

## A visit to Shevet Achim, Jaffa

Having visited Shevet Achim many times at its former home in Jerusalem, it was with great anticipation and curiosity that my friend, Jan, and I travelled to Israel in October this year to stay - and volunteer - at Shevet Achim's new premises in Jaffa. The contrast with Shevet Achim's former building could not have been more pronounced, both visually and practically, but undoubtedly the common denominator was the love and care that pour out from the Shevet community for the children and their mothers or fathers in its care.

Our first sight of the new premises immediately revealed the modern and practical layout of the building, which could have quite easily been purpose-built for Shevet Achim and its needs, i.e. spacious communal area and large veranda tastefully screened by luscious plants, practical and well-designed kitchen area, large office area and desk space, well-proportioned bedrooms and modern well-appointed bathrooms.



*Volunteers enjoying lunch on the veranda of the Shevet Achim building in Jaffa.*

The building divides neatly into two blocks, with the children and their parents having bright and spacious accommodation, almost a mirror image of what the Shevet staff and volunteer accommodation comprises. This arrangement gives each community its own 'space', albeit that there are regular sorties by the volunteers and staff into the families' accommodation next door to check on medication and progress pre- and post-surgery, as well as visits to the families to have lunch together, chat, and also to entertain the children, letting the parents have time to themselves.



*The nearby beach provides respite for children and their parents during their stay.*

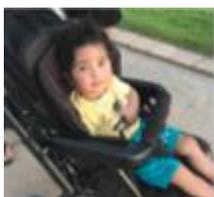
One other great advantage of Shevet Achim's new home is its proximity to the bright blue sea of the Mediterranean and the golden sands of the coastline near Jaffa. The children are often taken out for a stroll to the beach and this provides families with some precious times by the sea, and gives the mothers, or fathers, a welcome break and diversion during the sometimes long weeks of their stay.

## A visit to Shevet Achim, Jaffa .... contd.

Jan and I enjoyed our stay, particularly when it involved conversations and lunches with the mothers and children in residence during our visit (there being no fathers there at the time). None of the little patients were in hospital during our stay, so we were able to chat with the mothers and get to know their children, joining in with the Shevet team to support their precious charges.

The children who were in residence and awaiting surgery or further treatment at the time of our visit in October included:

**Noor**, who has the most cheeky smile, was accompanied by her very loving grandmother and has now had her surgery and was able to make the trip back home to her family fairly soon afterwards.



**Gabi**, who has a very happy nature has now had his procedure and for a while afterwards still had liquid in his chest, which stubbornly did not respond to treatment to reduce it. Gabi has now been able to go back home.

**Varin**, who had had her surgery before we arrived, and was very slowly responding whilst we were there, is now doing much better. It has taken quite a time, and her mother has been patiently and faithfully at her side.

**Mir**, who has had his surgery since our visit, has had much prayer, as his procedure was complex, and it took a while for him to respond. He loves to sleep with his mother's scarf near him.



Little **Ana** had her surgery and has now gone back home, but will be coming back to Israel next year for cleft palate repair.

Please keep these dear and precious little ones in your prayers ... and their families. Each surgery is so intricate, and yet they bravely continue to smile, lighting up the lives of those around them.

One of the highlights of our stay was joining the Shevet Achim community for worship on the beach, with the backdrop of a very blue sea and an equally blue sky. At 8 a.m. in the morning, we had the beach more or less to ourselves, and found the peace and quiet of the location naturally led us into a time of praise and worship.



## **A visit to Shevet Achim, Jaffa .... contd.**

It was good to see old friends , and Jan and I enjoyed meeting up once again with Jonathan Miles, the founder of Shevet Achim, and his wife, Michelle.

Commitment and love undergird the work of Shevet Achim, and this was very much evident in the community we met in Jaffa, drawn from the US, Germany, Australia, Denmark, Holland and the UK. How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1).

Our thanks to this wonderful community .... a very blessed 2019 to your all!

Sally & Jan



*Two Shevet Achim volunteers – one from the US and the other from the UK – looking after little Ana during her stay in Israel.*

## **Thank you, our faithful UK Supporters!!!**

The Trustees of Shevet Achim UK are very pleased to report that the charity has had a good year financially and has received some large amounts of donations from far and wide. It is truly amazing how God prompts people to give generously, as there have been very few opportunities in the past twelve months to visit Churches and other organisations to speak about the work of Shevet Achim. It is the hope of the Trustees that there will be such opportunities in 2019.

As we move into another year, the Trustees would like to thank each UK supporter and those Churches who sacrificially gave their gifts this past year to enable the work and ministry of Shevet Achim in Israel .... each donation has blessed a child with life!

May The Lord bless you all abundantly.

## Spreading the News

Shevet Achim UK always welcomes the opportunity to speak to groups throughout the British Isles about the unique work of Shevet Achim in repairing hearts and uniting brothers for life in The Middle East - one heart at a time. If your group would be interested in finding out more about how this Jerusalem-based community of volunteers is changing lives, please contact Clive Owen, Chair of Trustees, at [uk@shevet.org](mailto:uk@shevet.org) or call 01633 817275 to arrange for a speaker to visit and share about this unique work.

## Diary Dates

March 2019      Clive and Elaine Owen speaking engagement in Wiltshire

March 2019      Trustees Meeting

## Trustees

Pastor Clive Owen (Chairman), Rev. Peter James, Christopher Cheshire, Lynwen Evans

Treasurer: Andrew Jamison

Associates: Lisbeth James, Elaine Owen