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From the Chair - Andrew Gilbert



Andrew Gilbert—Limmud International Chair

Ever since I have been involved with Limmud, September has been a strange month for me. The vacation time comes to an end, and my work starts. My work as a Silk Merchant with many exhibitions and so many work commitments. Then there is Tishri with the chagim, which in its way takes over my life... and through this like the blast of the Shofar I am shaken by Limmud. As one of so many volunteers, Limmud is my Jewish contribution and for many years it was the Conference in December which was the centre of the Limmud year and the beginning of September was the start of the crescendo that would not stop until the end of Conference. As we have grown from a small gathering once a year in middle England to many conferences of hundreds and ever growing numbers of conferences in thousands, there is no Limmud quiet time and the sun never sets on Limmud. The Limmud story is remarkable as each conference has been built by volunteers who have their own work lives, their own personal commitments and yet somehow together they build Limmud not for personal gain but as a gift to their community. These volunteers may not be hon-

oured in name, but the work of Limmud is such a great mitzvah. I hope and I pray that you have the energy and purpose to continue with this great mitzvah in the coming new year! Thank you and to all of our ever growing Limmud family and friends all around the world, may it be a happy, peaceful and special new year for you and your families. Shana Tova Umetuka.

Andrew

Limmud International Training Seminar - "A Huge Success"



For the first time ever, 15 delegates from 12 different international Limmud groups, gathered in London for 2 days of intensive training organised by Limmud International.

The group had several workshops facilitated by some of the most experienced Limmudniks, focusing on the history of Limmud, how it changed British Jewry and how to identify patterns of change in their own communities, sparked by their local Limmud initiative.

This was the perfect opportunity to identify common issues we share, and also to gain a deeper understanding of each other's local communities. With no intention of spending time reinventing the wheel, participants shared experiences of success and recognised processes that had not proved so successful for their teams.

The delegates then participated in Limmudfest, where not only they could enjoy the great atmosphere of another Limmud flagship event, but also had the opportunity to observe and even join in with the set up of the event, giving them an insight to take what they've seen and learnt back to their teams.

As Mariëtte Groenenboom from Limmoed Netherlands wrote: **"The Training Seminar proved to be very special: being able to exchange experiences with people from all these different countries and meeting the UK people thanks to whom Limmud became such a huge success... it was just wonderful! Although I knew some of the UK Limmudniks by name, to actually have met them and to have heard some of the struggles they went through will surely help me keeping up the right spirit! "**

Thanks to all the participants for taking part.

A World of Activities - Limmud International

Support and Nurturing Programme Bringing the Limmud World a Bit Closer

The success of Limmud in the UK has inspired many other communities across the Jewish world to import the Limmud model. Activists in many countries have discovered that Limmud is the ideal vehicle to reach all types of Jews and reflect the diversity of their own communities, creating cross-communal and cross-generational experiences, accessible to all.

Limmud is proud of having inspired over 40 different communities around the world, and Limmud International exists as the body to develop and provide training, mentoring and support for every international Limmud group, to help ensure they maximise their potential to impact on their community.

Introducing the Limmud model is not straightforward. International groups and grass roots activists in the process of building Limmud activities require support to apply the concept into their own communities, mainly with the "translation" of the idea into their own context.

Over the past year, a cadre of 45 of the most experienced volunteers from Limmud in the UK and international Limmud groups were trained up and deployed into different international groups to support these Limmud communities. The key elements of support include the transmission of the "know how", the understanding of the Limmud philosophy and the empowerment of local teams of volunteers, who will own, plan and run their Limmud events in their own communities.

Volunteers and professionals that have been deployed, are chosen by the specific requirements and realities of the host Limmud groups and the match of their skills and experience in order to maximise the effect of inspiring and providing the support and nurturing in the best Limmud way.

Deployments have been organised in different shapes and forms. Some groups have organised team weekends, where they could participate in

several workshops and to experience a Shabbat together with their peers in the Limmud spirit.

Some groups, had workshops during the week, over a few evenings, in order to enable them to bring a larger participation to the sessions, accommodating their teams' schedules.

For some other groups, the initial participation at their actual events, enabled the Limmud International volunteers to gain a much better understanding of the nature of the challenges that these groups are facing.

Trying to cater for every different reality, time, language, size of groups, and arranging sometimes complicated flights is not an easy task.

However, from the feedback received from the host groups, Limmud International is extremely proud to conclude that the first step in this huge and ambitious programme proved extremely successful. This success is largely due to the passion, experience and skills of the Limmudniks that have been deployed.

No distance was too far, as volunteers literally crossed the world in order to arrive to each one of the international Limmud groups.

So, from Budapest, Hungary to Colorado, USA; from Warsaw Poland, to Buenos Aires, Argentina; from Philadelphia, USA to Belgrade, Serbia; from Toronto, Canada, to Berlin, Germany; from Los Angeles, USA, to Ashkelon, Israel; from Iasi, Romania, to Atlanta, USA, Limmud International strives to empower these local teams, empowering volunteers to develop their own communities and own learning events

And this is only the beginning. Much more to come...

With thanks to every Limmud International trainer, mentor and supporter, including Clive, Jason, Judy, Kevin, Andrew, Micah, Elliott, Raymond, Emma, Steve, Uri, Karen, Emma, Amy, Shosh, Maureen, Helena, Steve, Oren, David, Jon, Dan, Ruth, Carolyn, Claire, Claire, Mariano, Anna, Alastair and Jeremy



Dear J...
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Thank you so much for creating with the international folk. We

Best,
Debbie Jaffe - Limmud LA

Limmud International
and Nurturing Programme

since January

45 Limmud groups
to 11 different countries
16 International Limmud events
over 70 sessions

Limmud International

Empowerment: we believe in the importance of supporting in



Limmud
INTERNATIONAL

Support and Nurturing Programme

Judy and Kevin,

Thank you one more time for all you did during our weekend. It was such a pleasure to have you in Warsaw and learn so much from you. I'm sure we will remember about all your services and we will work hard so you can be proud of us. We hope to see you very soon,
All the best.

Monika Elliot—Limmud Poland



Dear Judy and Daniel

Thank you so much for your letter and for everything that you gave us during this past weekend - it was valuable information - but not only information, also lots of passion and real situations.

Looking forward to continue our work together and be ready to answer lots of questions that we will put because we want to have a tradition of at least 28 years of big Limmud in Romania :)

All the best,
Dalia and Adi- Limmud Romania



Dear Friends at Limmud International,

I want to thank you for making me the part of this special team.. This was an amazing experience for me and thanks for giving me the opportunity to meet and work with such great people. I was very excited and this was a big experience for me and I can say that this Limmud was more than I expected and hoped for. It was really absolutely fantastic.

The training seminar meant a lot to me because I could learn a lot of things and exchange experiences with other members of the team, presenters, and this will be useful for me when organizing Limmud Keshet EX YU later this year.

We are ready now to start making all the preparations for Limmud EX YU .

Warm regards from Belgrade
Ela Rojnik—Limmud EXYU

Uri

Thank you for your workshop and email! We are working with a lot of new energies and ideas after your suggestions and just simply meeting you :)!

Thank you! I really admire the work you do in England and hope to meet you in Hungary and at this year's Limmud in England maybe

All the best .
Susán Eszter - Limmud Hungary

Such an incredible weekend of learning and connecting we? had a little family there, didn't

Dear Daniel

I am very happy that this meeting in Iasi was very successful and you were able to meet and train the wonderful group of volunteers developing the Limmud model in Romania. For JDC, Limmud is a very important initiative to support and the strategic relationship with Limmud International that enables meetings like this one in Iasi, is among our first priorities

Jorge Diener - Area Director
Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania & Former Yugoslavia - JDC EUROPE

Clive, Jason,

What an amazing weekend . Thank you so much for your time, your interest and wisdom as we all try to create a vibrant Limmud community in Atlanta. I know we spread you thin, but we think we really inspired our volunteers and further spread the potential of Limmud to make everyone a learner and even a teacher.

We hope to see you in the UK !
Eric Robbins - Limmud Atlanta

Additional Support Programme in numbers
January 2008

Volunteers deployed
in different countries
Limmud Groups visited
and workshops run



Dear Clive,

Thank you so much for coming to Philadelphia and making us so much a part of the Limmud Family. I am sure you will hear from us often through cyber space. My head was spinning after you left with new ideas, new ways to look at things and much more knowledge about the Limmud process and principles. I now understand the Limmud approach to adult education and why it is different and important. I also understand that each volunteer is equal and must be empowered; various opinions are critical. We will have much to speak about on Tuesday when we meet. I have grown from your visit. Many thanks

Rita Davis - Limmud Philly

Additional Core principles

Individuals to enable them to maximise their contribution to the community

What they say about us: Limmud in the media



Limmudniks Raise the Roof- By David Lasserson

The Jewish Chronicle - Aug 28th - 2008

Over 600 people went wild under the stars in the Peak District last weekend.

All over Britain this summer, a range of festivals - from Glastonbury to V - has been serving up serious musical entertainment. Limmudfest 08, which took place last weekend in the Peak District, was no exception.

The summer incarnation of the popular Limmud winter conference brought over headline acts from Israel and the US, giving an impressive range of contemporary Jewish music. Making the biggest noise was Tel Aviv's instrumental funk outfit The Apples, who pumped out their furious dance set in a Sunday-night showdown, with 2 DJs sharing the stage with live instruments. Earlier in the day they had led sessions on their favourite record labels and the intricacies of the current music scene in Tel Aviv.

An acoustic approach to oriental Jewish music was provided by Israeli singer Smadar Levi who grew up speaking Arabic with two different inflections: Moroccan from her father and Tunisian from her mother. Now living in New York, she relishes her freedom to play with musicians from different cultures. Her sensuous,

eclectic repertoire of Ladino, Arabic and Hebrew songs beguiled the crowd, which erupted in cheers when she jumped off the stage to dance with them.

Levi's mission statement proclaims: "Give people the opportunity to learn and enjoy this rich, sensual tradition that has the power to make hips shake and souls soar."

Diwon, aka Erez Safar, who, like Levi, had made it to Limmudfest DJ-ing into the small hours, he pro-

duced a Jewish music festival in miniature from his mixing desk, as samples of obscure Tunisian and Yemeni chants fused with contemporary beats. Diwon, together with hip hop phenomenon Y-Love, had so enjoyed being part of the

mixture of learning and performance at Limmud's winter conference, that both returned for Limmudfest. Once again, Y-Love's committed, politicised use of quotation from source texts in Hebrew and Aramaic, combined with rhymes in English addressing contemporary inequality and prejudice, thrilled younger participants: "It's been years since reconstruction and it's still built wrong! That's why I rhyme

A record of more than 600 participants were at Limmudfest. They braved the heavy showers to pitch canvas, greet the day with yogic sun salutations, attend more than 200 study sessions, and dance under the light of the moon. For David Hoffman, responsible for music programming, the widening success of the festival is great news. "As Limmudfest grows, we have the ability to expand the scope of music we provide. This year we had music happening throughout the day."

Music was not the only art form on the agenda.

In keeping with a volunteer-run event with the emphasis on participation, there were plenty of hands-on arts sessions - from physical theatre workshops, in which would-be actors could create five-minute ensemble pieces using a Jewish theme, through to mezuzah-making and drawing for religious Jews.

Head of programming Deborah Brooks, heavily pregnant and resting on a hay bale at midnight, looked on proudly at the dance party in the Sababa Tent. "I wanted there to be something for everyone, at every time of day."



in Aramaic, this is Babylon!"

Y-Love's call to action chimed with Limmudfest's programme of sessions urging participation in political and social concerns, from creating welcome packs for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to lobbying for the return of prisoners from Guantanamo Bay.

Limmudfest 2008 once again suggests that when Jews get together in the great outdoors, they can make a truly joyful noise.

To see the full article: <http://thejc.thejc.com/articles/limmudniks-raise-roof>

5th September 2008 - by Lionel Slier

OUR SAGES implored us to "study and learn" and then to study some more. We were not required to complete the task but nor should we desist from it. The annual Limmud learning "fest" in Johannesburg - and also in Cape Town and this year in Durban - has come and gone.

Almost 700 people attended in Johannesburg and 1200 countrywide and they created an intense and amazing vibe. Overriding it all was an atmosphere of friendship and enjoyment.

There was so much to see and do and listen to. There were talks, music, films, dancing, food and companionship and the most heard complaint was that

there was just too much. There were so many worthwhile presenters that one just could not get to hear. There were 90 talks and the maximum anyone could attend, because of the time factor, was nine. Between sessions people discussed with each other what talk they had just been to.

Limmud showed that there is a tremendous depth of real talent and brainpower in the local Jewish community and above all, a desire to share it and be part of it. The amount of talent on show, peppered with some heavyweights from abroad, was astounding and the interest shown, equally astounding.

Yet one must pause to look at the organisation that went on to make Limmud so exceptional.

Co-chairmen of the organising committee, David Bilchitz and Coreen Horowitz, started putting the pieces in place in September last year.

They gathered together 25 volunteers who worked long and tirelessly to stage this event.

Excerpt from the article from www.sajewishreport.co.za/



Viv Anstey, National Chair Limmud South Africa and David Bilchitz, Johannesburg Co-Chair

Massive Limmud event planned for Russian-speakers in Israel—from Haaretz

9th September 2008 - by Raphael Ahren

A massive two-day Limmud conference for Russian-born Israelis will take place for the first time later this month in Ashkelon, Haaretz has learned. About 1,200 Russian-speakers from all over the country are expected to attend the event, which will take place on September 25 and 26. "We will discuss everything from Jewish identity to Jewish culture to Jewish heritage to the Holocaust," said Chaim Chesler, the founder of Limmud FSU, one of the many daughter programs of the educational organization that operates across the globe. "Really everything. It's like the biggest cholent you've ever seen. It's a Jewish kaleidoscope.

"There will be 150 sessions in 26 hours," Chesler added. "We have eight events in every given hour. Chesler said this month's conference is modelled after two successful Limmud events held in Moscow since 2006. "Many Israelis participated in Russia, so I asked: Why don't we have Limmud in Israel? We need quality, we need pluralism - and everybody is in: secular and Orthodox, young and old, Reform and Conservative. We want to enhance Jewish identity, and we want to enhance young leadership in [the Russian-speaking] community." Limmud was founded 28 years ago in



the U.K. and its model of volunteer-based educational events has since been imported to 43 Jewish communities all over the world. Limmud's flagship event is a five-day conference with 900 sessions that draws more than 2,500 people to a British university campus every year.

The Jews of the former Soviet Union constitute the third-largest global Jewish population, and even more than a decade after the end of Communist rule, many still struggle with their Jewish identity. The effectiveness of Limmud in countering that trend is illustrated by Alex Kreindlin, a 26-year-old filmmaker who took a six-months leave of absence from his day job to become the executive director of this month's conference, overseeing the entire organization in Israel. Born in Moscow, he came to Israel when he was nine and like many others he couldn't care less about his religion - that is, until he participated in a Limmud conference in London.

"I was a secular person, anti-religion and anti-Judaism, and here [at Limmud] I felt this is a project that could speak to someone like me. And it did," Kreindlin told Haaretz yesterday during a training session for the volunteers in Ashkelon. "Israel needs a program like this. All of Judaism was taken over by the Orthodox and the secular people were left with nothing. And this conference is something for them."

While Limmud events also include Orthodox lectures, Kreindlin views them primarily as an attempt to bring the secular population closer to Judaism. "Especially the Russians," he said, noting that most other immigrant groups live some sort of traditional Jewish life before they arrive in Israel. "In Russia, people didn't have Jewish traditions within their families - until I came to Israel I didn't even know I was Jewish." This disconnection from their origins is true for all Russian-speakers who came here, "and to bring them closer is a very good thing," he said. "Because if you come to Israel only to look for a better life financially, it's not the best place. But if you get connected to the essence of it, the essence of why we're here, then it can

To see the full article: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1019256.html>

Rosh Hashanah Thoughts- by Elliott Goldstein, Chair of Limmud

When we think about Rosh Hashanah, we often mistakenly think that the festival marks the start of the creation of the world – when in fact, the creation of the world began seven days before. Rosh Hashanah itself actually marks the anniversary of the creation of the first human.

So why do we mark the creation of the world in the day when humanity was created?

One suggestion is that the world was only created so that people could continue to create the world, in the image of God, and in a relationship with God. Therefore, because humans themselves are instructed to be creators, to transform the world, to continue God's act of creation, then Rosh Hashanah itself celebrates the continuing acts of creating performed by mankind.

But why then is Rosh Hashanah found at beginning on the ten days of repentance leading up to Yom Kippur? Why should the anniversary of creation be the day on which we are judged?

By clearly linking the 'creation' of Rosh Hashanah with the 'judgement' of Yom Kippur we remember the purpose for which we were created. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur together are a reminder of the 'ought', a reminder of our opportunity and responsibility to create a world that ought not accept the world that is. On Yom Kippur we will be judged on whether we have used our creative power, for which the whole world was created, to do good, and to repair the world.

That is the challenge of Rosh Hashanah is therefore to remember the world that *ought*. Do not use the 'is' as an excuse. Harold Schulweis, Rabbi at Congregation Valley Beth Shalom in California writes:

"Think *ought*.

Not what *is* a Jew, but what *ought* a Jew to be. Not what *is* a synagogue, but what *ought* a synagogue to be.

Not what prayer *is*, but what prayer *ought* to be. Not what ritual *is*, but what ritual *ought* to be. Focus from *is* to *ought*, and our mindset is affected. *Is* faces me toward the present; *ought* turns me to the future. *Ought* challenges my creative imagination, opens me to the realm of possibilities, and to responsibilities to realize yesterday's dream.

Ought and *is* are complementary. Without an *is*, the genius of our past and present collective wisdom is forgotten. Without an *ought*, the great visions of tomorrow fade.

Ought demands not only a knowledge of history but of exciting expectation. *Is* is a being, *ought* is a becoming. *Ought* emancipates me from status quo thinking. *Ought* is the freedom of spirit. *Ought* we not *Ought*?"

The challenge of Rosh Hashanah is remember the *ought* – to not just become another person accepting the community as *is*. As Gandhi famously said "you have to be the change you want to see in the world".

Midrashic literature depicts God during the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur sitting upon a throne, while books containing the deeds of all humanity are opened for review, and each person passing in front of Him for evaluation of his or her deeds.

As we all look back the past year, a year of monumental and unparalleled growth and success for Limmud, I hope that all those who have given so much to create the global Limmud community, look at their contribution to the future of the Jewish people with real pride – and may all our deeds be considered favorably, and may we all be inscribed in the book of life. Wishing you all and your families *Shana Tova*. May the New Year be filled with good health, happiness, fulfillment, learning and us each taking one step further along our Jewish journeys.

Elliott

Limmud International unveils new image and logo.

As you will have seen from this issue of our Newsletter, Limmud International is proud to show our new image, designed by Uri Berkowitz, graphic designer and experienced Limmudnik working together with the Limmud International Team.

The new logo will be soon available to every international Limmud group, in order to be used as a symbol of belonging to the Limmud International family.

Guidelines will be sent to every international Chair soon.

for more information, contact Mariano on mariano@limmud.org



From now on, you will be able to follow closely every step of our activities with updated information on our new website

WEBSITE LAUNCHING SOON !!!

Upcoming events

A Massive Weekend for Limmud Across Europe

You can see that the Limmud International family is growing by the quantity of activities during the year. During the weekend of 21-23 November, we are proud to have 4 different Limmud events in 4 different countries in Europe.

Limmud France will have their 3rd conference, as will Limmud Turkey. Limmud EXYU will be having their second event and Limmud Sweden will be having their first event ever.

So, 4 different cities, around 150 volunteers organising for an estimate of 2000 participants in total. The choice is yours, get your passport ready...



Limoud France, in the Parisian Region
Limmud Turkey, in Istanbul
Limmud EXYU, in Subotica, Serbia
Limmud Sweden, in Stockholm



First Gateways Festival in Jerusalem

שערי ירושלים
Gateways

Gateways (in Hebrew, Shaarayich), the learning festival of Jerusalem, inspired by Limmud and affiliated with Limmud International, will take place this year for the first time during the upcoming Sukkoth. In the intermediary days, nearly fifty institutions will teach and host in downtown Jerusalem free learning sessions (lectures, debates, etc.), with added tours, exhibitions, concerts, poetry readings, and other cultural events (over 250 events), stretching into the evening of Hoshannah Rabbah. Spanning the range of religiosity, secular through Orthodox, and spanning all types of education, informal through academic, with sessions in four languages (principally Hebrew and English, some Russian and French), Gateways hopes to re-establish the tradition of massive pilgrimage to Jerusalem on the Sukkoth holiday. The hope is to build greater Jewish unity around that which unites us – our past, our concerns and Jerusalem itself.

Full details on Gateways, including sessions, sponsors, educators, institutions participants, a map of locales, etc., are available at its website <http://www.gateways.co.il>. All are invited to join.

Limmud FSU in Yalta October 27-20, 2008

Join Russian-speaking Jews from across the former Soviet Union, Israel, and around the globe for the **2nd Limmud FSU Annual Conference in Yalta – October 27-30, 2008**. This gathering in the historic Crimea will showcase the best principles of Limmud – cross-denominational, informal, Jewish learning, traditional and modern Jewish culture and arts, Israeli dancing, and warm, interactive sessions with international presenters. Open to everyone, translations will be provided in Russian, English, and Hebrew.

Special highlights and mega-events: Taglit-birthright Israel: **Celebrating Israel at 60**, an historic musical retrospective and **Neshama Carlebach**: premier singer of jazz/pop Jewish soul music, and **Tikkun Olam** (Repairing the world): Examining global crises from a Jewish perspective – dialogues with outstanding Jewish leaders.

Limmud FSU has generous subsidies to help Limmud International volunteers take part in the event., for flight costs only.



Limmud FSU Ashkelon Israel - Sept.25-26, 2008

A new happening! Join Russian-speaking Jews from across the former Soviet Union, Israel, and around the globe for the **Limmud FSU Conference in Ashkelon, Israel - September 25-26, 2008**. This unique gathering in Israel reflects the very best of Limmud – cross-denominational, informal, Jewish learning, traditional and modern Judaic culture and arts, Israeli dancing, and warm, interactive sessions with international presenters. Open to everyone, Most sessions will be offered in Russian or Hebrew, with some English translation provided.

Programme Highlights: **Gesher Theatre** – A special performance, featuring traditional Russian theatre with an innovative approach and the famous Israeli singer – **Arkady Duchin**, award-winning composer and performer and **Tikkun Olam** (Repairing the world): Examining global crises from a Jewish perspective – dialogues with outstanding Jewish leaders.

Come to Israel for a special experience and be part of Limmud FSU in Ashkelon, September 25-26, 2008.



For further information and to register, please visit www.limmudfsu.org

LIMMUD CONFERENCE 2008

Join the largest ever gathering of Limmud International activists and international delegations. Come and join over 2000 participants from all around the world. Participate in the tailor made sessions "Taking Limmud Back Home".

Be part of the "world's most influential Jewish event" on its 29th year. *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*

Places already filling up. Book now!!

www.limmud.org/conference

We have special arrangements for Limmud International activists. Please contact Mariano on mariano@limmud.org for further information.



Limmud International 2008 - Events Calendar October - December

October

11-14 Limmud Bulgaria
www.keset.hu

24-26 Limmud Poland
limmud.pl

November

7-9 Limmud Hungary
www.keset.hu

21-23 Limoud France
www.limoud.fr

21-23 Limmud EXYU
www.limmud-keshet-exyu.org

21-23 Limmud Sweden
www.limmud.se

21-23 Limmud Turkey
www.limmudtr.org

December

23-24 Limmud Galil
www.limmudgalil.com

26 -28 Limmud Pre Conference Shabbat
www.limmud.org/conference

28 -1st Jan Limmud Conference
www.limmud.org/conference

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