

Flurry of events to help shul celebrate 150th

BY DOREEN WACHMANN

SEPTEMBER, the first month of the Heritage Season to mark the 150th anniversary of Princes Road Synagogue, finished with a flurry of events.

On Monday, September 16, medieval Jewish studies scholar Dr Dean Irwin detailed the history of the Benas family of influential bankers, philanthropists and historians of Anglo-Jewry as well as of Liverpool Jewry.

'Benas' donations recorded on board'

who were members of the shul.

Prussian-born Louis Benas (1820-1890) established himself as a banker in Liverpool in 1865.

He was a campaigner for the full political emancipation of British Jews.



SPECIAL VISITOR: Joshua Rozenberg and Robin Makin

His son, Baron Louis Benas (1844-1914), played a leading role in the shul, as well as in the Liverpool Literary and Philosophical Society.

He wrote the Records of the Jews of Liverpool in 1899. His son, Bertram Benjamin Baron Benas (1880-1968), wrote a follow-up to his father's historical work.



REFUGEES DISCUSSION: Shirley Makin, of Princes Road Synagogue, with Rabbi David Mason at his talk on refugees

director of HIAS+JCORE, which provides a Jewish voice on asylum and refugee issues.

He explained the Jewish values behind supporting those seeking asylum and refuge in our country, quoting from Biblical and other Jewish texts.

He said: "With the engaged audience, we moved from the beautiful synagogue sanctuary to the adjoining meeting room to continue a discussion about the modern issues facing refugees today and what can be done to ease their lives and futures."

"It one of my organisation's goals to engage with Jewish communities across Britain, so it was great to come to Liverpool and share our approach, as well as hearing some fascinating and constructive views from those

'Charity is a super theme'

who attended.

"I am sure that HIAS+JCORE will return to Liverpool."

Visitors to the historic synagogue during September included legal commentator Joshua Rozenberg, who was in Liverpool for the Labour Conference. He is the husband of Jewish Telegraph columnist Melanie Phillips.

The Heritage Season continues on Monday (2.15pm) with Dr Kendall, Mr Makin and ketuba expert Naomi Hoyland speaking on marriage and mourning at Princes Road Synagogue.

Next Wednesday (6.30pm) Professor Debra Morris, of Liverpool University, and United Synagogue director of education Rabbi Michael Laitner will speak on the historical, legal and Jewish aspects of charity.

Mr Makin said: "Charity is a super theme between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. We are hoping to attract students to the event."

Heritage Season organiser Robin Makin, who spoke about some of the people whose donations to the building of the synagogue are featured on the boards in the synagogue foyer, said: "Benas' donations are recorded on the board. They were heavily involved with the congregation."

Also at the meeting Dr Lee R Kendall, of Liverpool University, gave an illustrated talk on different aspects of society.

On Sunday, September 22, the synagogue hosted a jazz concert by singer and pianist Jeremy Sassoon on 'Musicians of Jewish Origin'.

On the following day in a migration-themed event, Dr Kendall spoke about the extensive range of migrant communities in Liverpool.

Historian of Victorian Anglo-Jewry, Dr Hannah Ewence, of Chester University, covered the theme of managing disease during the era of Jewish mass migration.

Mr Makin showed some of the work of draughtsman, printer, engraver and lithographer John Raphael Isaac (1809-1870), who was a member of Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation.

This meeting was followed on Tuesday, September 24 by a talk on refugees by Rabbi David Mason, executive