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Editorial

The Edinburgh Star

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This is the season for reflection but how do we look at the past? In this issue Stephen Massil writes about the Jewish Historical Society of England which celebrates its centenary. I looked west to the new museums which put the Holocaust on display, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. Is tolerance also the subject of the St Mungo's museum in Glasgow? Jenni Calder takes a look. Although this issue is concerned with museums, it is their role in shaping our views in the present which concerns me. The lack of tolerance has had tragic consequences in Yugoslavia and there is an informed article on the Jews of Sarajevo and the work of the Central British Fund for Refugees (40 years old – another anniversary). Just as *The Star* goes to press I have been able to add news of Sarajevo Jews.

B'Tselem is an organisation in Israel that has done more than reflect on the injustices and violations of human rights that can occur in a multicultural society. Laurie Gross reports some of the aims and achievements of its members.

A Scottish Judge, Gerald Gordon, reinterprets the story of Abraham and the 'sacrifice' of Isaac in a special Rosh Hashanah article. News of many happy community events has flooded in and I am very grateful to all the contributors. I am sure readers will also want to look at what is in the diary for this autumn.

I should mention one more anniversary, The Jewish Quarterly is also forty years old. It is an example of Jewish journalism at its best and I wish the editor and staff a hearty mazeltov!

My job as Guest Editor has been helped by the organisation developed by the Editorial Board and Ruth Adler, who has also helped commission and write articles, so that I have been able to enjoy the luxury of being a guest without worries – or not too many. I can hand you back with confidence to our permanent Editor for Chanukah.

Shana tova to you all.

Julia Merrick.

The Editorial Board is grateful to the advertisers and to the following donors for their support:
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הנהגתו של אברהם עזיקאל בן משה
 ביום אפריל 11 1826

An Edinburgh Puzzle for the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre

The Archives Centre has been helping a lady in England with her research into her family history. The family originated in Holland, coming to Britain in the late 18th century. They bore the surnames of Ezekiel, Eskell and Van Noorden.

Moses Eskell was a sealing wax manufacturer in Edinburgh who was buried in Braid Place Cemetery when he died, aged 74, in 1850. His nephew, Albert Eskell, was a dentist in Glasgow, where he was active in the Jewish community in the 1860s.

Unfortunately, we do not know of any records of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation which have survived prior to 1867 (the community was established in 1816). However, we now have a copy of an 'Excerpt from the Records of Various Matters Relating to the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation'. This extract was made by Reverend Jacob Furst in 1916, and he translates it as:

Moses, the son of Abraham Ezekiel from Holland.

My son, Phineas was born the 23rd day of Adar 2nd

5566 being April 11th, 1826.

Evidently Rev. Furst had access to a communal register of births in the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation dating back as far as 1826. What has happened to this register since Rev. Furst saw it in 1916? Has it simply been lost, or could it have survived in Rev. Furst's family?

Can anyone shed light on this puzzle?

Harvey L Kaplan, MA

26 South Lauder Road
 Edinburgh EH9 2ND
 July 1993

Dear Editor,

I should like, through the *Edinburgh Star*, to express my sincere thanks to family and friends, for their kind enquiries, good wishes, cards and visits received whilst in hospital and at home during my recent illness.

Their support and kindness was very much appreciated.

Sincerely,
 Joshua Lurie

Erratum

Edinburgh Star No 15, May 1993, Page 24

Erica Scroppa Newbury writes that the school which mistreated her for not being a Roman Catholic was not an RC school as stated in the article but a State school. This, she explains, makes things worse because the Italian Constitution declares every religion equal although in practice one religion is more protected. Still today the RC religion is compulsory from Nursery School to Lycee and the academic year starts with a compulsory Mass from which it is not an easy business to be 'dispensed'.

The editors regret this misunderstanding.

HELP LINES

During one of the meetings on Women in the Community, concern was expressed that if counselling was required for any reason no one was aware of where to go for help. Accordingly, here are a number of telephone numbers of various Jewish Counselling services available. All are either in London or Manchester, or both.

COUNSELLING SERVICES

Adoptions: The Jewish Association Fostering, Adoption and Infertility helpline : Manchester 061 428 5634; London 081 950 0013

Cancer: Chai-Lifeline Helpline: 081 201 9292, 9.30 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. plus 24-hour answerphone.

Confidential: Counselling, relationships, depression, bereavement etc. Care Concern : Manchester 061 795 0024; London 081 446 5418

Having problems with Get (religious divorce)? Phone Get Advisory Service 081 203 6314

Jewish AIDS Trust: 081 200 0360 Monday 7.30 p.m.-10.00 p.m.

Jewish: Lesbian and Gay Helpline. Confidential counselling and support. 071 706 3123 Monday and Thursday 7.00 - 10.00 p.m.

Marital: Relationship or individual problems. Phone The Jewish Marriage Council for strictly confidential counselling 081 203 6311 or 061 740 5764

Miyad: Jewish helpline. Open Sunday to Thursday noon till midnight, Friday until Shabbat and Shabbat night: 081 203 6211 or 0345 581 999

Violence : At home? Call Jewish Women's Aid confidential helpline : 0532 371 127

COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER	
8 Wed	Edinburgh Friends of Israel. 8.00 p.m.
	Eli Atad on 'The Sephardic Folklore'
OCTOBER	
10 Sun	Friendship Club 3.00 p.m.
13 Wed	Friends of Israel 8.00 p.m.
	W.A. Tait of the Royal Botanic Garden on his work with the Jerusalem Botanic Garden
15 Fri	Jewish Students Sabbath Meal Evening
17 Sun	Committee Games Night 7.30 p.m.
	(Card games, Scrabble, Trivial Pursuits etc.)
18 Mon	Lodge Solomon 7.00 p.m.
24 Sun	Friendship Club 3.00 p.m.
	Literary Society (Ned Temk, Editor Jewish Chronicle)
28 Thur	Council of Christians and Jews 8.00 p.m.
29 Fri	Jewish Students Sabbath Meal 7.30 p.m.
	Evening
NOVEMBER	
6 Sun	Lodge Solomon Ladies Night (Dinner/Dance) 7.30 p.m.
14 Sun	Friendship Club 3.00 p.m.
	Literary Society (Owen Dudley Edwards, 'Yeats and the Merchant of Venice')
15 Mon	Lodge Solomon 8.00 p.m.
24 Wed	Jewish Students (Speaker) 7.00 p.m.
25 Thur	Council of Christians and Jews 7.00 p.m.
28 Sun	Friendship Club 7.30 p.m.
	Literary Society (Ellen Galford, Novelist) 3.00 p.m.
	8.00 p.m.
DECEMBER	
9 Thur	First Day Chanukah see Review in this issue
10 Fri	Jewish Students Sabbath Meal Evening
11 Sat	Management Committee Chanukah Dinner 7.30 p.m.
12 Sun	Literary Society (Entertainment for Chanukah) 8.00 p.m.
19 Sun	Friendship Club 3.00 p.m.
20 Mon	Lodge Solomon 7.00 p.m.

● Maccabi meets every alternate Sunday from 1.00 - 3.00 p.m. For further information contact Jonathan Mason (445 3437) ● Senior Maccabi meets on Sunday evenings in members' homes ● The Jewish Philosophical Society meets every alternate Saturday afternoon in the Succah ● Edinburgh Jewish Discussion Group meet periodically. For further information contact Carole Brown on 332 2598 ● The Luncheon Club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 noon ● The above events, unless otherwise state, take place in the Community Centre, Salisbury Road.

NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM RABBI SHALOM SHAPIRA

ובכן הן כבוד... לעמך... שמחה לארצה. וששון לעירך.



In the course of the year prayers of various sorts are recited. As well as prayers of thanksgiving and praise, there are also supplications and requests for every day needs, national needs no less than individual ones. But only one prayer contains a request for Kavod (honour, dignity or glory). It is recited on the High Festivals, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and begins with the verse which I have chosen as the title of my message to the Community this year, "Give glory to thy people, joy to thy land and gladness to thy city".

The theme of the High Festivals, The Yomim Noraim (Days of Awe), is repentance - Teshuvah. Rosh Hashanah initiates, and Yom Kippur closes, a ten day period of repentance, the Asseret Yemey Teshuvah. Of course repentance is an ongoing process, something practised daily throughout the year, but the repentance practised on High Festivals is of a special nature. The culmination of the process is Yom Kippur itself, the holiest day in the calendar. It is of particular interest that our rabbis judged the Days of Awe to be the only time appropriate for a prayer for the glory of our

people.

To gain a deeper understanding of the approach of our rabbis to this subject, let us consider more closely these two concepts, Teshuvah and Kavod, repentance on the one hand and honour or glory on the other. Rabbi Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, said that when people do Teshuvah they experience a 'return' to the world of unity. He speaks of a return in this context since the word 'Teshuvah' derives from the verb 'shuv' (to return). In contrast with the world of unity is the world of division, a world we inhabit when we violate our true values. The division of which Rabbi Kook speaks is three-fold. First, there is separation from God, secondly, a distancing in interpersonal relations and thirdly, a division within oneself. Our Teshuvah begins with an awareness that the threefold dividedness from which we suffer is something wrong in us. This causes an anxiety which is sufficiently distressful to motivate us to seek Teshuvah. Through consideration of the way we have violated our values we gain insight into ourselves and that insight gives direction to our motivation.

According to Rabbi Kook our sins are, in the way just described, a constructive instrument for spiritual growth. This explains why our rabbis said that a Baal Teshuvah, a repentant person, has a higher status than a Tsaddik. On Rabbi Kook's interpretation, therefore, sin is not so bad that nothing good can come of it, and indeed a sin may result in a good great enough to outweigh the evil of the sin itself.

Rambam, known to the non-Jewish world as Maimonides, the greatest spiritual leader of the Jews of the Middle Ages, described rather differently the process leading to Teshuvah. First, he said, there is awareness of sin, with associated feelings of remorse and guilt. Then we make a verbal confession, which produces in us a sense of shame. This in turn is followed by a petition for forgiveness and a declared

intention to change our ways. Next comes the actual change and that leads to a diminution or cessation of the shame.

Though there are similarities between the descriptions Rambam and Rabbi Kook give of Teshuvah there are also differences. Rabbi Kook notes especially the value of sin in the process of Teshuvah, in contrast to Rambam who focuses on shame as a value in that same process. This shame, he tells us, is achieved through confession and it vanishes through our change of behaviour.

Shame is one side of the coin whose other side is Kavod. In reference to an individual person honour or glory is regarded as a negative quality. Our rabbis link it with jealousy and with other destructive human passions. But honour in reference to a nation is an entirely different matter. A nation's honour involves its culture, its religion, its language, its history, its uniqueness and its homeland. And as a people's honour or glory is something very special, different in many ways from an individual human being's, so likewise a people's act of repentance is a very special thing, different from the repentance of an individual person. The Teshuvah which we as a people do is our most special collective act; it is directed as much to God as to ourselves and is carried out during just one period in the year, on the Ten Days of Awe.

The honour or glory of one people is closely related to the attitudes of other peoples. We can say that in the course of our long history we, the Jewish people, have rarely been honoured by others and have, on the contrary, often been regarded with contempt and frequently subjected to persecution. And then came the Shoah, the Holocaust, when a third of our people were killed for being Jews. As a historical fact we Jews have been morally no worse than other peoples. We have been loyal citizens in the countries of our exile.

Our one fault has been to belong to the wrong people.

Inevitably the study of the Shoah and the instilling of a sense of pride in our subsequent history are integral parts of the education of our children. Their upbringing is directed to a sense of national identity and the development in them of an appreciation of the glory of our people. We want our children to feel honoured and privileged to be Jews.

One way to work towards these ends, a way now practised by many Jewish educational institutions, is to arrange tours to the sites of extermination camps. The educational value of these tours is well appreciated by Jewish educational circles at all levels. Indeed it is plain that the visits have greatly helped in fostering a sense of Jewish identity.

I was especially struck by a report written recently by a secular Israeli journalist, Meir Uziel, who had gone to Auschwitz. His report appeared in

the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv and translated into English is as follows:

I visited the soil of death there in Poland. I was determined not to recite Kaddish on the soil of the extermination camps. I even remained silent when all around me were singing 'Ani ma'amin' ('I believe with perfect faith'), composed by Maimonides, and 'Eli Eli' composed by Hannah Senesh. Just as every person has a soul so has every nation and our national soul is blue and white with a Magen David at its centre. This is the flag of the Jewish people and is the expression of its pride, of its success and its prosperity. Auschwitz is the very opposite, as its aim was to destroy the human dignity of every Jew just because he was Jewish. So I wanted to embrace the flag and to whisper to all who had been murdered: 'Look what I have brought you, look at the flag and see that to be Jewish is not a shameful thing but an honour and a source of pride.' I had an Israeli flag in my pocket but thought it might look strange if I opened it in public. However, when we passed the letters of the slogan 'Arbeit Macht Frei' (work

makes free) still displayed in the camp, I brought out my flag and everyone in the group clung to it instinctively for the rest of the tour.

On the High Holy Days, when most of our people gather in their synagogues, we will not only be showing respect for our place of worship, but will also be adding to the glory of our people, in accordance with these verses from the Rosh Hashanah mussaf service:

Happy is the man who does not forget You, and the son of man who strengthens himself in You. For they that seek You shall never stumble neither shall they ever be put to shame, all who trust in You.

May God listen to our prayers, gather our exiles, and give glory and gladness to our people and our land, and may we all be inscribed for life, peace and prosperity.

On behalf of Rachel and myself may I wish you all a happy New Year and well over the fast. Shana Tova, Ketiva va'chatima Tova.

THE AKEDAH : ETHICS OR THEOLOGY

by Gerald H. Gordon

The story of the Akedah, the binding of Isaac or, as it is often significantly if inaccurately called, the sacrifice of Isaac, is one of the central 'myths' of the Hebrew Bible. If we were a people who went in for pictorial representations it would surely be the most popular of subjects for our painters. As it is, it has become a popular subject for our poets, and more especially for our liturgical writers. It is one of the main themes of Rosh Hashanah, which is my excuse for writing about it in this issue. Like all the narratives in the Tanach it manages to be both laconic and many-layered, but it is more problematic than perhaps any other, and I thought it might be interesting to consider some of its paradoxes and explore some of the traditions associated with it.

Let us start with the story itself, which is contained in the first nineteen verses of Chapter 22 of Genesis. Read shortly, but not I hope

inaccurately, it is as follows:

And God tested Abraham and said to him, 'Abraham, take your only beloved son Isaac and bring him up as a burnt offering on a mountain I shall show you'. And Abraham got up early and saddled his ass and took with him two of his young servants and Isaac his son, and he split the wood for the offering and went to the place God had told him of.

On the third day of the journey Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance, and he said to his servants, 'You stay here with the ass and I and the boy will go on and worship and come back to you'. And Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice and put it on Isaac his son, and took in his hand the fire and the knife, and the two of them went off together. And Isaac said to his father, 'Here we have fire and wood, but where is the animal for the sacrifice?' And Abraham said, 'God will see to the animal for the sacrifice, my son', and the two of them went on together. And they came to the

appointed place and Abraham built an altar, and laid out the wood and bound Isaac his son on the altar on top of the wood. And Abraham raised his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son. And an angel called to him from heaven and said, 'Do not raise your hand to the boy and do not do anything to him: I know now that you are a man who fears God and you have not kept back your only son from Me'. And Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in a thicket, and he took the ram and sacrificed it in place of his son. And the angel called to him again and said, 'Because you did not keep back your only son I shall bless you, and make your seed as the stars of heaven and the sands of the sea, and they shall possess the gates of their enemies, and all the peoples of the earth shall be blessed in you because you have obeyed Me'. And Abraham returned to his servants, and they went off together'.

Now it is difficult for us to think ourselves into the mindset of the

people to whom this story was first addressed, but it is perhaps worth remembering two things. The first is that we are dealing not merely with a stage of human development at which human sacrifice was not regarded with the same horror as was later the case, and the second is that we are dealing with a stage at which children were the property of their parents, or at least of their fathers. A father had a right, that is to say, to sacrifice his child: it was clearly a very great sacrifice, a sacrifice of his dearest possession, but it was not necessarily as dreadful or unthinkable a thing as it would be to us. That, however, is merely by the way. The Torah speaks to each generation in the language of that generation, and the generations which set the pattern for traditional Jewish attitudes to the Akedah were the generations of the Talmudic Rabbis to whom human sacrifice was unthinkable, and who were aware of the problems and paradoxes of the story (whether or not they felt quite as uncomfortable with it as we do, or had any reservations about deriving the claim to be the chosen people from a readiness to indulge in human sacrifice).

The Biblical account, as has been seen, begins with the notion of a test or trial. The obvious parallel here is with Job, and this parallel was made explicit in some midrashim which set Abraham's test in the framework of a claim by Satan that Abraham was not really as devoted a follower of God as God claimed he was, and which explain what God is doing in the Akedah as an exercise designed to prove that Satan was wrong. Be that as it may, the interesting question for us is what the test was, and indeed whether Abraham passed, or, to be more accurate, why he passed. Did he pass because he realised at the last minute that human sacrifice was wrong: the ethical answer? Or did he pass because he was willing to sacrifice his son if that was what God wanted him to do: the theological answer. Is the Akedah about the importance of total faith and readiness to do whatever God asks, however

repugnant it is to our human moral sense, or does it signal the stage in the development of morality at which men, or at least Jews, came to realise that human sacrifice was wrong, and that they were mistaken if they thought it was commanded by God? It has to be conceded that in its own terms the text takes it as given that the voice Abraham heard commanding him to sacrifice Isaac was indeed the voice of God, but it is impossible to read the text without thinking of the problem: how do we know when the voices we hear are those of God and not those of the devil or of our own desires? I do not think that it is accidental that midrashim about the Akedah appear in a section of the Talmud (Sanhedrin 89) which deals with prophets who prophesy what they have not heard. (One modern scholar's⁽¹⁾ solution to this problem is to say that we have been spared Abraham's dilemma by the grace of God who has told us in the Torah that human sacrifice was wrong, so that although it was right for Abraham to act as he did, it would not be right for us.

The two approaches, the ethical and the theological, can be seen as represented by Kant and Kierkegaard respectively. According to Kant, Abraham should have realised that what God was asking of him was not ethical, and should have preferred the certainty of the categorical imperative, 'killing people is wrong', to the possibility that what he was hearing was a divine command. For Kierkegaard (who can claim the support of the great rationalist, Maimonides,⁽²⁾ as well as that of both Professors Leibowitz) Abraham was what he calls 'a knight of faith', and the Akedah is an example of the suspension of ethical considerations in favour of what he calls 'teleological' considerations.

The story as we have it can be criticised as an example of having one's cake and eating it – getting the credit for being willing to sacrifice without actually going through with it. But it is just that ambiguity which gives the story its complexity, that is

why we can read it in such different ways, depending on whether we concentrate on what Abraham was prepared to do, or on what actually happened. We can see signs of this ambiguity in midrashim which point out that the text does not say that God actually told Abraham to kill Isaac, and which try in this way to dispel our instinctive discomfort at the idea of a God who appears to have demanded human sacrifice, and our feeling that he cannot really have meant it.

The suggestion that the passage which has Abraham telling his servants that he and Isaac will return was some sort of unconscious prophecy is more tantalising, as indeed is the strange midrash which says that Satan told Abraham that he, Satan, had heard that really it will not be Isaac but a ram which will be sacrificed, to which Abraham replies that liars are punished by being disbelieved even when they tell the truth. Satan is often used in midrashic dialogues to represent a man's evil intention, and I think it would be reasonable to see the midrashic conversations between Abraham and Satan as representing Abraham's internal struggle during the three days between the command and the actual binding of Isaac on the altar, in which he tries to determine whether this is indeed something which is required of him by God. I would suggest that what this midrash is doing is expressing the feeling experienced by its author that a man in Abraham's position would have been, and perhaps even ought to have been, plagued by doubt as to whether he was doing the right thing. A modern midrash might explain the words of the angel telling Abraham not to harm the boy as representing Abraham's realisation when it came to the bit, so to speak, that he could not bring himself to kill his son, and that really God, as he had perhaps half-suspected all along, had never wanted him to do so. The midrash which tells of Abraham's encounter with Satan on his way to the place of sacrifice, which I have suggested is a way of describing Abraham's

arguments with himself, has a passage in which Satan tries to change Abraham's mind by warning him that if he goes ahead and kills Isaac, he will find that he is called a murderer the next day (perhaps by God himself), although it goes on to have Abraham expressing his willingness to undergo that agony as well. And there is also a midrash which says that Abraham took up his knife with the intention of shedding a quarter of Isaac's blood when Satan pushed the knife out of his hand it fell to the ground, and that as Abraham went to pick it up he broke into tears and sought help from Heaven, whereupon God sent the angel to intervene. But these midrashim, it must be said, do not represent the normal traditional approach, which is concerned to paint Abraham as someone who has so much faith that he accepts the order to sacrifice his son willingly, even enthusiastically, as a way of displaying his devotion to God.

There is a midrash which makes Abraham unwilling to listen to the angel who tries to interrupt the sacrifice, and has him insist on getting that instruction from God himself before he will accept it, and one which explains the instruction in the text not to do 'anything' to the boy as representing the angel's response to Abraham's plea that if he is not to be allowed to kill the boy with the knife he should at least be allowed to kill him in some other way. There is indeed a midrash which goes so far as to have Isaac actually dying of fright when the knife touches his throat, so that Abraham does in a sense, and a very real sense, carry out what he was originally called on to do, although without having to inflict a fatal blow, and Isaac has to be revived by the angel. And of course there is the non-traditional view (based on the verse which says that Abraham alone, and not both Abraham and Isaac, came back down to the servants) that there was once a version of the story in which Isaac was indeed sacrificed, and that the current version has taken that story and altered it in order to teach us that

human sacrifice is not required by God.

So far we have been considering only God and Abraham, so to speak. But there is a third party, Isaac. His role in the text is passive, although much can be made, and has been made, of the repeated phrase, 'and the two of them went on together', as evidence that he was a co-operating martyr, who shares with his father the credit for showing extreme devotion and submission to the will of God. What is most interesting about this aspect of the matter is its liturgical significance. As I have said, there is a clear parallel between the 'testing' of Abraham and the testing of Job, but there is also a parallel with another story. As the midrash says, commenting on the verse, 'And Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice and put it on Isaac his son' - 'Like someone who bears his cross'. I am not suggesting that the midrash had any particular crossbearer in mind, although Christians (for obvious reasons) have always treated the Akedah as a kind of model for the crucifixion. But what I am suggesting is that the stress laid by the Jewish tradition on the theological rather than the ethical aspects of the story can be seen very clearly in the use made of it in the liturgy. We pray in aid on Rosh Hashanah not only Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only beloved son, but also the willingness of that only beloved son to be sacrificed. Of course there is a difference between reliance on the 'merits of the father's and Christian ideas of redemption from sin, and of course the Akedah was the model for the crucifixion and not vice versa, but some of the later poetry, liturgical and otherwise, leaves me wondering if all the influences were in one direction. But I shall leave the reader to make what he will for himself of the references to the Akedah as he comes across them in his machzor.

- (1) See Emil L Fackenheim, *Encounters between Judaism and Modern Philosophy*, (New York, 1980) Chapter 2
- (2) *Guide for the Perplexed*, Part III, Chapter 24

Gerald Gordon, formerly Professor of Scots Law at the University of Edinburgh is now a Sheriff of Glasgow and a Temporary High Court Judge.

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ON THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF ENGLAND CENTENARY

by Stephen Massil

Origins of the Society

The Jewish Historical Society of England (JHSE) was founded in 1893 as a direct outcome of the interest aroused by the great 'Anglo-Jewish Exhibition' of 1887 and the gathering realisation that Jewish records and monuments in Britain were in danger of neglect, loss, and downright economic vandalism. The leaders of the Anti-Demolition League of 1886, who were instrumental in opposing the decision by the Mahamad to raze Bevis Marks and to sell the site, the organisers of the Exhibition, and the compilers of the 'Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica' (1888) were among the founding members and officers of the Society.

Its birth was widely welcomed as a new addition to the body of learned societies of the time. As early as 1859 it had been recognised that there was a need to include the Jewish Starra of the Exchequer amongst the records being published for the first time by the Public Record Office amongst the Rolls series and Calendars of state papers. The Ancient Monuments Act of 1882 marked an era of activity in respect of surviving monuments. By 1886 when the 800th anniversary of the Domesday Book was celebrated and increasing attention was being paid by the Royal Historical Society to the Anglo-Norman records there was pressure as much from the wider academic community as from within the Anglo-Jewish cultural elite to establish an effective Jewish involvement in this domain.

The Jewish press of the period had long been publishing articles and the occasional lectures of amateur scholars ploughing a steady field in Jewish history. What was perhaps most galling to Lucien Wolf, the Society's first president, was that in the 1880s the continental Jewish historians had begun to encroach on the British sphere and their contributions were noticed in the *Jewish World* and the *Jewish*

Chronicle as telling rebukes to the late-developing historical sense of British Jews.

There was a reluctance to become involved in perhaps too parochial a field. Educated Jews in Britain had wider interests. They had been educated at London University which had always welcomed Jews. From 1871 when the final disabilities to taking degrees in the ancient universities were removed, Jews had entered both Oxford and Cambridge (predominantly the latter which first included women at both Girton and Newnham). Schooling at St Paul's, the City of London, University College School, Manchester Grammar, Huthesons and elsewhere had become available (Polack's House at Clifton opened in 1878 and the North London Collegiate and such places as Queen's College in Harley Street took Jewish girls from this time) so an educated society emerged interested in the varied offerings of the Jews College Literary & Debating Society and the literary society movement across the country but not otherwise in the practicalities of historical studies. The Maccabaeans, a body of professional legal, medical and financial members, founded in 1891 with whom the JHSE was at first closely associated was one focus for these people. Their meeting rooms were made available to the Society from the outset but close collaboration on practical matters did not evolve as had been assumed.

There was opposition to the idea of a Jewish Historical Society of Great Britain from amongst those who deemed Anglo-Jewish history irrelevant in the wider historical view or who thought that effort should best be directed towards the wider scholarly interests of Jewish studies and dissemination and those indeed, like Claude Montefiore who, having had experience of poor support for his *Jewish Quarterly Review*, thought that there would not be sufficient interest in the work of such a society for it to survive for very

long.

Wolf, Joseph Jacobs, Isidore Spielmann, Israel Abrahams and others (including the Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler who had begun delivering lectures on the subject in 1870) contended that it needed British Jews to undertake the study of British Jewish history and that this would be a worthy contribution to the wider field of Jewish studies. At the meeting in June 1893 at which it was decided to establish the Society they won the debate and quickly found (200 members had joined by the time of Wolf's inaugural lecture of November 1893) that there were a large number of people keen to become involved in the work of the Society but few had claims as professional historians.

Herbert Samuel reported when giving the vote of thanks at the Society's jubilee meeting in 1943 that he hadn't been able to be present at the meeting of June 1893 because he had been taking his finals in the history school at Oxford at the time, but he did not pursue Anglo-Jewish history professionally. Rufus Isaacs, who had had a year at UCS and completed his studies only at Lincoln's Inn, and joined the Society in 1914, made no claim to be a historian or to be more than a benefactor to the Society when he did so.

The Society is managed by an Executive Committee drawn from its officers and a Council of both amateur and professional historians. It has enjoyed the support of distinguished patrons and a series of notable presidents over the years including professional historians, the Haham and Chief Rabbis, distinguished leaders of the community and also non-Jews such as James Parkes and most recently, for the year of the York and Expulsion anniversaries, Professor Barrie Dobson.

Activities of the Society

The interests and achievements of the founding members made an

impressive launch for the Society with the publications of the Exhibition of 1887, Joseph Jacobs' work on the Jews of Angevin England, Wolf's Personalities and Lee's work on the 'Middle Period' which Wolf took up. The systematic work and regular programme of the Society's lectures are recorded in its series of Transactions and Miscellanies, and the galaxy of talent directed at publishing the Anglo-Jewish Bibliography, the Plea Rolls and the Bevis Marks records over the years. The development of the Mocatta Library and the opening of the Tuck Theatre and Collection vouch for the sustained efforts of the Council and membership over the first fifty years of the Society and the recreation of the Library and Theatre following the bomb of 1941 attest continuing vitality.

One of the early initiatives of the Society, one of Lucien Wolf's hobby-horses, was to mark 'Resettlement day' on February 4th, the supposititious anniversary of the date in 1656 when Cromwell acceded to Manasseh ben Israel's request, which was inserted into the Anglo-Jewish calendar by the Chief Rabbi in 1894 and which was marked for a few years with learned addresses.

The interests of the Society and its sphere of activity have never been confined to London. If the initial aim of establishing branches of the Society throughout the British Empire was grandiose, arrangements to hold meetings throughout the country were soon put into effect and over the years branches have flourished in the leading Jewish centres of England – Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester and Birmingham have today expanding memberships and independent programmes.

The Society was instrumental in organising the Tercentenary Exhibition of 1956, the installation of a plaque at Clifford Tower in York in 1978 (to mark the massacre of 1190) and the Sir Moses Montefiore Exhibition of 1984.

The Society manages the noted A.S. Diamond Memorial Prize for original research publications in all fields of Anglo-Jewish and related history, and the Arthur Barnett essay

prizes directed at schools and young students.

The Society maintains a regular lecture programme which includes an occasional Lady Magnus lecture, the prestigious Lucien Wolf lecture on special occasions and the Richard Barnett Memorial Lecture shared with the Spanish & Portuguese and the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society. Recently there have been lectures in association with visits to sites of Jewish interest (in Bristol, and at the furniture history exhibition in the East End).

The correspondence of the Society is voluminous and varied encompassing enquiries from students and school children, private researchers (such as the enquiry relating to the catering diary of an unnamed London hotel which hosted a significant Jewish society event in 1898), local historical societies and heritage centres (as in Lincoln and King's Lynn, Australia and South Africa), bibliography and genealogy.

Conferences

Over the last thirty years the Society has held and co-sponsored a number of conferences and has published their proceedings:

Migration & Settlement, (1970) (a joint Anglo-American Conference with the AJHS founded as it happens in 1892);

Provincial Jewry, (1975);

The Jewish East End, 1840-1939 (1981);

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society Centenary, (1988);

and, most recently as part of its own Centenary celebrations this year, a conference on *'Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914 : impact on Jewry' in conjunction with the Institute of Jewish Studies*.

Anglo-Jewish Archives

Responsibility for the Anglo-Jewish archives and the heritage of British Jewry (in terms of monuments and relics) was bound up with the founding of the Society and it has to be said that long-term development of the Archives has proved beyond the capacity of the

Society. The Society has recently devolved the management of Anglo-Jewish Archives to the Hartley Library at the University of Southampton and given the extra resources available to that institution. The readiness with which it has set about producing catalogues and the business of seeking to augment and publicise the Archive, shows that change has been all to the good. The genealogical records have been transferred to the Society of Genealogists in London. Both these resources are available to members by arrangement with the authorities concerned.

Census Project

A Census Project has been under way for some years, investigating census returns and establishing a database of information about Jewish residents in Whitechapel in 1891; the Project includes a pilot analysis of the 1881 data for the same area, a model for developing a similar database and files for analysis for other areas of the country. It is hoped to arrange a seminar in the Spring of 1994 to publicise the results of the project and to launch the data base derived from it for scholarly use.

Centenary Celebrations, 1993

In the past, the Society has marked its anniversaries in various ways: the 21st and 75th were celebrated with dinners (in 1968 at the Banqueting House in Whitehall); in 1943, when, following the bombing of the Tuck Theatre, ordinary meetings were held in Oxford, the Royal Society extended its hospitality for the the Society's jubilee meeting under wartime conditions. Since there were the two significant dates in 1893 when the Society was set up (June) and when its first meeting was held (November), events for the Centenary year have been spread over two sessions and two senior past-Presidents have taken office respectively. Aubrey Newman represented the Society at the centenary of the American JHS in 1992 and presided over the International Conference in June this year. His Honour Israel Finestein will

deliver his Presidential address on the Centenary of Lucien Wolf's first lecture on November 11th, the date Lucien Wolf identified as the anniversary of Manasseh ben Israel's appeal to Cromwell when the the convening of the Whitehall Conference which discussed the matter of the return of the Jews to England was announced.

The major event of the Society's Centenary year has therefore been a joint international conference with the Institute of Jewish Studies at University College on 'Patterns of Migration, 1850-1914', held in June and preceded by Professor Charlotte Erickson's Lucien Wolf Lecture. It is hoped that the proceedings will be published before too long.

Other events of the centenary celebrations have included a JHSE evening at Jewish Book Week in March 1993 where the heated discussion about the need to preserve the British Jewish heritage confirmed the continuing conflict of interest within the community and the need to uphold the efforts of such new organisations as the Working Parties on Archives and on Monuments whose convenors are both members of the Council of the JHSE.

Also arranged, and available for local lecture programmes by invitation is a series of Centenary Lectures to be delivered by four leading scholars in the field of Anglo-Jewish history.

The Jewish Directory of 1874 was produced by Asher Myers who associated himself with the Society in its early years. A facsimile edition of the Directory with an introduction by Aubrey Newman is to be published by Leicester University Press as a feature of the centenary celebrations.

Also planned for 1994, and a marker for future expansion of interests, is a joint meeting with the British Association for Jewish Studies to be held in Birmingham where the Society's local branch will also be involved.

Stephen W. Massil is a Senior Librarian at the University of London Library. He is Coeditor of *Jewish Book News & Reviews*, Editor of the *Jewish Year Book* and the *Jewish Travel Guide* and is an active member of the executive of JHSE.

THE LOWRIE REPORT

SARAH - KNOWN AS SADIE - AT 70 (OR HAROLD'S DOUBLE MITZVAH)

Sarah Abrahams celebrated her 70th birthday at the Luncheon Club on Thursday, 1st July. Harold, son of the birthday girl and *chef de brigade*, not only honoured his dear mother by cooking a sumptuous meal of melon, salmon, new potatoes, salads, pavlova with strawberries and cream, coffee and cake but also gained the enthusiastic approval of the 43 lunchers, including some of the usual Lunch Club cooks. The family top table comprised daughter Zelda (Harold's twin), uncle and aunt Michael and Nana Caplan, aunt Mary Berkengoff, uncle Henry Mann, brother-in-law and sister-in-law Alec and Betty Abrahams. The toast to Sadie was made by Uncle Henry who said that regardless of the vicissitudes of life his niece remained the happy friendly person she always had been. A beautiful bouquet of flowers was presented from members of the Lunch Club and also one from Bernie and Irene Davidson. It was a luncheon to remember.



The Abrahams' family celebrating Sadie's 70th birthday at the Lunch Club

OUR YOUNG MAN SAID 'FOLLOW THE VAN'

They did too - The Betty Franklin Specials in the wake of Michael Wittenberg who, after Shabbat on 12th June, took to the road with the van, which was absolutely essential to the enterprise and was supplied by brother Manny, to collect the goods for the charity shop, held at the scene of Betty's previous commercial success, the Dalry Road. Michael went to work at 11.30 p.m. and 'finished with engines' somewhere around 2 a.m. on Sunday. Betty's team of shop stockers moved in to set up as soon after dawn as Betty could organise; blinking in the early daylight were Ian Shein, Norman Dorfman, Bill Sinclair, Arthur Kleinberg and David Goldberg. Over the Monday and Tuesday they were reinforced for both days by Rachel Shapira, Rose Orgel and Vicky Lowrie. Many other volunteers turned out either on Monday or Tuesday to lend their invaluable help for the day. The charity shop team, mainly senior citizens, raised £751 for Betty Franklin to hand over to Rose Orgel, treasurer of the Community Centre Committees.

*Please keep any unwanted household goods, books etc.
for our next shop or car boot sale.*

A REMEMBRANCE FOR SYLVIA : PRESENTATION OF PAINTINGS

It is Sunday, 25 July, at 3.30 p.m. and approximately 80 members of the Community saw the Hall become altogether brighter with the addition of two paintings of delphiniums by that talented artist Susan MacColl.

Sixteen members of Sylvia Lewis's family had attended her stone-setting, which at their wish had been private and now they were having a special memorial gathering with the Friendship Club, who meet once a fortnight at the Communal Hall. This was followed by a splendid afternoon tea prepared and provided by Sylvia's family.

Rabbi Shapira, in his opening remarks, spoke of the Torah which compares man with the tree bringing forth fruit and said that Sylvia's fruits were her children and grandchildren who follow in her footsteps. He went on to say that the artistic merit of the paintings would bring a spiritual pleasure to all who enter the Hall and that there could be no more appropriate way to remember a blooming personality of such a kind and generous nature, who had left her mark on both the Friendship Club and on the wider Community.

Anita Mendelssohn, in thanking Anita, Carole, Howard and Uncle Frank Lindey for so generously presenting the paintings to the Community Centre, took up the theme when she paid tribute to Sylvia's life-long work for the Communal Hall, the foundation of which had been laid by her mother, Annie Lindey. In particular how she so loved to arrange the flowers for all the functions no matter what the effort cost her.

Willie Caplan thanked the family for their kindness in sharing the occasion with the Friendship Club.



Photo J. Gilbert

Paintings by Susan McColl donated to the Community Centre.

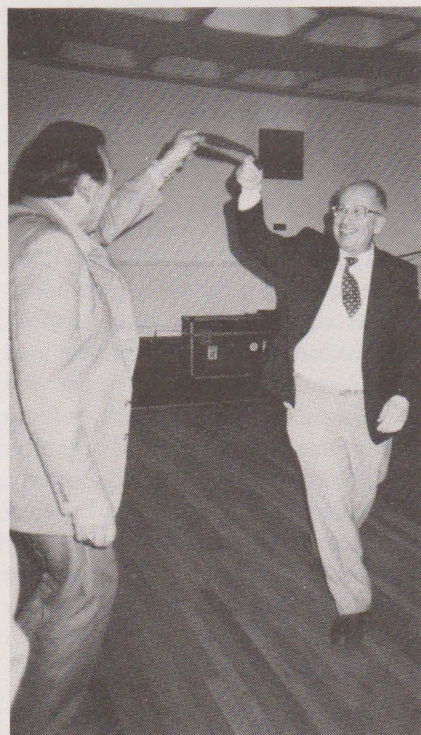
From left to right: Carole Cowan, Howard Lewis, Anita Levinson.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB REPORT *by Rose Orgel*

The Friendship Club changed the format of their Sunday afternoon meetings by holding a tea dance on 30 May. Chairman Willie Caplan assisted by his wife Betty and the Committee organised the function and the music was in the able hands of Willie and Betty's son Stuart who ensured the afternoon went with a swing.

With the exception of one or two, all present were Senior Citizens and their energy, enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment could have put younger members of the Community to shame. After non-stop dancing, the excellent tea provided was most welcome. Prizes for the raffle were donated by the members and were won by Mrs Shapira, Mrs Braverman and Mrs Orgel.

I am assured they intend holding another tea dance in the future when perhaps some of the younger older members of the Community will come and give their support as well as enjoying a very pleasant Sunday afternoon.



David Goldberg and Shalom Shapira dancing

FRIENDSHIP CLUB OUTING - LARGS OR BUS-T

by Michael Gold

The sun shone on Salisbury Road on the morning of 9 June as the members of the Friendship Club, putting away their walking sticks and zimmers, congregated outside the Synagogue. Talk and laughter

were infectious, the 'bus was on time and the elders of the community happily made their way on board to enjoy their day's outing to Largs. As 25 people took their seats, Maestro Willie Caplan, the ever-cheerful

chairman of the Friendship Club, confirmed with the driver that stops were to be made at Marchmont and Tollcross to uplift more members. The serious conversation on board turned from the contents of sandwiches for lunch to the number of comfort stops deemed necessary.

10.15 a.m., only 15 minutes late, Jewish Standard Time, the driver got set to move off. 10.20 a.m., no movement; 10.25 a.m., no movement. 10.30 a.m., movement, but by the chairman to the driver's seat. A brief discussion then - no diesel. Twenty-five voices in unison, 'No diesel, what do you mean no diesel? Didn't we pay for diesel?' The driver was heard to murmur, 'I didn't check; there should have been diesel'.

A quick decision and a passenger, who preferred petrol, ran the driver to a garage in Mayfield Road. Yes, they could supply the life-saving (the driver's) fuel and a drum. Back to Salisbury Road, three-quarters diesel

in the tank and one-quarter on Salisbury Road, no funnel. About 10.50 a.m. all back in their seats. The driver smiled bravely. He started the engine. At least he went through the motions, but Gornisht. After further attempts, highly technical discussion resumed. It was surprising just how mechanically-minded the members were. 'Perhaps the diesel hasn't reached the engine yet'; 'maybe the brake is on'; 'I think he's got a flat tyre'.

Consternation broke out when the stationary 'bus was diagnosed as having electrical trouble. 11.15 a.m. came and went, the driver having contacted his firm. The next 45 minutes passed, the manager and electrician arrived and were given a little cheer, until they examined the 'bus.

After much examination, checking and discussion, it was decided that it was best that the patient (our 'bus) be left in peace. Sic Transit Caporis.

He, rest his carburettor, was in terminal decline and that alive and in motion, he was a mortal danger to all around him. Reports of his death were coming thick and fast and were not eventually greatly exaggerated, as he passed to the great garage where I hope his engine conks out for ever.

Epilogue

It is true that all passengers on board, and would-be passengers, raised their voices and said, 'we are like 25 Tevyes; I know we are the chosen people; why do we get a tseclappte steak machine? May the coach's company wait for their customers as we waited for a 'bus, and waited, and ...'.

To soften the hurt on our feelings and our pockets, we later heard that the heavens opened up over both Ayr and Largs area around 1.00 p.m. and came down in torrents. Maybe somebody listened to Tevye after all!

photo Wilson S Groat



The wedding took place in Edinburgh on Sunday, 20 June, between Elisabeth Dorfman and Adrian Goldstone.

Garnethill Synagogue, Glasgow, on Sunday 1st August, the wedding took place between Abigail Cosgrove and Joel Korn from Birmingham.

It was a splendid and happy occasion especially as this was the synagogue where the bride's grandfather had been minister for many years. Clergy from many places took part in the ceremony and the choir and Cantor Ernest Levy sang with feeling. Dinner and dancing followed at the Hilton Hotel where he added some local colour to Grace after the meal with the tune of Mhari's Wedding! When it came to the speeches, the bride's younger brother Nick chaired the proceedings with ease. It was a Simchah to remember.



Elisabeth trained as a medical psychologist and Adrian, who comes from Manchester, is a lawyer and both are at present working in London. The wedding was attended by 179 guests who came from Israel, Australia, London, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow and of course Edinburgh. Elisabeth was a most beautiful bride and it was truly a lovely affair.

TAKING TEA WITH FREDA AND JOE RIFFKIN

by Ruth Adler

It had been my intention to interview Joe Riffkin about the Jewish Community in Falkirk, but as Burns knew only too well: 'The best laid plans of mice and men ...' First I discovered that I much prefer the art of conversation to the techniques of the interview. Second it soon transpired that the Falkirk Community ceased to have a shul some time in the 1920s so that Joe Riffkin's memories on the subject were understandably a little hazy! Third it quickly became apparent that Freda Riffkin had many delightful memories of both Falkirk and Edinburgh and it seemed a pity not to include them so ...

Origins

Joe Riffkin explained that his parents had come to Scotland separately from Lithuania and married in 1900. His father had been 'a traveller' in and around Falkirk, which is why his parents settled there. Joe himself was the fourth child and first son of the marriage. His parents saved up enough money to open up a shop which sold drapery and soft furnishings so that his father eventually stopped travelling altogether. There was a 'fair sized' shul in Falkirk at the time and Joe remembered a young minister, Mr Chasen, who was his Bar Mitzvah teacher. There were around forty families with about twenty children in the Cheder. A local butcher, not himself Jewish, supplied kosher meat which was killed at the local abattoir by a shochet from Glasgow.

Getting established in Falkirk

People began to leave and a large number migrated to Glasgow. Joe remembered how he and his father used to attend shul in Glasgow for the 'Yom Tovim'. They used to try out different ones and spend the night in a Jewish restaurant, 'Geneen's', but Joe's mother and sisters never came with them. 'I don't think they could afford it - I'm not sure'. In 1926 Joe matriculated at



Joe and Freda Riffkin with Busters

Glasgow University as a medical student but sadly in 1928 his father died, 'I had to give up medicine and go into business'. With a twinkle in his eye and a proud glance at his beautiful home, he reflected 'I didn't do so badly over the years' and even admitted 'I got to enjoy it'. Freda explained that in Joe's hands the shop expanded and acquired larger premises. 'H Riffkin of Falkirk was a very well known furniture business in the area'. When the war broke out Joe joined the forces and was away for five years. He returned with a commission. The twinkle appeared again 'I missed marrying at an early age, but I got involved when I came back'. Here was the stuff of which interviews are made - but they were both very coy about their whirlwind romance.

How had they met? 'We were introduced by a mutual friend'. 'A shidduch?' I asked. 'No, not exactly', Freda explained, 'this person gave a party and she asked me and asked Joe and one or two other people'. That was in 1949 and Joe added 'We didn't waste any time'. They were married in 1950. At the time Freda was a primary school teacher in Dalkeith, teaching miners' children. 'I loved teaching, I only taught for

three years. I had an old-fashioned husband who didn't want his wife to work'. Joe confirmed, 'I wouldn't have married if I had not been able to keep a wife'. In any case the children started coming ... Somewhere along the line Joe clearly became a modern man because when they decided to open a pram and nursery outlet in Edinburgh in 1968, Freda became the manageress and only retired two years ago. The shop is now run by their daughter.

Edinburgh days

Freda had clearly been an active member of the Edinburgh Jewish Community before her marriage and the move to Falkirk. She reminisced about Maccabi which used to meet in Chalmers Crescent on a Sunday night and 'everybody went'. She looked back nostalgically to the time when the shul held 1000 congregants and on the Yom Tovim the children had to sit on the steps. She had held all the offices of the Jewish Students Society and was Secretary of the Lit in 1949. She was also the first secretary of the Communal Hall Building Committee. For a short time she gave all this up and moved to Falkirk. She remembered one of her first outings to investigate the shops, when dressed somewhat casually she dropped in to visit her husband at work. He had remonstrated, 'In this town you're Joe Riffkin's wife, you go home and put on a good outfit to go shopping'. They were both laughing, 'I had to get dressed up in Falkirk to go shopping - but if you were too well dressed you were making too much money'. More laughter and Freda admitted 'I was glad to get back to Edinburgh and wear last year's coat to go shopping'. They spent three years in Falkirk and then set up home in Edinburgh to provide a more Jewish environment for their family.

Freda immediately became active again in the Women's Guild which met on the first Monday of the month and could expect attendances of 100. She held the office of

Secretary and President and remembered the cultural evenings and the lectures: 'It was something that really brought all the women together'. She felt that recent meetings under the auspices of the Chief Rabbi's initiative, Women in the Community, had 'brought the same spirit back a little' but 'the enthusiasm is lacking, the women are all working'. Joe for his part, looking for Barney Lewis one day, found him at a British Legion meeting. 'I got involved straight away'. And then in 1973, according to Freda, 'He found his vocation' and became Treasurer of the Burial Society, a post he held until very recently and to this day, he remains the Recorder.

'Jews are the same all over'

Eating wonderful home-made cake and sipping a second cup of tea we moved on to the subject of religious observance. The Riffkins were disarmingly frank. They described

themselves as 'very middle of the road'. When their parents had looked for a house, it had to be within walking distance of the shul, when their turn came 'the house had to be near the Falkirk Road ... we had a business and the shop was open on Saturday'. I wondered whether the Edinburgh Community was very different from the Falkirk one. Joe mused 'Jews are the same all over'. In a more serious vein, Freda admitted that if she were young now, she wouldn't stay in Edinburgh but would move to Manchester or Leeds in search of a more Jewish environment. She thought that not all change had been for the worse but that things were just different now. She laughed when recalling AGMs of former years 'When all the shul meetings used to be blood and thunder and everything was an issue'. She recalled several stalwarts 'If they objected to something in the balance sheet they stood up and yelled. If

they objected to something that had happened during the year they stood up and yelled. There were no inhibitions'. At this year's AGM Bill Simpson had tried to suggest that Council minutes be made available to all members. The idea was shouted down but Freda thought the proposal was a good one inasmuch as no one knows on what basis to vote for the candidates as no one knows what views they hold. Joe seemed to think it was quite simple, every one voted for their friends!

The tea was finished and we were all getting tired. I left thinking that whilst I hadn't quite got the article I intended to write, I had spent a lovely time in the delightful company of two people who had obviously weathered all the storms they had encountered, who took pride in their children and five grandchildren and clearly enjoyed each other's company after 42 years of marriage. Long may it continue!

CHEDER PRIZEGIVING

At the prizegiving on 27th June, Elaine Samuel was pleased to report that this year after years of decline 27 children were enrolled in the Cheder, a slight increase on the previous year. The new children 'tried and liked it and stayed'. The youngest class of 10 children do a lot of imaginative and creative work while at the top end of the school three children who had stayed on post Bar and Batmitzvah had studied Jewish history, the roots of anti-Semitism and modern Hebrew. Elaine very much hopes that other parents of Jewish children in Edinburgh will bring them along next year. She praised the excellent qualities of the teachers and their assistants: Lesley Danzig, Judy Gilbert, Nic Cohen, Susie Shenkin helped by Elliott Cowan, Aaron Raffel and Jonathan Mason.

Rachel Dorfman presented prizes to all the children. The most difficult part of the proceedings being how to shake hands and get a hold of your prize. One youngster, having negotiated this hurdle, proudly



photo J. Gilbert

Shaking hands and getting a prize from Rachel Dorfman while head teacher applauds.

waved the prize aloft for her parents to see. I would say they were a pretty happy crowd. Thankfully the days of children being slapped for failing to

learn are in the past.

This event was followed by the picnic at Bonaly Scout camp.

JMM

CHEDER PICNIC

by Judy Gilbert

Only Joyce seemed to know where she was going so with utter confidence we followed our leader, heading off in the direction of Bonaly recreation centre for the annual Cheder picnic. On arrival, we created minor pandemonium as parking near enough to our final resting spot with half a hundred weight of food and drink was not as straightforward as we had anticipated. The road leading up to the park was narrow and by the time our line of ten or so cars had reached the top we discovered there was nowhere left to park. Other visitors had decided this was the moment they would come down in the other direction. I must say the sight of a furious face drawing level with mine and pointing out the error of my ways – at least I think that was the gist of it – did rather hurt my feelings.



Cheder Picnic

photo J. Gilbert

We did eventually manage to park and, while several adults staggered with various picnic and sports items, the children ran, hopped and skipped ahead to a suitable spot in the field. As ever, the fare was delicious and plentiful. After the first of several eating sessions was over the children could let off steam in the adventure playground set in the woods on the perimeter of the field.

A little later, when the second eating session was over the Cheder Games

commenced. There were races which everyone took in good part, even the lag-behinds. Once the adults had finished making fools of themselves nearly everyone took part in an energetic game of rounders. Such exertions lead naturally to a need to stoke the boilers yet again. After the lollies had run out and people had relaxed in the beautiful sunshine that graced us that day, they began to take leave of what had been another successful Cheder picnic outing.

photo M. Merrick

WIZO REPORT by Kate Goodwin

photo M. Merrick



Katie Goodwin and Hilary Rifkind dressed to grill for the WIZO barbecue.

Our fundraising year began in the middle of the Festival with our Theatre and Supper Evening at the Playhouse to see Ruby Wax followed by supper at Goodwin's. Fifty of us spent a most enjoyable evening and raised £315.

Our Ladies Buffet on 17 March included a most interesting talk by Dr Cheri Martin with the very popular topic 'Don't diet, it makes you fat'. Our vegetarian menu was most delicious and Dr Martin left us all with plenty to think about.

May 22 saw us back at the Playhouse to see *Present Laughter* on its pre-London run, with a most sparkling cast



Guess how many kneidlach?

Eva Thomson, Rachel McKean and Wendy Goldberg ask Elaine Samuel and

John Cosgrove at the barbecue at the Goodwins in May

including Tom Conti and Jenny Seagrove in the main parts. Supper afterwards with a lucky dip made for a good evening.

June 4 – our Annual Summer WIZO Lunch now in its twentieth year. We made £500 and for the first time had a barbeque. WIZO struck lucky with the weather and tables were set in the garden which is always such a treat. The children enjoying the freedom of run and eat at the same time.

We thank our ever loyal supporters for their continued interest in our efforts and are proud to report that again we have fulfilled our quota of

£3,000. This sum is made up of not only events, but includes Jewish Women's Week, profit from the WIZO shop and membership money.

Our own joint project is the creche in Demona which continues to thrive and be even more needed as the Russian immigrants continue to find their way to Israel and need support and help to settle into their new life.

My very warmest thanks to the helpers who, without fail, pull out all the stops when needed and rustle up delicious things which we now all come to expect and are the hallmark of WIZO functions.

A LA RECHERCHE DU TEMPS REVOLU : AN EDINBURGH CHILDHOOD

by *Rosalind (Adelman) Landy*

At a tender age, six, as I recall, I was sent to Cheder in Sciennes Road. I remember the funny letters of the Reshit Da'at and how I wondered how our Rebbe knew, without looking, when we got the letters wrong. Mr Rubenstein was this wonderful teacher, and of course he knew the combinations and permutations of the letters in the book. He had been teaching for years and had even taught my parents! That was the 'business' side of Cheder but the other aspects were fun too. High on the list of memories must be the late Louis Gordon who somehow got money from his lovely parents to go to the cinema about once a week and he would then re-enact the plot of the movie for us. So well did he do this, that we had no need to see the film.

Then there were all the friendships and the small group of frum kids, the 'crowd' as we called it, who did everything en masse, Shabbat walks, the Jewish Choir, Habonim, Maccabi meetings, tea sessions in houses, frequently at Fanny and Simmy Levinson's and sometimes at the Fluss home (Avigdor and Feigy). This crowd once planned and executed the adventure of leaving the Cheder building (then in Duncan Street) after the caretaker had locked up and gone. The idea was to shimmy down a drainpipe. Alas, I was absent from Cheder on the day as I had flu. But my father next day came home and punished me. When I asked what for, he explained that the Shul caretaker had been called out after hours to deal with a window flapping in the breeze. He knew that he had left it closed and we were the live wires of the Cheder, it could only have been us. When I pointed out to my father that I'd been away sick, he reposted: 'but you would have done it had you been there' which was true.

I do recall with some amusement the Purim prize giving and play which was of course an annual event. One year I was in the play and

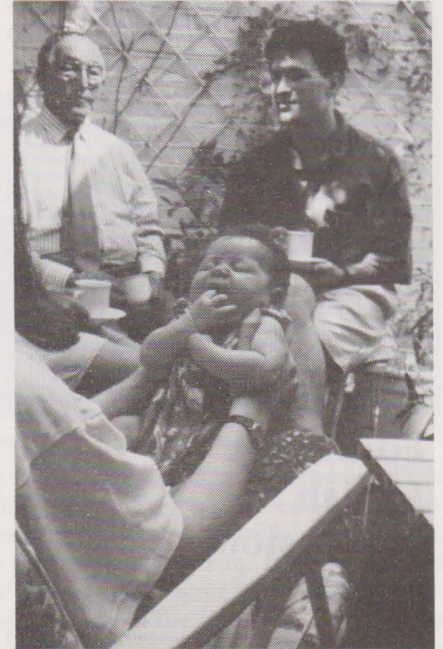
carefully gave very vague answers to my late mother about my role. She was convinced her daughter would be Esther, and in fact, to my great delight, I was quite the opposite, a bad guy, one of Haman's henchmen. It was the disguise and the plotting and the secrecy which were such fun. Mother was not amused.

Our Rabbi then was Isaac Cohen, later Chief Rabbi of Ireland, who made sure that Jewish life in Edinburgh was strong and positive; so it was a good time to be growing up. He was keen on Chinuch, uncompromising halachically, and frequently held open house for students on Friday nights and Chagim. As Judaism is so much based in the home, this was a real example and encouragement.

We all realised that the crucible that was Edinburgh would form us, as in *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, and that we would then leave and set up camp elsewhere because Edinburgh was numerically too small even then. And so it was. Sonia Levinson ('Edinburgh Star', No 10) married Aaron Cohen and went on Aliyah. Ruth Lowenthal married Barry Fluss, Edwin Hoffenberg married a Glasgow girl, Doreen, and both couples went on Aliyah. Mervyn Warner married after his education at Gateshead Yeshivah and then lived in London and Israel, and I married Barry Landy and went to live in Cambridge.

Time moves on. We are, perhaps, more grown up. Some of us are grandparents. We are a dispersed bunch, though largely the diaspora is in reverse since most of the group are in Israel. The common factor is Edinburgh and wherever we are and whenever we meet, our memories of growing up in Edinburgh are fresh in our hearts and minds and we are grateful for the education, training and care we received when we were young in Edinburgh's Jewish Community.

To those who remain, lang may yer lums reek.



The author's father, Barnet Adelman with grandson and great granddaughter, Landy

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THE ALYN CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL CONCERT

A pleasant summer's afternoon was enjoyed by an enthusiastic group of supporters of the Alyn Children's Hospital, Jerusalem, when they were entertained by two of Edinburgh's most talented pianists, Kathleen Dyne and Jo Barlow, on Sunday, 13 June.

On the programme were works by Enrique Granados, Alberto Ginastera, Claude Debussy, Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms.

The concert raised £240 and the

Alyn Children's Hospital Committee would like to thank all those who supported this worthwhile cause.

The money raised at the piano recital was part of a donation sent recently by the Scottish Friends of Alyn. We have heard since that the money has been earmarked to purchase pressure cushions at Alyn. These will significantly improve the children's comfort and be a help to those caring for them.

Valerie Simpson, Dorothe Kaufman

Edinburgh Jewish Discussion Group

The Discussion Group, now well into its second year, has continued to prove popular and successful. It caters for an often-neglected section of our community: postgraduate students and the younger members of the Edinburgh workface.

We are continually developing; now hosting not only informal discussions on many topics of Jewish interest in people's homes but also educating ourselves about the festivals by holding Tu B'Shvat and Third Pesach Sedorim. Social aspects have not been neglected, with theatre outings, a local ghost walk, quiz evenings and the occasional tour of the historic public houses of Edinburgh, proving thoroughly enjoyable.

We have now formed a link with a similar group in Glasgow which has provided us with several interesting meetings and social events in the 'other city' and we hope to continue a friendly relationship in the future.

This year we intend to become a real, organised organisation and hold our first AGM. We are always delighted to see new members and are open to suggestions from all members, new and old. Please feel free to get in touch.

Carole Brown (treasurer) 332 2598

AGM of the EDINBURGH HEBREW CONGREGATION

Election results

Joshua Lurie retired after 27 years service on the council. Two new members, Laurence Bowman and John Danzig, were elected and replace him and Ian Brodie. These are the only changes to the council this year, greater changes can be expected at next year's AGM. Be sure not to miss it.

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SELLING YOUR HOME?

ON RESPECT, REBELS AND REMUNERATION

by Ian Shein

Taken from the records of The Minutes of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation

4 December 1920

The President on behalf of the Council congratulated Mr E. H. Furst on his having been appointed a Justice of the Peace for the City of Edinburgh

27 June 1921

A report from the 'Evening News' was circulated. It stated:

A quaint Jewish ceremony, the first of its kind in Scotland, took place at the Jewish section of Piershill Cemetery when a large number of Hebrew books, scrolls of the Law, phylacteries and utensils used in the Synagogue for sacred purposes and which are now of no further use were publicly buried. According to Jewish custom, holy books and religious appurtenances must not be disposed of except by burial, in order both to prevent their being misused or treated without respect and also to secure their preservation. In Edinburgh the Jewish community is about 100 years old and the immediate cause of the ceremony was the amalgamation of the three Jewish Synagogues into one Congregation. The sale of one Synagogue, which contained many books etc. made it necessary to solve the problem of storing these relics and it was decided that they should be buried according to the Law. Rabbi Dr S Daiches and the Rev J Teitelman presided.

30 August 1925

The President intimated that on Shabbath 12 September the youngest son of Rabbi Dr and Mrs Daiches would become Barmitzvah and it was resolved that a presentation be made at a cost of 30 shillings.

~ • ~

25 September 1892

At today's Council meeting, a proposal was read out from the Chief Rabbi, Dr H Adler, which he desired Congregations to adopt. This stated that:

The proposition that the evening Service at the termination of the Day of Atonement be not read publicly cannot be entertained. It must be admitted that the arrangement that has hitherto obtained, is of a most unsatisfactory character. In many Synagogues, the Maariv is read whilst the majority of congregants are quitting the place of worship or noisily preparing to do so. In those Synagogues where the bulk of congregants remain, the Prayer is

read as a rule with unseemly haste. I am therefore extremely anxious to devise a remedy for this lack of decorum, which mars our solemnation of this most sacred day. With this view, I propose that the sounding of the Shofar be deferred until after 'Olinyu'.

The evening Service is to be commenced some little time before nightfall by the same reader who has officiated at Neila, and it is to be read with the same solemnity and impressiveness as the other Services of the day. The reader must be careful not to say Havdolah until after nightfall. The entire Service is then to conclude with the Shofar and the closing of the Ark.

21 November 1920

A letter was read from a member of the Congregation stating that he desired to bring to the notice of the Council the conduct of a congregant whose behaviour was 'unfitting a member of the community especially in view of the fact that this person is a member of the School Board Committee. I am of the opinion that it would be to the advantage of the community generally that he should be removed from any official position he may hold'.

14 November 1922

It was brought to the notice of the Council that some irregularity had been discovered at the AGM election last week. The Council considered the matter and were not quite satisfied. They therefore unanimously resolved to resign en bloc and ordered a new election to take place at the adjourned AGM meeting on Sunday first.

10 June 1923

The Warden of the Central Synagogue reported that a member of the community had refused to recognise his authority when called upon to observe decorum during Divine Service. The Secretary was instructed to write to the member on the subject.

31 July 1927

The President, Mr S. S. Stungo, reported with reference to a complaint by Rev Ordman of alleged discourtesy on the part of a congregant. The circumstances were submitted by Rev Ordman and the congregant to Rabbi Dr Daiches and as a result, an apology had been

received by Rev Ordman.

9 September 1928

The Secretary intimated that a letter had been sent to a member of the Congregation after the latter had allegedly, during or immediately following the Sabbath Service, employed unseemly language in making a reference to one of the Wardens at the Beth Hamedrash. (Subsequently the member approached the President and apologised for his conduct towards the Warden.)

~ • ~

15 September 1918

The Secretary, Mr A. Phillips, reported that he had received a letter from the choir boys requesting payment for their services and stating further that 'should the answer be unsatisfactory, we are afraid that under these circumstances we shall be compelled to discontinue rendering our services to the Congregation'. It was resolved to make a payment of 5 shillings (25p) to each of the fourteen choir boys.

13 March 1921

The Treasurer, Mr P. Lucas, reported that the overdraft at the bank now exceeded £300 and intimated that he could not make any further payments. He considered that the present financial position of the Congregation was very serious and desired that the Council should take immediate steps to remedy the position. (At a subsequent meeting, the matter was fully discussed and the question of a reduction of salary of the officials was considered.)

21 August 1921

The President intimated that he was informed by the bank that the overdraft exceeded £500. In order to meet the salaries, he had paid into the bank £10 of his own money. He stated that he expected a further overdraft of another £20 would be required to meet the salaries for the next few weeks and that he was prepared to advance that amount until Rosh Hashanah.

(Our current President wishes to point out that he has neither the desire, nor the inclination, nor the intention to emulate his predecessor with regards to this item!)

B'TSELEM : THE ISRAELI INFORMATION CENTER

by Laurie

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why is B'Tselem concerned with human rights violations against Palestinians and not violations against Israelis?

Certainly B'Tselem cares about Israeli victims. It condemns the violation of any individual's rights, be they Israeli or Palestinian. B'Tselem was formed specifically to address Israeli violations against Palestinians because, as individuals living under occupation, they are not protected by the same developed state apparatus that safeguards the rights of Israeli citizens. Legislative, executive and judicial authority rests in the hands of the military authorities, with security concerns often dominating the welfare of the civilian population. B'Tselem serves as a watchdog organisation to uphold their rights.

Doesn't B'Tselem's work weaken Israel's position against terrorist acts?

B'Tselem believes that Israel, just as any other state, must take whatever legal steps are needed to protect the safety of its citizens. In so doing, however, it cannot violate the rights of others who have never been charged or convicted of any criminal activity. When Israel engages in such practices as collective punishment, it is violating such fundamentally and universally accepted standards.

How does B'Tselem verify the information it receives?

B'Tselem fieldworkers, as well as official Israeli sources and Palestinian sources, together provide much of the information the organisation uses to publish its reports on human rights violations. Prior to publication, each report is submitted to the Israeli Defense Force, both to apprise them of the information gathered and to allow them to respond.

And God created man in His image.
In the image of God did He create him.
Man and woman He created them.
(Genesis 1:27)

For nations throughout the world, these words have provided the inspiration for the struggle to defend human rights. They are echoed in the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 'All human beings are born equal in dignity and human rights'. And they are the source of the word 'b'tselem' from Genesis, which means 'in the image of' and names one of Israel's human rights advocacy groups. Founded on a commitment to human rights for every person, regardless of race, religion or gender, B'Tselem - the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories stands as an important watchdog group which aims to preserve the humanitarian nature of the State of Israel.

Discovering the country's conscience

B'Tselem was founded in February 1989 by a group of lawyers, doctors, academics, journalists, public figures and Knesset members. Tensions and confrontations in the territories at that time called attention to the ways in which maintaining the occupation affected not only the Palestinians living there but also the democratic nature of Israeli society. Thus, the founders of B'Tselem sought to create a non-partisan, non-political organisation to inform citizens, politicians and authorities about violations of human rights committed in their name. Four years later, B'Tselem is an internationally-recognised Israeli human rights organisation, with more than 30 reports produced and distributed regarding policies enacted by Israel in the West Bank and Gaza.

The standards of conduct which B'Tselem believes Israel should uphold in order to preserve human rights emanate from international conventions, charters and agreements, as well as local Israeli law. The Fourth Geneva Convention, for example, protects the rights of individuals who come under an occupying force, especially during times of war. It restricts actions which assault human dignity, including humiliating and degrading treatment, imprisonment without trial, deportation and forms of collective punishment.

Israel is a signatory to all of the Geneva Conventions and has agreed to accept the humanitarian aspects of the Fourth Geneva Convention. By recognising its responsibility to preserve the fundamental dignity of the individual, Israel has acknowledged the principled, moral, ethical and democratic reasons for preserving the human rights of all members of society under its control. After all, the custom of respecting and protecting the stranger in one's midst is one of the strongest in Jewish tradition. It is stated many times in the Bible and never expressed with qualifications.

B'Tselem is founded on the understanding that people have the right to live their lives and engage in the most fundamental of human activities, such as living with a spouse, reading a book of their choosing, or expressing their opinions. Sadly, Israel does not live up to this promise. For example, a Palestinian man who marries abroad cannot bring his wife back to the territories; family reunification is regarded as a privilege, not a right, by Israeli authorities. This is not the case for most countries of the world, even those with strict immigration policies.

Legal dictums, both international and Israeli, explicitly prohibit inflicting pain against individuals while they are detained or incarcerated. Certainly Israel's practices are not on a par with those of some third-world countries

FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Gross

and many of its neighbours in the Middle East. Neither are they the ideal models that a democratic nation would wish to use for direction in such affairs. B'Tselem contends that violations of human rights erode the country's capacity to develop democratic institutions, respect for the law and tolerance for others. Thus, through its activities, B'Tselem aims not only to uphold the human rights and respect the basic dignity of the Palestinians but also that of Israel.

Watching for signs of improvement

Independent fieldworkers and investigators, as well as official Israeli sources and Palestinian sources, together provide much of the information the organisation uses to publish detailed and up-to-date information on human rights issues in the occupied territories. In addition, such information is crucial to B'Tselem's ability to follow policy changes, encourage involvement of the Israeli public in the struggle for human rights and provide assistance whenever possible.

The organisation's efforts are carried out by a small staff and numerous volunteers. Reports have addressed such issues as house-sealing and demolition; the system of taxation in the territories; school closures; and discriminatory law enforcement. All findings are conveyed to the relevant authorities - including the Internal Defense Forces (IDF), Israeli National Police, Defence Ministry and State Comptroller's Office - both to apprise them of the information collected and to allow them to respond. In addition, the national and international press quote B'Tselem extensively.

The inauguration of a Labor-led coalition in Israel in 1992 and the initiation of peace negotiations following the Gulf War brought a hopeful spirit of change to the country. Nevertheless, human rights violations in the territories have not been curtailed and, in some cases, have worsened.

Of particular concern is the noticeable trend toward an increase in fatalities of Palestinian children. B'Tselem will focus on this issue in its first public campaign, co-ordinating activities that allow individuals, as well as members of other Israeli human and civil rights organisations, to become involved in raising public awareness. Around Israel, participants will distribute information, encourage individuals to send personalised postcards to members of the Knesset and speak to the public and press about the need to change open-fire orders which will prevent other killings of children.

Preparing for change

In the long run, success in the peace negotiations could encourage a reduction in human rights violations by the Israeli government as it hands over areas of responsibility to the Palestinians. Still, Israel's current commitment to the peace process does not diminish the duty to uphold its human rights obligations to the Palestinians in the interim. Moreover, progress on the political front is expected to increase the prospects for violence between settlers and Palestinians in the territories when and if there is a transition to autonomy in the territories. B'Tselem anticipates that it will monitor and respond to such developments as they occur.

The hope will always be that the need for an organisation such as B'Tselem will cease to exist. But as long as activities are carried out - in the name of the people of Israel - that threaten the democratic and moral nature of the country, B'Tselem will continue to play a leading role in exposing such practices and pressing for ways to change them.

Laurie Gross is currently an intern at B'Tselem in Jerusalem. In September, she returns to New York to complete graduate studies at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, where she specialises in the Middle East.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How is B'Tselem received in Israel?

Much of B'Tselem's activities are geared toward pressing for greater government accountability in protecting human rights in the occupied territories. Thus, it is not surprising that the organisation's reports have generated far-reaching debate and attention in Israel from citizen and public official alike. While Israelis may not always like what B'Tselem has to say, as a public watchdog agency, the organisation is obligated to provide information that is not often available from other sources. In this way, B'Tselem helps to fulfil an important responsibility of the citizenry of any democracy: to be aware of the actions being taken by its government.

How is the organisation funded?

B'Tselem is funded through individual Israeli supporters, as well as through contributions by public and family foundations from the United States and Europe

Is B'Tselem a political organisation?

B'Tselem is a non-political, non-partisan organisation. It makes recommendations based on international law and treaties, as well as local Israeli law.

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and
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A PERSONAL VIEW *by Joanna Sofaer*

Almost all the tourist guidebooks and brochures that I have ever read about Israel (and I've read a lot of them) refer to Israel as 'A land of contrasts'. This well worn cliché seems to be inseparable from glossy pamphlets with pictures of the Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock and children smiling ecstatically on a kibbutz. Yet, this phrase may be one of the most accurate statements currently in print about Israel. Perhaps it is only a healthy cynicism, but it seems extremely ironic that tourist brochures should contain a kernel of truth among the advertisements that is more relevant today than much of the verbose and biased news coverage that is regularly broadcast about this country in the British media.

I certainly do not want to imply that everything is as rosy in the garden as the Israeli Tourist Board would have us believe. Living here it becomes obvious that Israel and the Israelis wake up every morning to a multitude of challenges. The land of milk and honey is abundant in more ways than one. By this I mean that just the contentious issues surrounding the 'hot' topic of territorial compromise or the current state of the Middle East Peace Talks, or the impact that the absorption of literally millions of new Olim is having on the society or even the problems that the new immigrants themselves face daily. Israeli society is a palimpsest of cultural and religious diversity, political viewpoints and generations that is young and developing. It is a Middle Eastern country with a Western identity crisis.

In a recent survey reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, a number of Israelis were asked about their identity. Did they feel more Jewish or Israeli? The older respondents replied that they felt more Jewish whereas the majority of the younger respondents felt Israeli first, even though the study of the Bible is mandatory at all schools until matriculation. These results may be surprising to those in the diaspora for whom Israel is the Jewish homeland and thankfully Israel still very much fulfils this role.

What this survey may show is that while young Israelis have certainly not forgotten the unique circumstances surrounding the birth of the state, how can they when they are constantly reminded of their history, they are the product and symbol of its successful evolution from a scattered nation into a state with a justified sense of the need to protect their homes.

Israel and Israeli society are fascinating creatures. Life on a kibbutz with its daily routines, sense of community (and associated gossip!) is totally different from the hectic organised chaos of Tel Aviv or slightly rarified atmosphere of Jerusalem. These in turn are different from the stunning, bleak beauty of the Negev. Each of these are different Israels, yet they are intrinsic parts of the whole. Those who come to visit for the 'Israel experience' and spend a few weeks or months in the country will certainly go away with something that they will remember for the rest of their lives. However, for those who stay longer or choose to make it their home the learning process never ceases, if only because of the changing nature of Israel itself.

A slowly increasing knowledge of Hebrew and travel around Israel are permitting me gradual insights but I shall consider it a pleasure and a privilege to continue to learn and experience this 'land of contrasts'.

The writer is currently doing postgraduate work at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and has lived in Israel since July 1992.



Joanna Sofaer with her Russian born fiancé Kirill Devevski.

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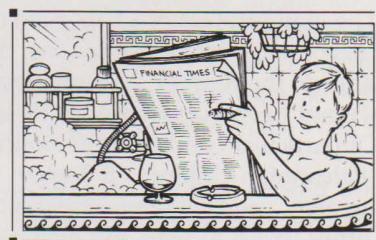
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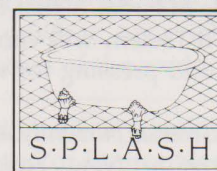
BATHTIME TALES NO 1



Nigel stags a bull

It had been a long day. The money market was up but Nigel's mood was anything but. He closed the bathroom door and turned the tap, noticing the satisfying touch of antique gold plated fittings. He lay back, the water gently lapping round the beautiful porcelain bath. It felt like a very expensive haven, designed with utmost style and taste. Life looked better already. And to think Nirvana could be gained just by visiting Scotland's premier bathroom specialist. Upwardly mobile? Right now Nigel felt wonderfully horizontal – and with his complete suite costing a mere trifle who could question his watertight business position?

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CBF WORLD JEWISH RELIEF

This year the CBF celebrates 60 years of assisting refugees. David Isaacson describes how it has tried to help Jews from Yugoslavia and what still remains to be done. Although they have not been subjected to 'ethnic cleansing', conditions for life in Sarajevo have been so appalling that many have had to flee.

JMM

SUPPORT FOR THE JEWS OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Rescue

In April 1992, when the Yugoslav civil war reached the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo, the CBF was quick to act. Of pre-war Sarajevo's 1,200 Jews, 200 were immediately airlifted to the safety of Belgrade. Rescue efforts peaked at the beginning of August 1992 when the three warring factions signed an historic agreement initiated by the CBF to allow Sarajevo's Jews to leave the war-torn city. Within two weeks, three groups of refugees totalling several hundred people had reached various sanctuaries in Croatia.

In November, a further 80 Jews were in a party of 350 Sarajevo refugees rescued by the CBF, together with the CBF's transatlantic cousin, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The Jewish evacuees were accommodated by friends or family in Croatia. In the longer term, many decided to seek asylum in the West or in Israel.

By the end of 1992, the majority of Sarajevo's Jews had been rescued. While the community's leaders heroically remained to look after the sick and elderly, and to maintain a Jewish presence that goes back hundreds of years. A number of 'Jews of the Shadows', who did not previously identify with the community, 'came out' as Jews.

Relief

In the past year, CBF World Jewish Relief has done its utmost to meet the refugees' immediate needs, sending several convoys of food, medicine, blankets and other necessities. The CBF enabled the Sarajevo Jewish Community Centre's relief kitchen to distribute 200 hot meals per day, and in Croatia the CBF funded the accommodation, food, clothing and indeed the very survival of Jewish refugees from Sarajevo.

Asylum Seekers in the UK

In the latter half of 1992, approximately 100 Sarajevo men, women and children sought asylum in the UK.

'We are now spending £35,000 per month to support the refugees', said CBF chairman Harry Kleeman. 'In 1993, the CBF's 60th Anniversary year, this campaign is going to be our top priority. This is a crisis of the utmost urgency'.

'The refugees arrived with no money, virtually no clothes and (for usually six months) they are not allowed to work. Many of them need to learn English. They need all the everyday things that you and I take for granted'.

Some of the refugees are Holocaust survivors, all have been traumatised by the civil war. While they await clearance from the Home Office to remain in the UK, the CBF meets their immediate needs - housing, clothes, food, transport, English classes, medical and dental treatment and pocket money.



Jews in Yugoslavia

photo: John Nathan

The CBF Job Club helps Jewish refugees negotiate the pitfalls of looking for work by providing resources such as a telephone, photocopier, directories and newspapers. Where possible, the CBF also encourages the needy to realise their Judaism. Last Pesach, for example, the CBF provided matzot for asylum-seekers' Seder tables.

In the words of one Bosnian now in the UK: *'The CBF put the coat on my back and the shoes on my feet. But it is hard to recover from anarchy'.*

Despite the problems of its beneficiaries' dislocation, CBF World Jewish Relief is doing its utmost to give the Jewish victims of Bosnia's civil war every opportunity to rebuild their lives.

David Isaacson Public Relations Director

Times Change... Needs Do Not

In 1933, we helped to provide Jewish refugees with sanctuary in the UK.

In 1993, we are still caring for the Jewish victims of conflict in Central Europe.

Jewish refugees arrive in the UK with neither money nor possessions.

They depend on the community's support.

Your donation, covenant or legacy will help our people to rebuild their lives.



CBF World Jewish Relief
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JEWES AMONG CONFLICT

Marcus Tanner reported in "The Independent" on Friday, 30 July in an article entitled 'Synagogue offer radio lifeline' what the courageous Jews who have remained in Yugoslavia are doing. Although the text is worth reprinting in its entirety I have selected a few quotes beginning with one which contains a stoical remark by radio operator Dejan Stojnic.

JMM

'For thousands of Muslims, Serbs and Croats, as well as Jews, Sarajevo's synagogue radio is the only link with relatives outside the besieged city. "A typical message is we have no food, no water, no power, but are well," laughed Dejan.

...

'While Dejan runs the radio link with Zagreb and Belgrade upstairs, in the hall downstairs a hungry crowd wait for the soup kitchen which feeds 320 people daily. In the office of Ivica Ceresnjes, the Jewish Community President, petitioners seek medicine, food and help with sending messages to wives and children outside the city. Over the road, customers crowd the Jewish pharmacy - the best stocked in Sarajevo - from morning to night....The community use their

position as relative outsiders in Bosnia's conflict to bring aid to Sarajevo. Alongside the kitchen and the radio room, La Benevolencia (Bosnia's Jewish charity, headed by Jakob Finci) supplies 40 per cent of all medicines used in Sarajevo. The latest project is to bring in 130 wheelchairs. None will be given to Jews. Most will be for Muslims, a fact of which Jakob is proud. "Many Muslims in Sarajevo sheltered Jews from the Nazis in the war. I cannot forget this fact."

....

'The fighting has divided Bosnian Jews. Jews in central Sarajevo can speak to friends in Zagreb and Belgrade, but not to 25 Jewish families a few hundred yards away in the Serbian controlled suburb of Grbavica. Jakob cannot even visit his parents' grave - the old Jewish cemetery lies on the Serb front line. One consolation is that none of the factions in Bosnia blame the Jews. "For the first time in a long cruel history the Jews are not guilty," Jacob said.

....

'Bosnian Jews cherish their Spanish heritage...When the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia in 1941, Germans came looking for the Hagadah. The Croatian manager of the museum smuggled the book to a Muslim professor who took it to Mount

Mijelasnica near Sarajevo, where Serbs hid it for four years. It is a tale of the tolerant Bosnia of the past. Now the Sarajevo Hagadah is hidden again.'

I am grateful to the Independent for permission to reprint these extracts.

JMM

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MALCOLM RIFKIND REMEMBERS THE 'DISAPPEARED' AND PAYS TRIBUTE TO AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

In a small ceremony in Edinburgh on Friday, 28 May, the Rt Hon. Malcolm Rifkind paid tribute to the work of Amnesty International. The date has been designated Forget-me-not Day to mark the founding of the movement by the British lawyer Peter Benenson in 1961 by an article in the Observer entitled The Forgotten Prisoners. This year the day was used to reflect on and remember the 'disappeared'. The event took place in the magical setting of Dr Neil's garden. The Drs Neil (a husband and wife team) took on the challenge of the garden over twenty years ago when they lost their allotment. It was a piece of wasteland belonging to the Church of Scotland and over the years they have created an idyllic haven.

The Defence Secretary spoke to a gathering of Amnesty supporters and said that Amnesty had made considerable achievements in three areas. First, there was incontrovertible evidence that campaigns on behalf of individual prisoners had often resulted in their release, sometimes after weeks and even months had passed, but nevertheless as a direct result of pressure brought to bear by Amnesty members. Second, the movement had played a significant part in educating people about human rights and in raising awareness about human rights violations throughout the world. Third, even in cases where individuals remained in the most dire situations of imprisonment and torture, Amnesty often succeeded in bringing a message of hope. In conclusion Malcolm Rifkind reminded those present of one of the world's most famous 'disappeared', Raoul Wallenberg who had succeeded in saving hundreds of individuals from the Holocaust and had subsequently disappeared without trace. The Minister had recently met members of Wallenberg's family at the opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington and had thereby come



Ruth Adler introducing the Secretary of State for Defence.

face to face with the agony experienced by relatives and friends of the 'disappeared'. They are in a constant state of limbo, not knowing whether to go on searching for their loved ones or to mourn their death, a state which has been poignantly expressed in the following poem by the Jewish Chilean writer Ariel Dorfman:

Who's that who's that man with Uncle Roberto?
oh honey, that's your father
why doesn't Daddy ever come to see me?
because he can't
is Daddy dead?
is that why he never comes home?
and if I tell her that Daddy is alive
I'm lying
and if I tell her that Daddy
is dead

I'm lying
so I tell her the only thing I can
that isn't a lie:
Daddy never comes home
because he can't.*

Having concluded his speech, Malcolm Rifkind assisted by Ruth Adler planted forget-me-nots in a specially prepared bed overlooking Duddingston Loch. A member of Amnesty who just happens to be a distinguished member of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation was heard to ask somewhat irreverently whether he was pining for the Ministry of Agriculture. Having observed the efficient way in which Edith Rifkind found the perfect venue for the occasion and the way in which her husband handled a spade, I should like to suggest that Agriculture be left to her!

Ruth Adler

Scottish Development Officer for Amnesty International

* This poem was read out by Ruth Adler in a brief introduction to the proceedings.

GERMAN-JEWISH STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

by Edward Timms

When the University of Sussex was founded in the early 1960s, the design of the new curriculum was decisively influenced by David Daiches, an English Literature scholar from an Edinburgh Jewish family. In the book which he edited under the title *The Idea of a New University: An Experiment in Sussex* (1964), Daiches and his colleagues attempted to draw up a 'new map of learning'. The aim was not to produce narrow specialists, but to develop interdisciplinary programmes in the humanities linking History and Philosophy with Literature and Languages. New courses were devised which crossed the boundaries between disciplines and established connections with the wider context of English, American and European Studies.

Since the 1960s many other universities have emulated the Sussex example, particularly through the establishment of Schools of European Studies. At the same time there have been other more radical reforms. What was lacking in that original Sussex map of learning was a clear indication of how the study of dominant cultural formations, for example English Literature or German History, was to be integrated with a recognition of the role of dissenting minorities or marginal ethnic groups. That original humanistic model, for all its merits, was heavily weighted towards the achievements of white male Anglo-Saxon or Protestant authors, from Shakespeare and Goethe to T. S. Eliot and Thomas Mann. It carried with it the implicit assumption that members of minority cultures would sooner or later be assimilated into the dominant tradition.

Since the 1970s this model of education has been modified by the establishment of cross-cultural and multi-racial studies. And the concept of ethnic pluralism has gradually displaced the more traditional nation-centred paradigm. But rather surprisingly, there has been a tendency to play down the

significance of the most long-established of the European ethnic minorities, the Jews. Jewish studies still occupy a marginal position in the curriculum of British universities. A survey of the 'Teaching of Jewish Civilization at British Universities', conducted in 1990 by Dr Sharman Kadish, reached distinctly pessimistic conclusions: 'Apart from Oxford and London, little weight is given to Modern Jewish History and contemporary political issues... Jewish civilization, always a "submerged" discipline at British universities, is being hit badly as a result of current government-initiated retrenchment policies in higher education... It is likely that Jewish Civilization studies will become increasingly dependent on outside funding.'

In my own field of German studies the picture is even more paradoxical. German history since the Enlightenment has been decisively influenced by interactions with the Jewish community: first the painful process of emancipation, then the development during the nineteenth century of an apparently successful form of German-Jewish symbiosis, and finally the virulent anti-semitic reaction which precipitated the Holocaust. But a recent survey of German Departments at British universities has revealed that German-Jewish studies scarcely figure in the curriculum. There may be courses on literary authors like Heine and Kafka, but little attention is paid to the conflict-laden but at the same time often extraordinarily creative interactions in other fields of German-Jewish cultural history.

This forms a striking contrast to the situation in the United States. It is American scholars who have placed 'Holocaust Studies' at the centre of the modern agenda. They have also produced important studies of the experience of survivors, particularly of Jewish refugees who settled in the States. In Britain, by contrast, it is only now, fifty years after the event, that these subjects are really coming

into focus. In proportion to its population, Britain received more refugees from Nazi Germany than any other country. Why has the phenomenon received so little attention? One answer is that in Britain pressures towards social conformity were particularly strong, so that refugees felt obliged to erase the traces of their original identity and adapt to British behaviour patterns. A very different picture developed in the States, where more cosmopolitan social norms allowed the migrants to retain their distinctive subculture. Thus in America there was a far stronger social base for the development of German-Jewish studies.

There are signs, however, that even in Britain this subject is at last being given greater priority. A Research Centre for Germans and Austrians in Exile was set up at the University of Aberdeen in the late 1980s, followed by the London Research Group for German Exile Studies. A symposium held in Cambridge in 1988 led to the publication of *Second Chance: Two centuries of German-speaking Jews in the United Kingdom*, an admirable collection of articles edited by Werner E. Mosse. And in March 1995, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps, the University of Sussex will host a wide-ranging conference on 'The German-Jewish Dilemma'.

This forthcoming Sussex conference forms part of a systematic attempt to give German-Jewish subjects a more prominent position within the School of European Studies. Students majoring in German discover in their very first term that the history of Germany cannot simply be construed in terms of some grand narrative leading to the unification of the modern nation state. Equally significant are the experiences of those excluded from that nation-building process, notably the Jews. A second-year course on German Culture and Politics leads logically enough to the debates

initiated by Theodor Herzl, which resulted in the emergence of Zionism as an organized political movement. Then, in their final year, students may opt for a special subject on German-Jewish Culture and Politics from the Enlightenment to the Holocaust. Here one of the key texts is *The Jews of Germany* by Ruth Gay, a vividly illustrated historical study which emphasizes the achievements of assimilation, as well as the more problematic dimensions of German-Jewish history.

Equally important is the new MA programme in German-Jewish Culture and Politics, which is being launched at the University of Sussex in autumn 1993. This course, which is likely to attract students from Germany and the United States as well as from various parts of Britain, is designed to encourage more specialized study and includes an introduction to archival research. One of the key questions is whether it is justified to speak of a 'German-Jewish symbiosis', for example with reference to the extraordinary achievements of the Jewish communities in Berlin and Vienna around 1900. The course concludes with a study not simply of rise of anti-semitism and the causes of the Holocaust, but also of the subsequent problems of how to represent and commemorate the catastrophe.

As a contribution to this task of commemoration, the University of Sussex has made a grant from its research development fund towards the cost of building up library holdings in German-Jewish studies and establishing an archive. It is hoped that this project will also attract outside support, both in the form of donations of books and papers and in the form of financial sponsorships.

All this may seem to have taken us a long way from David Daiches's original vision of a humanistic education, with English literary studies as the subject of central interest. But Daiches's autobiography, *Two Worlds: An Edinburgh Jewish Childhood* (1987), may serve to remind us that the



Shop-fronts in the Grenadierstraße in Berlin around 1900 illustrate the intertwining of Hebrew and German; an invitation to study German Jewish Culture and Politics and Berlin and Vienna as cultural centres.

characteristic modern experience is not participation in a single dominant culture, but the more complex learning process arising from tensions between competing traditions. The lesson of recent experience not only in Britain and the United States, but even more emphatically in eastern Europe since the collapse of communism, is that the strategy of subordinating ethnic minorities to centralized systems of control is no longer viable. Thus a radically new 'map of learning' is now needed which places a premium on respect for cultural pluralism and the rights of minorities. The study of German-Jewish history may thus have exemplary value. It provides the most spectacular of all warnings about what can go wrong when the project of emancipation becomes subordinated to nationalistic

prejudice and ethnic cleansing.

*Edward Timms is Professor of German in the School of European Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN. He grew up in the south of England during the second World War, and since his schooldays he has been fascinated by the problem of the 'two Germanies': the one enlightened and liberal, associated with the humane values of Lessing and Goethe; the other authoritarian and militaristic, associated with the the power politics of Bismarck and Hitler. The crucial significance of German-Jewish studies became clear to him through his research for his book *Karl Kraus - Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna*.*

PORTUGUESE REVIVAL

Today in Portugal, nearly 500 years after the expulsion of the Jews, there is only a small Jewish population, mainly based in Lisbon. They are now taking an active interest in restoring synagogues and cemeteries with the help of Jews from abroad.

In the shadow of the fortified monastery that dominates the town of Tomar a wonderful synagogue was discovered. It is now in occasional use and services were held on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The synagogue dates from 1438 and the design was inspired by a synagogue at Worms in Germany, with acoustic effects produced by clay pipes set in the corners under the roof.

New communities are appearing and a new synagogue has been built in Belmonte near the Serra da Estrela in the north of Portugal. The Chief Rabbi of France attended the inauguration.

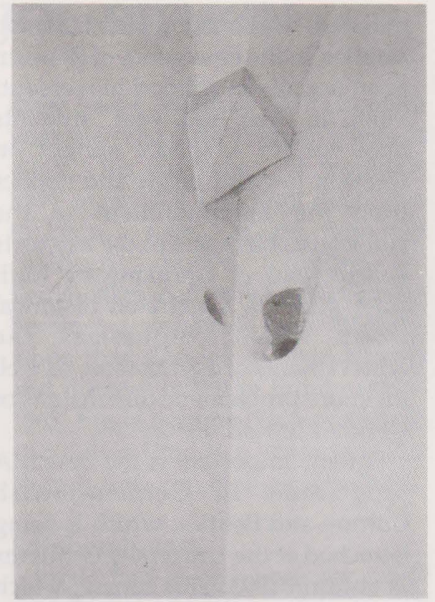
Further south in the Algarve the cemetery of the Faro Jewish community was restored and rededicated in May. The Tahara house has been made into a small museum. President Soares attended the ceremony and planted trees in memory of Aristides de Sousa Mendes. In 1938 this Portuguese diplomat was in Bordeaux where, after listening to the appeal of a Polish Rabbi and against the orders of his government, he issued life-saving visas to many Jews fleeing the holocaust. (Who, I wonder, are the heros of today's ethnic cleansing in Central Europe?) The Faro cemetery is known to date back to one hundred years before these events to the burial of Rabbi Joseph Toledano.

JMM

My thanks to Mr Jack Hammond for sending information.



The Tomar Synagogue



Detail of the accoustic pipes



Laying the foundation stone at Belmonte. Photo call.

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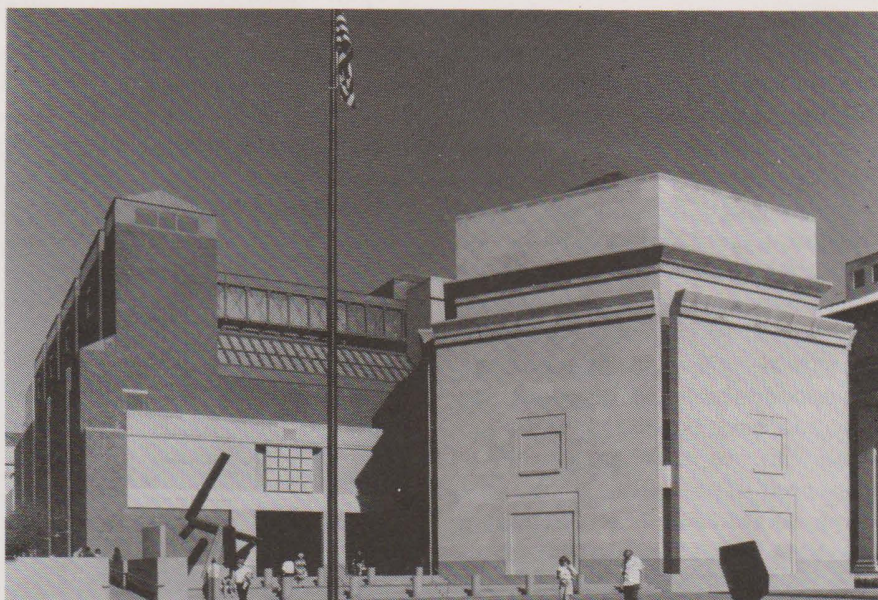
THE HOLOCAUST ON SHOW

As in dreams we see reality distorted, so in Sam Freeth's design for the *Holocaust Memorial Museum* the visitor sees the shapes of guard towers, gates and grilles abstracted and reassembled and subjected to American sunshine. This new museum is set right in the heart of Washington DC. In *The Late Show* on BBC 2 (May 27th) this museum was compared with another new museum the *Museum of Tolerance* in Los Angeles.

The programme reviewed the Washington museum mainly through its outstanding architecture but also addressed the problem which faced the Jewish architect 'How can there be such a museum?'. The sensual impact of the building that is, on the one hand, like a temple, but, on the other, calculated to give a feeling of disorientation, that something is wrong, that choices are being imposed. This is how the architect has tried to recreate the arbitrary decisions of life and death. Comments from Brendan Gill, architectural commentator for the *New York Times* and Michael Sorkin, writer on architecture, were skilfully blended to discuss how the building succeeds in being beautiful and just escapes from being a kitsch recreation of the concentration camp. Sam Freeth is not a camp survivor. He was born in Germany in 1930 and was fortunate to escape the holocaust with other children but without his parents. He is now suffering from Parkinson's disease.

Raye Farr, the exhibition director, describes how the visitor gets an ID card and 'takes that journey' (to the camps and death) step by step. The photographs and the artifacts have been brought from Europe – yes, real rails (from Treblinka) and wagons, even to real ovens. Screens have been built so that only if one wishes does one view the ghastly pictures of people in the camps. However, they serve only to attract the visitors who make a beeline for them. Is this a kind of pornography? the programme asks.

I can only agree with the



15th Street side of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

photo Alan Gilbert

comments of Jonathan Rosen 'It is not primarily historical. History is not interactive in that way; you feel you possess it but the fact is you are as far away from the actual event as you ever were'. I sympathise with the plea of the museum curator 'How otherwise can you understand?' and Sam Freed's expression of the dilemma 'Was it only to refresh the recollection of people about a particular catastrophe and sort of break the hearts again of those people who survived, whose families died in the holocaust or was it to be more general? How can all Americans share some of the emotions of it'. However, I doubt if this museum can achieve its aims as reported by Rosen, after talking with the Museum Director, namely the Americanization of the holocaust and the transformation of what happened to European Jewry into something that would serve as a useful tool for American culture. These aims include teaching the idea that it could never happen here (USA). They were very clear about the opening of the European experience to Americans that teaching Americans will heighten their awareness of the dangers of racism.

The programme producers also invited the comments of this year's

Reith lecturer, Professor Edward Said of Columbia University, emigré to the USA from the Middle East and considered by many a controversial figure. He interprets the museum in this way 'The ideal self-image of America is that we are the beacon unto the nations. Our history and everything connected with it is basically triumphalist. So my understanding of the framing of the holocaust memorial is that this was a defeat for Nazism and that, in a certain sense, the victims have been vindicated by and in America. So the story of American rescue, American recuperation of the suffering of other people can only take place in America because of our nation and our history.' Then he identifies a paradox; because it is in America – not for example Germany or Israel – its intention is universal but its subject is highly specific to the Jewish experience, and as such he does not believe it can have resonance beyond that in America.

This is only the first part of the problem of how we understand enough about racial and religious persecution to be able to prevent it. In Los Angeles the population is very diverse, including blacks, hispanics and Asians and the Simon Wiesental Centre recognised that it was necessary to expand on the lessons

of the Holocaust to reach all other cultures and races and so they have made their new museum the *Museum of Tolerance*. A school teacher explains how many of her children have never heard of the Holocaust and have no links with Europe.

In this high tech. museum the director, Gerald Margolis, shows us how the visitor enters a hands on interactive area, dealing with racism. The programme presented flickering screens in a dismissive manner. We have so little high tech. teaching here it would have been good to see an American example more clearly presented. The message that was being taught came over clearly: we are all prejudiced and can only enter the museum recognising that fact. The LA riots of 1992 have given impetus to the museum and a part of the museum covers the riots and the events before and after. Only after seeing this does one get to the Holocaust area where one meets characters from the past recreated and dramatised on film, such as a waiter and a customer in a European cafe – one a victim of Nazi oppression and one a perpetrator. As in the Washington museum, the visitor can take an ID card and follow the fate of that person. A present day teenager found it a frightening experience. Many people do believe this is a good way to learn about racial and religious intolerance and hope people will examine themselves afterwards but Jonathan Rosen commented that it may not teach people tolerance but that man is evil and that the enlightenment does not exist. He also worries that as a result of seeing the museum people will see Jews as victims, as in fact they were in Europe. The producers did well in this short programme to include so many of the issues raised by this sort of museum. Much more could be said.

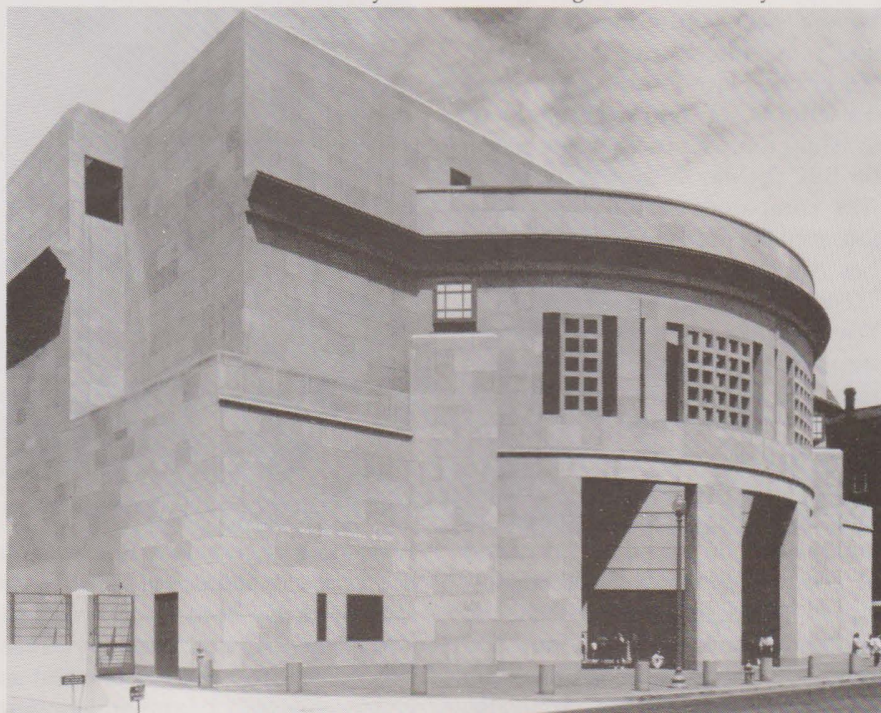
For Sam Freed it is important not to conclude, not to end everything, as he said in his unsteady voice 'I think it is a question of the mystery of the human heart which nobody has been able to fathom. And how can you then close it off and say

"This is it" . You don't, you leave it open-ended'.

JMM

Footnote. Edinburgh Jewry was represented at the opening ceremony outside The Holocaust Memorial Museum by the

Right Honourable Malcolm Rifkind but such is life in Government that he flitted there briefly between visits to the White House and the Pentagon and never saw the museum. I hope he gets the leisure to take a good look one day.



14th Street side of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

photo Alan Gilbert

THE DYKE AND THE DYBBUK

by Ellen Galford, published by Virago at £5.99

Until I read this book I never heard of a dybbuk with a sense of humour. The witches fairies and leprechauns of Celtic folk tales play tricks on us and enjoy a good laugh at our expense. But a dybbuk, I thought, was something else, out of place and out of time. The dybbuk, Kokos, who narrates this novel is more like a leprechaun. She flashes across centuries, with a sharp eye for the foibles of the families that she encounters and a quick-witted repartee to match that of her assignment for this generation, to Rainbow Rosenbloom, a London taxi driver.

The tale starts two hundred years ago at a Hasidic marriage, with a broken promise of sisterhood between Anya the Apostate and the bride. But Kokos does not haunt the bride for long; the Wonder Rebbe, Shmuel ben Issacher, wins the battle and confines her to a tree. At last, when freed from her imprisonment she follows the bride's family to London to carry on her mission. Rainbow, taxi driver and film critic for a gay and lesbian magazine, is the last of the bride's family and the descendants of the ben Issachers

are alive and well in Stamford Hill. The story races along, with the help of the taxi, between Rainbow's friends, the Rosenbloom family seders, with their gaggle of aunts, and the family in Stamford Hill. The 200 year old story comes to a happy ending.

A further thread to the tale is the transformation which has overcome the world of dybbukry while Kokos was imprisoned in her tree. No longer a traditional outfit with leather bound books, it has been transformed into Mephistco Industries, complete with computerised information systems, departmental budgets and concern over its corporate identity.

This book proceeds at a racy pace to pull these very different worlds together into the curious blend of tradition and modernity which can characterise Jewish life today. If you are looking for a novel with subtle characterisation and profound reflections on the fate of the Jewish people, then this book is not for you. But as a lighthearted romp past recent Jewish events it is an entertaining read.

Gillian Raab

ST MUNGO MUSEUM

by Jenni Calder

A museum about the world's religions is a bold venture. How can objects be used to express and explain religious belief? How can sensitive areas of faith be explored without tokenism or offence?

The St Mungo Museum in Glasgow takes three looks at religion. It begins with religious art. A selection of resonant symbolic objects are displayed in a cool, uncluttered space. We turn from a haunting Australian Aboriginal painting to a magnificent Nigerian ancestral screen, from Theseus killing the Minotaur on a black-figure vase to the calm introspection of the Buddha. The things themselves are compelling. But there are problems. One cannot be escaped: the display is housed in a building next to Glasgow Cathedral, and has been designed to echo Christian gothic architecture. One may be looking at a Qing porcelain bowl featuring the Taoist immortals, but the ambience is Christian, and to reinforce this the dominant image is Dali's *Christ of St John of the Cross*.

Contradictory messages are being implied. Scotland has been a distinctively Christian country for most of the historic period, and it therefore seems entirely legitimate that this should be conveyed in an exhibition. However, the apparent aim of the display is to present without bias examples of art inspired by diverse spiritual beliefs. The second difficulty can be ignored if the visitor chooses and I suspect that many visitors do choose: the explanatory labels are very long, very detailed and definitely not reader-friendly. Of course, some information is an important aid to enjoyment and understanding, but these labels include much that has little to do with the subject and sometimes actually interferes with it.

The second part of the exhibition looks at religious life. There is a marked change of tone and style here. The displays are packed, colourful, enlivened with music and written quotes from individuals. They cover a range of topics: growing up, sex and marriage, death and the afterlife, spreading the word,

and hostility, conflict and extermination. There is much of specific interest, yet the display left me dissatisfied.

Part of the reason has much to do with design, which has a racy contemporaneity which will soon date and does not seem appropriate when so much of the subject is concerned with ancient traditions and deep-seated human impulses. But the approach also causes difficulties. By approaching the subject through topics rather than creeds the aim was presumably to emphasise how much different systems of belief have in common. The effect, however, is oddly fragmented and dislocating. I found myself thinking, not how interesting it is that different religions share so much, but how odd and disturbing that so much importance is vested in outward manifestations of spiritual life. I do not think that was the intention.

The disappointment was that there was no attempt to address the roots of the spiritual. I would have preferred religious art presented not as art, but as keys to spirituality. I would have liked to start my experience of a museum of religion by being asked to reflect on the nature of this profound human need.

The third area of the museum features religion in Scotland. This is different again in tone, simpler, more straightforward, less dependent on ingenious graphics. The text is balanced and well-written, and the whole display has a much clearer focus, examining religion in a localised context and tracing the beginnings of Christianity, the Reformation, and the emergence of a multi-faith society, with prehistoric material reminding us that the origins of religious belief are as old as humanity. There are several moments of fascinating congruence – for example, a bishop's mitre side by side with a nineteenth-century ceramic figure of John Knox.

My account of the St Mungo Museum suggests a bold venture that has not succeeded, but I can in fact warmly recommend a visit. As

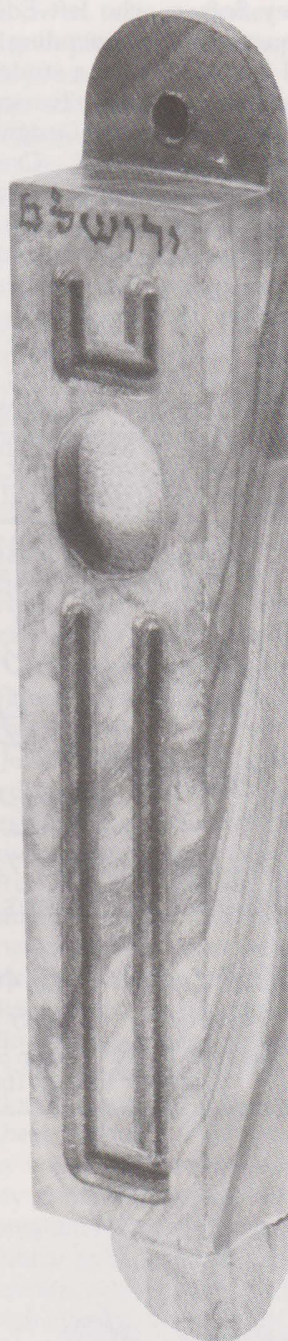


photo: St Mungo Museum

Mezuzah illustrating the Jewish way of life at St. Mungo Museum

war and peace, and so on, with a section presenting six major religions. There is a fascinating diversity of objects and strong visual images. An honest attempt has been made to avoid judgemental comparison and not to dodge the more controversial aspects – hatred

you emerge from the stair on the top floor you look out past the thirteenth-century cathedral to the city's necropolis. Below is the calm and inspiring formality of the Zen garden. This striking juxtaposition of symbols of life and death, faith and hope, struggle and harmony, is both moving and immediate. This vista communicates to me more about the wellsprings of religion than anything contained within the museum's walls.

Jenni Calder is Head of Publications at the National Museums of Scotland and is author of numerous books and articles on literary and historical subjects. As an education officer at the NMS she has lectured on material from many of the world's religions.

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THE PRIZE-WINNING SILVERWARE

Jeffrey Sofaer, who left Edinburgh as a consequence of the impending closure of the Dental School, is now a student on a two-year full-time course in silversmithing at the Kent Institute of Art and Design in Rochester. In the Goldsmiths' Craft Council Competition in February, just a few months after starting his course, Jeff's design for a pair of wall sconces won first prize – enough silver to make the sconces – in the Silversmiths (Senior) Design category. A condition of the award is that the design is made up for showing at the Competition exhibition next year. Jeff plans to set up as an independent designer/maker of silverware at the end of the course – or before if any commissions are forthcoming!

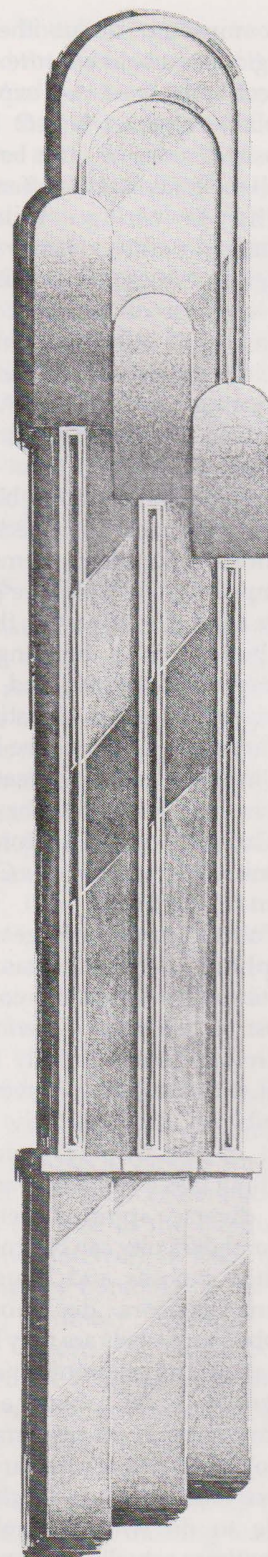
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A silver wall sconce, incorporating an electric light source. The light is channelled up through encased glass slabs to be dispersed by concave reflectors. The three vertical elements recall the traditional three-candle form with the reflectors in place of flames. Low levels of orange light escape through slots in the front of each element



WHO'S IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH?
HABONIM CAMP 1948

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Edinburgh*

Martin and Janis
Abrahams and family

*114 Barnton Park Avenue
Edinburgh*

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Michael and Ruth Adler
Jonathan and Benjamin

9 Warriston Crescent, Edinburgh

Joe and Margaret Aronson

15 Arden Street, Edinburgh

Clarice and Joe Been

*80 Willifield Way
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Shirley and Peter Bennett
Martin and Debbie

5 Oswald Court, Edinburgh

Leslie and Barbara Bennie
Richard and Keren

5 Cammo Place, Edinburgh

Norma Benjamin

48 Arden Street, Edinburgh

Avril and Norman Berger

3 Kirk Park, Edinburgh

Marcia and Lennie Berger
Gillian and Yvonne

19 Springwood Park, Edinburgh

Mr Alex Berger

*3 Grange Crescent
Edinburgh*

Rachelle and Monty
Braverman
and Rhonda Segal

29/1 Cameron March, Edinburgh

Mrs M. Berkengoff

*71 Glendinning Crescent,
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Allen Bloom

*450 Houslaw Avenue
Willowdale, North York, Ontario*

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Bowman, Benjamin,
Jacqueline and Michelle

24 Cammo Grove, Edinburgh

Micheline, Michael, David
and Duncan Brannan

*22 West Preston Street
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Norma and Ian Brodie
Simon and Daniel

60 Telford Road, Edinburgh

Douglas and Rosalind Brodie

*25 Park Crescent
Elstree, Hertfordshire*

Lennie and Elaine Brodie
Nicola, Karen, Russell and
Charlotte

*"Brothaigh", Little Chalfont
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May Brown

121 Rankin Drive, Edinburgh

Christine and David Burns

*Synagogue Chambers
Salisbury Road,
Edinburgh*

Brian and Louise Caine

*48 Greenbank Road,
Edinburgh*

Carmel (Caplan) and
Dov Cohen

Safad, Israel

Esther (Caplan) and
Terry Greenberg

Jerusalem, Israel

Nana and Michael Caplan

*59 Holyrood View
East Crosscauseway, Edinburgh*

Sandra, Sidney and Ian
Caplan

*Andrew and Kathy
30 Duddingston Road West
Edinburgh*

Willie and Betty Caplan

*25 Watertoun Road,
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Reva Cohen and family

Philip and Myra Cohen
Braham and Ruth

*43 Ladysmith Road
Edinburgh*

Best Wishes for a Happy New Year and well over the Fast

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Edinburgh*

Bella Cohen and Charles

*7 St. Catherine's Place
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in memory of
Mrs Genevieve Reid

Kenneth and Irene Collins

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John, Hazel and Nick
Cosgrove

Abby and Joel Korn

Andrea, Malcolm and
Elliot Cowan
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Rosa and Isaac G. Cowen

*31 Braid Farm Road
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Carole and Mickey Cowen
Mark, Gary and Sally

5 Oxfangs Road, Edinburgh

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*18 Swanspring Avenue
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Lionel Daiches, Q.C.

10 Heriot Row, Edinburgh

Lesley, John, Samuel,
Benjamin and Jonathan
Danzig

*13 Argyle Crescent, Joppa
Edinburgh*

Bernard and Irene Davidson

Mary Davidson
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*119/3 Grange Loan
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Fiona and Nigel Davies
and Robbie

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Sylvia and John Donne
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Sylvia and Gerald Glass
Karen and David

Betty and Michael Gold
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19 Marchmont Road, Edinburgh

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"In penitence we address ourselves.

In prayer we address God.

But in Charity we address our fellow Jews.

Tzedakah is the most powerful expression we have of shared responsibility."

Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Let every congregant be a donor

This year, everyone has the opportunity to participate in the Kol Nidre Appeal to help those newly arrived in Israel, our fellow Jews in countries where they face persecution and local communities in the development of their programmes of education.

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