

**KALASHNIKOV KULTUR**

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Lizzie Land

Yes, it's here, and the world of theme parks will never be the same. Why? Because the French have decided that what holidaymakers need is a whole new experience based on the life, loves and battles of a small Corsican. Welcome to Napoleon Land!

There in a field just outside Paris you will be able to celebrate the man who conquered Europe and then lost it again, marvel at the victories, attend the glorious coronation and sign up to join the Old Guard. You will be able to go from Toulon where he beat the Royal Navy one-nil to Austerlitz, where he duffed up the Austrians. By the time you've finished you too will be able to feel what it feels like to be French and understand why they are even more arrogant than the British.

Then there is the downside. How will they deal with Nelson's demolition of the French Fleet at Trafalgar? Probably by giving you a 3D opportunity to be the sniper who shot him. The retreat from Moscow? Who could want more than the chance to throw snowballs at a bunch of retreating unemployed actors as they re-enact the tragedy? I bet they won't mention that Napoleon did a runner and dashed back to the warmth of Josephine, leaving his troops behind to freeze.

And that's all before we get to Waterloo, Wellington or the small house on a small island in the Atlantic where the Brits dumped Napoleon in 1815. Yes, come to Napoleon Land for a rollercoaster ride through French history, see the greatness that was France (Mickey Mouse not included).

In the glorious world of historical theme parks should we be worried? No! Why? Simple really, the French will have to build their own, but us Brits don't have to bother, because we live in one already. We have battlefields, palaces, cathedrals and slums. So what if some of them are falling down, there's very little that can't be improved with a few holograms and a bit of CGI. Yes, welcome to Lizzie Land, an entire country looking over its shoulder at the pomp, circumstance, bloodshed and squalor that made it great.

Ultimate guide to Jewish London

Two authors have compiled the ultimate guide to Jewish London and will introduce it in person at a special event at the Phoenix Cinema this month. Rachel Kolsky, an East Finchley resident since 1995 and a trustee of the Phoenix since 1997, co-authored *Jewish London* with Roslyn Rawson.

The 224-page guide covers where to stay, eat, shop and pray, with detailed maps, practical advice, travel information and more than 200 colour photographs.

Special features include eight self-guided walking tours, restaurant reviews of over 40 eateries for all budgets and tastes, information on 44 synagogues and sections dedicated to the Jewish Museum, Holocaust memorials, Jewish art and artists, films and literature, Jewish cemeteries and day trips out of London.

Rachel said: "Despite a growing interest in Jewish heritage in London, no guide-book existed to ensure visitors and residents have all the information they need in one easy-to-read format. With Roslyn's knowledge of the Jewish community, particularly the synagogues and food, matched with my knowledge of the history of Jewish London, it seemed that we must write the book."



Jewish London co-author Rachel Kolsky

Special event

You can meet the authors at a launch event at the cinema on Sunday 25 March at 2pm. The varied programme will include a virtual tour of Jewish London, the delightful short *The Tenth Man*, which was filmed in the East End, Searle Kochberg's introduction to Jewish London on film and one of the best, but often overlooked, Jewish films from the 1940s, *It Always*

Rains on Sunday. Book via www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/whatson/ or phone the box office on 020 8444 6789.

To purchase a copy of the book contact New Holland Publishers and at the checkout use the Special Discount Code "Jewish London Rachel" for a £3 discount off the price of £10.99 (valid until 31 March 2012), with free postage and packing.

Life in a winter shelter

By Angela Anderson

Many of us know what it is like to feel cold outside in the winter, longing to get back to our home and its warmth. What of those who don't have that comfort, who don't have a home at all and who sleep in shop doorways?

A winter shelter began eight years ago as an initiative by Churches Together in Finchley, using their premises and providing volunteers and funding. Over the years the scheme has expanded to include 16 churches and synagogues, including recent additions New North London Synagogue and Holy Trinity Church in East Finchley, with volunteers from both faith groups working at Trinity Church in North Finchley.

Food, warmth and safety

Shelter is offered by a synagogue or church for one evening a week on a rotational basis to rough sleepers in Barnet from 7pm to 8.30am the following morning, operating from October to March. Guests are referred by Homeless Action in Barnet Day Centre in North Finchley.

Each faith community provides an evening meal, a warm and safe living and sleeping area, and a breakfast in the morning. The bedding, consisting of a self-inflated mattress, sleeping bag and pillow, goes into a private, labelled bag and is transported by volunteers to the next night's venue. Accommodation is provided for a maximum of 15 guests (because of the size of the smallest hall) who move on when they can obtain accommodation either from the council or private rental.

What is striking about the winter shelter scheme is that different faith groups are working together. Members of other religious communities from Finchley are most welcome to join the scheme so that services can expand. For Stephen Hiscock, a volunteer from Holy Trinity Church, working with people from the synagogue on a local, shared project was one of the most enjoyable aspects of the scheme.

What does the Barnet shelter mean to the people that use it? This poem by James Lamb, one of the homeless guests, probably says it all.

The Night Winter Shelter

They walk along the lonely street
Every now and then stop to rest their feet
Hair all matted and fingernails black
And carrying their life upon their back
That shop doorway looks good or that sheltered bench
To get out of the rain before they get drenched
God love them, these people have nowhere to go
Hoping for help but no-one wants to know
Poor rejects of life's rich tapestry
Walk through life without hope, wearily
What is the purpose, where will it end
No home, no job, no family or friend
Some of them beg for hot food and tea
Others will beg for beer or whiskey
A few of them won't 'cos they have too much pride
And suffer in silence by the roadside
They were in a dark tunnel, at the end was a light
It wasn't easy to see 'cos it wasn't that bright
But as they drew nearer the light became clearer
The illumination was a place to stay for the night
Greeted with a smile and a hot cup of tea
Friendly people said, "Come with me"
And led them to a place that they could rest
Just like a bird keeping young warm in a nest
Even though it seemed strange it was plain to see
This was a place filled with harmony
Generous, caring, considerate and kind
A place they could leave their horrid day behind
And when they finally rest their head
A chance of comfort on an unconcrete bed
Given time to reflect on the next coming day
Secure in the knowledge they'll have somewhere to stay
So thank you, Night Shelter, for the service you run
Helping the homeless, all the good you have done
Your pure human kindness is a joy to behold
For taking less fortunates in from the cold.

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