Jewish prayer, Bible, song-writing, community-building and respectful conversation. He is one of the co-founders of LimmudLA and is on his second tour with the Limmud International Steering Group. Shep lives in Los Angeles, USA.



Shlomit Naim Naor

Shlomit holds a Masters degree in Creative Writing and is a published poet. She was first introduced to Limmud in the UK, becoming an enthusiastic Fest team member, whilst on shlichut to Redbridge. Since returning to Israel Shlomit has supported the development of Limmud groups here. Shlomit lives in Jerusalem, Israel.



Toby Axelrod

Toby is a journalist and translator, originally from New York, and is also director of the Leo Baeck Summer University in Jewish studies in Berlin. She co-founded Limmud in Germany in 2006 and is still active, having served as program director, chair of the festival for several years, and overall chair of the board for four years. She is currently a vice chair. Toby lives in Berlin, Germany.



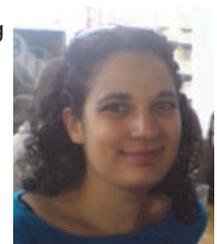
Clive Lawton

Clive Lawton is co-founder of Limmud and now as Limmud's Senior Consultant trains and develops Limmud volunteer teams around the world. An award-winning educator, a magistrate and broadcaster, he is the London Jewish Cultural Centre's scholar-in-residence and works worldwide in educational development and diversity issues. Clive lives in London, UK.



Dani Serlin

Dani is the LI Coordinator, supporting and networking Limmuds across the globe. She first volunteered for Limmud UK as a YAD and then a madricha for Young Limmud before joining a Limmud Fest UK team. Her background in project management and social research on community conflict. Dani lives in London, UK.



CHAVRUTA

Chavruta: Dynamic Learning

The Limmud Chavruta Project is an international collaboration of volunteers who create resources for chavruta study – a traditional form of Jewish learning where two people explore Jewish texts together. Co-chairs Jeremy Tabick and Robin Cooke explain why this is an exciting time to be a part of this unique learning initiative.

Flash back to the Monday morning of Limmud Conference 2012 UK, where over 150 participants are fully absorbed in text study. The room is buzzing. Some pairs share ideas on wealth creation; others debate the significance of the golden calf; all are learning from a compilation of Jewish and non-Jewish texts. Some have been discussing the first source for over an hour. The five minute warning triggers even more intense chatter and wild gesticulation – otherwise known as the ‘Chavruta vibe’. As the session draws to a close, many of these conversations are only just beginning.

To create the 2012 Chavruta book, ‘Money’, four teams of Limmud volunteers – from Israel, Hungary, the UK and the USA – spent months gathering sources from Jewish tradition and other voices exploring the notions of Prosperity, Work, Consumerism and Tzedakah. The result is an incredible learning resource which is already gracing bookshelves in hundreds of homes and libraries. One volunteer for the Occupy movement was so inspired that he purchased an entire box.



Since its launch in 1996, the Limmud Chavruta Project has created 17 books on a variety of themes for chavruta study. Each year the book is an essential part of the Limmud Conference UK programme. The project went international in 2009, and there have since been contributions from teams in Canada, Israel, Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA. More than that, the books have been used by Limmuds around the world, such as New York and across Israel.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2013

The 2013 book promises to live up to its prequels. This year’s project is well underway with a new (top secret) theme and volunteer teams in London, New York, South Africa and the Galil searching for content which will stretch our minds even further.

As well as new volunteers and a new book, 2013 also brings renewed ambition. The Chavruta Project has set itself the goal of engaging as many people as possible in chavruta learning as part of Limmud’s commitment to taking every participant one step further along their Jewish journey. It is often said that Chavruta epitomises all of Limmud’s key values of learning, openness and empowerment – we want to give participants the opportunity to take these values home and live them in their daily lives.

To this end, we hope to see even more Limmuds running chavruta sessions at their events across the world. Production and distribution to this wider international audience is one of our top priorities for the coming years. We are also exploring the possibility of having future books printed in Russian, Spanish and other languages. Finally, we are launching a new initiative in the UK with a Limmud Chavruta Tikkun Leyl event to be held in London this Shavuot.

Through the continued dedication of Limmud volunteers, we are sending the ‘Chavruta vibe’ around the world and back again. We encourage any and all Limmuds to use this valuable resource in their programmes, produced by Limmudniks for Limmudniks, to add a level of intense Jewish learning to the Limmud experience, and we aim to support any Limmud that would like to take this on board.

BE PART OF THE LEARNING!

The Chavruta Project thrives on the dedication of its volunteers. If you want to run Chavruta sessions taking place at your local Limmud, or want to get involved in any other capacity, please be in contact with us via email at chavruta@limmud.org!

For more information about the project, including past books in the series, check out <http://limmud.org/publications/chavruta/>. For regular Chavruta updates and food for thought, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).

With our books, you can learn with friends and family in the comfort of your own home or organise a Chavruta programme in your own community. Each source has discussion questions to trigger conversation and connections to help you navigate. The material is wide-ranging and flexible enough to work in many settings, from the classroom to adult education. There are hundreds of ways this can be done and you will know best about publicity, venue, refreshments, date and time for the programme, so we’ll leave that up to you! For advice or support, contact us via email at chavruta@limmud.org.



By Jeremy Tabick &
Robin Cooke,
Chavruta Project
Co-Chairs

CHAVRUTA STUDY AT HOME

All of us are very busy, and no one knows this better than Limmud volunteers! We come home from our studying or our real job and then we have to send a hundred emails, create spreadsheets and databases, draft proposals and invitations, arrange long Skype meetings etc.

A lot of our society is obsessed with productivity, with using every second wisely, not wasting five minutes when you could be proofreading or emailing or checking over your ideas. If we're thirty seconds late for a train, we miss the train; arrive ten minutes late for a meeting and we delay the meeting. Every second counts.

And yet sometimes we forget that relaxing is also productive, that creating a space for quietness, without deadlines, without trains to catch or meetings to arrange, is using our seconds wisely.

Perhaps before your meetings or on your commuter trains, we at the Chavruta Project encourage you to study this text from the midrashic collection Genesis Rabbah, with some guiding discussion questions.

'... and [God] rested on the seventh day' (Genesis 2:1).
What was created on that day when [God] rested?
Tranquillity, relaxed serenity and quietness.

Genesis Rabbah 10:9

- What role does shabbat play in our pursuit of prosperity and business?
- Why does tranquillity, serenity and quietness have to be created? And what is the significance of these being created by God?

This comes from the 2012 book **Money** which has already been used across the world, at Limmud Conference in the UK and at Limmuds in the US. If your Limmud is interested in using these books and would like support in integrating the Chavruta Project in your programme, do let us know at chavruta@limmud.org.

By **Jeremy Tabick & Robin Cooke**,
Chavruta Project Co-Chairs

ONLINE RESOURCES

LI Resources Directory (LIRD)

We are delighted that we can now offer access to the Limmud International Resources Directory: a Google drive collection with over a dozen folders of reference documents compiled by the Limmud International team.

The directory contains a wide range of documents: from budget templates, to sample presenter invite letters to mission statements, with contributions from a number of Limmud teams around the world. Also included are a variety of 'policy thoughts', written by experienced Limmudniks and covering a range of topics: everything from creating a Shabbat Limmud, to name badges and fundraising ideas.

In order to create a comprehensive resource we have included a large number of documents from a number of different Limmuds across the globe. This means you may see 2 or 3 different examples of a particular document created by different teams. When thinking about your own plans, please remember that the content of each how to tips, policy thought and template are the experience of one group of volunteers or presenter / trainer in a specific time and place. Experiment and see what works best for you, your volunteers and your local Limmud community – feel free to take another path!

Finally, we need your help to make the directory even better! It does not yet have a full range of materials and we hope to expand and develop this resource over the coming years. We would love you to send us documents you have that might be useful for other teams, as well as your feedback on any of the

Resources already included. This is a work in progress which we look forward to developing with everyone in the LI community.

We look forward to hearing from you with your questions, comments and additions!

By **Rebecca Lester**,
Limmud International
Steering Group



Q&A

How do I access the directory? Each Limmud team has a central email address with which the directory is shared. Contact your Limmud Chair to find out more. Limmud Chairs, contact Dani at international@limmud.org to arrange access.

How do I add my Limmud's really useful resources? Email your resources to international@limmud.org.

What folders will I find in the directory so far?

Welcome and User Guide; Budgeting; Feedback Surveys; Governance and Structure; Limmud Values and Principles; Marketing and Public Relations; Programming; Risk Management; Shabbat; Teams; Volunteer Recruitment and Retention; Young and Teen Limmud.

Praying for Money

There are a couple of concepts in Jewish prayer that may help your funder relationships:

REGULARITY AND FREQUENCY

Jews who pray as part of their observance do so regularly and frequently, three times six days a week and four times on Saturday. Our prophets tell us that God does not need our prayers. So, something else is going with that much prayer.

The regularity and frequency of praying allows you to build your relationship with God. The same is true of your funders. The more contact you have with a funder, the more of a relationship you'll be able to develop.

The more of a relationship you develop, the more honest you can be, whether it means being clear about your requests (e.g., I need £20,000 a year for the next three years to fund a YAD program) or that you are struggling with something their insight may help sort out (e.g., volunteer burnout, poor communication).

If you don't have regular and frequent contact with your funder, they won't know what's going on with your Limmud; they may forget to inquire about your needs no matter how passionately they believe in your goals; they may get annoyed about a decision your Limmud made and not have a forum to raise the issue because they don't have a relationship of sufficient trust in you or your Limmud.

Jewish prayer reminds us that everything has limits. Not every prayer lasts three hours. The afternoon (Mincha) and evening (Arbit) services typically take less than fifteen minutes. The learning for funders is to be sensitive to time. Don't contact a funder too much or too frequently; make sure your meetings don't last too long.

STRUCTURE AND STORY

We can learn one way of approaching individuals, foundations and organisations investing in your Limmud by looking at the structure of the Amidah, the quiet standing prayer in which it's just you and God in conversation.

Step 1: Avot, Creating Context

In the opening of the Amidah we remind God and/or ourselves that we are bound in this relationship by genealogy, in the same relationship that God had with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and/or Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Like God, investors have many petitioners. It pays to remind them who you are and how you got there, e.g., "Hi Helen - I don't think we've run into each other since Claire introduced us at the opening of the London JCC."

Step 2: Gevurot, Power

The next section basically says God is powerful; we humans by comparison, not so much.

Acknowledging the political realities of a relationship is important. You both need to know how much power your investor holds. That means being clear about what you are after, whether it's money, advice or relationships. Yes, being clear is risky but it also allows you and your investor to set appropriate boundaries at each stage of the relationship.

Step 3: Bakashot, Requests

The middle section of the Amidah is a series of requests, e.g., for forgiveness, health, return of the disenfranchised, money...

Now that you've established context and the political realities of your relationship with your investor, it's time to make your request. I usually don't start with a request for money. That comes later, after there's a relationship or buy-in - that's a personal style that needs to be weighed against your Limmud's needs.

Individuals, foundations and organisations may elect to invest through information, relationships, equipment and processes - it's not always about money. You can always expand or contract your requests over time.

Step 4: Hodaah, Thanks

Having now made your requests to God, after establishing context and power, we say "thanks," the simplest, most powerful way to acknowledge someone for their time and investment. Obviously, we need to do that with funders as well.

Step 5: Shalom

The Amidah concludes with a prayer for Shalom, one of those great words with multiple meanings, "peace" and "completion" (the root of shalom is shalem, complete).

In the investor context, I usually use this as an opportunity to complete the circle of our conversation by recapping our discussion, who is doing what ("I'll send you our evaluation report" or "Thanks for introducing me to Jane. Do you want me to send you a reminder?").

I conclude with a wish of peace. If it's someone I developed a real relationship with, I make it an intimate wish (e.g., "I know what a stressful time this is for you. I wish you peace and ease - all while increasing your productivity!").

If it's a new relationship, there's no harm in ending with the word, "Shalom!"

I hope this frame for approaching investors gives you some peace of mind and makes the process a little bit less threatening for those of you who are new to it.

Shalom!

By Shep Rosenman,
Limmud International
Steering Group



LIMMUD GROUP EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Limmud Boston

30 November - 2 December 2012 www.limmudboston.org

New England welcomed a third dynamic LimmudBoston conference with nearly 1,000 participants. Affiliated and unaffiliated, young and young-at-heart, they gathered for over 100 sessions, presented by over 130 different speakers, performers and panellists. While most participants come from the Greater Boston area of Eastern Massachusetts, we continue to reach past Eastern Massachusetts into New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut and Rhode Island. New York and New Jersey Limmudniks drop in, too.

Nine Boston-area synagogues hosted visiting Limmud talent for Friday or Saturday services, dinners and programs. A partnership of six synagogues from three different movements brought in presenter / performer Shawn Zevit. Three students from graduate programs

in Jewish education or clergy training received the first ever "LimmudBoston Fellowships." In coming years, we hope to expand this program with more pre-conference meetings and enhanced programming. The Camp Limmud program



doubled since last year, with over 30 children, ages 3-13. Their families report that they all want to return next year! Additionally, there were a dozen Israeli teens visiting MIT Hillel, who participated in the afternoon program.

The lunchtime concert, our main musical event of the day, included one local and two out of town musicians. They also played a short end-of-day closing concert. Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston (our "Federation") sponsored a portion of the registration for nearly 300 religious school educators.

Boston is definitely in 'le mood' for Limmud! It's only February, but we have already received session submissions, advertising orders and requests for exhibitor space at LimmudBoston 2013, to be held on December 8, 2013.

By Steffi Aronson
Karp,
Co-Chair,
Limmud Boston



LimmudLA West Valley

9 December 2012 www.limmudla.org

In Los Angeles, geography serves as both a point of connection and a challenge to creating wider community. LimmudLA has held its previous multi-day conferences in Orange County, 60 minutes outside of L.A. While some relished the opportunity to "get away," others used distance as an excuse to opt out. With a city as vast as L.A., one of our challenges is to plan events in different geographic centers, to enable greater overall community access to areas beyond "the City."

In fulfillment of this commitment and in partnership with synagogues, schools and community organizations, we held

"Our Lives, Our Judaism". This was LimmudLA's first full-day event in the West San Fernando Valley. 250 participants of all ages took part in a day which offered 27 different and diverse sessions, with titles like "Food Justice and Jewish Values". We also offered family sessions, such as Chanukkah Stories from George Washington to Goldilocks".

For the more than 30 children up to 8th grade, we held Camp LimmudLA created in partnership with the Shomrei Torah Early Childhood Center and Habonim Dror: Camp Gilboa, providing programming designed to mirror what their parents were doing.

LimmudLA partnered with New Jewish Community High School's Tefilla Kehilla Institute and expanded our amazing Teen program introduced at our 2009 Conference. This program brings high school students not just as participants but as presenters. Working with LimmudLA volunteer coaches, these students create a session and present it at Conference. This time high school

students partnered with adult presenters to create and present sessions together.

While partnering with a variety of different organizations was a challenge in coordination, the end result was that by bringing LimmudLA to the west San Fernando Valley, we were able to engage a community that we had not yet been successful in reaching. By engaging additional teens as presenters, participants of all ages experienced an incredibly powerful feeling - that Jewish knowledge, creativity and ideas have real staying power, and that the Limmud volunteer model enables teens and participants to share in building the Jewish future.



By Linda Fife & Esther Kustanowitz,
Volunteers, LimmudLA
Photo by Marsha Rothpan

LIMMUD EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Limmud Galil

10-11 December 2012 & 8-9 March 2013 www.limmudgalil.com

Limmud Galil celebrated its 10th annual conference during Hanukka at the Rosh Hanikra Holiday Village with 160 participants, who spent two days in lectures, workshops, discussions, music, art and Hevruta centred on the theme of "Who is a Wealthy Man"? It was a challenging experience for the Limmud volunteers to find creative ways to mark the decade of Limmud Galil along with organizing the conference. An exhibit of photos, booklets, bags, shirts and greetings from other Limmud groups around the world demonstrated the ten years of ongoing activity, along with presentations of Limmud team members throughout the



Conference on ten qualities and values Limmud.

A delegation of eight Galilee residents attended the Limmud UK conference in December, following a series of preparation meetings and volunteering at the Limmud Galil Conference. At Warwick the delegation presented a workshop on "kehila" – community – what comprises a community, circles of communities and how Limmud Galil has developed into a unique community of learning and friendship.

Immediately on their enthusiastic return this group took on the task of organizing the Limmud Galil Shabbat Conference, which took place at the Hermon Field School in the northern tip of Israel March 8-9. As a natural continuation of the group's process of developing their session on "kehila"/community, this became the theme for the Shabbat Conference. The sixty part and participants enjoyed an opening workshop, kabalat Shabbat, lectures and Oneg Limmud/Tisch on

Friday. The warm sunny weather on Shabbat was a welcome option for many to join a guided walk in the beautiful surroundings. Others marked International Women's Day with a session on "Big Women in the Tanach". The Shabbat concluded with a special Havdala with song, exchange of *Brachot* for the coming week and lighting the Limmud Galil Havdala torch.

After ten years of ongoing, year-round activity the study of kehila/community marks a suitable period for Limmud Galil to evaluate its history, where it is today and how to continue its steps in the Jewish journey. And in this process, the Limmud Galil team welcomes the opportunity to participate in the Limmud International workshop, which will be held in Israel in May.

By Mary Azaria,
Volunteer,
Limmud Galil



Limmud Arava

13-14 February 2013 <http://www.arava.co.il/matnas/culture/limud/index.htm>

About 300 participants came to the village Sapir in the Arava for two days of learning that enable delving into the "Jewish Bookshelf", not necessarily in a religious context but through hearing various opinions and outlooks, listening to lectures, taking part in workshops and "learning" in a Chavruta – in a two-day conference.

The conference, whose theme was "Tzedek" (justice), took place for the fifth time. The goal is to enable conversations between people from different sectors from all around Israel, and meeting top presenters for two days in a special atmosphere in a magical desert landscape.

The presenters and lecturers were volunteers, in accordance with Limmud values. They were all

top-notch and lectured in diverse aspects in the fields of Jewish culture, Israeli society and current events. Among them were MK Ruth Calderon while Shuli Rand performed in the evening with his band.

In the spirit of Limmud, which puts an emphasis on a cross-communal outlook that enables the diversity of the "Jewish Bookshelf", the Limmud Galil group wrote a Chavruta – the Jewish term based on thousands of years of learning in a Beit Midrash. These are group meetings in which texts from the world of Jewish values are analysed with support and commentary from modern texts.

Early on Friday morning the participants went on a hike in the Sheizaf reserve, and on Friday



afternoon there was an agricultural tour around Ein Yahav.

The conference takes place once a year in February, with sponsorship from the Central Arava – Australia Partnership through the Jewish Agency and in conjunction with the Central Arava Counsel and Community Centre.

By Yair Lederman,
Volunteer, Limmud Arava,
and Avigail Shapira / Dani Serlin

LIMMUD EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Limmud France

15-17 February 2013 www.limoud.org

The three day national Conference of Limmud France took place in the beautiful setting of Parc Hotel Coudray Montceau, 35 kms south of Paris. This was the 7th national Conference and, as the previous ones, it was a great success.

600 participants joined the Conference and its 160 activities, including sessions in English, and a special program for children and youngsters. Participants came from all over France, as well as from more than 10 different countries (Israel, USA, Mexico, UK, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Luxembourg).

The program included all types of activities (Culture, History, Torah, Leadership, Community, Israel, etc.), with two special themes: Spain (with lectures covering the history of Spanish Jews and also art, music, literature, architecture etc.) and the Couple (with sessions that dealt with the romantic encounter, the communication



inside the couple, the desire, the divorce, the gay marriage etc). We also organized sports activities (walks in the Parc with the KKL, Krav Maga, running, dance), theater plays, and games. Three different Shabbat services took place (orthodox, massorti, and liberal) and Limmud is probably the only place in France where this is possible.

As usual with Limmud France, the thrill was not only in the activities, but also in the wonderful atmosphere that developed all over the 3 days, and which enabled many encounters, unexpected discussions, and even improvised

concerts in the lobby of the hotel. The food was also great, especially for Shabbat diner with a fully packed dining room singing together Kiddush and various songs. Half of the participants were coming for the first time and several of them are already enthusiastic and ready to come back!

Once again, the organization of this big event went on (almost) smoothly, thanks to the amazing team of 60 volunteers. No burn-out: we are already starting to plan the next Conference, that will take place in 2014 from Feb 28th to March 2nd. Save the date !

By Elie Lobel,
Vice President,
Limmud France.
Photos by
WATKINS



Limmud Winnipeg

1-3 March 2013 www.limmudwinnipeg.org

Jewish tradition tells us that once something is done three times it is considered a permanent thing. This is called a "chazakah."

Let's say a group of passionate volunteers decide to launch a new Community event.. If we do it once - beginner's luck. Twice - still beginner's luck.

If we do it three times.. well, then we can really celebrate an achievement, and begin to " plan for permanence".



With returning attendees for the third time and enthusiastic new participants Winnipeg's third Limmud created a buzz in the community with forty sessions from the Women of the Exodus to Social Justice. Shabbat programs with Limmud out of town talent happened in five venues all around town in conjunction with Shabbat Across North America (National Jewish Outreach Program.) Presenters arriving on Thursday were featured on morning television and radio, attracting 30 new participants at the door.

The conference began with havdallah on Saturday night. Highlights included good food, the buzz of schmoozing over coffee and lunch, and the diversity of everything Jewish from art to Talmud to Jewish Yoga.

Next task for the Limmud Team – Planning for permanence!



By Faye Rosenberg-Cohen,
Co-Chair Programming,
Limmud Winnipeg

LIMMUD EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD

Harrow Limmud

3 March 2013 www.limmud.org/harrow

600+ people took over Heathfield School for Girls in Pinner for a day crammed full of Jewish learning experiences. These included history, culture, politics, religion, film, interfaith, arts and crafts, spirituality, and life cycle events. Thanks to the generosity of 100+ presenters who gave up their time to share their knowledge, there was a choice of around 20 different sessions every hour. It was great to see so many home grown and local presenters offering such high quality inspirational insights.

Whilst our brains were being offered a rich menu from which to choose, the inner Limmudnik was looked after by a buffet lunch, with drinks and snacks available on demand all day. The hardworking catering team, supported by participants volunteering on the



day, made sure we had eaten and been satisfied.

It was an amazing day that seemed to flow effortlessly and seamlessly from its start on motzei Shabbat. 20 or so volunteers undertook to change the venue from the school to 'Limmud' by way of reorganised furniture, and helpful notices. Limmud closed when another 20 volunteers undertook to ensure that on Monday morning, no one in the school would be able to tell we had even been there.

Volunteers, volunteers, volunteers: who were generous in their time, professional in the tasks they undertook. Harrow Limmud would be nothing without them.

Wherever you are reading this, I am sure you can identify with aspects of our efforts. So wherefore was Harrow different from other day Limmuds? We are proud to have introduced two ground breaking initiatives. For the first time Harrow Limmud shared surplus foodstuffs with the homeless. An invited representative of a North London Seventh Day Adventist church arrived at the end of our day to

collect sandwiches and other perishables for distribution to St Mungo's homeless charity.

Harrow was the first day Limmud in the UK to embrace disability and include people across the ability ranges as presenters as well as participants. We put the Limmud ethos 'all can learn, all can teach' into practice, as evidenced by the craft session led by Norwood, and the amazing concert performed by the rock band Autistix.

We are evaluating the 2013 experience and laying the foundations for 2015. So, if you are reading this in the area, join the team that delivers the next Harrow Limmud!



By Ruth Soetendorp & Doreen Samuels, Co-chairs, Harrow Limmud

Selected edited extracts of news articles and blogs about Limmud

Full articles can be found at Limmud International's '[In the Media](#)' page and at the links below

HONG KONG IS FINALLY LIMMUD TRENDING

By Erica Lyons, njewishnews.com,
13 March 2013 - <http://tinyurl.com/bo79pzh>

Just hours before the first Limmud Hong Kong the majority of the community was still asking, what is Limmud? Yet, despite this (as well as the fact that only 25 people signed up prior to the event), the inaugural Limmud Hong Kong, sponsored by the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre, drew participation from approximately 85 members of the community representing an incredible cross section.

For some it was the novelty of the event, for others it was the chance to be part of something bigger and connected to the larger Jewish world and for others it was the content offered. And for a few, though less

inclined to admit it, it was the cocktail and dessert party or the more than gentle nudge from one of their organizer friends. Irrespective of the motivations of the participants, it was an incredible start to something big for this community.

The majority of the team of organizers, of which I was honored to have been a part of, attended and were inspired by the Great Wall Limmud held last year in Beijing and were eager to create an even more local version of this event back home in Hong Kong.

Here we learned about Maimonides and infected mushrooms, Talmud and tofu, but what we really learned, was that there is so much to learn from one another. We needn't look further than our own friends and neighbors to source talent, knowledge, unique perspectives and creativity; our own innovative, diverse and engaging program was right here for us.

LIMMUD IN THE MEDIA

FEAST OF EDEN

By **Andrew Silow-Carroll**, njjewishnews.com,
2 January 2013 - <http://tinyurl.com/cevy6sj>

"And what is the purpose of your visit?" the customs agent at Heathrow asked. I had to stop and think. I was in England for [Limmud Conference](#), five days of lectures, workshops, and performances by over 200 rabbis, professors, artists, musicians, and Jewish communal professionals.

By the end of my stay, I pretty much had my answer. Limmud is one part pilgrimage festival, one part Woodstock for adult education junkies, one part celebration of the myriad ways to connect to Jewish life. Founded over 30 years ago and largely volunteer-run, Limmud blossoms over Christmas week at the University of Warwick like a Jewish Brigadoon. Clutching their 200-page program books, over 2,000 people rush to sessions — over 1,000 in all — that begin at 8 a.m. and continue well past midnight. When I wasn't leading sessions — on Jewish humor, American politics, and my other manias — I joined the crowds for sessions on Holocaust denial, Yiddish theater, the Prophets, the golem in Jewish literature, and anti-Semitism in Europe. - And that was Tuesday.

During my week at Limmud, I thought a lot about the Catskills and the other thickly Jewish phenomena that have gone by the wayside. A generation ago, spending time with crowds of like-minded Jews was organic. Most of us lived in Jewish neighborhoods, socialized with other Jews, vacationed at Jewish resorts and bungalow colonies. Admittedly, much of this was imposed by outside forces — restricted country clubs, unfriendly schools and professions. And it came with a price: Some no doubt found the self-segregation stultifying.

Nevertheless, there is something wonderful about gathering and celebrating with crowds of people who share your "language," history, and destiny. Solomon Schechter called it "catholic Israel" (small-c, that is) and Mordecai Kaplan celebrated Judaism as a "civilization." "Collective experience," wrote Kaplan, "yield[s] meaning for the enrichment of the life of the individual Jew and for the spiritual greatness of the Jewish people." Or, as a famous history of the shtetl put it, "Life is with people."

Limmud UK was founded at a moment when these ethnic bonds were fraying. "You gain acceptability and assimilation, but you lose Eden," Stefan Kanfer, who wrote a history of the Catskills, once told an interviewer. "You cannot have them both." And if you couldn't find catholic Israel outside of the synagogue, you'd have to recreate it — in the case of Limmud, around the theme of learning.

In session after session, I heard anxiety about the decline of Jewish peoplehood. Jonathan Boyd, executive director of Britain's Institute for Jewish Policy Research, spoke of the rise and fall of the "golden age of peoplehood" — a period that began with the Six-Day War and ended somewhere around the Lebanon war of 1982. As Israel became more complex, as anti-Semitism waned, and as great Jewish causes like Soviet Jewry were resolved, Jews lost their collective purpose. The challenge has become, he said, "to recreate that sense of Jewish peoplehood."

Levi Lauer, an Israeli educator turned human rights activist, spoke of the Jewish narratives — from ritual to Zionism — that no longer form the foundations for collective Jewish action. Dov Waxman, a political scientist at the City University of New York, imagined a communal conversation on Israel that was open to a "plurality of attitudes." Boyd himself proposed that "the only way to build a sense of collectivity is to build opportunities for genuine dialogue."

Limmud tries to model that kind of dialogue, in sessions that represent the range of Jewish interests, disciplines, and ideologies. You could point out those who weren't there, from the haredi Jews who make up a growing percentage of British Jewry to the rabbis of Britain's main congregational body, the United Synagogue. I preferred to focus on the wide range of people who did attend — Brits, Israelis, and Americans; Limmud International organizers from Europe, South America, and Asia; teens and grandparents; singles and couples; Judaic scholars in yarmulkes and trim gray beards and Jewish musicians in dreadlocks and bright pink highlights.

And here's the good news: Because Limmud has now spread to some 50 countries, Jewish Brigadoons and Edens are popping up all over.

RECORD NUMBERS ATTEND LIMMUD FSU MOSCOW

By **Maryna Gaidak**, ejewishphilanthopy.com,
16 April 2013 - <http://tinyurl.com/bmlqpmg>

Over 1,100 participants gathered in Moscow, last week for the largest Limmud FSU Moscow event to date.

Nowadays formal education is simply not enough and the high speed of modern life leaves us almost no time for gaining knowledge in different areas. This makes Limmud the right place to be at. The gathering of a high level of speakers along with an interesting and challenging public, gives participants an alternative vacation full of networking, family events, interesting lectures, insightful discussions and fun. The only disadvantage I found is that Limmud is never enough. As it became a "must attend" on the calendars of thousands of Jews around the world, so it will become in mine. Next stop: Belarus.

Limmud International news

Mazal tov to Steffi Aronson Karp, founder of LimmudBoston, who will be honoured in June with the Clal Yisrael award from Synagogue Council of Massachusetts. Steffi began the creation of LimmudBoston after attending the first Limmud Atlanta.

Mazal tov to David Century on his marriage to Jessica Sacks. David is a long-time Limmudnik and dedicated Limmud volunteer, having served on the Limmud UK Executive as Treasurer and numerous Limmud Conference UK planning teams. Having made aliya David brings his Limmud experience and enthusiasm to Limmud activities in Israel.



Limmud
INTERNATIONAL

Calendar of upcoming events

APRIL 2013

25-26

Limmud Galil - www.limmudgalil.com

26-28

Limmud Philly - www.limmudphilly.org

MAY 2013

9-10

Limmud Modi'in - www.limmudmodiin.org

9-12

Limmud Germany - www.limmud.de

23-26

Limmud International - Training on Tour 2013 Israel

JUNE 2013

8-10

Limmud-Oz Sydney - www.limmud-oz.com.au

27-30

Limmud International - Training on Tour 2013 North America

30

Limmud Buenos Aires - www.limuda.org

AUGUST 2013

2-4

Limmud Cape Town - www.limmud.org.za

5-6

Limmud Durban - www.limmud.org.za

9-11

Limmud Johannesburg - www.limmud.org.za

16-18

LimmudLA - www.limmudla.org

30 - 2 Sept

Limmud Atlanta+SE - www.limmudse.org

**TO GET THE MOST UPDATED CALENDAR OF LIMMUD EVENTS AROUND THE GLOBE
PLEASE VISIT www.limmudinternational.org**

As the voice of our Limmud International community, we would like to spread the news of significant life events for people in our group. If a Limmud activist in your local community experiences a special life event you'd like to share, please send your news to the Limmud Office by emailing: dani@limmud.org

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Limmud International acknowledges the generous support of individuals and Jewish foundations and organisations, including: Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) Europe, the L.A. Pincus Fund for Jewish Education for the Diaspora, Pears Foundation, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation and the JDC