בס״ד

Gateshead Yeshiva
ישיבת בית יוסף

GATESHEAD YESHIVA NEWSLETTER

אלול תשפ״ו

Welcome to our Elul 5786/2026 Newsletter distributed to over 7,000 alumni of the Yeshiva.
We are delighted to share with you a brief overview of the recent year.

Elul Zman

Boruch Hashem we are pleased to report that our Yeshiva has commenced the Elul Zman with an expanded student body necessitating extra capacity within the infrastructure of the Yeshiva.

In order to be מחזק the התמדה in the בית המדרש and רוח דרך ארץ ומדות טובות of התורה, and יראת שמים within the Yeshiva, the הנהלה שליט"א, with ברכה of מרן רהי' שליט"א have arranged that הר"ר שמחה Feld and הר"ר בן ציון Fierstone take on extra responsibilities, and they have been empowered with being אחראי for the practical areas of השגחה/discipline. ב״ה we are pleased to report that this חיזוק is already being felt amongst the בחורים and we wish them continued הצלחה.

Rabbi Chaim Grunwald has now accepted a full-time position as משגיח in Yeshiva Ketana. We are very grateful for all his years at the Yeshiva and wish him much הצלחה.

During the course of Pesach Bein Hazmanim the hygiene and sanitary facilities which are located in close proximity to the Beis Hamedrash were completely revamped to accommodate the much larger student body than what they were originally designed for.

YEMEI LIMMUD
Sunday
12th/13th December
(3rd Teves)

Yemei Limmud 5 in a revised Winter format, spanning a מוצאי שבת and Sunday, was a great success. All the Shiurim and highlights associated with the Yemei Limmud were successfully carried out. During the Yemei Limmud at Lunch on the Sunday, the Rosh HaYeshiva launched the 'One Yeshiva Global Impact Campaign' giving it his full endorsement whilst sharing his two restrictions on internet use and genuine goodwill and no peer pressure.

Yemei Limmud 6 is scheduled for מוצאי שבת פרשת מקץ / Sunday 12th/ 13 December.

The Alumni Committee are exploring the possibility of arranging a Shabbaton in Gateshead once again for all those who are eager to relive the 'Yeshiva Experience'.

Campaign Follow Up

Many thanks to all those who pledged on the campaign*, please find the details which will enable you to fulfil your commitment in honour of the Yeshiva.

Account Name: Trustees of Gateshead Talmudical College

Account Number: 904 06 864 Account Sort Code: 20-33-51

IBAN Code: GB52 BUKB 2033 5190 4068 64 BIC Code: BUKB GB22

Achisomoch: https://clients.achisomoch.org/make-a-donation.php?charityId=632&c=Yeshiva_General_Upkeep

Mr. Avi Merel was very instrumental in setting up and running the Campaign and we are very grateful to him and we now wish him much הצלחה in his future endeavours.

*More about the Campaign further on in the Newsletter.

Electrical

Further to many statutory inspections and after much investigation, the Hanholo took the decision for all electrical control equipment to be upgraded to current-day regulations. Many of the items date back to the late 1960s.

Vox Electrical carried out this project during the Summer Bein Hazmanim. Furthermore, all the dormitory corridors had their lighting upgraded with the addition of emergency lighting. These improvements were sponsored by The Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association to whom the Yeshiva is ever grateful.

Message from מרן ראש הישיבה שליט"א

ובתורה אתה עמל אשריך וטוב לך (אבות פרק ו')

חז"ל taught us (עי' ראש השנה דף ט"ו) אמרו לפני מלכיות כדי שתמליכוני עליכם, say the פסוקים of מלכיות in order that you should accept My kingship upon you.

ר' אליהו זצ"ל pointed out that חז"ל do not say that saying the פסוקים of מלכיות is in itself a fulfilment of קבלת מלכות שמים, but that the saying of the פסוקים in the תורה which express מלכות שמים will have the effect that you will humble yourself before הקב"ה and be stirred to be ממליך on yourself the מלכות שמים, so powerful are the words of תורה.

[כתוב במדרש רבה פרשת נשא (י"ד י"ב) על הפסוק ולהג הרבה יגיעת בשר, "אם יגעת הרבה בדבריהם (דברי החכמים - ע"ש לעיל) הקב"ה מסיר יצר הרע ממך".]

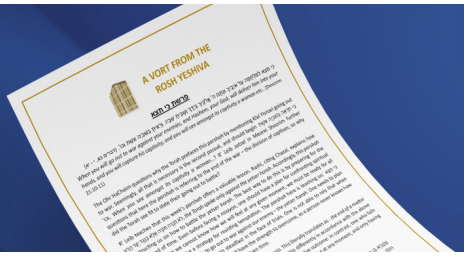
ר' שלמה וולבא זצ"ל in his biography of ר' ירוחם זצ"ל writes that in his ישיבת מיר of משגיח זצ"ל the last אלול, before his פטירה, ר' ירוחם זצ"ל said, "to direct one's thoughts in thinking deeply into the words of the torah and being מחדש חידושי תורה is the true manifestation of קבלת עול מלכות שמים."

[עיין ספורנו דברים ל"ג ה' שכתב על הפסוק ויהי בישרון מלך "ואז מי שהיה מלך בישורון, והוא הקל יתברך שהיה מלך בין המעיינים ותופסי התורה". (והיינו שפירש ישורון מלשון "אשורנו ולא קרוב" (במדבר כ"ד י"ז).כמש"כ הספורנו על הפסוק (האזינו ל"ב:ט"ו וישמן ישורון ויבעט) "בהתאסף ראשי עם, במתן תורה וכו' שבטי ישרא', היה מלך על כל "שבטי ישראל יחדו וכו'

The ר"ש in his commentary on (פרק ד' משנה) משניות פרה aquotes from the תוספתא "שהיה ר' יהושע אומר, הלומד ולא עמל כזורע ולא קוצר", he who learns without putting effort into his learning is comparable to one who plants seeds but does not reap the produce.

Standing before the ימי הדין a קבלה to be מחזק in עמלה בתורה would be very beneficial.

לשנה טובה תכתבו ותחתמו לאלתר לחיים טובים



Register to receive the
Weekly Dvar Torah
by the Rosh HaYeshiva שליט"א
in English
please register your interest by
emailing **parshasheet@gyalumni.org**

Mazel Tov

- Rosh HaYeshiva Horav Avrohom Gurwicz שליט"א for חתונה of a grandchild in Manchester.
- Horav Chaim Ozer Gurwicz שליט"א for 2 חתונות of grandchildren in ארץ ישראל.
- Horav Ezriel Rosenbaum שליט"א for his grandson's חתונה in London, son of Mr. and Mrs. Feiger of Gateshead.
- Horav Yosef Aharon Oppenheimer שליט"א for 2 חתונות of grandchildren in Lakewood and 1 in ארץ ישראל.
- Horav Yaakov Yehuda Rosenbaum for his son's חתונה and to the Zaida, Horav Ezriel Rosenbaum שליט"א.
- Horav Simcha Feld on the birth of a grandson born to Rabbi and Mrs. Dovid Aryeh Steinberg
- Horav Chanoch Sulzbacher for his son's בר מצוה
- Horav Boruch Moshe Cymerman for his son's בר מצוה
- Mr. Totty Lebrecht on the birth of twin grandchildren born to his son Yossi
- Mr. Yehuda Schleider on the engagement of his son

the Call was Global — the Impact was Real

One YESHIVA GLOBAL Impact — Gateshead Yeshiva ישיבת בית יוסף

By Yoni Klajn

In the wake of Gateshead Yeshiva's first crowdfunding campaign, veteran members of the alumni committee – Shaul Bodner, Aryeh Melinek and Zev Dunner (Lakewood) – reflect on the campaign's remarkable success and give readers the backstory.

A Campaign on the Rosh HaYeshiva's Terms

In February 2026, Gateshead Yeshiva held its first ever crowdfunding campaign in its 97-year history. With an annual turnover of £4m and a steadily rising deficit, the Hanhola and alumni resolved to run a campaign to put the Yeshiva on its feet for the coming few years.

Shaul Bodner explains the background: "For many years, the Rosh HaYeshiva shlit"a had objected to the idea of conducting an online fundraising campaign. When the possibility was eventually raised in earnest, both myself and Aryeh had serious reservations about whether a campaign on the proposed scale could succeed under the conditions he required."

Aryeh, who had considerable experience of fundraising campaigns, felt it would be extremely difficult to raise such a large sum without displaying donors' names and contributions in the usual way.

"I was very hesitant," he recalled. "I really felt there was no way we would be able to do it without having names on there and showing the amounts. Especially when people wanted to give larger amounts in honour of their RY, Maggid shiur or former mashgiach, I thought they would want their names displayed."

Shaul and Aryeh headed to Gateshead one Sunday to consult with the Rosh HaYeshiva. The seasoned businessmen entered the room hoping to negotiate some form of compromise. The Rosh HaYeshiva, however, made his position unequivocally clear. Not long after, at the December/Kislev 2025 Alumni Yom Limmud preceding the campaign, the Rosh HaYeshiva conveyed his thoughts to attendees at lunch with characteristic clarity and passion.

His reservations about traditional campaigns were twofold. Firstly, concerning the concept we find in the Torah of nedivus lev when people donated to the Mishkan. People should donate willingly, said the Rosh HaYeshiva, rather than under pressure, feeling compelled to match a large contribution simply because another alumnus had given that amount. A donation made under social pressure – and often beyond their financial capability – was not the type of genuine nedivus lev that he wanted the campaign to encourage.

The second concerned technology. Although he acknowledged that many people used the internet, he did not want the campaign to oblige or encourage anyone to do so.

Therefore, concluded the Rosh HaYeshiva, the amount donated will not be made visible to the public, and a complete telephone-based alternative would be provided.

The eventual arrangement allowed donors to display either their names without the amounts or the amounts without their names. Nobody would be able to see that a named individual had given a particular sum.

"The Rosh HaYeshiva said that this was how it was going to be done," Aryeh said, thinking back to the meeting that Sunday afternoon. "It was non-negotiable. Shaul and I came out of that room with complete respect for his decision. Once he had given us his brachah and said, 'This is the way it is,' we stopped negotiating. We were 100% committed, and we went full force from that point. The rest is history."

Mobilising a Worldwide Network

With the principles established, a goal of £4m set and a date in the calendar, the campaign began to develop teams across the world. Initial discussions took place around the beginning of December following the Yom Limmud, and the campaign itself was held around Purim. The intervening months were filled with intensive planning, meetings and international travel.

Yitzi Bude, CEO of Charity Extra, invested his heart and soul in the project. As both a talmid of the Yeshiva and the son of a talmid, he brought a deep personal commitment to the campaign alongside his professional expertise.

The next step was to galvanise alumni from across the globe to come on board.

"The Rosh HaYeshiva did not merely approve the campaign and leave others to implement it," says Shaul Bodner. "He invested himself personally in its success. He participated in late-night Zoom meetings involving several time zones, travelled to Manchester and London, and connected with alumni and campaign organisers in America. He also recorded personal messages in both Yiddish and English, which were screened at each event. The Rosh HaYeshiva really put himself out to show how much he cared about it and to ensure that it received the maximum impetus."

"There was full support across the Hanhalah and across the Yeshiva," says Aryeh. "They pushed it wherever they could."

Campaign meetings and events were held in locations including Eretz Yisrael, Zurich, Manchester, London and the United States. In the run-up to the campaign, R' Mordechai Yosef Karnowsky travelled to Eretz Yisrael, America and Zurich. R' Yosef Aharon Oppenheimer joined the events in Manhattan and Lakewood, while Rabbi Avrohom Arran spent Shabbos in Monsey. R' Chanoch Sulzbacher joined the effort in New York, and R' Eli Gurwicz attended the events in Eretz Yisrael and Zurich. Longtime Yeshiva mover and shaker Totty Lebrecht also hit the road, travelling to the USA and Eretz Yisrael and visiting three or four different venues over the course of many intensive days.

the Call was Global — the Impact was Real

One YESHIVA GLOBAL Impact — Gateshead Yeshiva ישיבת בית יוסף

Ten days before the campaign, the committee sought to inject added energy to galvanise American donors. A suggestion was put forward to hold three melaveh malkahs in a single weekend—in Monsey, Boro Park and Lakewood. The problem was it was already Tuesday.

By Wednesday, arrangements for Monsey and Boro Park were already in place, and the team decided to proceed with Lakewood as well.

"The problem was publicity, getting the word out to talmidim," Zev explains. "With only a few days remaining, it was too late to rely on conventional print advertising."

It was decided to send a Shabbos gift to everyone on the mailing list in the three areas and, after some to-ing and fro-ing, Zev's choice of a kokosh cake prevailed. The challenge was to bake and deliver more than 800 kokosh cakes before Shabbos. Somehow, by Friday morning, over 800 had been delivered to homes in Monsey, Boro Park, Lakewood and several surrounding areas, each containing an invitation to one of the events.

On Motzaei Shabbos, approximately 500 people attended – a very respectable outcome and precisely the boost the campaign needed.

A successful campaign

The campaign ultimately attracted more than 14,500 individual donors across its 15 communities and 1139 teams, raising well in excess of the original £4m goal. For the organisers, however, its true significance lay not simply in the sum raised but in the extraordinary breadth of engagement it produced.

Shaul explains: "The campaign reconnected the Yeshiva with talmidim who had not been in contact for many years. Previous appeals and alumni initiatives had achieved only limited results, but this campaign gave former talmidim throughout the world a simple and immediate opportunity to give something back."

The sheer number of donors subsequently attracted the interest of Baltimore's Yeshivas Ner Yisrael, another longstanding institution with a deeply committed alumni body. Its representatives met Zev Dunner and members of the back-office team to analyse the campaign and understand whether aspects of its success could be replicated.

"They were struck by the number of individual donors," Zev explained. "That shows the depth of your success. This wasn't about the individual person donating a million dollars, it was about ten thousand people who are prepared to be part of your network. That is gold dust."

The response also demonstrated the remarkable breadth of Gateshead Yeshiva's influence. At each pre-campaign gathering, the the entire spectrum of contemporary Orthodox Jewry was represented – a true cross-section of Gateshead Yeshiva's alumni.

"Everything was represented," says Zev. "Chassidish, Litvish, Sephardic, and everything in between. Gateshead Yeshiva has provided nearly a hundred years of service to all of them, and everyone genuinely feels like a talmid."

The impressive span of the Yeshiva's alumni was evident too. At the Lakewood gathering, a Satmar chassid approached Zev, keen to explain why he attended that night. Pointing to the extraordinary range of people in the room, he observed that the crowd included men in their eighties, seventies, sixties, fifties and forties.

"For him, that was a momentous reflection of the yeshiva's stature," Zev explains. "You are a Gateshead talmid, and even eighty years later, you are still a Gateshead talmid."

"People have many commitments," Shaul acknowledges. "They have families and other mosdos demanding their attention. But the pride and identity of being a Gateshead talmid—we saw how strong that is, through and through."

Maintaining the Momentum

Nearly a century of history has produced generations of talmidim scattered throughout the world, and despite the campaign's extraordinary reach, the organisers are conscious that the campaign did not reconnect with everybody.

"Although we made unbelievable inroads into reconnecting with talmidim, there were certain areas and certain countries that we didn't manage to reach properly," Aryeh Melinek says. "There is still a great deal more to do. We want to hold more events in those countries and, generally, to keep the momentum going."

Looking ahead, the Yeshiva's centenary in 2029 is on the horizon, with plans being formulated to mark that extraordinary occasion in the most fitting way.

Beyond the headline figures and impressive numbers, it was a minor incident that took place the day after the American events that captured something fundamental about the yeshiva and defined how its talmidim perceive it.

"The campaign team was preparing newspaper advertising and searching for an appropriate quote from the Rosh HaYeshiva," recalls Zev. "One of the professionals working with us casually suggested that we simply invent a suitable line. 'It's copy for a paper,' he said. 'Just make it up.'

"The Gateshead alumni in the room looked at him and then at each other," Zev recalled. "Either it was something that the Rosh HaYeshiva had genuinely said, or it wasn't going in."

After a long pause, the adviser apologised. "I get it," he said. "That's the sort of place it is."

Alumni Illuminations

By Yoni Klajn

Gedalia Guttentag is a second-generation talmid of Gateshead Yeshiva, where he learned from 2003-2005. His father, Rabbi Jonathan Guttentag, comes from the Newcastle-Sunderland branch of the Guttentag family, whose roots in northeast England go back more than a century. He lives with his family in Ramat Beit Shemesh and is an editor at Mishpacha magazine and the author of the recently published biography of Rav Simcha Kook (ArtScroll)

Take us inside the Gateshead yeshiva you remember.

The Gateshead Yeshiva that I and my friends joined over 20 years ago were perhaps the 'intermediate generation'. The two Reb Leibs were no longer there and Reb Mattisyahu Salomon had left for Lakewood a few years prior. But under the leadership of a generation led by Reb Avrohom Gurwicz and fellow Hanhola members – direct talmidim of the earlier generation – the Yeshiva was booming. The atmosphere of what had gone before — and the greatness that had made Gateshead pre-eminent — still hung very much over the place.

You could feel that sense of continuity physically. It was the same building, the same shiur rooms, and the same oitzar (where, according to the apocryphal story, Reb Avrohom had once been locked out by a bochur playing a trick). Yes, the new Leo Noé wing was inaugurated during my time in Gateshead, but essentially it was the same place. You felt that sense of continuity.

And it wasn't only the Yeshiva. The town itself – then numbering only a few hundred families – still had that quality. Hearing a halachah shiur from Rav Falk made a major impact on me, as did seeing the Gateshead Rav, Rav Betzalel Rakow, the very picture of that old-time town rav, something that you had to come all the way to northeast England to see.

The remarkable thing was that Gateshead Yeshiva 20 years ago was a self-contained Torah town. During a long winter zman, you could get swallowed up there for weeks at a time. You simply didn't need to leave. You went from your room to the Beis Hamedrash, down to the dining room; even the laundry was dispatched from inside.

A breath of fresh air might mean crossing into the back lane, taking a quick walk down to Saltwell Park, or perhaps going to buy something in the modest shops on Coatsworth Road. Otherwise, your whole world was there.

I remember during one particularly successful winter zman when I finally emerged on January 2, heading to the bank on Coatsworth Road to withdraw cash. This was when you still had to sign the stub of a check to draw cash. Totally oblivious to the passage of time, I looked up at the bemused cashier and asked, "What date is it today?"

2. How did Gateshead Yeshiva shape you and your life's journey and contribute to the person you have become today?

Gateshead Yeshiva had a transformational effect on me. I entered as a post A-level schoolboy, and I left as someone whose world had been reoriented, having encountered full-

Alumni Illuminations

time Torah learning from world-class talmidei chachamim. Years later, it is like a giant boost of fuel that still charges your journey onward.

But even besides that macro impact, smaller things stay stamped on you as a Gateshead talmid. Orchos Chayim LeHaRosh, said by the Mashgiach after shacharis in Elul, still echoes in our ears. And, obviously, the beautiful Gateshead nusach of the Yamim Noraim, handed down through the generations, is something that doesn't fade.

3. From your perspective, how does the Torah of Gateshead Yeshiva impact the Torah community around the world?

Gateshead Yeshiva has an unusually diverse population. For example, the large proportion of chassidishe bochurim. It was the first place where I would have encountered, for example, a roommate from Boro Park. That simply wouldn't have happened in any other conceivable constellation that I might have come across.

There were so many different types: you had bochurim from France, from Eretz Yisrael, even from Ponevezh. There were former high-school boys mixing with boys who had gone through Yeshiva ketanah and then there was a Bobover rebbishe einikel from Boro Park.

That sheer range produces a cross-mixing of different ideas and introduces you to backgrounds that you would never otherwise have encountered. It really enriches a person's horizons in terms of Torah learning and different types of ideas.

And all of those people go back home changed by Gateshead. You can encounter Gateshead alumni in every walk of life, all around the world.

4. What would you tell a younger version of yourself entering Gateshead Yeshiva today?

A few months ago, I attended a Gateshead Yeshiva fundraising event in Yerushalayim in the run-up to the campaign, and afterward I wrote about something that had moved me deeply. Hundreds of former talmidim were gathered there, some of whom had left the Yeshiva years or even decades earlier.

At one point, the audience stood watching a video about the Yeshiva. There were Roshei Yeshiva speaking, historical footage, and then the camera panned around the dining room. As it focused on the dining room toaster, a cheer went up from the crowd: people instantly recognized that relic of yeshiva life. It was a wonderful reminder of how deeply even the small, mundane details of Yeshiva become part of you.

But I noticed something else that evening. Ordinarily, as we grow older, the authority figures of our youth tend to diminish somewhat in stature. We ourselves mature, become more experienced and confident, and those once-imposing figures can somehow seem smaller.

With Torah figures, I realized, the opposite can happen. Walking away after encountering the Roshei Yeshiva again, many years after I had been a talmid there, I felt more strongly than ever how fortunate we had been as young men to encounter figures of such stature. Time had not diminished them. If anything, growing older had given me a greater appreciation of just how much we had been privileged to receive.

Almost a century ago my great-grandfather and namesake Gedaliah Dovid Guttentag was an early supporter of the yeshiva. As it approaches the next century, this Torah landmark should continue shaping new generations of talmidim.