

OH DEAR NO!

I couldn't possibly headline an article with the words "Harrow Ghanaians Association's (Harga) Inauguration & Fundraising Dinner Dance" albeit it was just that to which Bobbi and I were invited one August Sunday evening, as representatives of Mosaic Reform Synagogue. Oh dear no. No, no, no. It was just so colourful and anything but boring.

WE arrived at the school where this function was taking place to be met by one of the Ghanaians dressed, from head to toe in the most colourful National dress imaginable. As he most courteously moved some barriers, he guided us to a car space close by the school entrance. From the miserable drizzly grey of the night we were soon transformed in to a new world. The colourful National garb of the men competing, but seldom winning, with the quite extraordinary display of the wondrous patterns in the most glamorous magical bursts of colourful body coverings of, dare I say, dashing ladies, ever to be seen.

ON our way, we had wondered who else might be at 'our table' but 'our table' was the top table, where we were seated alongside The Mayor of Brent, the Deputy Mayor of Harrow, the Councillor for Consular and Welfare, Ghana High Commission, and a representative of the High Commissioner of Ghana. We were each formally introduced to the gathering and loudly applauded. Seated majestically at our 'High Table' was the Association's Chairman, a somewhat mighty majestic figure in his robes and elaborate Chain of Office, and much gold ornamental fixtures in evidence. He was *Barima Ati Awuah Kwaako*, Chief of *Akyem Ali*. Behind him was his muscular bodyguard holding a golden emblem, making sure all was well. We heard from the Chief and there were speeches by both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. `

HARGA (The Harrow Ghanaians Association) meet at Mosaic monthly, and I believe that Edward, our Caretaker, (who incidentally looked splendid in his traditional robe.) is the link initiated our attendance. The Master of Ceremonies made mention of how Mosaic had befriended the Association and how Ghanaians generally had much for which to thank the Jewish community. In thanking our hosts, I caused a ripple of laughter saying that now we were so immersed in the Event, I had decided to cancel our holiday to Ghana – as we were 'already here!'. First in Hebrew and then translated I said, 'how good and pleasant it is, to dwell together in unity.' And making reference to the opening prayer, before Dinner was served, by Rev. Benjamin Twumasi, who had asked The One On High to ensure the evening's success, I remarked that such a prayer-request was new to me, but there was no doubt that the answer was in the affirmative.

YOU will have noted the words that I felt inappropriate for a title, included 'Fundraising'. The cause for the evening was the Mampong school for the Deaf. How much those with a total loss of hearing would have missed this evening. True, the colours caught the eye and long remain in the memory of all who could see them. But added to the colour, almost integrating with it, was the beat of the music, which summoned the swaying to and fro of everyone, yes everyone, who was there. Nobody walked anywhere, they moved their bodies showing off their robes and dresses. Bobbi and I were still swaying when we reached home and I felt like jumping on the stairs. We were presented, before we were finally on our way, with (colourful, of course!) ribbons to wear and a rather lovely wooden carved globe, a memorial (see photograph) to remember this unique occasion. But the colours.....

Jack Lynes.