

■ ROBIN MAKIN PLANS SERIES OF EVENTS TO MARK PRINCES ROAD ANNIVERSARY

Chief Rabbi will join in shul's 150th celebrations

BY DOREEN WACHMANN

LIVERPOOL Old Hebrew Congregation will mark its 150th anniversary at its Princes Road premises in September.

LOHC member Robin Makin has planned an impressive programme of around 40 events to mark the anniversary.

The events take place over a six-month period from September 8 till the end of February.

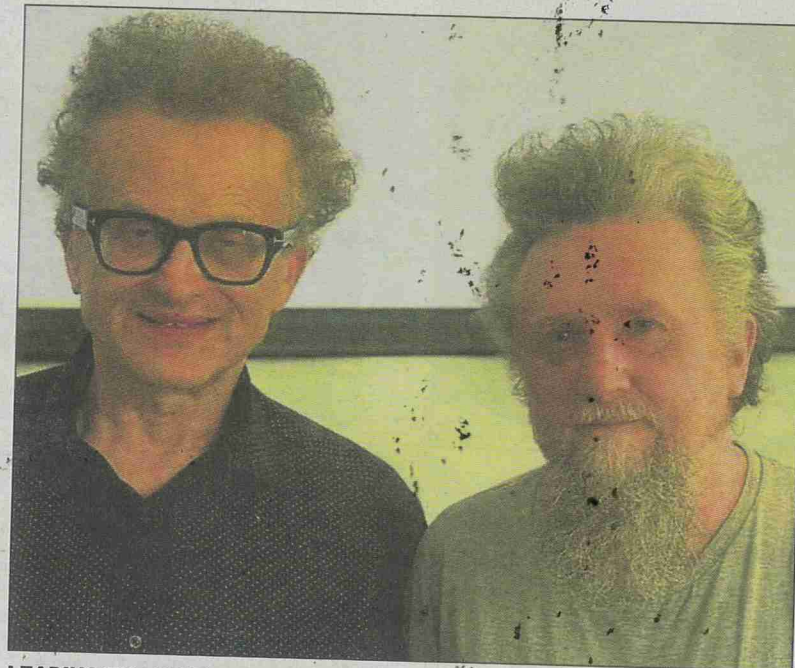
The Princes Road building was consecrated by Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler on September 3, 1874.

Appropriately, present Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis will be the keynote speaker at this year's celebrations on September 8 in the concert room of the grand St George's Hall, where in February, 1874, a Hebrew Ladies Bazaar raised the then magnificent sum of £3,000 for the new building.

The national anthem at the event was played by the Grenadier Guards.

St George's Hall was also where, on September 3, 1874, a grand banquet, with a massive 10-course menu, was held to celebrate the consecration of the synagogue.

Mr Makin, a solicitor, said: "We want to recapture a bit of the atmosphere of 150 years ago. The concert room now only holds 90 people, so we are holding two sittings before and after the main event which includes speeches, a



LEADING THE CELEBRATIONS: Robin Makin, left, with University of Liverpool's Department of Continuing Education lecturer Dr Lee Kendall, who is presenting a series of events for the anniversary

ceremonial civic procession, and an organ and cello recital."

Lunch and supper at St George's Hall will be provided by Manchester's Ushy Kosher Caterers.

Introducing the speakers — the Chief Rabbi, Lord Mayor of Liverpool Councillor Richard Kemp, Mayor of Liverpool City Region Steve Rotheram, former Liver-

pool Labour MP Dame Louise Ellman, Dr Lee Kendall, of Liverpool University, Mr Makin and LOHC chairman Alison Cohen — will be television presenter Anne Robinson, whose connection with the Makin family dates back to when Mr Makin was six years old.

Mr Makin, whose father was well-known solicitor Rex Makin, told me: "One of my earliest

memories was when I was six.

"My father was not hands on in doing lots of things with me, but he promised to do something with me on August Bank Holiday, 1967.

"But it was the day that Brian Epstein died.

"My father, who was The Beatles' solicitor, had to go to Epstein's home in London to sort out what would happen.

"When he came out of Epstein's house, all the hack journalists had gone to pub, leaving there just rookie journalist Anne Robinson, who gave him a lift to Euston Station. My father gave her an exclusive scoop, which forged her career."

As a result of the scoop, Crosby-born journalist and presenter Anne gained a permanent post at the *Daily Mail*, where she had previously been just been a trainee.

Mr Makin said: "She has always been friendly with our family, since that time."

Anne has also done the voice-over for a promotional video of the celebrations.

She told the *Jewish Telegraph*: "I am thrilled this truly inspiring season of events is now being launched. It is my very great privilege to be giving a hand in promoting the fabulous programme."

Dame Louise, who has had a family connection with the shul since the early 20th century, said: "I am delighted that the wonderful heritage celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of Princes

Road Synagogue will be launched with a grand civic event.

"This will be a magnificent start to an exciting programme which will take place over a six-month period."

The Chief Rabbi said: "I would like to congratulate everyone associated with Princes Road Synagogue on your 150th anniversary and I am looking forward to participating in the celebrations. Mazeltov!"

Metro Mayor Steve Rotheram added: "I'm delighted that this year's heritage celebrations will be launched at St George's Hall in September, commemorating Princes Road Synagogue's 150th anniversary."

But, Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation's history goes much further back than 150 years. Liverpool's first synagogue was opened in Cumberland Street, which is now the site of the Metquarter shopping centre, in around 1750.

In 2008, a plaque was unveiled to commemorate the early synagogue on the Whitechapel side of the shopping centre.

But, Mr Makin said: "The plaque got taken down when they rejigged the Metquarter. After a couple of years of effort they are going to restore the plaque."

Following the speeches on September 8, the Chief Rabbi will unveil a plaque at the Metquarter.

■ For a full list of Heritage Season events from September to the end of February visit princesroad.org/heritage