

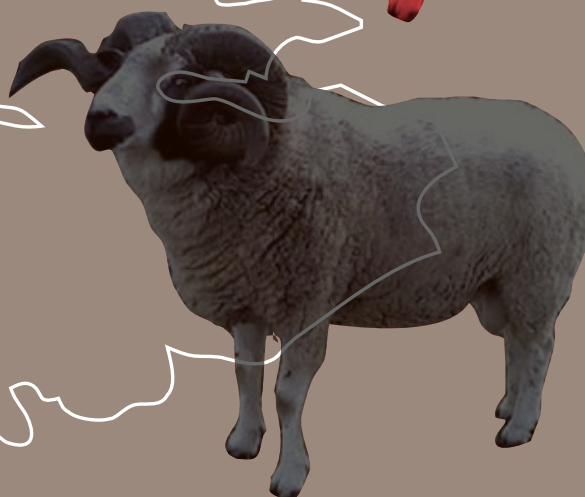
THE EDINBURGH

STAR

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PASCAL POLITICS



THE MAGAZINE FOR THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY



The Edinburgh Star
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Pascal Politics

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From the Editor

We approach the point in our calendar when we remember the deliverance of the Jews from their Egyptian oppressors. How ironic, therefore, that we are holding our breath once more with regard to Israel's future and it's cautious association with this same neighbour.

We cannot deny that Mubarak's thirty years of government has kept a tentative peace between Israel and Egypt. Never-the-less, with 40 % of Egyptians living below, or near, the poverty line, the time recently arrived for his own people to rise up against their economic hardship and his resistance to reform. Attempting to maintain control, he tried to make concessions, regularly purging his ruling party by getting rid of the more unpopular figures. This was still done through rigged elections, but corrupt practices and widespread torture in his police force still persist.

Online Liberal activists called the first major protest, in January. Thousands turned out including the 'Muslim Brotherhood' who, in order to maintain credibility were forced to set aside their hard-line ideology and temporarily had to agree with democratic demands. Three hundred people were killed in pitched battles, but 'people-power' eventually ousted Mubarak from Cairo.

Revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, and the demise of President Mubarak, have inspired a wave of conflicts in Libya, Yemen and Bahrain. As I sit here, daily reports are given on conflicts escalating in Libya. What is most disturbing is anticipating how much influence organisations like the 'The Muslim Brotherhood' will have despite their claims to encourage democratic rule. There is no doubt that there is a connection between this organisation and Hamas. Movements such as the 'Brotherhood' may well promote themselves as lovers of democracy for their own ends, but there lies the danger. Only a little while ago I heard an interview with an official member of that group who, when asked if they would consider recognising Israel as a state, categorically said 'Never'. He is probably not representative of the majority of Egyptians but it is still hard to understand how tyrants, such as Hitler, Stalin and Adi Amin, the ravings of whom many wouldn't have given credence, had somehow managed to turn apparently rational and intelligent people into a nation of unquestioning followers. In Gaddafi's case his maniacal violence keeps his military government in fear of reprisal, should they ever come out on the losing side. If Gaddafi finally keeps control this might give an open invitation, for the seemingly 'benign'

Brotherhood and others like them, to show their teeth. There, then, is the reason for growing fear about the future of Israel.

At this juncture I would also like to express sympathy for all those in the aftermath of the natural but non-the-less devastating earthquake in Japan.

How fortunate we are to be living in such a temperate and democratic environment and the front cover of this issue of the Star reflects the element of democracy in celebration of the Scottish elections. And, while on the subject of decisions, our own Community has reached a point where it has to think seriously about where we go next. We are all responsible for what happens. If you wish our wonderful but shrinking community to continue, it is incumbent on us all to take advantage of the opportunity given to us, to respond to the proposals that have been put together by the Executive with such great thought and care.

Our much loved caretaker, Mrs Christine Burns, is finally taking a well earned rest and will leave an enormous gap in our community, for she really has been an 'honorary member' who has worked tirelessly for thirty years. I for one will miss the many chats we had to put the world to rights; read Janet Mundy's farewell interview with her.

This issue of the Star boasts three articles from our younger members, Sarah, Clare and Freddie. Sidney Caplan demonstrates how involved Jews were during the war despite the derogatory views of some individuals and if you aspire to full marks for Seder studies, just turn to the Rabbi's crib notes, For a light hearted but reassuring look at the 'Get' issue turn to Lesley Danzig's close (but I hasten to add **outside**) observations.

To emphasise the community spirit brought about by various organisations and activities that are our life blood, you can read the familiar updates in 'Around and About' and 'Society Reports'; and if you have any snippets of news or photographs you think might be interesting or relevant, please send them to judyemmi.gilbert@gmail.com

The Edinburgh Star Board thank you for continuing to support the magazine and wish all our readers a happy and kosher Pesach.

Judy Gilbert

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Next Copy date: Mid August 2011

The Editor, The Edinburgh Star, 4 Salisbury Road, Edinburgh EH16 5AB



Pesach Message

Pesach is the festival of freedom, called in our prayers 'the time of our liberation'. On it we celebrate our liberation from the slavery of Egypt using ancient rituals and symbols to personally re-experience the moment of obtaining our freedom.

On the second Seder night we take this experience a step further: we begin to count the Omer. We thus connect the festival of Pesach with that of Shavuot; the 'time of our liberation' with 'the time of the

giving of our Torah'. This connection goes back to the very inception of the Exodus. When G-d gives Moses his mission to take the Jews from Egypt, he links it to the fact that they shall come to worship G-d at Mt Sinai. This is establishing an important precedent. Freedom by itself is a prerequisite for spiritual development and the moment of liberation is exhilarating. Yet it is not the end of the story. The big question that confronts all revolutions from the Exodus to today is what is to be done with the new found freedom? In the case of the Jewish people the answer is clear: our liberation is but the first step on the road to creating a society based on G-d's law and providing

an inspiration for the rest of the world. We thus immediately look forward to the giving of the Torah on Shavuot. We are witnessing an extraordinary eruption of freedom throughout the Middle East. This is to be largely welcomed. Yet the question remains: what will be done with this new found liberty? What direction will these societies now take? We may be thankful this Seder night that the Arabs have achieved their own Pesach. The question remains, however, what will be their Shavuot?

A Happy and Kosher Pesach
Rabbi David Rose

Interview with Christine Burns January 2011

Janet Mundy

I have written many articles for The Star over the years, but no commission has brought me greater pleasure than interviewing Christine Burns for this issue.

After over 30 years of loyal service to Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, she is retiring at around the time that this magazine is published. She will be much missed by everyone who has ever had any involvement with the Salisbury Road Synagogue, but we all wish her a long and happy retirement.

Q. How did you start working for Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and when?

A. My father-in-law worked here when it was the Community Centre. It was too much for him to do both. He came in 1968, 12 years before me. I thought I would like to try it. I never thought I'd be here 30 years on. I didn't realise that it would be so much work because he didn't have all this work!

The Shul was open when I came (1 December 1980). I think it opened in October and the Community Centre opened in March 1981.



Christine and Dave Burns

Q. What did you do before you worked here?

A. I was really a housewife. I did a couple of cleaning jobs. When I left school I worked in R.W. Forsyth in Princes Street as a junior sales lady (I was only 15) where I was paid £2 a week. Then I went to Goldbergs before I got married where I got the princely sum of £5 a week! I got married in 1964 and I've got 3 children. [The synagogue is] having a tea for me, in May, after I leave so I won't have to do the washing up! I think my son and my daughter are coming. (I now have 6 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild). Two of my children still live in Edinburgh, and one in the Borders, not far away.

Q. What are your happiest memories of working for Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation?

A. I have lots of happy memories. I miss a lot of the old people who have gone. The first person I miss was Reuben Zach – I made him coffee every day. Also Willie Caplan, who was a great shul-goer. I loved all the kids – I always got on well with them, although a few were more special than others! I remember Jonathan Adler was one of my first Bar Mitzvah boys.

I also remember the opening of the shul. My father-in-law was here then and was invited to the open day. There were nearly 400 people that day. The then Chief Rabbi, Lord Jacobovitz, was there. He was a lovely man – he came into the kitchen to speak to us all. I was just new then, and he was impressive – a very nice man.

I found it very interesting when I first came here. The Rabbis used to get fed up with me asking questions. I used to get phone calls and I wasn't allowed to pass on phone numbers, for security. So I had to go to the Rabbi and ask the question that they were asking me and then go back to the person. Now I can just give people Jackie's number and everything's easy. I used to take people into the shul a lot. I had to learn wee bits of what the shul was like. I was very lucky because I came here when the building was new, so I saw things like all the dishes going into the different cupboards, so it helped you learn. That's how I learned everything. I remember at seder nights everyone talked about "dickie" this and "dickie" that. It was a while before I realised they meant "Pesachdik"!

Q. What will you most miss?

A. I'll miss the people. I love all the old people, like Mrs Braverman, who moved to America to be near her daughter and died just before New Year. Everyone loved her and thought she was wonderful. There were a lot of great people.

I was also fond of the students. They used to have Friday night meals every 2 weeks, and they were wonderful.

Q. What will you least miss?

A. Washing dishes! Having to be around for the deliveries. I love being in the building in the quiet, coming in the early morning, especially Spring mornings. Nobody's about and I can just do my own thing. I love the building, I love upstairs – the feeling and ambience. I love going out of the back

door and seeing Arthur's Seat. I'll miss it so much.

I get very upset when people say unkind things about people who work very hard for the community.

Q. How do you spend your time when you're not working?

A. I go out to lunch with my husband or friends. I don't do very much at the moment – I can't fit it in! But that's what I hope to do more of.

Q. What are your future plans?

A. I want to do a bit of walking and have more holidays – everyone knows I like Benidorm! But if it takes more than 3 hours on a plane, I can't be bothered.

I like reading – Josephine Cox and Catherine Cookson. The greatest thing about reading is that it takes you away from everything.

I'm not a terrific TV person – I watch it with my husband but I'm not a telly addict.

I'm looking forward to the freedom to do as you want. If I go on holiday I have to work it out between what's going on but I won't have to do that anymore.

I don't know yet where we're going to live. I'm Edinburgh born and bred, so we'll stay here.

Q. Will you come back and see us?


A. Of course. Everybody says that. I'll probably come back and see the lunch club, when I have a day free of my husband once I get sorted.

I'm going to have a Kiddush on 9th April, before I leave.

Q. What do you think you might have done if you hadn't got this job?

A. I've never thought about it! This job is a way of life and I don't regret any of it.

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Around and About

Community Activities

SUNDAY 22 AUGUST ANNUAL CIVIC SERVICE

The Lord and Lady Provost of Edinburgh, Rt. Hon George and Elizabeth Grubb, spent Shabbat morning at Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation's Synagogue for the Annual Civic Service. The City Officers, led in by the High Constables carried in the Mace Sword of the City of Edinburgh. Councillors Jim Lowrie, Cameron Rose and Brian Chatham also took part in the procession together with other representatives from the City. 100 people attended the event.

Hilary Rifkind, Chair of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, observed that it was good that there was just such an opportunity to acknowledge the particularly good relationship that we have with the City of Edinburgh Council, and the mutual respect that we share. She felt that the Lord and Lady Provost really value this annual event at which there is always such a lovely warm atmosphere.

Stephanie Brickman

SUNDAY 7 NOVEMBER COMMUNITY CENTRE QUIZ



Heads together

The Community Centre Committee held their Quiz Night, which was enjoyed by sixty-three people.

The quiz masters were Arnold and Betsy, whose questions ranged from such topics as birds to the songs of Abba.

A light supper of soup, falafel, pita bread, humus and a choice of salads was served, followed by coffee and biscuits while the competitors got stuck into the



Serious work

marathon round which included naming cartoon characters meantime trying to work out anagrams of Shakespeare's plays and the novels of Sir Walter Scott and Charles Dickens, were just two sections.



Winners

After a hard fought battle, table 5 won with a 1st prize of a rosette for each table participant and a wooden spoon for each of those at the losing table.

Steven Hyams

SUNDAY 14 NOVEMBER REMEMBRANCE DAY



Well deserved consolation

The Armistice Service, led by Rabbi David Rose, was held in Edinburgh Synagogue at 3.30 after the Mincha service. It was particularly poignant as some of the younger community members made their own personal contributions to the occasion. Isaac Forsyth



Lennie Berger,
David Gonshaw

Plaque & candle

conducted part of the service with the support of Julian Goodman, Sarah Levy introduced two poems that she and her sister Clare then recited. Freddie Green could relate to the significance of the day by telling us a story about his grandfather and you can read about it elsewhere in this edition of the Star.

Following the two minutes of respectful silence, unusually, Anthony Gilbert played the poignant 'Last Post' and 'Reveille' on the clarinet instead of the usual recital performed by a bugler. Norma Brodie brought the rarely played organ to life with a rendering of Adon Olom and the National Anthem to accompany the singing of the gathered assembly.

After a collection made by Michael Taylor for the Poppy Foundation, people gathered in the Marian Oppenheim Hall for tea, passing by Lennie Berger and David Gonshaw as standard bearers posted in front of a memorial plaque for the fallen.

Though solemnity and remembrance were the important focus of such an occasion, the afternoon was pleasing and much appreciated by everyone.

Judy Gilbert

SUNDAY 21 NOVEMBER MITZVAH DAY

Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation Cheder baked challot and recorded Jewish songs for a local charity that works with young adults. Teens Plus provides one-to-one further education for young adults with learning disabilities, including two young Jewish people. Once a week there's a group Kiddush with Shabbat songs, that both Jews and non-Jews enjoy. The Mitzvah Day challot will be used for this.

Merav Gardi, a teacher in the cheder, said: "The children enjoyed the baking and singing and were really interested in how this would help other young people."



Baking challah



Making challah

Sukkat Shalom (Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community) teamed up with the Edinburgh Hindu Community for Mitzvah Day and National Sewa Day which coincided this year. The Hindu concept of "sewa" has much in common with mitzvot. The combined group of nine people joined a ranger in helping clear



Car wash

vegetation and rubbish from Holyrood Park. Gillian Raab, Chair of Sukkat Shalom said: "Despite terrible weather it was a very interesting and fun experience, everyone enjoyed it. Over lunch we had a good time discussing the mutual problems of running small communities."



Happy contributors

Stephanie Brickman

CHANUKAH 2010



Menorah in
Trafalgar square



Official visit to London -
Chanukah in Trafalgar Square
- Sara Lurie and Boris Johnson

SUNDAY 23 JANUARY BURN'S SUPPER



Hilary Rifkind, Rabbi Rose, Nat Edwards,
Rabbi Solomon & Gillian Raab

Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation and Sukkat Shalom (Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community) got together for the first ever joint Burns Supper, organised by Edinburgh Jewish Community Centre Committee and ELJC.



Rabbi Mark Solomon

130 members of both congregations attended the event, which was held in the Community Centre on Salisbury Road. Nat Edwards, of the recently opened Robert Burns Birthplace and Museum in Ayrshire, delivered the "Immortal Memory".

Sukkat Shalom's Rabbi Mark Solomon sang songs by Robert Burns in Scots and Yiddish with a bagpiper and fiddler for accompaniment. The piper also accompanied Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation's Rabbi Rose as he led the 'benching' to the tune of 'Scotland the Brave'.

Hilary Rifkind, Chair of Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation, said: "It has been a pleasure working with Gillian Raab and her team from Sukkat Shalom to create such a wonderful evening for Edinburgh's Jewish Community."

Stephanie Brickman

TUESDAY 15 FEBRUARY THE POSTPONED CHANUKAH LUNCHEON



Chanukah Lunch

The Chanukah lunch for the Luncheon Club which should have taken place in December was postponed due to the terrible weather. Norman Berger introduced the guest of honour, Elizabeth Grubb, the Lady Provost. Unfortunately the Lord Provost was unable to attend due to ill health.

David Goldberg said "Grace" then everyone sat down to minestrone soup, roast beef, latkes, French beans and carrots, and to finish, pavlova and lemon tea or coffee. David then "benched".

As this lunch had been postponed for seventy days. The mine disaster was still very much in mind. Norman spoke of the terrible entombment the miners had suffered for seventy days. Their final rescue seemed like a miracle which seemed highly appropriate at a time when we were celebrating the miracle of Chanukah.

The Lady Provost spoke of her early life in Hong Kong and recalled that when war came her father was away at sea. She and her mother put the key in the door of their flat and left just as the Jews of Europe had had to do.

At the end of the war her family returned to Hong Kong. She went to the George V British School where she met a Jewish girl and to this day they have remained good friends.

At university she trained to be a teacher of deaf children. When she and her

husband returned to Edinburgh, she took up a post in Donaldson’s School for Deaf Children and taught there for twenty four years, also carrying out her duties as the wife of a Minister. She felt that this was what she was on this earth for. When her husband went into politics she suddenly found that she was the Lady Provost of Edinburgh, but as she said, ‘that’s another story’.

Betty Caplan then presented Avril with a bouquet of flowers as grateful thanks for all the hard work she does for the Luncheon Club.

Hilary Rifkind, as Chairman of the Synagogue Board of Management (and one of the cooks), reiterated what everyone had said before and hoped that the Lord and Lady Provost would visit us again.

The Luncheon Club was started over forty years ago to provide lunch for any one in the community over sixty.

Avril Berger is much appreciated as the convener with nearly twenty volunteers (including one man) working on a rota basis of two cooks per meal. Her organisational skills ensure that everything needed is on hand for her dedicated group of cooks and grateful thanks go also to our caretaker, Mrs Burns, who helps to make the wheels run smoothly.

On average, sixteen sit down to eat and there are eight to ten carry-outs. For those who have difficulty coming to the Centre a bus from SEAG (South Edinburgh Amenities Group) will pick them up at their home and take them back later

at a cost of £3.00 each. On Tuesdays a meat main course with a starter of soup is provided and on Thursdays a fish main course with a dessert finishing with tea or coffee; all strictly kosher, for just £3.50. It takes place in the Community Centre of the Synagogue Complex.

This service is much welcomed by our Senior Citizens many of whom live alone and may have difficulty obtaining kosher food. This also affords them an opportunity to meet and socialise with their friends.

In a community of our size, providing kosher meals twice a week is a great achievement. A number of larger communities than ours have tried unsuccessfully to provide even one meal a week.

Finally we all send our best wishes to George Grubb the Lord Provost for a full and speedy recovery.
Sidney Caplan

**SUNDAY 27 JANUARY
HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY**

Many events have been held across Scotland to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. In Edinburgh the First Minister, Alex Salmond, and Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp addressed some 250 people at Craigroyston Community High School on Thursday 27th January.

Rabbi Soetendorp told of his remarkable escape – as a tiny baby he was delivered in a suitcase to a German couple near Arnhem in the Netherlands. They risked their lives to shelter him and another Jewish child until the liberation in 1945.

Describing the evening as “extraordinary”, Mr Salmond went on to say: “We are immensely proud of our own long-standing Jewish communities here in Scotland. They have always been, and will always remain, part of this country’s rich tapestry, part of the tartan that makes up Scotland... We need to keep telling the world about the Holocaust until the world learns the lesson.”

Stephanie Brickman

On Monday 24th January, David Goldberg spoke to an assembly of 200 children at the Musselburgh Grammar School, in memoriam of the Holocaust. They watched him light a candle and recite the memorial prayer in both Hebrew and English. Together with children he planted a tree and finally presented a copy of the Community Memorial Book to the school. (left to right Religious Education teacher, Jane Bonnar head of Social Subjects Dept, David Goldberg, MSP Kenny MacAskill – Cabinet Secretary for Justice. On Thursday the 27th he addressed 300 pupils at Royal High School once again lighting a candle and reciting the memorial prayer in both Hebrew and English. David’s contribution to both occasions was well received and much appreciated.



David presents EHC memorial book to Musselburgh High School

**SATURDAY19 MARCH
PURIM**



A quick glimpse round the Shul and you would have been forgiven for thinking you had arrived in an alternative universe. Three teenagers in their pyjamas, sucking on dummies; cowboys; a miniature Gadaffi (ugh); boys dressed as girls and girls dressed as boys; a flapper and a hippie; a ‘gent’ with giant ears and a little elf with pointy ones. The list could go on. None could surpass the Rabbi, though, who took on his familiar multi personalities, rapidly swapping fairy crowns for devils horns and police helmets. Brandishing a sword and then a wand and reciting the Megillah sometimes in falsetto and other times baritone voices. The mere mention of Hamen brought forth a burst of noise from football rattles, gregors and a squawking parrot! What would our incoming caretaker and his wife think they had joined? John Masterson (retired police constable) and his wife Jane, sat demurely in Shul smiling and pretending that this was all quite normal but what must they have been thinking inside. Not to worry, they found it all very interesting and at least didn’t try to escape, or worse still, arrest us!

Descending into the relative sanity of the communal hall for Kiddush, and superb Hamentaschen, was not the finish of this surrealistic scene. A Purim Spiel, par excellence, by Nancy Lynner and Rohan Green, was still to come. (Producers - Nancy Lynner, Rohan Green & Stephanie Brickman, Choreography - Pam Weiner, Scenery Painting - Elaine Levy)

Children and adults threw themselves into their roles with fervour but the contenders for Queenship were second to none. A more ‘heart-stopping’ set of ladies you never set eyes on! (Jonny Sperber, Josh Brickman and Bill Shakman)



This was a Purim to surpass all Purims.

Cast	
Leora Wadler	Phil Wadler
Stewart Green	Reuben Ogilvie
Sharon Ogilvie	Adam Wadler
Orlie Meiksin	Saphi Ogilvi
Miriam Brickman	Rohan Green
Hanna Cohn-Simmen	Dorothy Sharratt
Naomi Meiksin	Stephanie Brickman



Thanks also to Betsy Dorfman, Colin Gajewski, Sarah Levy, Christine Burns, Joyce Sperber, Gidona Goodman, John and Lesley Danzig.



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The Call Went Out: ‘Enlist In Any Regiment’

Sidney Caplan

At the outbreak of the First World War the above call went to every Jewish organisation in the country and the Jewish men in the United Kingdom rallied to the colours in their thousands. Many were the children of refugees or were refugees who had escaped anti-Semitism in central and eastern Europe and were now bearing arms for a country who allowed them to carry on their religion without interference. The September 2010 edition of this magazine has an article on how the Jewish young men of Edinburgh responded to the call to arms.

“He was only aged sixteen but he joined up ”

Five Victoria Crosses were won in this conflict and many other awards were given including the Military Medal won by Hyman Baker a member of the well known Baker family who had furniture stores called Barker and Co. throughout the South of Scotland and the North of England. He was only aged sixteen but he joined up as he wanted to be with his three brothers. At the Battle of the Somme as a machine gunner, he stopped a German counter-attack though his colleagues were dead or dying around him and he had been told to withdraw. He said afterwards “I had to do something”



Wyman (Hymy) Baker
M.M

We all know that casualties in this conflict were extremely high and two thousand were Jewish. If you look at either the plaque in the vestibule of the synagogue or the memorial in Piershill Cemetery you will see that our small congregation had heavy casualties. This was not the first time that British Jews fought for King and Country. During the Seven Years War in the seventeen fifties Captain Alexander Schomberg commanded H.M.S. Diana at the Battle of Quebec in 1759 and led the bombardment of the city to cover the army under General James Wolfe, climbing up to the Plains of Abraham and the battle. Captain Schomberg was the son of Meyer a German doctor in London and he joined the navy in 1743. Sir Moses Montefiore was a member of the Surrey Militia and the famous Jewish boxer of that time, Daniel Mendoza (1746-1836) was a member of the Durham Militia.

Roald Dahl said “I never knew a Jew who served in the armed forces”

The Militia was the fore-runner of the Territorial Army. There were three thousand Jewish volunteers in the British army during the Boer War and one hundred and eighty did not return. Twenty years ago the children’s writer Roald Dahl said, “I never knew a Jew who served in the armed forces”. You would have expected a comment like that from Oswald Mosley who said “Jews are cowards and are only interested in making money” I remember my late father being furious with Dahl’s comment as he, during the second world war, had been in the seventy eighth (Battle Axe) Division of the First Army and had fought through North Africa, Italy and Austria. Alex Rubenstein was in a bomb disposal unit. These units had the second highest casualties in the war. Ian Shein was radio operator to the Partizans in Yugoslavia, and David Goldberg escaped Hitler’s Germany was by the end of the war with his regiment ended up in Germany. The late Willie Caplan was a tank driver during the battle of El Alamein and Andrea Cowan’s father Ellis Schulberg was a paratrooper who was dropped into the disaster of Arnhem and only escaped capture because he was able to swim across the river Nederrijn. Let us not forget Carole Cowen’s late father, Barnet Lewis, who on D-Day on the beaches under intense German fire helped to unroll the telephone cables between different units so that they could communicate with each other. There were a large number of casualties. Remember there were no mobile telephones in those days. Cowards? I do not think so. George Magrill, who was a director of Grants Furniture Stores ended the war as a major and Reginald Levitt, whose family owned Woodhouse Furniture Stores, was promoted to full colonel. They were well known members of the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation of that time. You did not get promotion to that rank unless you had been in the line of fire.



Barnet Lewis



Willie Caplan

“There were twenty five Jewish female doctors serving in the armed forces”

There were many more from Edinburgh who served with distinction in the Second World War and you will find their stories in Edinburgh Star issue 51. We will never know how many Jews served with Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.) who were dropped into occupied Europe to cause death and disruption. They had an advantage in that many of them were refugees from the Nazis and could blend in with the local population

Over three thousand Jewish serving personnel were killed during the war and three were awarded the Victoria Cross, along with others who won many other awards including our own Hannah (Nan) Brodie née Rabstaff. She joined the A.T.S. at the outbreak of war and became part of a searchlight team in the blitz. During one severe raid, and with her comrades dead around her, she held the searchlight on a German bomber until it was shot down. She lost an eye



Hannah (Nan)
Brodie

and was awarded the Military Medal for her bravery. There were twenty five Jewish female doctors serving in the armed forces and one of them, Captain Stella Cutner, treated the wounded on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day itself. Even at this present time there are Jews serving in Her Majesty’s Forces and who can forget the cortege of Lieutenant Paul Mervis a casualty of Afghanistan going through the streets of Wolton Bassett.



Memorial Stone

I received a great amount of my information for this article from the Jewish Military Museum in Hendon. The museum was started by Henry Morris who is the curator and Martin Sugarman the archivist of the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women (AJEX). The cost of setting it up was £30,000, and is worth visiting and can only be viewed by appointment (tel: 020 82022323) It has just been granted accreditation from the Museum, Library and Archive Council because it is such a valuable contribution to British military history.

Getting a ‘Get’

Lesley Danzig

Last week I accompanied my cousin to Garnethill Shul in Glasgow to receive her ‘Get’ (a Jewish divorce ceremony). We were both quite nervous and did not speak of the stories that we had heard of spitting and throwing slippers and other such degrading activities.

When we arrived at the Shul, Dianne Wolfson was there to meet us as she is the Administrator for these occasions and had been the contact for my cousin, advising her of times etc. We learnt later that had I not been there, Dianne would have offered to come in with my cousin in order that she should not be alone during what is in reality a male dominated occasion.

“The names by which they were both known seemed to be so important”

We were shown into the Archive room where her soon-to-be ex was already waiting; my cousin had the choice of

being in a separate room from him but did not feel it was necessary. Shortly after, a Rabbi who is the senior Dayan of the London Beth Din came into the room to interview both parties. The names by which they were both known seemed to be so important that the question, ‘Is this the name you are known by?’ was repeated several times. The Rabbi then went on to ask my cousin’s ex if he had been called up recently; did his late father go to Shul; what name was his father known by. We then moved onto his Hebrew name. What Hebrew name was he called up by in shul? ‘Tsaddik’ came the answer. The Rabbi queried this as it means ‘a wise man, not a name usually given to a baby! Perhaps it really was ‘Tsaddok’? Was this a Scottish/English accent divide? This was not the last time this particular discussion was brought up, but a thread of good humour ran through the debate each time. These questions were repeated and repeated but the Rabbi himself was very pleasant and even ventured one or two jokes....After another short wait we were all called into a large room.

Seated behind a table was Rabbi Rubin

of Giffnock Shul, the Rabbi from the Beth Din and Rabbi Wayland, the Student Chaplain. At one end sat the Sofer (a scribe) who had journeyed from London with the Dayan and at the other sat the two young Rabbis (from Glasgow Kollel), who appeared, in contrast to the rest of the Beth Din, quite nervous and strained. My cousin and her ‘almost-ex’ sat on the other side of the table and I sat behind just watching.

The proceedings began with a confirmation yet again of each party’s name. Then both were asked to confirm that they had not vowed to anyone else that they would not give a Get to their spouse. The Get theoretically is written by the man so an interesting little performance took place whereby all the materials needed to write the Get i.e. a quill, parchment, ink etc all in a clear poly bag, was presented by the Sofer as a ‘gift’ to my cousin’s spouse, (let’s call him ‘X’), who then gave them back to the Sofer so that he could write the Get on ‘X’s behalf with ‘X’s own tools, as it were. The Sofer received the gift ceremoniously. Each action was accompanied by the appropriate words repeated after the



Memorial Plaque

Rabbi sometimes in Hebrew, sometimes in English.

The Dayan then declared a break while the Sofer wrote the Get and requested that we reconvene in an hour and half but with the caveat that we do not leave the city! So far, so good. Dianne invited us to partake of Doreen Cohen’s bridge rolls in the kitchen along with a hot drink. As it was so cold outside we gladly accepted and were shown into a living room to relax and have our lunch comfortably. ‘X’ tactfully excused himself and went to have a snack out.

“*Glasgow* was described as being the city Glasgae”

At 1 O’clock we were called back in. The Rabbi sought confirmation that neither

party had travelled outside the city boundary. The Sofer had finished his work but the Get had to be read out and witnessed by our young Rabbis. As it was all in Aramaic the Rabbi kindly translated it. ‘Glasgow’ was described as being the city Glasgae, Glasgow between the rivers Kelvin and Clyde, to avoid confusion with any other Glasgow! After the reading we stood up. My cousin had to cup her hands and not move them; the Get was folded up in a special way and given to ‘X’ to hold. The Rabbi asked him to repeat words in Hebrew (almost like a wedding!) which indicated that he, ‘X’, was presenting his by now almost ex-wife with the Get which he dropped into her cupped hands. She was then instructed to put it under her arm and symbolically walk towards the door of the room indicating that she was now in possession of the Get and was free to marry again. Before my cousin actually left the room the Rabbi

asked her to come back in and sit down. He said that she was now able to marry anyone she wanted with the exception of a Cohen and he emphasised that that was not a ruling of the Beth Din but rather a ruling from the Torah. Then with a smile he said that of course ‘X’ was now also free to remarry. He complimented them on choosing the correct way to end their marriage and wished both of them luck. With that we left the room.

Although emotionally draining this was not the nasty experience I had expected. No one was asked to do or say anything embarrassing or horrid. It was conducted with dignity, every step of the way being explained. Everything was done to make the participants feel as much at ease as they could under the circumstances. I can only hope that this is generally representative of the Get ceremony in other places round the country.

D'var Torah

Clare Levy

Last year I spoke about how Hashem gave man freedom to choose and how with freedom comes responsibility for our actions.

Today we have just heard **Bereshit** and we heard that Hashem took man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to work it and to guard it. Adam was responsible for protecting his environment and all that Hashem gave him.

“Adam was responsible for protecting his environment”

Today in the modern world we too have the responsibility to protect our world just as Adam did.

In the times that the Torah was given to man his whole life would depend on his environment. The weather was important for his crops. He needed wells for water and animals for ploughing, transport, sacrifice and food. We are still dependent on our environment but we are also more sheltered from it because we have artificial heat and light, and machines to do the work of the animals. If we are not farmers in Britain we are not connected to the land.

One question we have to ask ourselves is ‘Does the Torah teach us how to manage the environment in the modern world?’

I think it does.

to excess. This ensures we are aware and protect our resources.

Where do our responsibilities to the environment lie in our Garden of Eden?

Can we remain in centrally heated houses, eating fruit grown under glass that has been transported across the world? Can we throw away something as soon as it is broken or because we do not like it? Can we allow animals to become extinct just because we cannot see a use for them or because they live thousands of miles away in another country.

As just one young person, maybe I cannot change the world or even my country but I can start with my home, my school and my community.

Two years ago I adopted an animal from an endangered species at the zoo. The junior class at Cheder have also adopted

Pesach Memories

Sarah Levy

Judaism is a religion full of exuberant, exciting festivals. From the sweets and singing at Simchat Torah to the dressing up and games at Purim, the Jewish calendar is full of variety and fun for all the family. I must admit, I anticipate these festivals greatly and find them most enjoyable, but sometimes I feel that they have been “westernized” too much, and the meaning behind the celebration has been lost or changed over the years.

“Pesach is one of the highlights of my year”

Pesach (also known as Passover), however, is not at all like this. Many children will groan when Pesach comes around. It consists of, basically, eight days of a very restricted diet (no wheat, grains, pasta, cereal, crisps, chocolate or bread) and two long Seder nights which involve sitting round a table for hours listening to some old men talk in Hebrew. It should be clear then, why Pesach is not top of the list when it comes to fun. However, for me, Pesach is one of the highlights of my year.

At the mere mention of the word Pesach, memories flood through my brain like tidal waves. I am three years old, and staying at my grandparents, house with all my family and extended family. While the adults have spent the day cleaning the house from top to bottom, my cousin and I have been practising the traditional song Ma Nishtana which is sung at the Seder by the youngest child or children. When the Seder time finally arrives, I am buzzing with excitement at the chance to sing in front of everyone.

I believe it is the endless traditions and customs that make Pesach such an enjoyable festival; from the 2000 year old blessings, stories and ancient chants and songs, to the somewhat more personal family traditions of matzah eaten with jam and cherry tomatoes in wine glasses on the table. Pesach is quite simply a jumble of traditions.

Any young Jewish child will quite happily tell you the story behind Pesach. During this festival we remember the hardships and suffering of the Jewish people when they were kept as slaves in Egypt thousands of years ago. We celebrate the strength and bravery of our ancestors who

“I have to endure the rest of the world devouring Easter eggs”

“The junior class at Cheder have also adopted animals”

animals. Last year I introduced recycling into the Community Centre and now it is being continued by Andrew and his friends at Teens Plus. They also collect waste for recycling from other communities.

The Rabbi continually reminds us not to let any food go to waste and I try to remember this to ensure the mitzvah of Bal Taschis.

These efforts may seem insignifiacant. But if everyone did one more thing to help their environment then, like Adam, we could make our world into a Garden of Eden.

escaped the perils of slavery and fled from Egypt under the command of Moses.

In this day and age, stories like this are becoming ever more important. Jews have been persecuted for years, and racism is rising like a rocket. The festival of Pesach reminds me that I am not alone, even though I am the only Jewish person in my year, and I have to endure the rest of the world devouring Easter eggs at a time when I cannot even eat chocolate. Pesach is special to me because across the world all 5 million practising Jews sit down together and look to the past, while the rest of the world looks toward the future.

Even the strict dietary restriction can be almost enjoyable. Ever since I was little, I can remember baking cake using only coconut powder, eggs and margarine. These restrictions also help to remind Jewish people (in particular Jewish teenagers) that they should not be assimilating to the modern Atheist/ Christian world. It is learning to reject the majority of food offered to you, to take your own food to restaurants, and to go hungry at school that reminds me that I should never forget my ancestry or my religion.

I absolutely relish teaching my primary 1 class at the Edinburgh Hebrew Congregation Cheder (Sunday School) about Pesach, because the whole idea of

this festival is passing down stories and traditions to the next generation so that they are not lost in history forever. The looks on their faces are rather amazing when they ask questions like “But why do we do this” and “why don’t we do that”. When the time comes, they will pass down the information I have given them to their children, in the same way that my parents told me.

It is impossible to describe the unity and joy that comes around every year

“it is a chance for quality time with your family”

with Pesach. For adults, it is a time of reflection and realization, and for children, it is a chance for quality time with your family, songs, stories and of course, not forgetting the anticipation to see if the prophet Eliyahu (Elijah) has drunk from the cup of wine which the children leave out.

This eight day long festival reminds Jewish people across the globe that the Biblical era is not history, but in fact the beginning of a journey that the Jewish people have been on for thousands of years and will hopefully continue for thousands more.

We end each Seder by shouting the words “Next year in Jerusalem” reminding each other that one day the Jewish people will unite as one and live in harmony with the rest of the world.

The Jewish Servicemen’s Roll of Honour

Freddie Green

My Grandfather, Arthur Lawson, fought in the Second World War and returned to Glasgow, his birthplace, a decorated soldier with many experiences and memories that have contributed to making him the man he is today. That man is one of the best I know. And for everything I know him for – his kindness, gentleness, and modesty – I know him best for his unbelievable drive.

He is in his late eighties now, has problems with his heart, throat and is close to blindness with macular degeneration. Grandpa, like many who fought and lived through the War, has strong opinions about the War and the proper remembrance of the concerned events. But he uniquely has a burning passion, among others, to make sure that those who made the ultimate sacrifice for us, in both World Wars, are remembered. After the war he returned to Glasgow and continued his work as a central heating engineer and created a thriving business becoming expert in the field. He married and raised a family, and when he was widowed, she married my grandmother, Toby, and became my step-grandfather. Nowadays, he is well known not just amongst the Jewish community in Glasgow but in London, where they live, not only as the former head of the Association of Jewish ex-Servicemen and Women but for his work on many other Jewish charities and foundations. Every year, he still marches at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. This past summer, I found him where I normally do, on his computer! And then when I heard what he was doing, I resolved to help him. We sat at his desk working on the task he had set himself; to make lists of all the Jewish servicemen who had been killed during World War I and II and who had come from Glasgow and London. I was amazed at his passion for the job, and I knew that this passion would make his list better than one from a group of historians.

And it does come down to his backbone. If you look in the dictionary at the word ‘determination’, you could see a picture of him sitting at his desk pushing his magnifier to the screen working on his list. If you ask him why he does it, he will tell you he discovered that most synagogues, even, with memorials, do



The author with his step-grandfather, Arthur Lawson MBE, at the Cenotaph '04

not have the full details of those killed in their community and where they are buried. He has also discovered that many of the names mentioned are with surnames and one initial only, and he feels saddened that these men are not remembered by their full names. So his list shows a full name, age at death, regiment, number, former address, where and when they died and where they are buried.

Grandpa often tells me that there were more Jews that fought in the Wars for the British forces pro-rata than any other minority group of the population. But if you ask me why he does it, I would say it is because he doesn’t want to forget them, and he doesn’t want us to forget them either. And above all, he wants them remembered properly.

Understanding the Seder

Rabbi David Rose

The Seder night is the pre-eminent night of the Jewish year. On it we re-enact our liberation from Egypt. We do so by the means of ancient texts and ceremonies, the basic form of which was already set down in the times of Talmud.

We thus have before us possibly the oldest example of a continuously performed ceremony in the world. The Seder, however, can be confusing or even daunting, so I hope here to provide a simple guide to its ceremonies.

The Basics

There are four main mitzvot we have to perform on Seder night, two directly from the Torah and two of Rabbinic status.

They are:

Telling the story of the Exodus (Torah)
Eating Matzah (Torah)
Eating Maror (today rabbinical)
Drinking Four Cups of Wine (rabbinic)

These mitzvot are woven into the fabric of the texts that tell the story of the Exodus, the four cups of wine being used to delineate four main parts to the evening which are:

Kiddush to start off proceedings

The 2nd cup separating the telling of the story of the Exodus and the food part of the evening.

The 3rd cup, over grace after meals, separating the food and the ‘praise’ section of the evening.

The 4th cup ending the obligatory ceremony of the evening.

Much of the ceremony of the evening is centred around engaging the children, to ‘tell your children’ being the primary mitzvah of the evening. We thus wash the hands without a blessing, eat a vegetable rather than bread and hide a piece of the Matzah.

A major part of the Seder is the obligation to eat while leaning to the left. This is a sign of freedom, taken from a Roman

banquet. We must lean while drinking the four cups of wine and eating the Matzah.

The Order

The word Seder means order and there are ten easy steps, found in most Haggadas, which can help you make sense of the evening. I will here provide a brief explanation of each step.

Kadesh-Kiddush - As on all festivals the evening begins with the festive Kiddush, which also serves as the first cup of wine.

Urchatz - Washing the Hands: This is preparation for eating the vegetable and while it has its origins in purity laws is also designed to arouse the curiosity of the children. No blessing is therefore made.

Karpas -Vegetable: The custom of taking a vegetable and dipping it in water is also a remnant of practice at a Roman banquet and is designed again to pique the interest of the children. We use a vegetable not used for Maror, normally parsley or potato.

Yachatz - Breaking the Matzah: On Seder night we have three Matzot: two as normal for a Shabbat or Festival and one to break. We break the middle Matzah also to interest the children and also because Matzah is called in the Torah ‘the bread of poverty’. The larger piece is hidden for later.

Magid - Telling the Story: this is the main part of the Seder where we tell of the Exodus. This can be done in any language. Traditional texts are provided but strictly speaking one only has to say the passage near the end of Rabban Gamiliel talking of Pesach, Matzah and Maror. One can improvise and also get participants to tell their own versions. This section ends with a bit of Hallel, the blessing of Redemption and the 2nd cup of wine.

Rachtzah -Washing the Hands: we say a blessing.

Motzi Matzah - Eating the Matzah: we eat the top and middle Matzah. We should eat around a whole machine baked Matzah at this point leaning to the left.

Maror - Bitter Herb: we eat a sizeable piece of lettuce or horseradish without leaning.

Korech – Sandwich: we eat a combination of Matzah and Maror, as this is the way it was eating with the Pesach sacrifice in the Temple. We lean.

Shulchan Orech - Meal: One should have a Yom Tov meal. It is traditional to begin with eggs in salt water.

Tzaphun - Hidden Matzah: We find the hidden piece of Matzah and eat it in memory of the Pesach sacrifice that was eaten after the meal. It is called Afikoman after the Greek for dessert. We eat leaning.

Barech - Benching: We say the Grace after Meals followed by the 3rd cup of wine.

Hallel-Praise: we say the rest of Hallel and other prayers of praise. Beforehand we open the door for Elijah. This had its origin in the days of Blood Libel, checking to see who was up to no good on this night. We also fill a cup of Elijah, as some Rabbis thought there should be five cups of wine. We don’t drink it though Elijah might. At the end of this section we drink the 4th cup.

Nirtzah-Acceptance: we end with traditional songs and on the 2nd night count the Omer.

Some Guidelines

Time: The Seder is strictly meant to start after nightfall. As this is often difficult with summertime and children, a good suggestion is to at least try and get to the ‘Pesach Matza and Maror’ section and eat the Matzah after nightfall. That means 21.15 in Edinburgh this year.

Children

Children are at the heart of the Seder. To keep them involved, involve them as much as possible. A nice Sephardic custom is to have them act out parts of the story. Most important, enjoy yourself!

Society Reports

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society

On Interfaith

31 OCTOBER 2010

Stephanie Brickman

Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society 2010/11 season has begun with talks by Alex Goldberg, Chief Executive of the London Jewish Forum and another from Dr Emily Michelson, Director of the Reformation Studies Institute at the University of St Andrews.



Alex Goldberg

Mr Goldberg, a broadcaster and writer on interfaith issues, gave a talk entitled simply "On Interfaith". Dr Michelson's lecture was about attempts to convert Jews in the Roman ghetto of the 16th Century and how the presence and the idea of Jews was important to defining Catholic identity in an age of turmoil.

Both lectures were followed by lively discussions.

Professor Avery Meiksin, Chair of the Edinburgh Jewish Literary Society, said: "We hope this season covers contemporary Jewish issues and literature. Membership is stable and we're getting good turn outs."

Conversionary Preaching to Jews in the Roman Ghetto

21 NOVEMBER 2010

Hannah Holtschneider

Dr Emily Michelson (University of St Andrews), a Renaissance Historian, introduced a captivated audience to her new research project on preaching and the history of Christianity in Early Modern Italy. She focused on one aspect of a much larger project, namely Conversionary Preaching to Jews in the Roman Ghetto. A guiding question for her talk and further explorations asked 'What do Jews mean for Christians in 16th century Italy?' and her paper teased out a variety of ways in which an 'idea of Jews' functioned in the theology expressed in Catholic sermons in Rome. To illustrate her observations of changing patterns of identity and its public articulation and dramatic performance, Dr Michelson took a spellbound audience on a journey across Rome to three locations of public preaching (San Lorenzo in Damaso; Santa Maria in Aracoeli; the Ghetto) at which three different priests (Cornelio Musso, SF; Marcelino Evangelista, SF; Alfonso Lupo, OP) developed their public theology. As Gregory Martin's travel writings of the 1580s illustrate, preaching formed an important part of the public religious life of the city of Rome. Closely allied to the political establishment, preachers sought to articulate Roman Catholic identity in the face of massive social and religious changes. Particularly during Lent the city was transformed into a 'public festival of preaching'.



Emily Michelson

denominations (a form of religious pluralism) and the expansion of the 'world' through exploration and conquest, prompting re-examination of religious identity as well as an articulation of what it meant to be 'European'. The Roman Catholic Church in particular struggled with these changes that threatened to dislodge its religious (and resulting political) hegemony. In this scenario, Rome, as the centre of Roman Catholicism, became an arena for the public articulation of what it meant to be Catholic. One vehicle of this performance of Catholicism was public preaching. While the geography of the city was actively remodelled from mid-16th century onwards – including the physical separation of groups that were deemed not to 'fit' with the ideals of Catholic piety (Jews, prostitutes, the poor) – preaching turned the attention on these social groups in an effort to win them for the Catholic cause.

Jews, or ideas about Jews, form an important part of the preaching strategy at all three locations. While each preacher had a different style and spoke in a distinct context (location matters for the political and social orientation of the sermons) all used Jews as examples which are supposed to teach Christians how to be better Christians. Preaching to Jews in the ghetto soon developed a distinctive approach with the aim of converting everyone and became standardised towards the end of the century with particular preachers with good knowledge of Hebrew sources specialising in this form of sermon. Preaching took place on Shabbat afternoons. It was a spectacle that was watched by crowds from all parts of the Christian population of Rome. And indeed, more Jews converted to Christianity in the 16th century than before, though it is not clear that that was due to the efforts of these preachers. An incentive may have been, however, that after 1541 Jews no longer needed to relinquish their property after conversion to Christianity.

A most interesting case of a preacher is that of Alfonso Lupo, a Dominican from Spain with a converso background. While not many of his sermons survive, others refer to his skills as an orator. In Spain, Lupo had preached against the blood-laws instituted by the Inquisition. In Rome he quickly became one of the most beloved preachers of his time. Lupo occupied a liminal place: he was both Spanish and Italian, both Jew and Christian, his person being a place in which questions of Roman Catholic identity were negotiated and tested.

16th century Rome offers an insight into the renegotiation of Catholic identity in response to major changes in the Christian landscape of Europe. In architecture, urban planning, art, theology and its public performance through preaching, Romans articulated notions of truth and relationships to those who are different. Jews, or rather ideas about Jews, performed an important function in the process: the minority was used to reflect the identity struggles of the majority population, by being made into an example of faithfulness and piety to be emulated by Catholics while their conversion was supposed to demonstrate the superiority of Catholicism in a time of increased religious competition.

Europe between 1500 and 1600 was a continent in upheaval, characterised by the development of different Christian

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Perpetrators of the Holocaust

30 JANUARY
George Wilkes

Professor Bloxham synthesised a number of years of study of the perpetrators of the Holocaust, with a brief discussion of the context in which the mass murder of so many Jews and others was possible. To be more exact, of the many contexts in which perpetrators understood their actions, since the structures within which the Holocaust was planned and executed varied so much depending on location and period. To be sure, one single feature was necessary for the Holocaust to take place, the redemptive anti-Semitism of Adolf Hitler. Even this did not make the Holocaust inevitable, nor did anti-Semitism by itself explain why the SS and the German armed forces and police and their collaborators were so effective in the commission of mass murder on such a scale.

In explaining these features of the Holocaust, Professor Bloxham concentrated on the bureaucratic and political features of Nazi rule which made so many perpetrators take an active part in the killing of the Jews. In some respects, these 'structural' factors – bureaucratic competition and the urge to integrate into the new German Europe promised by the Nazis – make clear that genocide does not rely upon hatred alone. In some regards, in Professor Bloxham's account these 'structural' factors are actually defined by an absence of structure, particularly an absence of constitutional or moral constraint, and what made the work of the perpetrators of the Holocaust so efficient relied on



Donald Bloxham

the individual interests and psychologies of an extremely wide variety of perpetrators about whom standard generalisations are insufficient. It is therefore ultimately unsatisfying to think about the motivations of the perpetrators of the Holocaust in terms of 'types' of perpetrator, whether it be ideologues versus opportunists, or an elite of desk-bound planners, administrators and visionaries as against subordinates in the field obeying their orders to kill without any agency or moral responsibility.

The discussion following the lecture was vigorous and Professor Bloxham's responses underlined both his sensitivity as a human studying this cataclysmic tragedy and at the same time the depth of his scholarship in this area.

How Many Ways to say Kaddish

27 FEBRUARY
Rabbi David Rose

In this entertaining and fascinating talk, Rabbi Mark Solomon took us through the world of synagogue music, using his fine voice as our guide. Explaining how music is used to mark the various periods of the year, he also spoke of the different tunes used in the home at the Shabbat Table. He ended with 16, or was it 17, different tunes for Kaddish from a weekday morning through to the end of Yom Kippur. The talk was an education both for old hands and newcomers to the Jewish liturgy and everyone learnt something new, as well as being treated to an unmissable musical tour de force.



Mark Solomon

The Liberation of Celia Kahn by J David Simons

14 MARCH
Elaine Samuel

It was less than two years since David Simons had first spoken to the 'Lit', so this repeat invitation was a testament to the interest generated by the novels of this Glasgow born writer. David Simons writes with a distinctly Scottish Jewish voice of the challenges and dilemmas that faced our grandparents and great-grandparents during the early years of their arrival and settlement on Scottish soil, some of which may resonate to this day.

That they faced the constraints of poverty, war and economic depression, is well known. What David Simons explores, however, is the options they perceived within these constraints. How could rabbis, communists and chalutzim emerge out of the same single family, transplanted, (in my case) from one shtetl in the Ukraine (Kiblic) to another in Wales (Tredegar)? How did such diversity arise in the midst of seeming uniformity and constraint? What took siblings along such different paths? Why, in a single lifetime, did rabbis become apikorsim, apikorsim



David signing copies of his book

become communists, communists become chalutzim, and chalutzim become rabbis?

And how much richer is our Jewish history for this inter-generational and intra-generational movement? Some would argue that we have a living history for this very reason; we have refused to stand still.

David Simons, our guest speaker on 14th March, is one such Jew who has kept moving, from Glasgow, to Edinburgh, to Israel, to Japan, and back to Glasgow: from property lawyer, to kibbutznik, to English instructor, and now to writer. So, for example, David recalled his ten years on kibbutz with particular affection. But, as he explained, his novels are an opportunity to confront some of the issues that have obliged him to move on. This was certainly the case with regard to his most recently published novel, 'The Liberation of Celia Kahn'.

Celia Kahn appears in a minor role, as a 'social activist', in David's first Scottish-Jewish novel, 'The Credit Draper', which is set in the Gorbals during and following

World War I. We are not sure what kind of an activist she is in The Credit Draper. And nor was her creator! However, as David recollected, he found considerable curiosity about Celia amongst his readers, and his interest developed partly in response to theirs. As his interest grew, so did his research take on new dimensions, and The Liberation of Celia Kahn was born. He alighted on the Glasgow rent strikes of 1915 and the role played by women against the war profiteers. In this milieu, Celia tries to find her own liberation. What she finds, how she finds it and what she does with it is the stuff of the novel. For, as David explains, his starting point is always a main character who moves from Point A to Point B, from one position to another. His work is to explore why and how that transition is made.

David's attention has most recently turned to the issue of denial and the blind spots that we all may have in relation to ourselves, our beliefs and our political views/passions. Entitled 'An Exquisite Sense of What is Beautiful', his latest novel ostensibly deals with the United States and Japan, but he described it as a vehicle for addressing his painful



The Lit's says thank you to Christine Burns for all her help

The JET's

St Abbs
Keith Gilroy



It was a cool autumn morning when we set off on our walk around St Abbs Head situated about five miles north of Eyemouth on the Berwickshire coast. Despite the dark clouds overhead, spirits were high and the conversation was in full flow as our group of eight (John and Lesley Danzig, Jonnie and Joyce Sperber, Micheline Brannan, Betsy Dorfman, Karol Swanson and Keith Gilroy) set off towards the nature reserve managed by the National Trust.

Within minutes we were trekking across



open countryside, the fresh sea breezes blowing gently across our faces. Karol, ever the optimist, had brought sun glasses and sun cream but sadly, despite the odd glimpses of blue sky, these were not needed. After some twenty minutes the track, which had been relatively flat up to that point, turned right and we started to climb gently upwards to give us a splendid view of Loch Mire.

The detailed notes, prepared by John and Lesley, assured us of impending spectacular views and we were not disappointed - the forbidding North Sea stretching as far as the eye could see set against the steep, rugged cliffs and soaring birds was indeed a wonderful sight.

Onwards and upwards we climbed until we reached the Light House Cottages – a small group of buildings by the cliff edge

and often confused relationship to Israel. We can only expect that it is written with the same thoughtfulness, honesty and dedication that informed David's presentation to the Lit.

David Neville gave a vote of thanks on behalf of members. The Liberation of Celia Kahn is published by Five Leaves.



clearly still serving a purpose but now deserted and fenced off totally from the path. It was here, in this relatively remote spot, that we encountered a casualty! A woman had tripped whilst walking her dog and in doing so had fractured her ankle. Although other walkers had gone to assist and attempted to call an ambulance they could not get a signal. So whilst Jonnie and Micheline stayed with the lady, Keith headed to the highest point and managed to get through to the ambulance control centre giving them grid reference (handily provided in John and Lesley's guide) of our location. In due course an ambulance, supported by a coast guard crew, arrived and we continued on our way.

By now it was approaching one o'clock and, finding shelter from the breeze in the lee of a hill, a well deserved lunch beckoned. Betsy's homemade biscuits were particularly popular. Having re-energised ourselves, we continued along the coastal path enjoying spectacular





views of the sea lashing against the cliffs almost 100m below.

Rounding a corner, the lovely village of St

Abbs could be seen nestling in a sheltered cove – the many sailing boats bobbing gently up and down in the harbour. Half an hour later we found ourselves walking down the steep road to the harbour festooned with signs offering diving trips. Ever the inquisitive, John asked a passing young lady dressed in a wet suit why the area was so popular. She explained that the combination of numerous species of exotic fish and spectacular underwater scenery made St Abbs one of the most popular shore diving sites in Britain.

As three o'clock approached, the draw of

a warm drink and homemade cake at the National Trust Visitors Centre café was irresistible and we were soon enjoying tea, coffee and scones together with a very large slice of apple pie!

After a final look round the arts and crafts gifts shop we said our farewells and set off home having had a great day out discovering the beauty of the Berwickshire Coast and the pleasure of good company.



The JETs' first walk of 2011

Peebles

Arnold Rifkind

The JETs (the Jewish Edinburgh Trekkers) started the 2011 season on Sunday 20th February, with a moderate walk from Peebles. Although a number of people were away, and some had to call off, nine warmly insulated trekkers met at the car park by the river in Peebles at 11am.



We set off from the south bank of the River Tweed to follow a route round the base of Cademuir Hill. However all agreed that we should return in the warmer months to actually climb this hill, which rises to just over 1300 feet where can be seen the ruins of two Iron Age forts and glorious views towards Eildon Forest and Tweeddale valley to the south west, and the Moorfoot Hills to the north east. It was a most pleasant walk through a lush valley with wonderful views of the gentle countryside. We enjoyed seeing the sheep in the fields and much evidence of spring approaching, particularly revelling in the masses of snowdrops beneath the trees.

After an enjoyable four miles walk we arrived at Kirkton Manor and settled down to eat an eagerly anticipated lunch at picnic tables on the banks of Manor Water. Unfortunately a brief, but biting, cold wind suddenly came up, which shortened our lunch break and hastened our departure.



We then passed through the tiny village of Kirkton Manor and made our way, over several stiles and through a couple of

kissing-gates, to the Tweed Walkway, which is a lovely trail along the banks of the Tweed. The Walkway crosses from the south bank to the north bank and back again as you proceed back to Peebles. The first crossing took us over the Old Manor Brig, dated 1702, where the Manor Water joins the River Tweed. From this bridge there was great excitement when Tom and Judy caught sight of a leaping salmon. Now back on the north bank we followed the path of an old railway line till we reached Neidpath Viaduct which crosses the Tweed. On the left was Neidpath Castle, which was built in the 14th century, by the Hays family who owned it until it was sold to the Duke of Queensberry in 1686. Today it is privately owned by the Earl of Wemyss. The Hays were royalists and Cromwell's cannons caused much damage and although it was partially repaired, the upper wing of the tower had collapsed by 1790. Today only the main block and south range remain roofed. Mary, Queen of Scots, visited the castle in July 1563.

Now back on the south bank of the Tweed we walked the final, gentle stretch alongside the river, and arrived back in Peebles at 3pm. We had all so much enjoyed our day out, the exercise and fresh air, the beautiful views and the convivial company.



WIZO

OCTOBER 2010

In October we enjoyed our Ladies lunch at the home of Esther and Harold Mendelssohn with a 'Floral Art' demonstration by Sheila from 'Harvest Garden'.

We enjoyed a fashion show by three boutiques in William Street with additional fashions from 'Cupboard'. All the expenses for this event were met by 'Extra Inch' and we were delighted with a most generous donation from them which made a fine total of £440.00

We have also received much significant and much appreciated wardrobe donations from our members and friends which will be sold at the Glasgow WIZO 'Nearly New' sale in November.

NOVEMBER 2010

Chairman's Mission WIZO. UK

In early Nov. a group of 40 WIZO "girls" led by the chairman Lorraine Warren left a cold grey UK for the hot sunshine of Israel. Representing Edinburgh Group Scotland were Joyce Cram, her daughter Hilary West, Sylvia Donne and Ann MacInnes on her visit to the State.

In a packed 4 days the Group travelled from Ashkelon in the South to Haifa, Kiryat Shmona and the Golan in the North visiting a variety of WIZO projects. Our last day was spent in Jerusalem and ended with a Gala Dinner back at our hotel in Tel Aviv attended by World President of WIZO, Helena Glasser and other Executives.

Over the 4 days we visited day centres which were maintained or had been refurbished by British WIZO and arrived at a new centre literally an hour after the contractors had finished. In all we were made so welcome and enjoyed singing and dancing too. The children who performed for us at the Margaret Gold Music Centre in Tiberius played with such skill and confidence- the first piano soloist couldn't reach the pedals!

So many highlights to remember - in the dusk enjoying afternoon tea with the British Ambassador, Matthew Gould, at his home, the first Jewish "boy" in the post! Helena Glasser and Brenda Katten joined

us. Home hospitality par excellence with Betty and Jack Crystal in their Tel Aviv apartment with roof terrace dining.

Visitors to Israel are always welcome at the centres and this tour showed us how much our fundraising meets the needs of so many of Israel's citizens of all ages.

9th FEBRUARY 2011

On this inclement Wednesday night, 25 WIZO ladies met at Prestonfield House for a champagne dinner party. Mr James Thomson, director of the Hotel, hosted the reception where we first met up and mingled in the Tapestry Room.

In the sumptuous Rhubarb dining room we enjoyed mouth watering:

Cream of parsnip & ginger soup

Fillet of bream with spelt grain risotto and parmesan gnocchi

Dark chocolate and Clementine tart with spiced cream

Coffee and petit fours

Our appreciation of these culinary delights was followed by Mr James Devlin, guest speaker, taking the floor. He spoke for 30 minutes, recalling and telling stories of his experiences in the music business from his very early days as a group manager and part of the 1960's pop music scene. We learned that his mother took a very keen interest in much of his career... to his great embarrassment!

Some of us recognised the power of such a mother, and the fact, to, that his grandmother had come from Russia suggested that he might have a Jewish element in his background!

When 10.30 arrived, party bags and coats were collected and the ladies agreed that this was a fine way to spend a cold wet February evening.

12 FEBRUARY 2011

WIZO National Quiz at Home

High tech, WIZO fund raising in 21st Century. Sylvia and John Donne were the hosts for the National Quiz 2011. The eleven people who took part were... Carole and Ian Graham, Avril and Norman Berger, Anne MacInnes, Kate Goodwin, Norma Brodie, Sandra and Sidney Caplan.

Seven rounds were played and at precisely 7.00pm we opened our envelopes containing instructions and quiz questions. 122 teams throughout the United Kingdom took part.

There were ninety-six points to be won in the various categories of subjects and all answers had to be emailed no later than 10.15pm to Central Control.

Three rounds were completed; a delicious supper, some of which had been brought along by guests, was served to rejuvenated competitors, then back to our combined effort of thrashing out the answers for the last four rounds.

The results came through at 11.30pm. Out of the possible ninety-two points, Edinburgh achieved 75 points. The winning score was 90 and the bottom was 31, gained at the house of one of the WIZO executives!

Edinburgh took the very respectable position of fifty-seventh out of 122 teams.

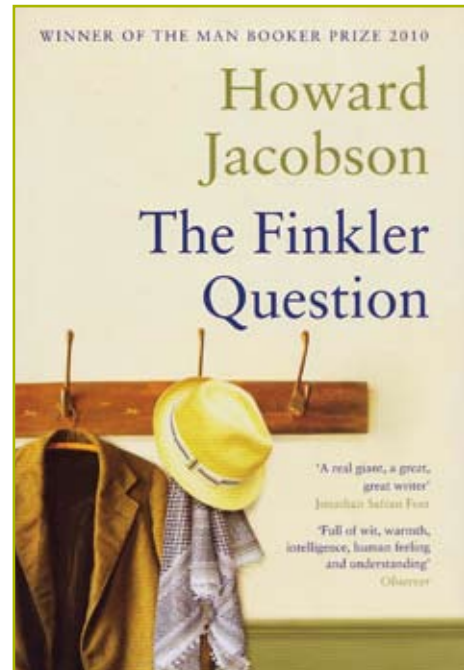
There was no specific charge for taking part in the evening of fun but a suggested donation of around £10 – 15 was made and our team made £150. on the assumption that every team would have on average 10 people each of whom might donate £13 to £20 the amount raised could be guessed at between £15,860 and £24,400... possibly a lot more; not to be sneezed at for a very good cause!

Patrons
Lady Hazel & Mr John
Cosgrove

Reviews

The Finkler Question by Howard Jacobson

Gillian Raab



Shortly before this review was due Howard Jacobson was interviewed by Kirsty Young on the BBC programme Desert Island Discs. Readers of the Finkler Question will recognize the irony of this because in the novel Sam Finkler announced to his wife that he had “landed” an invitation to the programme as he was avoiding helping her in the garden. His wife was less than enthusiastic about this and when he suggested that he could choose the music that had been played at their wedding she countered “If Mendelssohn is the best you can come up with, my advice is to tell them you are too busy. Unless he wrote an ‘Adultery March’”. Of course Sam (or Shmuelly to her) did not take her advice, but unlike Howard Jacobson, he did not select music that was played at his wedding. The other difference between the real and the fictional Desert Island Discs was that Kirsty Young did not touch on the question of Israel. In the fictional version Sam Finkler claimed, as part of a sanctimonious statement about

his Jewishness, that he was “profoundly ashamed.... of the dispossession of the Palestinians”. In the novel this led to his becoming a founder member of ‘ASHamed Jews’, an organisation that bears a passing resemblance to some Jewish organizations that are critical of current Israeli policy. It is enough of a resemblance though to have led to protests from Jewish Socialist groups who have posted highly critical reviews on the Amazon web site. But like much else in the book the portrayal of this group is taken to extremes and played for laughs so as not to be taken too seriously.

The Finkler Question certainly made me laugh at its absurdities. It features plans for a Museum of Anglo-Jewry Culture that would one day serve Jewish teas in the garden..“Jewish teas? “It’s like an English tea only there is twice as much of it”. But it is often or funnily serious. There are three main male characters and three female, two of the latter being dead at the beginning of the book. We really only get inside the heads of two of them, Sam Finkler and Julian Treslove. They had been friends since schooldays and had kept in touch through Libor Sevcik who had taught them Czech history briefly before making his name as a biographer and confidante of Hollywood stars. Sam had made his confident Jewish way through life with an Oxford philosophy degree that led him on to be a celebrity author of books with titles like “The Socratic flirt: how to reason your way to a better sex life” and “Descartes and dating”. Julian, in contrast, had been floating wherever the tide would take him, picking up credits for a modular degree like flotsam followed by various unsatisfactory jobs until finally washing up at an agency where he was hired to attend functions impersonating the likes of Brad Pitt. While Sam has had a wife and three children, Julian has floated in and out of many women’s lives and inadvertently fathered two sons whom he sees only intermittently. At the start of the novel the three men are spending an evening together mourning the loss of their women, by widowhood in Sam and Libor’s cases and by lack of any real connection with them in Julian’s. On his way home after the meeting Julian is mugged by someone he thinks was a woman and who may have called him something like ‘you Jew’.

On the face of it the theme of the novel is Jewish identity, or lack of it, and how Jewish men in particular agonize over it and its contradictions. The Jewish women are more secure in theirs. Libor’s seemingly devoted late wife is portrayed as an idol and Libor’s great-great-niece, or maybe great-great cousin, later Julian’s lover, had no doubts about her identity: “Hephzibah Weizenbaum was tented and suggested the Middle East. There was an Arab shop on Oxford Street which sprayed perfume into the traffic. Treslove, on his way to nowhere in particular, sometimes stopped and breathed it in. Hephzibah Weizenbaum smelt like that – of car fumes, and crowds of tourists, and the Euphrates where it all began”. Julian Treslove’s agonizing was over the possibility of his Jewishness or Finklerishness, as he would put it. Sam Finkler’s recently deceased wife Tyler, raised as a Catholic, knew more about how to lead a Jewish life than most Jewish women but to her husband she was still the ‘shiksa’.

The Finkler question is as much about belonging or wanting to belong as it is about Jewish identity. Sam Finkler wants to be on the inside of intellectual celebrities and will pull any strings he can to get himself acknowledged as part of that inner circle. Julian is the character with the dream of belonging to the Finklers. One might have expected that the author might have chosen a Jewish character to have some of his own traits. But everything that Jacobson talked about on Desert Island Discs, his early shyness and his tendency to weep to operatic music, were things that he shared with Julian, not with Sam. He uses Julian to see us as he thinks others see us. The other characters give the range of contradictory ways in which we see or mock ourselves. Enjoy.

Patron
Mr Leslie Wolfson

Obituaries

Joy Goodman

Born Liverpool 18th July 1936, died Karmi’el 27th Sept 2010



Joy & Brian Goodman

A celebration of Joy Goodman’s life, which helps us understand, too, where her son Julian gets his own showmanship from.
Lord Julian Goodman

My mother was born Joy Fisher in Liverpool, 1936, to Pearl and Samuel (Mickey) Fisher. She was an only child, as her father was tragically killed in the May Blitz of Liverpool 1941. He was a volunteer ambulance driver in the Civil Defence, and had the night off due to a Yahrzeit. However, as the Blitz intensified, he reported for extra duty after Shul, and the hospital suffered a direct hit. This had a profound effect on my mother and her whole family. They all made a special effort to make up for her having lost her father, and they were all incredibly close. As I grew up, I noticed that all my great aunts and uncles were more like extra grandparents, and my cousins, no matter how far removed, were like extra siblings.

My grandmother, as a single parent, shared a house with two of her sisters who occupied the ground floor, while my mother and grandmother lived in the top floor. Both floors had their own bathrooms and kitchens, however the “apartments” had no separation other than a normal staircase, and so their lives were very much integrated. Everybody worked very hard and my mother also excelled as a pupil, particularly in music, and became Head Girl of the Liverpool Hebrew Schools.

She went on to become a very talented singer, singing in Princes Road Shul’s rather rare orthodox mixed voice choir, and various other organisations including The Liverpool Operatic Society. She met my father when she performed in Allerton Shul’s production of Slotke and The Magic Needle (a Yiddish Pantomime based on Aladdin).

They were married at Princes Road in 1960, and became members of Greenbank Drive Shul. During her time there, my mother was involved in all the communal activities, and was chairman of the Ladies Guild for some time. Her life was full of charitable activities and she was a member of many charitable groups and societies. She frequently performed for them all to raise funds or awareness including Young Wizo and The Liverpool 35 Group, and during the height of the latter’s Soviet Campaign, sang on BBC Radio Merseyside to highlight the plight of Soviet Refuseniks.

Along with my father, she was involved in every activity involving parents at The King David Schools (successors to the ‘Liverpool Hebrew’). She chaired many committees, especially the music ones, and deciding that more much needed money could be raised through diversifying, helped form The Friends of King David Music, which put on regular concerts, and helped the school to improve its already impressive facilities, and become recognised as one of the best schools for music in the North West of England. She didn’t just organise events, but was a huge participator. She sang at many concerts, and created a specifically Hebrew Singing Choir for pupils at the High School, The Chaverim, and took them on to great success at the Liverpool Music Festivals for some years. When one of the teachers at the Primary School took ill, she stepped in and took over their choir until his return. She chaired the Joint 4 for many years (a combination of the four main PTAs, Old Boys/Girls associations of the two schools) which ran the annual Garden Party, and as a member of the JLGB Band and guard of honour, I frequently found myself being inspected by my mother along with the Lord Mayor. She was known by everybody at the school and beyond, but with a great sense of fun, was the butt of many of my jokes and routines in the concerts in which we appeared together, much to her delight as well as the audiences’.

Her charitable works were not confined to the schools and shuls. She went out in all weathers delivering Kosher ‘Meals on Wheels’ and every year collected for The Royal British Legion’s Poppy Appeal. Our house was frequently turned over to charities, and one year I remember a marquee erected for a Garden Party in aid of the Leukaemia Research Fund opened by Sir Charles Groves (the then conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic). This was not surprising to me as a child, as she had the ability to involve and motivate huge numbers of volunteers, and our house was often full of people arranging things for the benefit of others. Along with my father and some friends, she was also a founder member of The Chiribim, a Hebrew singing group that performed all over the country, with all proceeds going to Hillel House. Her acts of charity were often quiet and discreet too, and she would do anything to help and support any of her friends in need, despite her own commitments

On taking Aliyah, she just continued to do the same in Israel. She took part in concerts for charity, and frequently performed hilarious comic routines with my father as well as singing beautifully many a song that moved all who heard her. They both volunteered to help the IDF, and once a week, along with other

retired volunteers, they went along and assisted the army in a similar way to how the NAAFI helps HM Armed Forces in the UK.

She was Chairman of Keren B'yachad, an English Speaking Group that raises money for local charities, Rabbis, hospitals and social services in Israel. She chaired this group until her illness precluded her a year ago. The committee decided that they could not do without her, so they moved their meetings to my parents' house, and she remained involved up until her death.

Many people have told me over the years that they can always tell which Barmitzvah boys I have taught, because of the "showmanship" style of their brochas. This wasn't taught to me by my father or grandfather (who taught me to leyn), it was my mother. She waited until I had learned all the basics and then she went over it all with a fine toothcomb, and taught me the art of performing. As children we accompanied her to her singing teacher on our "special treat" trips to town. Edwin Francis Bel Canto had also trained the opera singer Rita Hunter, and all the skills he taught my mother, she passed on to us. On a Friday afternoon, round the kitchen table cooking for Shabbes, my mother would teach us all the solos and duets from the liturgy that she had sung with her mother as a child, consequently, as we grew old enough to perform them in Greenbank Shul Choir, we already knew the finest pieces for the Yomim Norayim that other boys were just being taught by the choirmaster. She also taught us pieces long forgotten by many congregations, and aside from a lucky few of us who know them, are now only to be found on the manuscript pages of rare archives around the world.

She had a great lust for life, and for fun, and was generous to a fault. She had a passion for entertaining, and being a wonderful cook would fill the house with guests for Yomim Tovim and any other opportunity that arose. Every conversation I had on the telephone with her was filled with laughter, and eavesdropping friends at my end of the phone would also be laughing just hearing my responses, and having to guess what my mother had said to cause such hilarity and mirth. This was again the case, despite her pain and discomfort, the last time we talked, just a day or so before her death.

Her only regret on taking Aliyah was the lack of opportunity to spend more time with her family and huge circle of friends back in the UK, but the extraordinary responses from all the shuls and friends back home, as well as people in Karmi'el, showed that she'd had a much greater impact on people's lives than she could ever have possibly imagined!

She is survived by her husband Brian, three sons, a daughter and six grandchildren who were all the very centre of her world.

Patrons
Mr & Mrs Phillip Harris

Rachelle Behrman Braverman
September 1914-2010

Farewell to our Mom
Shirley Kurnoff



COMPASSIONATE
When you met our mom she radiated warmth and empathy. She had a gift of wanting to help people. Back in August 1939, the start of World War II, Mom heard of Jewish children in Austria that were desperate to escape to Britain. As a strong Zionist and advocate for children, she involved herself in this program. Gertrude Nachtigal Kissiloff was one such child, October 28, 1939, Gertie, rode the kinder transport with her brother, from Vienna to London, and then on to Edinburgh. Gertie, 86, now lives in Manhattan. She spoke with Mom last Friday (September 17, 2010) telling her how much she loved her, and thanking her, again and again, for saving her life and, indirectly saving her brother and parents, too. When dad was failing in health at the young age of 91, Mom personally looked after him with minimal additional home-help. It was her job she would tell Jackie and me; she was a mere 86!

ELEGANT
Our Mom grew up in an affluent, orthodox Jewish home in Ventspils, Latvia, located on the Venta River/Baltic Sea. Our Granny Sarah, who we never met because of the Holocaust, was the personification of elegance. Granny traveled to Vienna periodically to purchase fine clothes and cosmetics, dressing herself and her children in fine clothing. This wore off on Mom. Mom's daily motto was "put on your make-up before starting your to-do list, and definitely a colour tint works!" She cherished her weekly hair appointments, and always welcomed a nail color change. Look good, feel good, was her motto.

COURAGEOUS
Fall of 1939, the Nazis captured Mom's mother, Sarah, because she was not wearing her Star of David arm band, rather it was on her coat sleeve that she was carrying because it was an unusually warm day. Mom heard the story first-hand from her younger brother, Joseph, who was miraculously picked up by a British member of parliament on the streets of Buchenwald, summer of 1945. She weathered the storm back then. Mom thought that her brother, Max, and sister, Harriet, were also taken by the Germans, but never gave up hope. She searched for

Harriet through the London Jewish networks and finally traced her to Warsaw. It was one lunch time in Johannesburg, South Africa, the year was 1958, when the international telephone operator called to say "expect a call from Warsaw at 4.00pm, stand-by". Aviva, Jackie and I remember it well. The only words that came out of Harriet's and Mom's mouth were: "is that you? Is that really you? Are you ok? Shellingka! Harriet! Shellingka!" They subsequently met up in Israel the following year where Harriet resided with her family. Nine years on, August 1965, Mom traveled to Leningrad & Moscow to see her brother, Max, who had spent the past 10 years in a Siberian concentration camp. Mom, Auntie Rena and Uncle Borya of London, were the first tourist group allowed into Russia at that time. They were testing uncharted waters. Mom and Max met secretly in parks in Leningrad, and exchanged nylons and anything synthetic, so that he could resell the items. Sometimes they sat on a park bench and Mom would check for hidden microphones. She sent us post cards that read: "we have met friends, and it is all wonderful" referring to her meeting with Max. Envisage this at her Leningrad hotel at the end of the corridor sitting at a table, a guard said to her each morning in Russian (Mom was fluent in both Russian & German)... " we are watching you. Beware!" Mom told us of the chills that woman gave her, each day. But, she was stoic and didn't give in. She had a mission!

In 1950 Mom contacted tuberculosis. It was at that time that family members were discussing the dispersal of us: Aviva (12), Jackie (6), and Shirley (3), to different family members. Despite being seriously ill, Mom told Aunty Rena of London: "no one is taking my children from me, and they are certainly not dividing them up. Period!" And the rest is history. Sadly, May 1990, my Mom had to witness the death of Aviva. Mom and dad becoming substitute parents to Rhonda, their granddaughter, Rhonda's father was deceased, too. Later Rhonda phoned daily to inquire after Gran.

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE
Back in 1934 at the age of 20, Mom left her home town of Ventspils, Latvia to attend Edinburgh University. In 1952, after visiting her first cousin, aunty Olga in Johannesburg, South Africa, Mom convinced Montague, our dad, that our family should emigrate there. She told him: "this place is full of sunshine, fresh fruit and there are no food rations! The sale was over. We lived there for ten glorious years 1952-1962. After that, Mom and Dad spent every Jan/Feb. in South Africa with Jackie and her family, lasting thirty years. She was fortunate to witness Russell and Craig, her two grandsons, grow up as young boys and then develop into successful young men. And then, 56 years later, at the young age of 93 Mom said "I'm coming to America!" In May 2008, as the train left Edinburgh station for London, I asked her "are you sure you really want to do this, to leave Edinburgh? "I have nothing here anymore. Monty has gone I have no family here - let's get going!!!" she responded." Once in the US and at Rose Schnitzer Manor, Mom adjusted to new friends, a new apartment, a new bed, new food, and new accents! She never grumbled. She loved her new abode. How did she have the guts, the incredible belief that life in the US would work out just fine? Maybe we all have a bit of Ellis Island in us at any stage of our life?

Can you imagine the conversations that will take place between these two lovebirds who were married for 69 years!

A woman of compassion, elegance, courage and spirit of adventure. She will be sadly missed by her two daughters, Jackie and Shirley, her sons-in-law, six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Jackie's Farewell Speech
Thanks for affording me the opportunity to say a few words about my dearest Mum. May I begin with a quotation: "There are souls who find joy everywhere in life and then they leave the joy wherever they go". These words epitomize my Mum.

She viewed life as an adventure, a voyage of discovery, a journey, not a solo journey but a journey connected to her beloved family, friends, acquaintances, flora, fauna, in fact the whole universe. Shirley and I recalled being taken as young girls to visit and feed the ducks at the Blackford Pond in Edinburgh. Mum would talk to and connect with the ducks and it was her wisdom and unique perspective on life which allowed her to know that, "good relationships" bring us happiness.

Together with my dearest Dad, Mum piloted the family vessel for 69 challenging years, through calm waters and stormy seas but they never lost their courage, fortitude and optimism. Mum, I have learned from you how to see a glass of water as half full and not half empty, how to be aware of and thankful for the good things that happen and to never take anything for granted.

Thanks for teaching me about kindness, generosity, care and compassion. Your thoughts, feelings and behaviors are the archetypes of how a mum, granny and great granny should act, in fact how all human beings should treat one another. Mum your life has been an inspiration to me and I shall try to honor your great legacy and continue in your spirit, passing on your great lessons.

I am so proud to be your daughter.

Guess Who
& When? [Answers on back page](#)



Golf Report

Syd Zoltie – Chairman of the Edinburgh Hebrew Golf Society



Beth Freedman receiving the Reuben Zack Trophy from Syd Zoltie

Blue skies with decorative clouds and a stiff south westerly wind reading 6 on the Beaufort wind-scale provided a challenging round of golf at the annual Shul Golf Tournament on the nine hole Princess Golf Course at the Braid Hills.

A plethora of nationalities from England, France, Israel and Japan were included in the seventeen players who took to the course on the Sunday before Yom Kippur.

The Reuben Zack Trophy was won by Beth Freedman with a net score of 20 and the team event for the Maccabi Cup was won by John Danzig, Brian Caine and Sid Zoltie. The Orange Bowl Trophy was claimed by Elie Atad.

We welcomed Tom Seatter who having



Bryan, John & Sid



John Danzig holds the Maccabi Cup

arrived in the City from Israel, scored an admirable net 36 on the course. Tom has served four years as a lieutenant in the Israel Defence Force and is now studying Mechanical Engineering at Heriot Watt University.

Our thanks go to Lennie Berger for organising the event, Ian Young of the Braid Hill Golf Centre for donating the



Isaac Ansell-Forsyth & Benjamin Griffin



Isaac, Lennie & Benjamin

prize of a professional golf lesson and to Jim at the Coffee Shop for the complimentary coffee and scrumptious shortbread biscuits to wind up a most enjoyable morning.

All you seasoned and potential golfers make sure you turn up next year for a golfing experience you might never forget!

Scottish Friends of Alyn

Clarice Osborne Chairman

On behalf of the Scottish Friends of Alyn, I should like to thank all those who responded so generously to our 2010 appeal to help the children in this hospital in Jerusalem.

I should also like to thank everyone who marked the celebration of birthdays, anniversaries, and other happy events by donating to Alyn. As a result of our appeal this year we have purchased the following items;

2 walkers for the Physiotherapy department

1 manual wheelchair with backrest for the patient rehabilitation ward

A DVD and screen for the plaster unit in order to try to divert the children's attention from the pain they are experiencing.

Recently in the Sunday Times there was a story about a 9 year old Palestinian girl, Marya, who was tragically paralysed in an



Israeli missile strike. She and her father have been granted the right to live in Israel thus enabling Marya to continue to have treatment at a hospital in Jerusalem (the only one in the Middle East capable of treating her injuries) 'ALYN'. I am sure that like me all our supporters will be proud of ALYN and the help given by Scottish Friends.



Happy Passover



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Mazel Tov to...

David and **Millie Harris** who have recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

Rabbi David and **Eliesheva Mason** Mazeltov on the safe arrival of their baby daughter **Amalya Rachel**. Mazeltov also goes to **Irene** and **Philip**.

Clarice and **Berl Osborne** on their diamond anniversary.



Blanche Mundy on her 95th birthday in February.



To **Doreen** and **Laurence Bowman** Mazeltov on the safe arrival of their new grandson, **Coby Rafi** on 19th December 2010. Mazeltov to **Jacqueline** and **Joseph** and little brother **Ryan**.



On behalf of the Edinburgh Jewish Community, the Edinburgh Star would like to congratulate His Royal Highness Prince William and Katherine Middleton on their forthcoming marriage.

Patrons
**Mr & Mrs
Edward Green**

Forthcoming Events

May

- 16 Monday Lodge Solomon
- 22 Sunday Annual WIZO Garden Party Tea 3.00pm. At the home of Kate and Ronnie Goodwin
- 29 Monday Retirement Tea for Mrs Burns

June

- 1 Wednesday AJR Annual Northern Get-together
- 5 Sunday Coffee Morning
- 8 Wednesday 1st day of Shavuot

August

- 20 Saturday Annual Civic Service
- 21 Sunday Festival Open Day

October

- 17 Monday Lodge Solomon

November

- 21 Monday Lodge Solomon

December

- 19 Monday Lodge Solomon

The Luncheon Club meets every Tuesday (meat) and Thursday (fish) at 12.30pm. New volunteers and/or helpers always welcome.

Senior Maccabi meets on Sunday evenings in member's homes. For further information, contact Isaac Ansel-Forsyth and Benjamin Griffin.

All meetings take place in the Synagogue Community Centre, Salisbury Road unless otherwise stated. All are subject to alteration.

Guess Who & When? Answers **Lennie Berger's Production of Carmen Cohen 1997**

Back row, left to right Bill Sinclair, Norma Brodie, Anthony Gilbert, Vicki Lowrie, Rose Newman, Rose Orgel, Susie Sinclair, Lennie Berger, Ian Liefer.
Front, left to right Judy Gilbert, Christine Burns, Valerie Simpson.